

Northeastern U.S. and Eastern Canada Summer, 1988

Fri. evening, June 3, 1988

Clayton, NM

We left home Mon., May 30 for 3+ months of wandering the U.S. and Canada. Only one stop is planned, and that is the American Birding Association (A.B.A.) convention June 26 - July 3 in Duluth.

The first night we had planned to go only as far as Kingman, but since Kingman is a most uninteresting place to stay and we were not tired, we went on to Seligman. The KOA there was well outside town and 1/2 mile off the freeway--nice and quiet. A lovely night full of stars and moon and ripply clouds veiling it all.

Tuesday we went to Red Rocks State park just east of Gallup, NM, a beautiful setting. Birds were much the same as at the Colorado River, where we camped two weeks earlier.

Wed. we went to Santa Fe. We walked around town in the p.m. and had a most uninspired meal at a pretentious restaurant. Our campground was outside town (east) about 10 miles, set in pinon-juniper woodland, with trees separating all the sites. Although there was a milk-carton bird feeder with seed left over from the previous site occupant, no birds came to our seeds. I did see a female Black-headed Grosbeak try to land on the feeder's perch, but she was too heavy and tilted herself off. She never did discover the seeds Jim put all over the ground and picnic table. Very few other birds were around.

Thurs. we continued across the Rockies (Sangre de Cristo Range), following the old Santa Fe Trail through Glorietta Pass (I-25 follows this route). We spent a couple of hours at Pecos National Monument. It consists of ruins of an old Indian pueblo plus ruins of a Catholic cathedral established around 1600 to convert the Indians. Both are in good enough repair to see easily how it was all laid out. A most interesting place.

After a good Mexican lunch in Las Vegas, NM, we drove the rest of a long day across to Clayton, a town of about 5000 in extreme NE New Mexico. We had planned to stop at a state park enroute, but it proved to be rather bleak despite its lake, and the electric and sewer hookups which AAA promised were nowhere to be found. (Trailer Life didn't say there were any, and Woodall's didn't mention the place.) We'd have put up with the lack of hookups had the place seemed more interesting.

We spent last night and will spend tonight in Clayton. I had seen the Koowa National Grassland on the map. We drove north out of town on a minor state highway today and stopped a couple of places. The first was a piece of grassland with lots of low shrubs--a likely spot for Cassin's Sparrows. They were there doing their spectacular courtship song-flights facing the wind. I recorded the song, but the wind made it less than a #1 recording. When I played it back, the birds showed some interest, but mostly flew in a 50-foot-radius circle all around us--much too far for good pictures, though Jim did snap a couple. I also recorded Scaled Quail, but they didn't show themselves longer than a fleeting glimpse.

Our second stop was more productive for Jim--and the birding was very good. We found an old grove of trees--cottonwoods and another species I don't know. Some were very old and had lots of dead snags. Lewis's Woodpeckers, Red-headed Woodpeckers and Kestrels were nesting. Common Nighthawks alternated snoozes on the branches with brief food-forays. Jim got some good perched pictures plus some potentially good flight-shots. (You always have to wait and see about the latter.) [They were no good.] Other interesting birds today were Northern Waterthrush (late transient), Swainson's Thrush (russet-backed race), Virginia's Warbler, Swainson's Hawk, and Krider's Red-tailed Hawk.

Northwestern New Mexico east of the mountains is a very sparsely populated area. As we

moved away from the mountains the land became slightly greener as we left their rain shadow. The road cuts tell the rest of the story--topsoil only about 6 inches thick at best. Bedrock is very close. It's land suitable only for cattle grazing, and evidence of over-grazing is obvious when highway right-of-way is compared with pasture just over the fence.

This land obviously held a greater population in the past, for we passed many abandoned farm houses--some very old adobes which have almost returned to clay, others desolate old frame houses with all the windows out. Only about 1/4 of the houses seem lived in.

Land here is distinctly rolling, with rock ledges here and there. Also a few buttes.

People are so few that the local folks wave at every passing vehicle--including us. We even got a few waves from drivers of vehicles we met on the highway. It's kind of a friendly feeling. You get the impression that if you had a breakdown, help would be right at hand.

Mon. a.m., June 6.

Carmen, OK

I'm sitting in our trailer parked in front of Lee and Barbara Moser's house in Carmen, OK.

We left Clayton Sat a.m. and drove east across the Okla. panhandle 125 miles. This land is becoming more and more suitable for agriculture as we move east--mainly wheat, which is almost ready for harvest. Very few towns. Even those which are on the map are almost indistinguishable from large farm headquarters. Only Guimon is of any size.

Since it was Sat., we wondered if we should be arriving at a lakeside campground [Optima Dam, I believe, didn't record name in diary], but that was the only place about half-way to Lee's house. We needn't have worried. Besides the resident gatekeeper/caretaker, there was only one other party in the huge campground, and almost no water in the huge lakebed behind the dam. We had electricity, but no other hookups--a common thing in this state, I've noticed. I guess that way RV's can use their air-conditioners, probably a necessity as the summer rolls on.

We selected a site in an isolated loop with a broad view over the lakebed, its riparian bottomland, and the plains beyond. In the foreground around the trailer was natural prairie with scattered bushes. I hoped it would have Cassin's Sparrows, and it did. The next morning early, I went out and recorded one. After breakfast we tried to get it to come close in response to the tape, so Jim could get a picture. He did get some, but not as close as he would have liked. The bird mostly did the fly-by's. He would sit about 25 feet away and sing. Or he would do his aerial song flight. We even placed the tape recorder on the ground under a bush, fearing that our presence was intimidating him.

I think perhaps the reason he didn't come right up to the source of the sound is that a truly worthy rival would have confronted him with a song flight of his own. The Botteri's Sparrow, a close relative which we encountered in SE Ariz. a couple of years ago, came right up to the tape recorder and perched on a branch above it looking down. It does not do a song flight. My theory was also in accord with the behavior of a Dickcissel which Lee showed us in a wheat field last night. It also has a song flight, and it too just sang and sang from a utility wire on either side of the tape recorder--as if to challenge its "rival" to come out and fight like a man.

Weather has been very pleasant so far. The warmest was low 80's with a breeze Sat. We sat in the shade behind the trailer for several hours Sat. afternoon looking out over the landscape. Meadowlarks and Ring-necked Pheasants were the most audible birds, though the latter were essentially invisible. Jim did find a Meadowlark nest with chicks.

After dinner, while Jim was doing the dishes and I was sitting out back again, up drove the people from the other party in the camp. They had simply come up for a visit--which is apparently the neighborly thing to do in this friendly place. (I have never been in such a friendly area as northwestern New Mexico and the Oklahoma panhandle.) It turned out to be a mother and son. He said he was 51 and had older siblings, so she was probably in her 80's. The man talked to Jim in the trailer, and his mother came out back and talked to me. It was a very pleasant experience. She told me her parents

had homesteaded in this part of the country. She had had to take an apartment in town 30 miles from home in order to go to high school. (Imagine a 14-year-old girl on her own in an apartment.) She got married right out of high school to a college graduate in the area, who was city clerk of their town for many years, as well as a farmer. He died about 10 years ago.

An interesting coincidence: another son and daughter-in-law have a home in Huntington Beach, and she had visited them there. (They're separated now, and son has moved to Carson, but daughter-in-law still lives there.) The daughter-in-law works in K-Mart, and Jim remembers one older clerk there. He's going to go up to here next time he's in the store and see if Hooker, Okla. means anything to her. I think the name of the people is Bounds, but I can't remember for sure.

Yesterday we left the campground about 11:00 after our morning bird-photography endeavors, planning to stop around noon for lunch in a roadside cafe. It was 1:00 before we found one. This part of the country is very sparsely populated. The place we found was Log Cabin Crossroads, a building built on the site of an old log cabin. It was simply a cafe/store/gas station where two highways meet. It was full of Oklahomans in their Sunday best eating dinner after church. The menu was pretty dismal. The church-goers were eating well-done steak cooked on a griddle, mashed potatoes and gravy. We had hamburgers. The place and the people made me think of Carol's Café in Garden Grove, which my brother Gil used to inflict on us every other Sunday when we were kids. (We got to take turns choosing where we would eat after church.) The only difference was the sound. There was so much hubbub we couldn't distinguish one word we heard, but the vowel sounds alone told us we were in Okla. and not Calif. The vivacious little waitress could have gotten a job in Mel's Diner [setting of a 1970's and 1980's movie, *Alice Doesn't Live Here Any More* and TV show spin-off].

In the afternoon, as we got farther east, but still just barely out of the panhandle in NW Okla., there were more trees. The towns began to look like typical small towns in the midwest.

One stretch of road, however, went through an area of eroded red mesas, which looks like NM or UT might if it had more rain, *i.e.*, the slopes and valleys were more vegetated. I was amazed to find something like that so far east.

Just six miles south of Carmen we came across a preserved old sod house, open to the public and run by the Okla. Historical Society. It had endured, where all others had long since washed away, probably because it was under a large tree and sheltered by a next-door frame house. The place had been restored a bit and refurnished as it might have looked around 1890, when it was built. They've also built a building all around it with controlled humidity, so it should last. It's apparently the last remaining one in the state.

Carmen, where Lee and Barbara live, is a town of 500 people on a side road off of a side road. A charming place full of big old houses on large lots with lots of shade trees. Lee and Barbara both lived in Calif. all their lives. (Jim and Lee were Boy Scouts and L.A.P.D. officers together.) Lee and Barbara met 12 years ago and discovered both had close relatives in and near Carmen. They married a few years later, came back here to visit, bought an old boarding house in terrible disrepair for \$4,000. They've done some fixing up, but are mainly living in 2 or 3 rooms. Much more should be done, but they say they may never do it. [1994 update: nothing has been done and they're no longer living in it]. They have so many other interests, including travel, birding, genealogy, etc., that they "don't want to spend the rest of our lives fixing up this place."

We've parked our trailer right in front of the house and run an electrical cord into the house. Right now I'm washing clothes in their washer and will be able to hang them on a clothes line! They have a dryer, but Barbara and I both agree that clothes lines are ever so much nicer. We slept in our trailer last night and fixed our breakfast before the Mosers were up this morning. It makes a wonderful way to visit people! No one is inconvenienced.

The birds here tell you you're in the east--Brown Thrashers, Blue Jays, Cardinals, etc. A more exciting difference is the colony of very tame Mississippi Kites which roosts just two blocks away. We drove right under six perched on a utility wire. Jim photographed them while standing on the tailgate of the truck, and they were totally unperturbed.

Sun., June 12.

Gray's Ranch RV Park, between Fairfield and Grove, northeastern OK.

We left Carmen Mon. afternoon and drove about 25 miles northeast of there to Great Salt Plains State Park. It was nice campground, but had a severe noise problem. It was right next to a U.S. Air Force air strip, and pilots in training were in and out all day practicing take-offs and landing. All day means from before 7 a.m. to nearly 6 p.m. In addition to that, the water going over the spillway behind the dam nearby made a constant roar.

There were Cardinals and Carolina Chickadees in the bushes beside us, but they weren't interested in Jim's efforts to feed them.

The best bird species there was pair of Yellow-billed Cuckoos, which seemed to be nesting not far away, but we couldn't figure out where. Their visits were at least an hour apart. Perhaps they were incubating.

Great Salt Plains is a flat area of brackish (calcium sulfate) water. People dig for selenite crystals in the mud behind the dam, but it seemed to be a hot dirty task for just a few crystals with muddy imperfections, though I guess they can grow pretty large.

The weather warmed up on Tuesday, so by noon it was unbearable outdoors. Even the AC didn't do the job. I don't think the voltage was up to standard, for we've never been this uncomfortable in hot weather before, and we've had it as high as 105°. I think it was around 95° there.

Wednesday was even hotter. We set out fairly early and drove 215 miles due east ending up here, the extreme northeast corner of Okla. We were able to get partial shade, and despite the fact that the electrical outlet is rated only 15 amp, the AC soon cooled us down. On the TV that evening we learned that the temp. had been 105° in a town we had driven through. No wonder the truck AC had trouble coping.

Gray's Ranch is a lovely campground by a large lake, Grand Lake o' the Cherokees--actually a reservoir. Most people have trailers here permanently, or at least all summer. We got the last site with sewer as well as water and electricity. The camp is surrounded by heavily wooded slopes. Six hundred acres belong to Mr. Gray, a sweet little man of about 75, who loves to talk about the place. He's owned it since he came back from World War II.

There are lots of birds here, but they're not easy to photograph. It took several days before they discovered our feeder. Now we get Cardinals, White-breasted Nuthatches and House Sparrows. And we just now discovered a Red-bellied Woodpecker eating Magic Meal at a spot down on the lower lawn that Jim laced with the stuff. Red-headed Woodpeckers forage at the same tree, so maybe he'll be able to shoot both of them.

Yesterday I was able to call Carolina Wren and Prothonotary Warbler out of the woods to be photographed. This morning we drove through the farmland nearby and managed (finally) to get a couple to Eastern Kingbirds to hold their ground on a barbed wire fence while I inched the truck up to them. Jim felt really good about those photos.

The first night we arrived (Wed.) it was hot and muggy (88° at 9 p.m.) until we went to bed, so we left the AC on all night. But when we awoke the next morning it was nice and cool and dry and has been so ever since, though today is a trifle too warm.

Thurs. night we fought the Battle of the Midges. As soon as it became darker outside than inside, we suddenly became aware that there were thousands of tiny insects just outside the window whistling like little mosquitos. Unfortunately they were so tiny they could get through the screen. By the time we realized what was happening (I was taking a shower, and Jim couldn't hear them.), they were everywhere inside. I finally decided (Jim was off to the campground's shower by then.) to turn off all the lights except the ceiling light in the bathroom, close all the windows and lure all the invaders into the bathroom, where I zapped them with Raid. I took the broom and swept them to flight from wherever they had lit on the walls and ceiling in the murky darkness of the rest of the trailer. They were definitely attracted to the light, for they were all over a light beige corduroy pillow, but almost

ignored a dark brown one next to it.

Most of them died over the throw rug on the bathroom floor and could be shaken off outside, but many died over all the rest of the trailer, and I don't think it was just from the insecticide. The next mornign I vacuumed them up and must have dumped 1 1/2 cupfuls out of the vacuum cleaner bag.

The next evening there were practically none of them. The hot weather must have hatched them out.

Friday we went to Har-Ber Village, a collection of old buildings and items of early days in this part of the country. It was established by Harvey and Bernice Jones (hence the name), who made a fortune in the trucking business, and it's free. Not even a gift shop, and the snack bar is off to one side and very cheap. We found it very interesting to look at the buildings, both homes and businesses furnished as they might have been in early Okla. There were also many overflow buildings, each filled with items of a particular type--old glassware, milking and creamery equipment, etc., etc.

Duluth, MN

Fri., June 24

It's been 12 days since I last wrote up our travels--days mostly filled with trying, and sometimes succeeding, to enjoy ourselves despite searing heat. Highs were in the high 90's. Nights were very warm and muggy. We kept watching TV and seeing that it was somewhat cooler up here, so we decided to do 300 miles a day and get here early. The ABA convention starts next Tues., and we got here last evening. Now for the highlights of the past days.

We remained at Gray's Ranch until June 14. Jim managed to photograph Cardinals well, plus Red-bellied and Red-headed Woodpeckers. We also attracted the Prothonotary Warbler and Carolina Wren with the tape playback method. An Eastern Phoebe at and near a nest were also good subjects. I got good sound on quite a few birds. On week-day mornings, when the boats weren't out on the lake, recording conditions were ideal, especially the one or two days without a breeze.

Gray's Ranch stayed bearable cool(?) even on the hottest days, and I sat out on the grass under the huge trees doing my embroidery while Jim went back and forth between the feeding station by the trailer and the old tree which he had salted with Magic Meal (bacon fat, corn meal, peanut butter, flour) for the woodpeckers.

We finally tore ourselves away on Tues., June 14 and drove down to Tahlequah, OK, in the heart of Cherokee country. After securing a campsite near the edge of town (Solar Inn Motel and RV Park) and leaving the trailer's AC running, we spent a couple of hours at the Cherokee Museum and Cultural Center. It was only mildly interesting. The displays were unnecessarily and annoyingly illuminated with lights which shone on this and then that board covered with printing--all the while you were listening to a message through earphones. (If you didn't press the button, there was almost no light at all.) There was much too much printing and too little other material. It would have been much easier to read it all in a book.

The best part of the museum was an art show of paintings done by local Cherokee artists. Some were very good, but seemed vastly overpriced. Many were several thousand dollars.

There was also an outdoor replica of an early Cherokee village, which was much like any other early American village. The Cherokees were one of the "Five Civilized Tribes" and adopted many of the white man's ways early.

On Wed., June 15, we set out for Arkansas and Petit Jean State Park, which I remembered as being very scenic when Mother and I visited it in May, 1975. Unfortunately we arrived just as a major gathering of old car enthusiasts was assembling for a week-end affair at a nearby Antique Auto Museum. All the campsites in the park were taken, and we were directed to a nearby church camp (Lutheran), which had elec. and water. We had our pick of the sites, but by the time evening fell were squeezed between two large RV's six feet away on either side. Since there was no way we could

have our curtains open to the faintly cool night air, we left the AC on all night and left first thing in the morning. We had no desire to see the park with that mob present. They expected as many as 20,000 people by the weekend.

Our next stop was more fortunate. We spent three nights at Blue Ky RV Park in Mountain View, Ark (June 16-18). We found it to be a lovely spread-out campground and we got a site well away from other trailers. Full hook-ups, too. Jim tied a fallen sapling about 4ft off the ground between two larger trees and laced it with bird seed and Magic Meal. This time it drew the Blue Jays he'd been trying to lure. There was also a funny little Carolina Wren who made the rounds through the area's sparse undergrowth. It especially enjoyed burrowing through the wet leaves under the drippy water faucet, obviously bathing in the drip water. What is it about wrens that makes them so amusing and endearing?

While in Mountain View we visited the two main attractions. The first was the Ozark Folk Center, a state park where local artisans still perform their tasks as they did around 1900. Around 15 or 20 different crafts are done. The idea is to keep skills such as soap-making, blacksmithing, woodworking, etc., from being lost.

In the evening we went back for the folk music show--2+ hours of entertainment for under \$5.00. No songs later than 1940. Performances varied in quality, but most were excellent. I thoroughly enjoyed it, but Jim got sleepy and was glad when it ended. (I had taken a nap in the afternoon to prevent drowsiness.)

The next morning we went to Blanchard Springs Caverns, because Gil (my brother) had recommended it as 2nd only to Carlsbad in his eyes. (Gil loves caves and has taken several trips to this part of the country just to visit some.) Jim took lots of pictures, both flash and time exposures, but we'll have to wait until Sept. to see if any came out.

We hated to leave our lovely campsite in Mtn. View, but Jim had taken all the Blue Jay pictures he thought he should, and no other birds were in range.

Our next stop was the Camelot RV Park in Poplar Bluff, MO. This was a park we'll never return to mainly because the manager was so disagreeable. He wasn't in the office when we got there, so Jim had to phone him at home (25 cents pay phone!). He was told to select any site. So we did, but the guy soon turned up and said we had to face the other direction in the site. That meant our windows faced other trailers, not the nice view of pond and woods. We would have driven out, but there was no place else within 50 miles. So we selected another site and made the best of it. Never before have we been told we had to face a particular direction in a site. Of course, one way is always the "correct" way, for all RV's have the utilities on the left, but we have long hoses and cords and can face either way. This park had all sites lined up so the trailers' window sides faced the center of the park, not the view.

The place bristled with posted rules, too, all stated in the most disagreeable fashion.

We had planned to visit Mingo National Wildlife Refuge, a cypress swamp with a long boardwalk, which I loved in 1983. The oppressive (100+ degrees plus high humidity) weather plus the prospect of another night in that campground sent us on our way.

Monday, June 20, we drove north through Missouri all day. We even drove through the heart of St. Louis, instead of taking the bypass, so Jim could see the Gateway Arch. He was suitably impressed. It was very hot, and the truck AC barely kept us comfortable. Jim drove in the late afternoon and the sun on his side really got to him. We were happy to find a totally shady site at Mark Twain Cave Campground in Hannibal. We decided to spend two nights there, but the heat kept me indoors all day with the AC running. Jim had bought a wood carving set in Mountain View and was anxious to try it out, so he braved the heat so his wood chips wouldn't clutter the trailer.

In our short stay no birds found our Magic Meal. I'd love to return to that campground in cooler weather. It looks like a wonderful place to record, and a little more time should clue the feeder birds in on the goodies.

Many sites there had full hookups, but they were all taken by a caravan of 30 or so Avion trailers, who were touring the Great River Road. If they had not been there, the campground would

have had very few visitors. It was surrounded by woods with lots of shade trees in the grassy central area. Even with all the Avions in residence, we still had no immediate neighbors either night and the sites were nice and spacious. (We had elec. only.)

No, Gil, we didn't visit the cave. It was just too hot to walk over to it!

Wed., June 22 we drove northward all day, mostly through beautiful rolling Iowa farmland. I even saw several "perfect" farms: red hip-roofed barn, 2-story white house, misc. silos and outbuildings. (When I first visited the midwest in 1952 I made my Uncle Ralph, who lived in Chicago, drive all over northern Illinois looking for such a farm for me to photograph. He loved to drive, so was happy to comply. We never found one.) We didn't stop for pictures because the road was too narrow. (All Iowa roads are narrow and lack shoulders.) Besides it was too hot, and we just wanted to get north.

Spent the night at Pikes Peak State Park just south of McGregor, Iowa, which Mother and I visited in 1983. The camp was quite nice and had electricity, which we required for the AC. Water and sewer we can do without for short stops. Not far from our camp is a fantastic view of the Mississippi River and its extensive bottomlands where the Wisconsin River flows in.

When we awoke yesterday (June 23), the weather was cool! What a relief after all that heat. With the exception of a couple of acceptable days at Gray's Ranch it had been beastly hot since June 7. We drove north along the Wisconsin side of the Miss. R. as far as Alma, when a detour sent us away. It was a pretty day--not hazy and brassy as it had been, though not crystal clear either. I've driven this stretch of river a couple of other times and Jim enjoyed it as much as I. Beautiful riparian woodlands with the river meandering through. Small towns which look little changed since 1900 seem to be straight out of Mark Twain.

After leaving the river to go nearly due north through Wis. to Duluth, MN, we first traveled through rolling farmland, then gradually the woodlands became larger than the cornfields. Finally it was all woodlands with lakes here and there.

We stopped for lunch in Durand at a lovely restaurant, Mozarts. I had tomato and ham quiche--very good, and Jim had German sausage and sauerkraut. Desserts were irresistible--chocolate mousse (Jim) and English trifle (me). Very good place and a pleasant relief from typical mid-America cafe menus.

When we got out of the truck in Duluth it was positively cold! Wonderful. Temperature got down to 46 degrees last night and we slept wonderfully under the electric blanket.

The Duluth-Superior area has very few campgrounds, and sewer hookups are practically nonexistent. We did drive through one park which had a few, but the place was so crowded and awful-looking, we couldn't face staying there for ten days. We're at the Duluth Tent and RV Park (E and W plus dump station) We have a nice site with windows facing a birch/alder thicket with Song Sparrows, Chickadees, Alder Flycatchers, American Redstarts, Clay-colored Sparrows, plus other spp. yet to be identified. So far (4:30 p.m.) no one has found the bird food. It's been chilly (60°) all day with a brisk wind off Lake Superior. Had a few short thunder showers. The ABA convention doesn't start until Tues., so we have several days to get acquainted with the area before then.

The camp is right across the road from Lake Superior and on the very north edge of the city. Parkland is all along the lake side of the road. Campground is quite spacious and uncrowded. I think we'll enjoy it here through the July 4 weekend.

July 13

Kapaskasing, Ontario

It's been along time since I've written. The ABA convention was extremely busy, then it seemed I never had enough time to bring this account up to date properly. But I guess I'd better get started, even though it's 5:00 p.m.

After a few days in our first site in Duluth, we moved to another in the same park. The first one was OK, except that there was another site right next to us. The first Sat. night there was another RV

only 6 ft away from our bedroom window, and we had to wait until their card game was over at 11:00 before we could go to sleep. The next day we noticed that a nice site completely surrounded by birch trees was free and had E and W also. So we moved into it for the rest of our stay in Duluth. Even on the July 4 weekend when the camp was really full we had a sense of isolation in our lovely little alcove.

The ABA convention was held at the Holiday Inn, a multi-story hotel 8 miles (1/2 hr) away in downtown Duluth. Parking in the parking structure was not a hassle, even though it was validated parking. We just had to say "ABA Convention" and no charge.

Tues., Thurs., and Fri. there were lectures on bird ID and other aspects of birding. Wed., Sat., and Sun. morning there were field trips. Every evening we had dinner there plus an after dinner program. Food and service in the dining room were absolutely superb. Most of the speakers were very good, and none were poor.

Probably the most memorable was Peter Harrison, who spoke at the banquet. Arnold Small (program chairman), who had met him on a trip (or trips?) to the Antarctic, knew what he was getting when he asked him to speak. Harrison is a slip of a Cornishman who seems around age 30. He wrote and illustrated the definitive ID book *Seabirds of the World*. His talk (with excellent slides) described a recent trip to the Antarctic on a small sailing ship with two other men. His lilting, almost poetic, account of his adventures there was inspiring. Landing on and scaling steep sea cliffs pounded by surf, braving towering storms with a disabled engine—all were part of the daily life, and he told it *very well*.

Field trips involved meeting at 3:45 to 4:30 a.m., depending on the trip's destination, being jammed into a 40-passenger bus and taken to various birding spots. They were well organized and the birds had been staked out with admirable competence. However, we didn't like the crowds, the long days, and the cramped busses. We'll probably skip field trips at future conventions. It was very hard to get through the wonderful evening programs with that kind of schedule. We'll just find the birds on our own next time.

I saw one life bird, Northern Hawk-Owl, on one of the trips. It was perched on the tip-top of a spruce tree beside the road. Its long tail was cocked and used for balance on its precarious perch. This bird had nested nearby, and the young were still being fed, holding the adults in the area. The birds were not seen again starting two days after we saw one. The convention literature had not promised this species, since it's only a very rare nester this far south and mostly seen in the winter. So we were very lucky. I had not expected any other lifers, so was not disappointed.

After the convention was over, we went on our own to the best spots the tours had visited to try to photograph some of the birds. By then the weather had become hot, muggy, and windy, so birding was pretty poor.

Sunday we went to Sax-Zim Bog, skipping the half-day tour there that we had paid for. We couldn't face another early start and another ride on that bus, we were so exhausted. So we got there 2 or 3 hours later than the tour and spent all day. Got pictures of Mourning Warbler, which responded to my taped playback of its song. Tried for Bobolink and may have gotten one or two shots of Ovenbird by the same method. Also, Jim photographed an Upland Sandpiper sitting on a utility wire. High perches are typical of this species, but it still looked strange to see a sandpiper perched on a wire.

Monday we returned to Aitken Co. Went 1st to the place where Great Gray Owl was supposed to be—a clearing in a spruce forest way gack on a Forest Service road. No owl, but did get a Sedge Wren to respond to the tape. (In fact, nearly all the photos Jim has taken in the north country have been obtained by this method.) Then we went to Rice Lake NWR, where we'd seen an American Redstart nest. Got that photo, but curtailed any further birding because of extremely oppressive heat. Aitken Co. is about 65 mi. west of Duluth and doesn't have the cooling effect of the southeast wind flowing off Lake Superior that Duluth does. We were never too hot at our trailer park.

Tues. we stayed in Duluth. I did laundry in the morning while Jim photographed a Song Sparrow coming and going from its nest in a clump in the next campsite (unoccupied that day). In the

late afternoon we drove down to the harbor area, where sandpipers were to be found. I missed the Golden-Plovers which reportedly had been there a few days earlier. Reportedly the subspecies *fulva* and *dominica* are about to be split into two full species, and I'm not sure I've seen *dominica*. Unfortunately the birds had left when we got there. Did see a lovely alternate plumage Short-billed Dowitcher of a different subspecies (*hendersoni*) than we get in Calif. We also encountered, and Jim photographed, a flock of Bank Swallows, many perched on the ground or on a low piece of discarded cable.

Wed we returned to the Isabella area northeast of Duluth to try to locate a Great Gray Owl or relocate the Hawk-Owl. No luck, but we did find a moose--also Magnolia Warbler, Swamp Sparrow, etc.--for pictures.

On the way back from our Isabella trip we ate lunch in Silver Bay, where Mother and I had eaten when we stayed there some years ago. I remembered the good cinnamon rolls we'd had. The little coffee shop was still there. We had sandwiches and pie (Jim lemon, me cherry) and it was outstanding. They had two cinnamon rolls left, so we bought them and took them with us for breakfast.

Thursday we hitched up the trailer and drove northeast along the north shore of Lake Superior, stopping in Silver Bay for six more cinnamon rolls, which I can freeze. At Grand Marais we turned north on the Gunflint Trail to a campground about 25 miles up that 60-mile spur road (Okontoe Camp).

After selecting a pull-through site in the park, we discovered there was more traffic than we expected on the dirt road ten feet away. Jim discovered a lovely back-in site not too far away. Entrance was rather narrow and curvy, but Jim loves a secluded site as much as I do and so made the effort and got us into it. It had a view of a little lake through the trees, plus E and W. S is very hard to find in northern Minn., no doubt because the pipes freeze in winter, but we dump our gray water in the bushes when no one is looking. Don't know if they care, but we'd rather take no chances. Black water (toilet) tank only has to be dumped every couple of weeks, and most camps have a dump station, which we can visit as we leave. Gray water needs to be dumped daily unless we take extreme care when bathing and dish-washing. Then the tank might hold for two days.

Kim Eckert, who wrote an excellent bird-finding guide for Minn. and also ran the birding tours at the ABA Convention, recommended the Gunflint Tr. for boreal forest birds like Great Gray Owl, Black-backed Woodpecker, and many warblers. We didn't find any of these, but did get some deciduous forest birds to pose for pictures, especially a male American Redstart and a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. These two were farther up the road when we drove up there Friday (July 8), but a Myrtle Warbler right in our camp was singing constantly. I didn't know until I called it in with my tape replay what it was. It sounds slightly different from Audubon's, and I don't hear their song too often.) The bird posed very well for pictures--not nearly as jittery as most warblers. My tape wasn't too good, though, for the people in the next site had 2 or 3 noisy kids, who yelled all the time they were awake. One we dubbed "Eric-no," for the parents were continually admonishing this child, who was in his "terrible twos."

Our first night at this campground we had a powerful thunderstorm, the first one we've had that really amounted to anything. It kept causing voltage fluctuations, so the circuit breaker box kept going off. We tried to run the AC because it was hot and stuffy in the trailer with the windows closed against the rain, but no success. We had run it for several hours in our first site earlier in the afternoon. Don't know what the difference was except the storm. All the while we were there (three nights), we would occasionally get periods of flickering lights. Probably the line from who knows where was simply overloaded.

Water there was funny too. Very yellow and metallic tasting. One wash cloth with white stripes now has yellow ones. I presume it's iron and will take special treatment to remove it.

The site was lovely, but I was happy to leave "Eric-no" *et. al.* on Sunday, July 10. We drove up to Grand Portage, just below the Canadian border and visited a National Monument commemorating the last portage (8.5 miles) used by the voyageurs carrying furs out of the interior. From there travel

was on larger canoes on the Great Lakes. There had been a station of the Canadian North West Company there until about 1805, when surveyors proved they were in the U.S., not Canada, so they had to move. The buildings have been reconstructed as they might have looked at the time of the abandonment.

We crossed into Canada, suffering a minute inspection by a zealous young customs woman. (Last year we had been practically waved through.)

In Thunder Bay (formed when the two cities of Fort William and Port Arthur merged in 1968, after Mother and I came through here), we visited a reconstructed version of old Fort William--on a new site, but using old plans. This provincial park is meant to be a replica of the successor to the Grand Portage site which had been abandoned about 1805. It was meant to look as it might have in 1815. All the buildings were interpreted by people impersonating people who might have lived there then. It was such fun to talk to a young clerk, voyageur, blacksmith, cooper, company executive, etc., asking them about their daily lives as they played their roles. I think they enjoyed the fact that we did some role-playing, too--pretending to buy something in the store or to have some ailment in the doctor's office, etc. It really brought to life what it must have been like in a fur-trading fort in early Canada. It was a fort mainly for defense against anticipated attack from the rival Hudson's Bay Co. Attack never occurred, and the North West Co. merged with the Hudson's Bay Co. in 1821. The post continued. The original site has been swallowed up in the modern city, hence the new place.

We spent Sunday night (July 10) at Mirror Lake Campground. It was nearly full of permanently installed vacation trailers, with just a few places for transients. It was OK, but too many people, too much foot traffic on the trail just outside our window. Thank goodness the night was cool, for we had to have our curtains closed.

On Monday (July 11) we drove most of the day, arriving at Wild Goose Lake trailer park around mid-afternoon. Full hookups for a change. How nice to have that sewer, too! The camp was nearly deserted, yet had 75 sites. They were quite close together in a birch-fir(?) forest, but with so few people we really felt alone for a change. What a pleasant relief after the noise of the past few evenings. It's light here until nearly 11:00 and people (including kids) don't go to bed very early. We're on the western edge of the Eastern Time zone, so it stays dark until around 5:00 a.m. People do all their sleeping in the morning.

Tuesday (July 12) we took a spur road which went north out of Geraldton. Mostly forest with all-too-many irresponsible clear-cuts. We drove 75 miles north with little change in habitat. (I think Jim was hoping to find muskeg, or tundra, or something.) We did find a lovely scene--lake with marsh grass clumps, surrounded by trees, nice puffy clouds. Jim took lots of photos--including some with his larger format camera.

While he was photographing his scene, I kept myself occupied recording my umpteenth Red-eyed Vireo. I had had no success calling this species forth with a playback before, but to my surprise this one was different. It did come out. So I called Jim, and he got 4 or 5 pictures before the bird got tired of the game.

Later in the day I recorded a Tennessee Warbler. It did come out and perch in a treetop to be ID'd, but would not come low enough to be photographed. You never know how birds will respond to playback. This one just flew back and forth high above us. It always pays to keep trying, for, as the vireo proved, behavior is not constant with all members of a species. But don't try too long with any one bird.

We got back around 3:00. I washed three loads of clothes, including rugs. Only one machine, so lots of trips back and forth to the laundry room. I hung the sheets, rugs, and a few other items on a line tied between trees. They were dry long before nightfall. Did the rest in the dryer.

This morning we awoke to lowering clouds. By the time breakfast was over it was raining. Jim hooked up in the rain, drove all day (213 mi) in the rain and unhooked in the rain. The rain has stopped now (8:30 p.m.), but it was a good steady downpour. It hope it does some good in helping the drought, which, according to TV, is serious in Canada, too.

Kapuskasing is a town of 25,000 and a major metropolis in northeastern Ontario. It's truly a

bilingual area. We went to a shopping mall, and all the clerks went easily back and forth between French and English.

We knew we were in French Canada earlier in the day, for we started seeing houses with front doors, but no front steps or porches. The doors could be anywhere from 1 to 6 ft off the ground. Mother and I were amused by them on an earlier trip back there. The funniest house we saw had a 6-foot-high front door--and a set of steps and porch out 10 feet away in the middle of the front lawn and rotated 180 degrees from the direction they would have been had they been used to enter the house. It was a trim, neat house, with nicely painted red wooden steps and small porch. No photo possible--raining too hard. Obviously these people don't ever use their front doors. But why do they have them, except perhaps as decoration?

July 17, 1988

Reserve La Verendrye, Quebec

Two campgrounds since I last wrote--one absolutely lovely and the other simply awful. [Later (2021): This was by far the worst place we ever camped in all our years of trailering.]

We left Kapuskasing after some morning shopping and continued east, then south. The day gradually cleared to beautiful puffy clouds. We ended up at Culver Park in Swastika, a village near Kirkland Lake (town) in Ontario. We had a site overlooking a meandering river with reeds and water lilies on its edges. We were on a little peninsula between the river and a lake (Blanche R., Otto Lake). the campground had lovely huge sites, a variety of trees, including lots of pines, which seemed to draw birds in. The pines were quite young, so the birds were never too high for Jim to photograph. He did very well just wandering back and forth along one row of them. I'm not sure what all he got, but he did tell me he thought he was shooting a Pine Siskin until a Myrtle Warbler came up and stuffed a bug down its throat!

The next morning we awoke to ground fog hanging over the water. Jim took pictures of the river in that mood, too. It was such a nice park we decided to stay another night. It only had an electric hook-up ("hydro" here in Canada), but we're good for 2 or 3 days on our 40-gal water tank.

All was lovely until just after lunch. We saw a car pulling a trailer drive by, then back up jack-knifing his trailer against his car. It soon developed that the driver was super-angry because we had his site. When we entered, we had been told to take any site that didn't have a slip on the post. It turned out that this old codger had reserved it for the season on June 1, but hadn't been using it for at least a month. We were in the site and had had a hard time leveling up and were not about to move, especially since the site had not been labeled taken.

So the old man had no choice but to pull into the site next to us. As the afternoon progressed, he got madder and madder and started swearing and shouting, first in the 3rd person (about us), and then in the 2nd person (at us). All the while he was sitting inside his trailer drinking beer. The tirades became more and more belligerent and incoherent. We became the symbol of everything Americans were doing to subjugate poor Canada. Finally I told Jim I couldn't take it any longer. So he went over and told him to be quiet, or he'd call the police, and that his profanity ("goddamn" and "bastard" were actually his strongest words) were offending his wife.

The man then opened his door and fell out on the ground! Jim helped him up and talked a bit more with him. (It reminded him of his days manning the drunk wagon on L.A.P.D.) Finally the old codger said he'd only be quiet on one condition--that Jim go in and have a beer with him. Jim decided that wasn't an impossible condition, even though he's not fond of beer.

He wasn't totally mollified, but at least he shut up the rest of our stay there, except for some completely incoherent roars when he was totally in his cups. It turned out his name was Loren McPherson and that he was a retired miner from the area. (Gold, silver, copper, iron, etc., are mined locally. Gold especially. There is a gold mine with a 7000-foot shaft not far away.)

Next morning we decided we still wanted to stay over in the park, but we let old Loren have his site and moved to a lovely isolated site by a meadow in the opposite corner of the park. The park had

about 50 sites and no more than a third were taken. So we spent three nights, instead of the one we had planned on. Ended up with a bird list for the park alone of 50 spp., including 10 warblers.

Saturday afternoon we drove into Kirkland Lake and visited a museum housed in the chateau built (1929) by the man who discovered gold in the area (1911). It had displays of local history including gold mining, which has always fascinated Jim.

This morning we left around 11:30, after a morning of birding, and headed eastward into the northwest corner of the settled part of Quebec. It was surprisingly (to us) populous--apparently copper mining is the principal source of income. Lots of nice homes--somewhat garish by our standards with lots of red trim and fake brick and stone fronts--sometimes all on the same building. Very few dangling front doors, to our surprise after seeing so many in eastern Ontario.

We ventured over here with some trepidation, for there were no camps listed in our camping guides. It turned out there were a few, but we decided to press on and try to find a place, even without hookups, in the vast provincial park, Reserve Faunique La Verendrye. We stopped at a tourist information center in Val d'Or, and they told us there were lots of campgrounds all through the park and that we should stop at the little white house at the park entrance and buy a campground ticket. It turned out we had to choose a particular camp there and pay, then drive on to the camp. Jim selected one near the main road, because the man in the office was afraid our trailer couldn't handle the 3-5 mile roads in to others.

The camp we took was 40 km farther down the road, but we pressed on. We were in the middle of a 28-km Quebec road construction project at that point. This means tear up the entire road first, then grade it sort of, and then pave it. It was rough, narrow in spots, and dusty. Furthermore, it was full of traffic. It's the only road between northwestern Quebec and the Ottawa area.

We finally made the camp and drove in. What a shock! It was jammed full of camping vehicles, and no numbered sites were marked. We finally found a spot barely long enough for us to squeeze into. No complaints from our neighbors even though we're awfully close to them. All the units seem to be that close. People are pretty quiet, and it's 8:30 now, so it probably won't be too bad. Why all these people want to jam themselves so close together is beyond comprehension. We've been in some fairly crowded camps before, but at least they had numbered sites. Here it was everyone for himself.

What a disappointment! We've been in uncrowded camps almost every night since we left Duluth and thought this vast provincial park would be the same. The highway travels over 100 miles just traversing it from north to south, and it's almost as broad east to west. Lots of water and canoe routes. I suspect it's a delightful wilderness experience away from the roads, but we haven't the boat (or inclination) to venture there.

Next morning, same place.

A bit more about our "campground." It seems like an array of roads just grew spontaneously and branched out in several directions. No loop roads, no turn-arounds at the end. We're parked near a junction and Jim may be able to turn around here. To complicate things, it rained in the night and there is a huge puddle right where he'll have to pull out and turn around. I hope he can make it.

Jim took a walk last evening and inspected the "rest rooms." He said they're the filthiest pit toilets he's ever seen. The sides are even caving in and the excrement is running over the ground.

Maniwaki, Que.

July 19

I'm sitting in the trailer jacked up in a springs garage in this small town in Quebec. Yesterday as we were driving down the road I heard a clunk, then a jingling sound and told Jim to stop at once. He discovered a broken spring dangling. Since there were other springs, he felt it was safe to drive on. (We were in the middle of that huge provincial park.) When we stopped here for gas 100 miles

later at the first town outside the park, we asked if anyone in town could fix springs. We ended up at a nice new springs shop (opened in Jan.). Upon inspection, it turned out that three (of the four!) springs were broken, though only one was completely severed. I'm afraid I had to tell Jim, "I told you so!" He has a habit of ignoring "bump" signs until he can see for himself that they're really bad. In the last few days he's hit a couple of really bad ones plus innumerable lesser ones at a high speed. Right now he is very contrite and told me, "You have my permission to tell me to slow down for bumps."

The shop didn't have our size in stock, but ordered them sent out overnight on the bus from Ottawa. They were here when we arrived at 8:00 this morning. A darling young little French-Canadian mechanic is installing them. We had a nice chat with him yesterday, and it turned out he is pretty knowledgeable about the local birds--knew the habits and call of the loon. In fact, when Jim asked him if he knew where there were any, he wasn't sure of the English word he had used, so imitated the call to see if that's what we meant. He speaks very good English.

We camped last night in the city park right here in Maniwaki. It was a lovely place along a river with trees on the opposite side. You'd hardly know you were in town. The place was practically empty, and most people (2 or 3) had selected sites near the rest rooms. A couple more were half-way down. We were at the far end, and no one was within 100 yards of us. A very pleasant place to spend the afternoon and night. The irony of all those people leaving this lovely sylvan setting behind and departing for La Verendrye to camp cheek by jowl with other folks was very apparent. We'll take the city parks over provincial parks any day--at least in Quebec.

Wed. a.m., July 27, 1988
Quebec City, Que (QC)

After we left Maniwaki we drove south out of Quebec province into Ontario again. As long as we were in the trailer-repairs mode, we decided to get a new sway-bar and found a Prowler dealer near Ottawa who handled it easily and quickly. Spent the night at Ottawa Trailer Camp about 20 mi. west of the city. Did no sight-seeing in Ottawa.

On Wed., July 20 we drove south to Morrisburg on the St. Lawrence River opposite New York State. We found a satisfactory Campground (Caravan Camp) in a grassy apple orchard. Most of the sites were occupied by permanently situated trailers. Everyone was exceedingly friendly, starting with the man who saw our bewilderment at the choice of two sites we had been offered by the management. (The three hookups, especially the sewer with its short hose, were situated in such a way that it was impossible to hook up to them.) He came over and said, "You don't want that site. There are some nicer ones over there." And so there were. We went back to the office and found they were unreserved.

As I said, all of the folks in the campground were very friendly. Most were from the Ottawa area. When we've stayed in camps full of permanent trailers before, the people have usually ignored the short-stayers.

Canadians love bright colors, and the campground was full of flower pots (often red ones full of pink and purple petunias), lawn ornaments, foot-high picket fences, etc. Everything painted just yesterday. Much of it vastly overdone by our standards, but here it was rather nice. The sites were large for a trailer park, so there was plenty of grass to break up the scene.

The day we arrived we went over to Upper Canada Village, arriving around noon. This is a model of how the area looked in the 1860s when it was settled. It uses a collection of restored old buildings from the area. There are people in all of them performing the tasks of the period. Mother and I have visited this place twice before and it's always a highlight. We spent all afternoon there.

Thursday was drizzly, so we decided to stay in the trailer. I washed, trotting back and forth to the laundry room with my umbrella. Unfortunately they had only one washer and one dryer that worked. The dryer took only dimes and ran only about 10 min at a time. So it took lots of trips to get two loads done. With the rain I had to dry everything in the dryer. Up to now I've been able to hang

some things on a clothesline strung up between a couple of trees. Worst of all the dryer was apparently too hot, so two blouses and a pair of slacks came out hopelessly wrinkled. (I tried yesterday to rewash the slacks and iron the wrinkles out of them while they were damp.)

In the afternoon it cleared somewhat--to warm and muggy. We took a drive back to the Crysler Park area where Upper Canada Village is. This time we toured the rest of the park, especially the Crysler Farm Battlefield interpretive center. It was here that British forces decisively repulsed a large American force which was headed for Montreal during the War of 1812. It seemed strange to hear about the war from the British point of view. I don't remember enough about that war to say what actually started it, but I do recall British forces in the heart of the U.S. settled areas.

Later we drove around on the park roads, and Jim found a flock of relatively tame Canada Geese to photograph. The flock was started with captives, which breed there. This in turn lures the migrants to stop over in the spring and fall.

Friday we took a long drive along the St. Lawrence River. We crossed to the U.S. at Ogdensburg, N.Y. There we mailed some film and letters and bought gasoline. It's very expensive in Canada (\$1.60 to \$1.80 per gal. U.S. funds).

We also visited a museum devoted to the works of the Western artist, Frederick Remington. It was in an old house where his wife resided after his death; he never lived there. However, they had converted one room into a reproduction of his studio, full of artifacts of the old west. Jim has always been a fan of the western artist. I was probably less anxious to see the place. I did enjoy the work, though, especially the bronze sculptures and the paintings of dusk and night scenes. His skill with light was very realistic.

From Ogdensburg we drove up the river (southwest) about 50 miles and crossed back over near Gananoque, in the heart of the Thousand Islands (actually 1800 islands!). The road on the U.S. side was mostly through the woods with only an occasional view of the river.

In Gananoque I had hoped to have lunch at the Golden Apple, a restaurant in an old house which Mother and I loved on two previous visits. Unfortunately it closes from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m., and we arrived at 2:30. We had a merely adequate meal at another place.

Then I did a little shopping, while Jim took a nap in the truck on a "quiet" shady residential street. All the while he was entertained by Mitch Miller favorites being played on a tape recorder by an old man who was hard of hearing. Other people along the street were out on their front porches, etc., enjoying the warm day. At one point, Jim reported, the town crazy-man wandered down the street shouting dire threats at everyone. No one paid any attention to him.

The drive back to Morrisburg was more beautiful than on the American side. Much of the road was right along the river full of islands. Each island, whether large or small, has trees and building(s). Some islands are only big enough for one building and one tree, provided they are small, and provided part of the building is on a deck over the water. Other larger islands contain huge mansions with architecture of the early 20th century.

Saturday we decided to stay over one more night and just relax in the campground. Finding a new place to stay on Sat. night can be a problem, especially near metropolitan areas, so we played it safe. I took a walk around the camp and found a Cape May Warbler, the first of the trip, and went back to get Jim. He took lots of pictures of him. Apparently he had claimed this one pine tree as his own and chased away all comers, especially Yellow Warblers and another Cape May. He himself rarely left his tree.

(The drizzle has stopped--time to leave. Will continue later.)

Later same day.

KOA nr. Riviere-du-Loup, Que.

Sun. it was still slightly drizzly, but we took off for Montreal anyway. Found a place about 10 miles beyond (Camping Alouette. "Camping" is the French word, as well as the English.) We ate a quick light lunch, then headed back into the city. Our destination was a museum associated with

McGill Univ.--starred in the AAA book. It had quite a few nice items from the various Indian cultures of Canada, but the display of needle crafts mentioned in the AAA book turned out to be four tiny crazy quilt squares and two copies of Godey's Lady's Book open to quilt patterns. Furthermore the museum was not as large as we expected. It's surprising a city as large as Montreal doesn't have any large museums.


Next we checked out the art museum, but couldn't figure out where to buy a ticket, which everyone seemed to have in hand. Everyone spoke French around us. Besides, our ardor for museums had cooled considerably by then. (That's probably the real reason we didn't see it.)

So we decided to drive up Mont Royal (from which city got its name). We only had a general map of the city with a few key streets, so we floundered around a while before we found the way up to the view point. No real problem, for all the while we were enjoying looking at this very French city. On the slopes of the mtn. we encountered some enormous old stone-block mansions. They were probably built at least 50-100 years ago, and are still very nice today. One had a couple of police cars on either side of it--it was on a curve--and we speculated it might belong to some important politician. When built, these mansions had fabulous views out over the city. Today that view is ruined by a lot of garish high-rise apartment buildings on the flat land right in front of them. Too bad. Montreal is on an island, so high-rise is the only way to accommodate its population.

We drove northeast through the city--just to see what it looked like. We figured we couldn't get too lost on an island, and we didn't. We managed to find a bridge back across the river with a minimum of trouble.

Montreal is a city of potholes. Every street or freeway is full of them or else torn apart for construction and rough for that reason. (A comic we heard on TV that evening even called it Pothole City and everyone roared.) The province of Quebec in general has pretty bad roads, but Montreal's are awful. (Quebec City is much better.) Even a new road is very uneven and jouncy. All the manhole covers seem to be recessed 4 or 5 inches and are in the driving lanes, too. (That's true in *every town*.)

That evening I decided I wasn't going to cook and that we would seek out some French Canadian food. I selected the Hotel Sheraton dining room, simply because it was closest to our campground and recommended by AAA. When we got there, we discovered that Sunday night is buffet night. I usually don't like buffets, but it looked nice, so we decided to go for it, rather than go somewhere else. (There was no place else close.) The cost was \$13.75 (Canadian, about \$11.25 U.S.). What a feed! We loved every bite. Soup - cream of leek, not thick, hurray! A salad bar 20 ft by 3 ft and full of cold meats, fish, shellfish, as well as the usual salad makings. Their liver sausage was heavenly! I could have made a meal on the salad bar alone. But there were hot dishes, too: roast beef (rare if we wished, which we did), lamb chops, a pork stew of some sort, frog legs, vegetables, noodles, potatoes. We had to try a piece of everything. I was gratified to discover that they used practically no garlic--only a little on the frog legs. Then there was a dessert table with a choice of about 10 different items. We each chose a different type of chocolate cake. That was the only disappointment. It was European-style gateau--no substance and not very much chocolate taste either. What an experience. We were glad we'd gone there. And the price! Unbelievably low for such a feed. Prices in general in Quebec restaurants are much lower than in western Canada. Grocery prices are as high as in western Canada, though, about 1.5 times those in the U.S.

Monday we drove slowly north along the south shore of the St. Lawrence River to just short of Quebec City. It's such fun to see the colorful French Canadian farms and towns. All buildings are very colorful and look freshly painted. A very popular style is: [sketch showing a simple square house with a single gable (not , but concave) from one side to the other, three gabled windows facing front on the second story, central front door with a window on either side]. House itself may be board, rock, brick etc., but always the curved roof line. The roofs are always some shiny bright color, usually red, but frequently blue, green, or even purple. Shutters and other trim match, contrast with, or sometimes clash with the roof. Various arrangements of windows on the front of the house, often a wide front porch, but never a front door hanging over nothing. That's an Ontario style.

Other styles can be found, too. All very colorful and freshly painted. Barns, silos and other farm buildings are equally attractive. Sometimes they're even decorated with colorful geometrical patterns. One barn had all its doors: [sketch of a square with a diagonal line from one corner to another and a large circle in the center, colors of the various areas alternately red and green]

Flowers are everywhere--large beds, flower pots, hanging baskets, etc. I've always associated Canada with flowers, but French Canada takes the prize. Usually it is very lovely, but yesterday we passed a house which was painted a purplish pink with white trim--and had orangy-red geraniums in window boxes across the front.

We stayed at Camping Sous-Bois outside Quebec City. The next day we decided we'd see Quebec better if we took a bus tour. The streets go every which way in the old town. The campground owner called the tour company, and they picked us up at 8:30, gave us a nice tour and brought us back at noon. We really saw the city lots better than if Jim had been driving and I trying to navigate.

In the afternoon we drove up the north shore of the St. Lawrence River to Ste.-Anne-de-Beaupré, where there is a huge basilica and mobs of people there for the miraculous cures that reportedly occur there. We didn't stop, but drove past the church. The traffic jam was so slow that we could see all we wanted as we drove by, and Jim decided to give the interior of the church a pass, since parking looked formidable. (I saw it in 1966.)

Our road up to Ste.-Anne was a four-lane affair with lots of tourist traps. On the way back we took a narrow two-lane road which was obviously the original road. It wound its way through town after town, some with houses with front porches practically in the road. Again we were enthralled by the architecture, trim and flowers.

We stopped at Montmorency Falls, then on back through the city. (We had bypassed it on the freeway on the way up.) My recollection of the lay of the land from the morning tour got me through the old part amazingly easily. We saw lots of city townhouses with spiral iron work staircases to the upper floors. Reminded me of New Orleans' French Quarter.

I had hoped to eat in a Quebec restaurant, but we were tired and didn't want to drive back into the city. There was no place very close to the campground. So I decided to make a raspberry pie--my first. I had bought some fresh raspberries the day before at a roadside stand--also sweet corn, tomatoes, plums, potatoes, at another stand. The only recipe I had was on the corn starch box. Unfortunately it was for blueberry or strawberry pie. Raspberries are apparently much juicier, for the pie was very runny. Otherwise it was (and still is, I presume) delicious. I had to buy a rolling pin at a Woolco. Tried rolling out the pie crust on the formica sink, but it slid around. So I wrapped a dish towel around the board which covers one of the sinks. It worked perfectly as a pastry-cloth on this "bread board." Fortunately we had 30-amp hook-up, so I could keep the trailer cool with the AC while the oven was on. It wasn't really hot outside (high 70's probably), but the humidity was very high. [Later: over the years I made many pies this way from roadside-purchased fruit.]

Last night we had intermittent thunder storms, and it was still raining this morning. We got a late start as it cleared a bit and drove north along the south shore of the St. Lawrence River to start our circuit of the Gaspé Peninsula. Stopped at a number of wood-carvers' shops in St.-Jean-Port-Joli. There must be 20 or 30 shops in this small town. All do pretty much the same type of work--representational statues of animals and elderly people. Some used to decorate household items like knife handles, letter openers, lamps, salt shakers, etc.

Continued northeast to just short of Rivière-du-Loup, where we found a campsite at this KOA. Passed farmland and small towns much like those between Montreal and Quebec, though the land looks increasingly stony.

Evening, July 28.
Ste.-Félicité, Que.

We're in an open grassy campground, Le Vieux Phare Sur Mer (The Old Lighthouse by the

Sea) on the north coast of the Gaspé Peninsula--not too far around (10 mi. east of Matane). Our campsite is at the top of a steep rise and overlooks the lower part of the same campground, rocky shoreline, and the sun setting in the northwest over the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Everything in this campground is trim and clean. All buildings, and even the picnic tables and electrical hook-up boxes are freshly painted white with a liberal use of bright orange trim.

As we moved about 100 miles northeast along the St. Lawrence River, the farms gradually became more scruffy, and produce (legumes) stands gradually were replaced by fish (poisson) markets. I bought some of each plus some delicious homemade French bread at the produce stand.

At neither stand did anyone speak English. The produce stand was easy. Everything was labeled with its French name and price. (I can understand written French to some extent, but not spoken, because I had to pass a test in reading French when I was working on my PhD at UCLA.) When I wasn't sure, I'd just pick up the item and point to the placard and look questioningly at the woman. She'd either nod or point to the right sign. Prices are about the same as at the produce stand we patronize in Santa Ana, maybe a bit higher--certainly not bargains, but worth it for good fresh food.

At the fish stand, the prices were by the kilogram. I converted the usual wt. I purchased into pounds. with my calculator, then wrote it on a slip of paper. Fortunately numbers are universal, just the words for them are different. I read the price on the cash register.

Everyone we've dealt with here in Quebec has been very friendly. If they spoke English, even only a trifle, they've been anxious to converse. If not, smiles were totally sufficient. It is certainly not what Mother and I encountered in 1966. Then everyone was very surly. The French Separatist movement was very active then, and we surmised that they resented anyone who couldn't speak French.

The people here in the camp speak just a bit of English. Jim asked for a sea view. All the seaside sites were taken, so the man had us pull in parallel to the edge on the upper level, thereby taking up three sites. We'd have been perfectly content to back in, but this is spectacular. By the end of the day, that upper level was full--and all those other rigs were backed in the correct way. I wonder what their occupants thought of us.

The color of the sunset has finally faded, and Jim is back from the seashore, having pulled a muscle in his thigh when he slipped on a seaweed-covered rock. He always has to get out just a bit farther to improve his picture. (Slipping on an ice-covered rock into a creek at Sequoia National Park last spring taught him nothing.)

On our way today we stopped at Grand Metis, where there is a lovely garden. Similar to Butchart Gardens in Victoria, this place was also started by a woman on an estate. Tuberous begonias were the most spectacular--large beds of enormous blooms right outdoors. Many other flowers, too, all nicely labeled in French, English, and Latin. The place is not a Quebec Provincial Park, or there wouldn't have been any English labels.

The houses are gradually becoming somewhat more subdued in their architecture and paint jobs. We're seeing more and more cube-shaped two-story dwellings of white clap-board, with colorful shutters of various designs. The road around the Gaspé was not built until 1929, so this area of fishing villages was isolated from the rest of Quebec until fairly recently.

We've been hearing on TV (Quebec station, but in English) that Gaspé is suffering economically. Poor fishing and what the people consider overly stringent fishing regulations are limiting their incomes. (They've probably overfished the area.) Young people are moving away to find jobs. We'll see as we move out the peninsula how it looks. Up to now everything we've seen in Quebec looks trim and prosperous.

This afternoon, as we were chatting with the couple in the RV next to us, an elderly French-speaking couple who are tent-camping just below us came up all smiles and started a conversation. They were obviously trying to be friendly. We were sorry we could not understand them. They reminded us of the mother and son way back in the Oklahoma panhandle who drove up to chat with us.

Sun. evening, July 31.
L'Anse Au Griffon, Que.

We're still on the north shore of the Gaspé and almost at the end. "Gaspé" is a French corruption of a Micmac Indian word, meaning "land's end," and we're almost at the end. Our campground is "Camping Griffon" and is perched atop a sheer cliff about 200 ft above the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The place was full to overflowing last night (Sat.), but we have a site in a corner and were not bothered by the hubbub. Also, the last two nights have been very warm and muggy, and since last night seemed to threaten that we'd have to close the windows and ceiling vents because of rain, we left the AC on all night. Around 9:00 a 30-amp fuse blew! Obviously the voltage was way down because of all the folks drawing current. Jim went to the office for a replacement and reported that they didn't seem surprised at his request. (Most places have circuit-breakers, thank goodness.)

Friday we drove here from Ste-Félicité, alternately climbing to the top of high cliffs, then down to little towns by river mouths. All these towns are dominated by their high-spired Catholic churches. Catholicism seems to be the sole religion here, and the churches are simple and beautiful, not overly ostentatious like some we saw farther southwest.

I noted some differences from when we were here in 1966 (22 years ago). We saw no fish drying on racks, though we did see the old racks in a few towns. Apparently refrigerated transportation has supplanted salting and drying. We were told that they still do some salt-drying, but no one we asked spoke good enough English to be able to answer my questions very well.

All the towns are much larger than they were 22 years ago. Lots of new houses with architecture more like the rest of Canada (and occasionally the rest of Quebec) are to be found. If all these people are trying to make a living fishing, no wonder the government is impelled to regulate the catch. We did meet a man from Montreal today, who used to live here, who claimed there were still lots of fish and that the govt. regulations were designed to keep the price up and make the packing plants wealthy. He seemed like an intelligent well-educated man, but could well have been prejudiced.

Yesterday morning, after I did the laundry, we set out to explore Forillon National Park, on the northeast tip of the Gaspé. I'd been wondering why Mother and I didn't visit this park when we were here 22 years ago and speculated that we were on too tight a schedule (motel reservations every night). The man I referred to in the last paragraph solved the problem by telling us that the park was only formed 17 years ago. He said the govt. evicted quite a number of elderly people from their homes, sometimes forcibly. Too bad. Seems as though they could have been allowed to live out their lives in the old way. It would even have enhanced the park. One section is devoted to describing the old way of life--with a company store and farmer/fisherman's house. (We wondered who got evicted from that house.) It was very interesting to see.

Most of yesterday was spent in the north section of the park. There's a little harbor where a few fishing boats go in and out, and gulls were all around--Herring, Great Black-backed and Black-legged Kittiwakes, especially the latter. Most were adults with nests nearby. Jim had a great time photographing them as they soared on the wind off the end of the breakwater/pier.

We went out to the end of the road at Cape Bon Amé (not the end of the point, which is Cape Gaspé). There we were atop a tall vertical cliff where Double-crested Cormorants and Herring Gulls were nesting, or sometimes just perching. Jim photographed the gulls from there both yesterday and on a return visit today. (We went back to LeHavre--the harbor--today, too.)

While we were watching the gulls soaring out from the cliff in the wind today, suddenly they started screaming even louder than usual. After a moment I realized that there was a "stranger" there, whom they did not like. They were darting at and dive-bombing it. One even flew up behind it and grabbed its tail in its beak, lifting its rear end so it took a brief nose-dive before recovering. After some pondering, I decided it was an immature jaeger, possibly Parasitic. Jim took some photos, but ran out of film when it got the closest, but he did get 3 or 4 shots. Finally the bird tired of the

harassment and descended to the water 300 ft down. There the gulls paid it no attention. We watched it for some time, hoping for a repeat performance and only once did a gull take exception to its presence and then only briefly. (Jaegers eat gull eggs and chicks, so the furore was justified.)

this morning at 7:30 we took a lovely tourboat ride along the north shore out to the tip of Cap (cape) Gaspé. The boat had only nine people aboard. (Literature said they had to have a minimum of ten, but they went with only nine.) We were so happy to have an uncrowded boat! We saw it go out full at 1:30 this afternoon.

We went along the base of towering (as high as 600 ft) vertical cliffs, some serving as rookeries for Black Guillemots, Black-legged Kittiwakes, Herring Gulls, Double-crested Cormorants and (we were told) Razorbills. I saw none of the latter. Maybe they're through nesting. Harbor and Gray seals were resting on off-shore rocks. The sun was shining directly on the colorful cliffs, and it was beautiful! Jim shot pictures like crazy, in hopes that some would come out. (The sea was fairly choppy.) On the way back, the boat swung out to sea farther in search of whales. We did see several fairly well. (I don't know what kind.) Also a few Gannets, which had flown up from Bonaventure Island after breeding.

The rest of the day today we spent visiting the south shore (village and farm) and returning to Le Havre and Cap Bon Ami, as described earlier.

When we left Cap Bon Ami to return to the trailer 12 miles west, it was still hot and muggy (though blowing hard as it had been for several hours). When we got out of our air-conditioned truck, to our surprise it was cool and much drier. Overhead half the sky was clear and half covered with high thin clouds. A dry front was obviously passing and we had unknowingly crossed it. Now (a couple of hours later) the hazy sky is only visible low in the sky far to the east. What a welcome change! I hate to have that AC on all night.

5:30 p.m.--time to fix dinner.

Tues., Aug. 2

Percé, Que.

Today some 22-year-old "unfinished business" was finally taken care of. Let me explain. Mother and I were here in Percé on the extreme east end of the Gaspé Peninsula 22 years ago. At that time we took the requisite tourist boat around Bonaventure Island, just offshore and saw the Gannetries from the water. Since I didn't start birding until two years later, I didn't get off the boat at the wharf and walk across the island to see the gannets at close range. Today we did! I always count the Northern Gannet as the first bird on my life list, because I remember them so well from that earlier visit, though. Now for the details.

Yesterday we drove the short distance from our first stop to Percé (2-hour drive) and got a site at Camping Caron a bit south of town. Full hookup and panoramic view of both Le Rocher Percé (pierced rock) and Bonaventure Island. The former is a very famous Canadian landmark and lies just offshore, connected to the shore by a narrow ridge of land exposed at low tide. It is 1500 ft long and about 380 ft high and has a hole in it! [sketch in original diary] There were two holes at one time, but the outer one collapsed in 1845. Old-time paintings show it was much like the remaining one, so it must have been quite a collapse.

Bonaventure Island is a couple of miles offshore and slopes down to the sea on one side and rises gradually to 250 ft high cliffs with a steep dropoff on the side farthest from land. It's nearly round and has an area of about 1.5 sq mi.

Percé is by far the most "touristy" of the Gaspé towns we've been in. Its main street is lined with motels, restaurants and souvenir shops for 2 or 3 miles. Not junky, but very crowded and busy.

After lunch we drove into town and found a nice new information center with very artistic and informative displays about the geology, flora and fauna of this seacoast. There we saw a nice 12-min movie (English or French version available) about the life history of the Gannet. This museum was a good preparation for today.

We ate dinner in Biard's Restaurant downtown. Had a delicious seafood buffet dinner. (They had roast beef, etc., too, which was also good.)

Today we took the 8:30 a.m. boat from the downtown wharf. They run every 20 to 30 min. It took us all around Bonaventure Island so we could see the seabird colonies (mostly Gannets and Kittiwakes, though we did detect Black Guillemots and one or two Razorbills in flight over the water). It's really a stupendous sight. Every conceivable ledge, large or small, is covered with Gannet nests--only pecking distance apart. Fifty thousand birds, including sub-adults; 18,000 nesting pairs.

Then the boat docked at a little wharf on the south side. From there it was a 2.8-km walk across the island to the gannet rookery. the trail ascended to 443 ft, then descended to the level of the cliff top, 250 ft. We had been told that the birds would be only two feet away, but didn't really believe it. But it was true! A simple low log fence separated the spectators from the edge of the vast colony on the top of the cliff. (We couldn't see the birds on the ledges from there.) There they were in front of us--hundreds of birds at a glance, on territories no more than 2 or 3 ft apart, the closest ones just across the fence and a few strays on our side. They went about their business as though we weren't there.

And what a business it was! The nests were slightly raised from the ground level and had outer ridges of grass and seaweed. Most nests had large, but still downy, chicks. Some had smaller chicks, others had feathered juveniles. We even saw a few fledged juveniles. Couldn't see any eggs, though a few birds were copulating.

What an array of rituals these birds have. Solo displays, fencing duet displays, mutual preening, threat displays. I described them all in my little field notebook. There were lots of nice signs all along the fence explaining the significance of each. I read each one aloud into my microphone, so have them for future reference. [After I got home, I tried to match the photos with the descriptions and names of the rituals and succeeded with a few. Those few are in my *Quilt Stories* book.]

Jim and I decided if we were going to make the effort to get over there and walk across the island, we were going to carry all our gear with us. He had (I think) two cameras, five lenses ranging up to his 200-600 zoom, plus 20 rolls of film. He shot 8. I had my tape recorder plus our lunches. We each carried drinking water, binoculars, etc. Jim photographed those birds in every plumage, doing every behavior, with four lenses! I recorded all the different sounds and tried to figure out which behavior went with each. That wasn't easy, with them all calling at once. We spent 2 or 3 hours at the gannetry.

After "doing" the gannets, we had a choice of returning by the same trail or taking a longer trail (4.9 km) around the south side of the island. We chose the latter, hoping it would give us views of other species' nesting. We were disappointed, for most of it was through the woods 50 ft or more from the cliff top. The last mile or so was along an open brushy meadow and quite hot. Lots of ups and downs, too. We were exausted! (2.8 km + 4.9 km = 7.7 km = 4.6 mi) We haven't done much hiking this summer because of the muggy heat and are soft. We may feel the effects tomorrow.

I've been anticipating Percé for weeks with some trepidation. I knew I wanted to land on Bonaventure Island and see the Gannets up close, but I kept remembering how unpleasant it was the last time I was on the Gaspé Peninsula--and in Percé in particular. The hotel where Mother and I stayed then was way up on a hill, and when we walked in a bunch of people who were talking French all fell into a seemingly guilty silence. They rented us the rooms we'd reserved in the usual (for French Canada) cool verging on surly fashion. Then all night long cars came up the hill, stopped a while, then left. We wondered what kind of illicit business we had landed in. All went OK and we left without incident, but it was sort of an uneasy night. Yesterday I drove up that hill and think I found the place. It's still a hotel. AAA gives the motel only one diamond, but rates the restaurant, which I think is new since we were there, very high. It's also very expensive. The hotel's name is different: L'Auberge Gargantua. I can't remember what it was then.

The boat ride last time was total chaos--until we got on the boat. There were many boats, each run independently. Each had a huckster out by the road yelling (in French) at all passers by.

You sort of selected a salesman blindly and bought a ticket. Then there was a mad dash across a broad sandy beach, hoping to find the right boat, and to get on it before it sailed off.

Around 1970, we were told, all the boatmen got together and formed an association. (There's still one non-member, but it's a minor company.) Now you buy a ticket from a booth or just before you get on the boat. The boats run on a staggered schedule from morning to afternoon. You can come back on any boat, not just the one you went on. We waited about ten minutes in the morning and walked up to the wharf in the afternoon just as a boat was pulling in. After its passengers were unloaded, we got right on, and it left. So easy!

The morning boat this time was nearly full and we were among the last on, so we had terrible seats (no knee room, dirty window with wide vertical bar right beside our seats)--for about two minutes. Then to our amazement some people in the very front seat right beside an open door decided they didn't like the "windy" seat and moved back. We dashed up there. Jim could take pictures out the open door, and we got the cool breeze. (It was never cold today, and parts of our walk were downright hot, especially when we were in open, but sheltered areas. Fortunately much of the walk was through a spruce forest.)

I forgot to mention the White-winged Crossbills we saw on our walk across the island this morning--only the 2nd time I've ever seen them. We got good binocular views of both male and female birds, but they were never close enough for photos.

We're continually amused by the quaint English translations of French signs, brochures, etc. Some are just awkward, but more than once a brochure has said that there would be "animators" at some attraction to explain it. I think they mean guides, naturalists, interpreters or some such word.

We've encountered no one up here in Quebec who has been unfriendly. The people range from merely polite (rare) to absolutely charming. Those who speak English are anxious to converse and make us feel welcome. Even those who don't speak English are helpful. Last night Jim was puzzled by the campground showers. He went into all three of them and each had only one faucet. A man in a nearby trailer saw his bewilderment and came over to reassure him that that was the way it was supposed to be--in sign language.

When we arrived at this campground, there was an unmanned office at the bottom of the hill and a notice in French which we didn't understand. We looked up the hill and there was the owner beckoning us that the "real" office was on top. He showed us the various sites and was very cordial and helpful and not a bit impatient with our typical mode of looking over the whole camp before selecting a site.

Afterthought: Bonaventure Island is now entirely a Quebec Provincial Park. For 100 or so years there was a small fishing village there, with a company which kept the fishermen in chronic debt, yet didn't let them starve. The last winter anyone spent on the island was 1964. For a few more years some folks spent the summer there (and were doing so when we were here in 1966) In 1971 the government bought the entire island and made it into a park. The buildings are all boarded up, but we were told they plan to renovate and refurnish them to help "animate" (my word) the life style. I guess no one was evicted forcibly.

Wed. evening, Aug. 3
Pointe de Croix, Que.

This will be our last night in Quebec. We're at the head of the Baie de Chaleurs, which separates Quebec from New Brunswick, and tomorrow we'll cross the bridge to New Brunswick. Our campground tonight is Parc Gaspesie and is pretty rudimentary. We had to try several sites before we could find a level one--and we're just on a "flat" grassy lawn. Fortunately there are only 3 or 4 sites occupied, so the fact that they're pretty tightly packed is no problem.

The washrooms have no "men" or "women" labels and Jim wandered into the women's by mistake. Fortunately no one was there. Actually they're pretty casual about using the right one here in Quebec. A few nights ago (Camping Griffon), Jim was showering in his usual fashion, entertaining

himself with his own singing and whistling. When he paused briefly, he heard a woman's voice doing the same in the next shower stall--in French.

This morning before leaving Percé we went back to the wharf for an hour or so to photograph the tame gulls. There were a few immatures which I need for the Sea and Sage Library--Herring especially, which occurs in Calif., but isn't very common there. We're also trying to get all ages of Great Black-backed and were lucky to find a juvenile in the flock, pecking intermittently at its parent's red spot on the bill. Strangely this jv always maintained a head-down, neck-stretched-out posture, sort of a begging mode. I've never seen jv gulls do this constantly before, just intermittently. I wonder if it was to show submission to all the other gulls in the large flock. Most juveniles of other gull spp. that I've seen have been just with their own parent.

The rest of today we spent driving along the south shore of the Gaspé. Towns all along, and the rural stretches between, seem to be almost continuously lined with houses. Architecture is giving way a bit to a more English style, especially characterized by large porches all across the front, sometimes glassed in as sun porches.

Up until today on the Gaspé the highway has been the best we've had in Quebec--sometimes narrow, sometimes wider with a good gravel shoulder, and relatively smooth. Today, though, we hit two awful construction zones--one 10 km, the other 6 km. Both were rough but the 6 km one was terrible! They must have removed the pavement clear down to bedrock. Flag-persons were very casual, when present, so it was really up to us to pick a path through the mess. At one point they even diverted the large vehicles, like trucks and us, through a small shopping center parking lot. There were a few small-scale gravel-moving operations going on at several places along the way, but the mess looks as though it will last for months longer.

Tonight we have the first biting insects we've had for almost two weeks--mosquitos, black flies, and tiny no-see-ums. Just a few of the latter, thank goodness, for they can get through the screens.

I forgot to mention that there were lots of flying insects of one particular type at the Gannet colony yesterday. They'd land on us, especially on the lee side from the wind, but they didn't bite. However, it wasn't pleasant to have 20 or 30 flies on you.

Eastern Canada is Prowler country. We see more Prowler trailers here than anyplace else we've been. There are a fair number in the west, but almost none in the south-central states. Here it seems as though 1/3 of the trailers we see are Prowlers, some quite old. (Our trailer is a Prowler.)

Fri. evening, Aug. 5
Saint Edouard de Kent, NB

We're still in French Canada--sort of. New Brunswick is extensively French, and the only officially bilingual province.

Yesterday we left Quebec and drove east along the south shore of the Baie de Chaleurs almost to the tip of the peninsula. That area is almost as French as Quebec; it was settled by the Acadians when they were expelled from Nova Scotia by the British. On the way the countryside was more English, both in architecture and language on the signs, including surnames.

After we got a campsite (Motel and Campground Colibri in Blanchard), we spent several hours at the Acadian Historical Village, a collection of old buildings similar in concept to Upper Canada Village. They had buildings from 1780 to 1890--farm houses, village houses, print shop, cobbler shop, grist mill and linen mill, blacksmith, cabinet maker, etc. Most of the visitors spoke French, so we didn't have the benefit of hearing the questions and answers of other people, just the ones we ourselves asked. The staff were bilingual.

Along the road yesterday we stopped at a rather large establishment specializing in strawberries. They grow them all year in hot houses and sell strawberry shortcake, pie, muffins, cookies, etc. They also had raspberries and blueberries, plus sundry vegetables. I bought some blueberries. The strawberries didn't look as nice as those I get at home. Also bought strawberry muffins, raspberry cookies (a drop cookie with raspberries in the batter--quite good), plus some other

produce. Forgot to try the muffins this morning.

Last evening it started to rain about an hour after dinner--just enough time for the BBQ to cool enough to be stashed under the trailer, thank goodness. It rained off and on all night until about 1:00 this afternoon. We left around 10:00 when the rain let up enough to hook up.

Our drive down the coast was mostly out of view of the shore, through towns and along rural roads lined with homes. New Brunswick is working hard to build two-lane roads with limited access that bypass the towns. They're very good, and since the weather was poor, we took them some of the time.

We stopped at a roadside fish market which advertised scallops. Bought huge ones for \$5.50 (Canadian) per pound. They were weighed on an ancient balance with a weight that was slid across a single beam. It obviously predated the metric system in Canada by decades.

Our dinner tonight consisted almost entirely of items I've bought from roadside stands: sauteed scallops (delicious!), new potatoes (bought from three small boys with a table beside the road), salad with lettuce, tomatoes and cucumbers from various stands, blueberry pie I made from the blueberries I bought yesterday. This pie was a complete success. I got the proportions just right. Jim liked it, too. After he ate all he could with a fork, he got a spoon out of the drawer to scrape with. Finally, he couldn't resist applying his tongue to the residue--since Christi (Mother's dog) wasn't here.

This campground (Allain Beach Camp) is in a very small village by the sea and is several miles from the main highway. It's not a particularly touristy area, although the campground is nearly full of season-lease trailers. Since it's Friday night, many were occupied. We were lucky that one site which backs up to the sea was available. I am sitting here on the bed looking out the rear window at the gentle surf breaking on the sandbars. It's almost dark, but earlier we could barely make out the low land mass of Prince Edward Island far away. Not a large number of birds, but we've seen Common Terns, several gull species, including the first Bonaparte's we've seen. The only shorebirds are Semipalmated Plovers.

Jim's happy to be back in the land of English-language TV. Around the Gaspé it was all French. There was one English station in Quebec City, which was available the last couple of nights, as well as NB stations.

This afternoon and early evening we've been visited by two local "entrepreneurs." The first was a man selling blueberries (\$2.00 per quart--I paid \$2.75). I had to turn him down, because I'd just made a fresh pie. The second was a woman selling baked goods. (She has a little shop down the road, she said.) She had pies tarts, banana bread, etc, all nicely packaged, in the back of her car. I bought a loaf of white bread. It looked like the good light French Canadian bread with the crunchy flaky crust that I've been buying. It's sort of a cross between traditional French bread and typical home-made white bread.

Morning, Sun., Aug. 7.

Camper's Villa, Glenholme, NS.

The last two nights we've been awakened by young "adults" whooping it up at 2 a.m. (We thought the French were supposed to be wild and the English more staid, but that doesn't seem to apply to this generation.)

At Allain Beach we were awakened by six kids swimming in the sea (Northumberland Strait). At first we thought they were in a small boat and in trouble, but later we decided they were just moving along the shoreline out in the water and losing their steps on the sandbars. Anyway the girls were shrieking and the boys were yelling encouragement. This went on for the better part of an hour. We decided these people did not live in our campground. I suppose they were renting a cottage nearby.

Last night the noise occurred about the same time. Some gal was shrieking with laughter, and a radio was playing. Fortunately it was at some distance across the campground. We're beginning to realize that, as much as we hate to look out our window at vast expanses of big RV walls, the owners

of these big rigs are far more likely to be quiet.

These two nights are the first on this trip that there has been middle-of-the-night noise, although sometimes the neighbors stay up later than we'd prefer.

Yesterday morning I got up early and walked out on the beach with my tape recorder. The one-foot surf of the night before had diminished to around three inches and was making a pleasant lapping sound. I recorded the screams of Common Terns against this background. It should fit in well with some seashore slides sometime.

Because of the noise the night before, we decided not to spend Sat. night, too, in this spot and to chance pulling into one someplace else. (We usually don't try to locate a campsite on Sat. night, especially near populated areas.)

We continued south through eastern NB and crossed into Nova Scotia, finding this camp 15 miles west of Truro. It had plenty of sites when we stopped around 2 p.m. and isn't full now, although the sites which back up to the forest seem to be all occupied. (We prefer back-in sites, so we can have our back draperies open on these muggy nights.) It was so hot and sticky, we just turned our AC on, ate a late lunch, and took a nap, which we needed after last night's "entertainment."

Late in the afternoon we drove to Truro for dinner. I remembered a restaurant there where Mother and I had had a good lunch and which overlooked a river with a tidal bore.

(No one but Mother will find this next part very interesting, I suspect.)

When we were here 22 years ago, we ate in a restaurant just across a bridge in Truro with a great view of the tidal bore. The restaurant had good food and a nice sort of colonial atmosphere. Its gift shop feature good-quality linens, knit-wear, woolens, china, etc.

When Mother and I were again here 11 years ago, we thought we had relocated this place, but it wasn't as nice as we remembered. The view was much farther away and the gift shop was full of "Souvenir of Nova Scotia" junk.

I saw "Palliser's Motel and Restaurant" advertized in AAA and also a NS Provincial publication, and it sounded like the first place. The way to it was sort of round-about--not just "over the bridge, there it was." But we went anyway.

As we were eating dinner there, it dawned on me that the old bridge pilings just outside our window might have been the main highway 22 years ago. I asked the waitress when that bridge had gone out. She said, "I'm 25 years old and can barely remember going across that bridge. It used to be the Trans-Canada Highway."

So the puzzle was solved. On our trip 11 years ago, we had eaten at a restaurant, which we could see in the distance, just across the new bridge. (It would have to have been on our departure from NS, because we crossed from St. John to Digby when we arrived.)

(Other folks can start reading again now.)

The Pallisers Restaurant and Motel (still AAA and lovely) is now at the end of a half-mile road which dead-ends at the river. It's surrounded by grassy lawns where people sit on the slope and watch the tidal bore. We didn't wait the 1 1/4 hour for the bore, because it was absolutely the wrong time of the moon for a good show. We're going up to Cape Breton for a week and will return when the tides are more extreme.

Sat., Aug 13.

St. Ann's Bay (Englishtown).

Almost a week has gone by since I last wrote--a week of full days. Today we've decided to sit around a bit and get caught up on lots of things, including rest. I'll go back to where I left off last week.

Sun., Aug. 7, we spent all day driving from near Truro to Catalone, which is five miles from Louisbourg on the easternmost edge of Nova Scotia (Stonewall Campground). Weather still quite warm, but we've found that we can usually run our AC even if we only have a 15-amp hookup, provided (1) the voltage is up to par (which it sometimes isn't in a crowded campground) and (2) we

don't run any heat-generating appliances simultaneously (electric frypan, microwave oven, toaster, hair dryer, etc.) The dehumidifying AC is almost more welcome than the cooling. The humidity here is apparently abnormally high, because the TV news had a report about hay and other crops molding in the Annapolis Valley of NS.

Monday we had to do laundry. It had been 9 days and we were running out of clothes. Since the campground had no laundry, we had to go into Louisbourg to a laundromat. When we got there the place was full (9 a.m. Mon morning!), so we did a little sightseeing instead.

I caught sight of a road to the lighthouse (3 km), so set forth. It turned out to be a beautiful one--the third one on the site. The ruins of the first two were still visible. The first one was the very first lighthouse in Canada (2nd in North America). Built 1734. The day was foggy with fog drifting across the top of the lighthouse. Jim tried to get pictures of the same scene with and without the fog. Hope he succeeded, for it should make a nice effect in a multi-image show. There was also wind rippling the grasses, with Louisbourg and its harbor nearby. I suggested he shoot that several times and try quick changes back and forth from one image to the other with his Coyote (computer that runs our shows). He was dubious about that idea, but reluctantly tried it to humor me.

The foghorn had a lovely sonorous tone, which I recorded. I had to walk about 100 yards away (getting my feet soaked in the boggy ground) and aim my mike away from the sound (and unfortunately toward the surf). Then I turned the recording volume very low (<1 on the scale). In this position the wind varied the sound intensity considerably as evidence by my meter reading. It should be a lovely effect.

Got back to the laundry about 11:30, and it was almost empty. By the time we were through there and we'd had lunch, it was the middle of the afternoon. so we loafed the rest of the day.

Tuesday, 8/9, we spent the entire day at the Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site. This remarkable place is a carefully researched reconstruction of the town and fort which existed on the site from 1713 to 1760. It had a stormy existence, for it occurred when England and France were at war in Europe. This French village and fort was conquered by the British in 1745 and the people exiled. Then the treaty of 1748 allowed them to return. But still there was no peace between the two nations, and it was conquered again in 1758. This time the French were banished for good from all of Nova Scotia. (Longfellow's *Evangeline* is a fictional poem about the experience.) The British had the fort demolished in 1760, and since then no one else has lived on the site. "Louisbourg became the only major colonial town without a modern city built on top of it," according to the guidebook.

Much archaeology and delving into historic records, both in Canada and France, preceded the reconstruction of the fort, and about 1/4 of the original town as it would have been in 1744, just before the first seige and conquest, when it was at its peak. The place is comparable only to Colonial Williamsburg, both in scope and in historical significance to a nation.

(How little Americans know about Canadian history, not to mention its current affairs. We're hearing plenty of U.S. news on Canadian TV. At home we never hear any Canadian news unless it directly affects the U.S.)

Louisbourg was full of people in the dress of the period--from elderly people to children playing in the streets with the toys of the time. Each was impersonating a particular person from the period, some more convincingly than others. Few kept in character as well as those we met at Ft. William, but they were fun to learn from anyway, even if they did resort to the 3rd person.

Perhaps the most in-character were the gate-keepers. Everyone entering the gates had to be "interrogated" by these men. Of course, anyone speaking English was immediately suspected to be a spy. since we were from California, a possession of Spain at the time, they decided we could enter. It was fun to watch each party as it went through the gate. The guys were still as much in character at 4 p.m. as they had been at 9:30, when we entered.

Some of the buildings have interiors restored to their 18th century appearance. Some house museum-type displays on various subjects. Still others have comfortable lounges where one can rest in an easy chair with books about a particular aspect of life in those days. In another room of each of these buildings is a short movie or slide show, which one can watch while the feet rest. Even with

this, we were exhausted--both our brains and our feet--by the end of the day, and we didn't even take the walk through the unrestored ruins.

That evening (or perhaps it was the night before) we went into new Louisbourg for dinner. The food (fish in batter for me, roast turkey for Jim) was disappointing, as is most Canadian food. Not bad, just blah.

While we were eating, we heard music outside. A local parade was passing! A few home-decorated floats, but mostly just the local folks. Every business that owned a panel truck with its name on the side drove by. All the mothers with kids in strollers, as well as the older ones on bikes. Just a small town event. Everyone who wasn't in the parade was out front watching it go by. Today's Louisbourg probably has a population of around 1000 and is on a site a couple of miles away from the colonial town.

Wed. we decided to take the shore road and see the little fishing villages along the way. I spotted a gravel road on the map, which led to the actual Cape Breton--a small promontory which juts farther east than any other land in Nova Scotia.

It turned out that no road was signed "To Cape Breton." I spotted one "To Baleine," which seemed to be about the right place. Baleine wasn't on the map, though, so it was a guess. It was only a rough gravel road, but not really bad. After a couple miles we came to a few houses (6 to 8) clustered around a small natural harbor. (Nova Scotia is rich in these.) Just short of the first house, out came a large black dog (a Labrador, I think). It was a classic car-chaser ("George Tirebiter," Jim dubs them all) and chased us a ways. At the third or fourth house there were 5 or 6 dogs (not all Labs, but all large). These just watched us go by. We kept driving around the cove until the road finally petered out in front of the last house.

Two men were conversing beside the house, so Jim decided to go ask them if that was Cape Breton off in the distance (1/2 to 1 mile away). They said it was.

And that's how we met Charlie Burke, age 68, who lives in the most easterly house in Nova Scotia. He seems much older than his years. No teeth. Arthritis and old World War II injuries have taken their toll. He invited us inside. His little two-room house has an old cook-stove which looks like a wood-burner, but I think it's powered by propane now. No TV that I could see.

He was accompanied by his friend Charlie Ley (pronounced Lee), who had come to take him shopping. This Charlie had seen us the day before in Louisbourg and waved at us, curiously enough. He remembered our truck, which apparently has tires of an unusual size! Charlie Ley is 54 years old and works two months of the year lobstering. The rest of the year he draws unemployment! A few odd jobs--on a cash basis--supplement that.

Charlie Burke worked as a fireman (coal stoker) on Great Lakes ships and is now on a pension. His accent is broad Cape Breton. The accent plus his toothless condition made him somewhat hard to understand. He was extremely pleasant and overjoyed to have visitors. He gladly posed for pictures and urged Jim to go out back and photograph his pig, too, which of course he did.

We must have spent an hour talking to these friendly men. Charlie B. hadn't realized until we pointed it out that his house was the most easterly in Nova Scotia. He had had it hauled out there from Sydney right after the war and installed 200 yd from the house where he was born--and where his two brothers now live.

We reluctantly tore ourselves away from the two Charlies and drove on around the coast to Glace Bay, an old coal mining town. There we visited the Miners' Museum, which is built over a worked-out coal mine. I just looked at the museum displays, but Jim also took the mine tour. He found it most interesting, and also most uncomfortable, for he spent half the time stooped over because of the low ceiling. Next to the museum were several buildings, the most interesting of which was a duplex, which had been a home for many years. Half was furnished as it might have appeared in 1850, the other half, 1900. Typical company-supplied housing.

After Jim came out of the mine tour, he looked closely at his camera and discovered he had shot the entire roll up to that point with it set for the wrong film speed. (He usually keeps each camera loaded with a particular film, but had changed for some reason.) He lost his mine pictures

and also his pictures of Charlie and his house and his pig. That wouldn't do. So we decided to go out to Baleine again the next day. We also went by a Provincial liquor store and bought a couple of six-packs of beer to take along, one for each Charlie.

Thursday, 8/11, dawned crystal-clear, the first truly clear day in 10 days. It's been sort of muggy-foggy-hazy with high clouds most days. So we were glad to take the coast road again and retake some pictures of the beautiful little harbors at Lorraine and Main-à-Dieu, as well as Charlie and his pig.

Charlie was home, this time accompanied by his "maid," as she called herself. She's the only woman in the village and cleans his house weekly. I don't know how much he can pay her. All the rest of the houses have only bachelors in them, we were told. Turns out she (forgot to get her name, darn it) has a sister in Azusa and had a brother there, too, till he died. *Everyone* we meet, it seems, has some relative in California.

We sat down and chatted for another hour, reshot the photos, then went back, hooked up the trailer and drove across to St. Ann's Bay Campground, just off the Cabot Trail. We're in a nice site at the end of the camp and can see the bay through the trees. It's only about 100 ft from the water's edge. I selected this campground on the water hoping it would be cooler than if we were down near Baddeck. I think it is, but still it's amazing how warm it is right at the edge of the Atlantic Ocean. It's rarely this warm near the Pacific. Prevailing wind is off the continental land mass here. The same westerly at home is off the ocean.

Since it was such a beautiful clear day, we ate a late lunch, took a brief rest, then set out around 3:30 to drive as much of the Cabot Trail around the north part of Cape Breton Island as we could. Conditions were beautiful for photography, and we ended up at Bay St. Lawrence--as far north as one can drive in Nova Scotia--around 5:30 or 6:00 p.m. Jim took pictures of rocky coast, high bluffs, harbors filled with multi-colored fishing boats--all in ideal light with sparkling blue sky and water.

We drove back to our trailer, stopping for a highly mediocre restaurant dinner, and got back here at 9:40 p.m. The last hour or so it was dark. We were exhausted, but glad we had made the effort, because since then (2 days) the weather has been back to its typical haze.

Yesterday, Friday, 8/12, we retraced our drive of the day before, then continued on around the Cabot Trail through Cheticamp, the Margaree Valley, and Baddeck. Took some pictures, but not many of distant scenes. Stopped in a few gift shops in Cheticamp, where they specialize in hooked rugs, mats, coasters, etc. The ladies (200+) of the area make them from their own home-dyed wool each winter. Several shops in the area (one a co-op) sell them to the tourists. When we were here 22 years ago the women had little stands all along the road peddling their work, but now it's all done through a few stores. Some of the work is quite original and artistic. Most of it is in the traditional designs of the area. I think the quality of workmanship (workwomanship?) is higher than when each woman peddled her own wares beside the road. It has to be when it's all laid out together in a store. Prices are high, but it still works out to a pretty low wage on an hourly basis. Still, it must be nice to be paid for the pick-up work one does on a cold winter day.

We skipped the attractions in and around Baddeck--will visit them on our way tomorrow. Still, it was 5:30 when we got back to the trailer.

Interesting item on the road (Cabot Trail) Thurs. afternoon: a rock no more than six inches in diameter with an orange rubber traffic cone beside it. The rock obviously fell off the cliff, but why the cone? Why didn't the person who placed the cone there simply remove the rock? Perhaps he doesn't belong to the right union! (We were told there are Newfie jokes in Canada similar to Polish jokes at home. But this is Nova Scotia, not Newfoundland. We're still scratching our heads.) Both the rock and the cone were gone when we drove the same stretch of road Friday. They might even have been gone Thurs. night, but it was dark then.

Yesterday morning we saw a wildlife warden (as we discovered later) and a couple of men with binoculars head for the beach near our trailer while we were eating breakfast. While Jim did the dishes (as he always does, bless him), I wandered out to the beach and discovered they were trying

to rescue an adult Bald Eagle with an injured wing. It flew short distances, and lit on the water, then flapped out onto the shore 50 feet away. I rushed back to get Jim, but the bird had been captured and caged before he could get any photos. The bird looked as though its wing wasn't too badly injured. The ranger speculated it might have collided with a power line. Gunshot wounds are rare around here, even in the hunting season.

Sun. evening, Aug. 14
Whycocomagh, NS

Pronunciation of town: accent on first "co", "g" silent, short "o" in both "co's."

We did very little yesterday except sit around and relax. Probably a good idea after the hectic schedule of the past few days. Weather was cool and mostly overcast with a good breeze off Bay of St Ann's. What a relief. It started to rain around 9:00 p.m., rained off and on most of the night--fairly hard at times. Today it ranged from partly to mostly cloudy. This morning there were beautiful puffy clouds, but later on a very high thin overcast replaced the blue sky as a backdrop for the puffy clouds. Jim took a few nice scenic pictures this morning.

We drove only about 1 1/2 hours today to Whycocomagh (Glenview Camp), where we have the end site, with a view out over an arm of Bras d'Or (the huge inlet which Cape Breton Island surrounds) in the distance. The foreground isn't so nice--the highway right below us and a small concrete-making plant across it. We liked this site better than the side of another trailer, though.

Along the way we stopped in Baddeck and spent a couple of hours at the Alexander Graham Bell Museum there. Bell spent many summers in Baddeck and performed experiments with aircraft and hydrofoils on Bras d'Or, using the fortune he earned from his earlier invention, the telephone, to finance the research and a lovely home (still in Bell's heirs' hands). The museum has been much enlarged since Mother and I were here in 1977, and I think it must have used the land on which the motel where we stayed last time was situated. I couldn't find it. No loss; we hated it.

After we had unhooked the truck at the campground and rested a while, we decided to see if we could find any Bald Eagles to photograph. The ranger who captured the eagle the other day had told us they nest all along the River Denys near here and should still be feeding recently fledged young in the area. We had some trouble finding the area because there are lots more roads on the land than on the map, and none are numbered. The junctions just point which direction to turn to find various villages, many of which were not on the map!

We never found any eagles, but we did find the River Denys (both the river and the town!) We also found towns called River Denys Mountain, West Bay road, Blues Mills, and River Inhabitants. Two days ago we went through towns called Middle River, Upper Middle River, and Lower Middle River.

Sun. afternoon, Aug. 21.
Bridgewater, NS

Can another entire week have passed since I last wrote up our travels? Well, here goes.

Monday, 8/15 was cloudy with intermittent light rain, but no problem. We just drove all day back to the Truro area. Along the way I bought blueberries for another pie. This time we stayed at Playland Camping Park near Truro, arriving around 1:00. Just after we finished unhooking the truck and trailer and hooking up the E and W (no S here), the sky opened up and it really rained hard for an hour or so.

There was to be a tidal bore at 2:58, but we didn't care to see it in the rain. But then the rain quit at about 2:30, so I said, "Let's go see it." I underestimated the time to drive to the site, but we just made it. I let Jim out with his camera and went to find a parking place. Just as I was walking up to the river bank, I looked downstream, and there it was--a good 2.5 to 3 ft high wave which was the tide rushing up the river, surmounting the trickle of water flowing downstream. Jim, of course,

photographed it while perched precariously on some rock and leaning over the river bed.

Rest of day spent grocery-shopping and pie-baking.

Tuesday, 8/16, dawned cloudy and remained so all day. No rain, though, and the air wasn't hazy. We drove slowly along the south shore of the Bay of Fundy and its awesome expanses of shiny red mud at low tide. Jim didn't take very many pictures because of the overcast sky and also because the roads had no shoulder. With the trailer it's especially hard to stop.

We ended up at Smith Cove Campground near Digby. We elected to take an EW site with view of the Bay of Fundy, rather than an EWS site behind a row of trees. Our view was of a cove, and we were part way out a little point, so at high tide the water's edge was to the extreme left outside our dinette window, and at low tide it was to the extreme right, ca. 200 yards away from the high tide line. Tides here are about 30 feet, not as high as farther up the Bay. At low tide there were birds feeding on the mud--Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls, Willets, Semipalmated Sandpipers and Plovers, and Crows. Numbers not particularly large.

Wed., 8/17, dawned drizzly, and the drizzle lasted all morning. So we elected to drive back along the road to Annapolis Royal and visit the various attractions in this historical English town:

(1) Annapolis River Tidal Generating Station, a pilot project to use the power of the incoming and outgoing tide for power generation. They claim to have considered the ecological balance of the estuary that the tides flood, but I wonder what the effect would be if all the tidal river mouths were harnessed.

(2) Fort Anne National Historic Park. Built as a French fort in 1635, seized by the British in 1710 and manned by them until 1854.

(3) The Habitation--Port-Royal National Historic Park. Reconstructed on the original site is the earliest permanent settlement north of Florida (1605). It was French. A British expedition from Jamestown, Virginia, destroyed it in 1613 while its inhabitants were away. The Canadian government researched and built this replica in 1939.

(4) Annapolis Royal Historic Gardens. Shows garden styles over the past several centuries. Particularly interesting to me was the history of roses section. Placcards explained how our modern roses came about by successive hybridizations of European roses with Chinese ones.

(5) St. George St. in downtown Annapolis Royal has buildings, both new and old, in the 18th century style. Bought some books in a store there, including a History of Canada, which Jim is now reading. We both feel the need to place all these historic sites we've been visiting, and the news we're hearing on TV about governmental activities, in historic perspective.

Thursday, 8/18, we drove out Digby Neck, a narrow peninsula which extends farther west than any other land in NS, diverging gradually from the coast as it goes out. Two narrow channels separate the mainland of the peninsula from two islands, Long I. and Brier I. The first is Petit Passage, the second Grand Passage. Ferries cross each passage (\$1.00 round trip or as the Canadians say, "\$1.00 return.") The day was glorious--cool, crisp, clear with puffy clouds. The scenes of boats on the mud at low tide, fishing villages, craggy coastline, lighthouses, etc., were more than Jim could resist. I don't know how much film he exposed.

The ferries carry 17 and 12 cars, respectively. the smaller one plows through the water and rides so low that spray rained down on the decks and our truck. The decks were awash with three inches of water, which flowed out the sides. Jim just leaped clear of the wash in time, but spent the 5 to 10 min crossing on a little round rod used to keep vehicle tires from hitting the railing of the boat. I dashed back to the truck and got there just in time. On the return trip we prudently remained in the truck.

The tidal currents in Petit and Grand passages are fierce, as the waters enter and leave the Bay of Fundy and St. Mary's Bay at unequal rates. (St. Mary's Bay is between the Digby Neck plus two islands and the mainland of NS.) the ferries have two propellers each and each can be rotated in any direction to provide thrust forward, backward, or to either side.

Wednesday evening we went into Digby and had dinner at a nice seafood restaurant. Jim had to eat Digby scallops in Digby, which bills itself as the Scallop Capital of North America. Scallops are

Jim's very favorite seafood.

Friday, 8/19, we continued on around Nova Scotia. The coast road passes through one fishing village after another, some French, some English. Settlement is almost continuous here and elsewhere around the coast of NS. The interior is practically a wilderness with hardly any roads. Some logging for pulpwood is done, but the trees seem pretty scrawny, so I doubt much lumber for housing is obtained.

We especially enjoyed passing a drydock where fishing vessels of all sizes were being renovated.

Along the road all the way to Yarmouth (pronounced "Yarmit" by a French-speaking gas station owner) we played leapfrog with a caravan of 46 (we counted them) Airstream trailers. These folks were on a conducted tour of NS. We had seen them pulling into a city parking lot in Annapolis Royal and parking as close together as they could be squeezed. No hookups either. We decided we'd never want to travel that way. In fact Jim dubbed the procession the "silver horde." According to a gift shop proprietor I talked with yesterday, this was the second caravan of them. The first had passed through the area a week earlier. They straggle down the road, stopping wherever they please for sightseeing. We saw them outside churches, museums, gift shops, restaurants, etc., all along the road. Thank goodness we were also pulling a trailer and didn't want to pass them on the two-lane road.

We went beyond Yarmouth about fifty miles to the only campground (Derrydown Camp in the village of Forbes Pt.) along the southwest shore for many miles. It was on a side road off a secondary road and practically empty. E and W only, but we dumped our sink water in the bushes. The first night in that campground there were two other parties there, the 2nd night three different ones, one of which arrived at midnight, but were very quiet. It was pleasant to have several sites between parties for a change. Not a particularly scenic area, being surrounded by spruce bog (and mosquitos) and far from any cities. But very quiet.

I baked a gooseberry pie from some berries I'd purchased at the farmers market in Annapolis Royal. Didn't have a recipe, but guessed based on how I treated blueberries. I used more sugar (1 3/4 cup instead of 1 1/2), but the same amount (2 1/2 tbsp) of cornstarch. (I really must buy some tapioca!) The pie came out very runny, but about right in sweetness.

Sat., 8/18, we took a day trip around the area. First we visited the Pubnicos ("P." hereinafter), driving north through P. Beach, Lower East P., Middle East P., East P., to P. From there we went south on a peninsula to West P., Middle West P, ending at Lower West P. Whew!

At the latter village we found some Ruddy Turnstones (breeding plumage) and Semipalmated Sandpipers, which were feeding on the shore just below the outfall pipe of a fish-processing plant, which must release nutrient-rich water. These birds were so intent on their feeding that they came right back after we frightened them away initially. Jim took lots of pictures, and I recorded them at very close range. There were rocks and tiny tide pools, so we even sat down comfortably while we were doing it. [Note added six years later: I'll never forget the name of that town after writing "Lwr. W. Pubnico" on the mounts of all those slides.] [Even later (2021). And I never did. the slides of both species are the best we have of either.]

The next day was glorious and clear, as it has been for the past several days, so we drove through several other fishing villages, taking pictures wherever our fancy struck. In the process we completed our tour of Nova Scotia's extremities by visiting Cape Sable Island, the southernmost place. The others were:

Easternmost: Cape Breton, where we met Charlie Burke.

Northernmost: Cape North on Cabot Trail.

Westernmost: Brier Island, off tip of Digby Neck.

The day got sort of brassy toward the end, so no pictures at Cape Sable I.

We've met some lovely people the last few days (All Canadians have been lovely, making our trip lots of fun.) They seemed to go out of their way to be friendly and conversational. Here are a few from the past couple of days:

(1) While I was in a fish market, a man walked across the street to strike up a conversation with Jim. He's a French Canadian from the area, but a naturalized U.S. citizen who worked in Conn. before retirement. Now spends 9 months in NS and three months either in Mexico or Spain (where it's cheap).

(2) Farther down the road we stopped to use our bathroom (nice to carry our own restroom). A passing Airstream driver told Jim his tail lights weren't working right, so he walked back and forth re-installing the bulbs. (They're rather idiosyncratically installed on the trailer!) A lady came out of a house nearby to see if we were having trouble. Had a nice chat with her.

(3) Beyond Yarmouth about 20 miles, we stopped for gas, and the owner of the station (Paul) came out to chat. (A boy had pumped the gas.) He turned out to be an ebullient one-man "tourist information center." He told us to be sure to visit the West Pubnicos, but "They sure talk funny down there." This coming from a man with a thick French accent made me laugh. But he was right. When we were at the end of the road where the sandpipers were, the first man we spoke to was almost incomprehensible. Jim had the experience of dealing with him, while I sat in the truck and listened. Jim's bewildered facial expression as he had to ask the poor man to repeat everything he said was priceless.

(4) We were the phenomenon of the day at the dock where the sandpipers were in Lower West Pubnico. Nearly every car (or truck) coming and going pulled over and stared at us as we recorded and photographed the birds. No doubt our California license caused some amazement, too. Before I joined Jim to record, a man pulled up who didn't talk as funny as the first one. He was a fisherman and answered a lot of questions I'd been having about the area and fishing, etc. I had a nice long chat with him. When I told him we were interested in birds, he pointed to an island just discernable offshore and said in June the (Common) Eiders nest all over the island. He and his family like to go out there for a picnic BBQ and watch the birds. They don't use them in any way. He seemed to really know the seabirds--cormorants, razorbills, puffins, etc. Said Gannets pass through in April on their way to Bonaventur I. Not seen in fall, though.

Today, 8/21, we drove along the south shore toward Halifax, but as usual didn't get very far. Weather again beautiful. This time there was an evanescent morning fog which added a different dimension to Jim's photos--sun breaking through fog, layers of fog on the water, etc. We really saw some lovely scenery. By mid-afternoon, when we stopped here in Bridgewater, the sky had become overcast. We've had a bit of rain while I've been writing this. TV says it'll be clear by morning and clear through Wed. Weather is cool all over now, so we won't dread leaving the coast. *We're tired of heat!*

Lots of birds in our campground--especially Blue Jays, Common Grackles and "Slate-colored" Juncos. Hope Jim can get pictures of the latter. They've already found the birdseed. Perhaps tomorrow then the rain is over.

Camp: Overhill Pines Campground. It's surrounded by pines, but on Oakhill Rd. I think the pines are the reason for the birds. We've always done well here in the east where we've had pines: Kirkland Lake and Morrisburg, ON, come to mind.

Sun., Aug. 28

Timberlands Camp, Trenton, ME
(between Ellsworth and Bar Harbor)

Our activities the past several days have been dictated by one fact: Jim discovered he was running out of film! Prices in Canada are outrageous--at least \$5.00 per roll higher than in the U.S. He called his favorite discount store in New York, but they didn't have any rush private shipping company that delivered to Canada, and we didn't want to trust the notoriously inefficient Canada Post. They just started their third strike in a little over a year and are pretty bad between strikes.

On Mon., 8/22, we drove around the point and back to Lunenburg. Beautiful scenery all the way. At Lunenburg we spent a couple of hours in the Fisheries Museum, housed in an old fish-

packing plant. It has an aquarium showing commercially harvested fish, displays on boats and boat-building, etc.

We ate lunch in their restaurant and watched 4 or 5 Ospreys diving in the bay right outside the window. Must have been a family group. Can't recall ever seeing so many that close together before. They looked so beautiful against the blue sky dotted with puffy clouds. There was an emerald green lawn on the far side of the bay (golf course?), and the blue water sparkled.

Unfortunately the lunch wasn't so nice. I had fish in doughy batter with soggy french fries. Jim had strange-tasting German sausage, but with delicious hot cole (kohl) slaw.

After lunch we returned to the campground, and Jim photographed Blue Jays and Juncos the rest of the afternoon. The next day, 8/23, we stayed around the camp. Jim did more photography and I found a nice nature trail through the woods. While alone I saw a Black-throated Green Warbler, several Red-breasted Nuthatches, and a family group of Ovenbirds, all at close range. In fact, one Nuthatch came in so close to my *pishing* that I thought it was going to alight on my shoulder. It perched only four feet over my head and called its little tin-horn call more rapidly than I've ever heard it. Finally it swooped down just in front of my nose and lit again ten feet away and continued to call until I took pity on it and ceased *pishing*. Unfortunately when I brought Jim back later, nothing would come close.

We left Bridgewater Wed., Aug. 23, and drove a little closer to Halifax (Wayside Camping Park in Glen Margaret). After lunch in a restaurant nearby we drove down the shore of St. Margaret's Bay to Peggy's Cove, a famous picturesque fishing village in a postage-stamp-sized cove surrounded by rocks and stunted wind-twisted trees. The place appears in nearly every Canadian calendar and is truly lovely--if you can overlook the 1000 or more tourists who swarm over it every day. To their credit, the government has designated the area a protected zone and prevented continued development in the area, but there are gift shops aplenty, and bus tours and cars in parking lots at the entrance to the town and to the lighthouse. The latter, incidentally, is no longer used for its original purpose. It has become "the only post office in Canada in a lighthouse." But men do fish from the village as always. I wonder how they feel being subject daily to the idiotic utterances of tourists such as the woman who instructed her husband photographing a scene with a gull in the foreground, "Be sure to get that duck in the picture." Or the man who authoritatively pointed out a coot to his pre-school son and said, "That is a White-billed Duck."

Anyway, Jim took a fair number of pictures from angles which showed only the fishing activities. Most were with his large format camera, for which he still has plenty of film. He's running out of 35-mm only.

After that, we drove into Halifax, about 30 miles away and braved the traffic trying to find reasonably priced film. The big camera store downtown offered no discount for quantity purchase, so was out of the question. A discount department store on the edge of town was somewhat less. Jim would have bought enough film to tide him over until we got back to the U.S., but it all included processing--in Canada! That meant two trips through the uncertainties of Canada Post, to which he would never trust his precious photos. (He's been saving all the film he's exposed in Canada to make here in the U.S.)

So we decided to skip the Fundy Park and Hopewell Cape area of New Brunswick and return posthaste (not Canada Post-haste!) to the U.S. the weather supported that decision, for it turned cloudy and rainy 8/25 and after a couple of days of rain has been foggy ever since, with only a couple of hours of sun some afternoons.

On Thurs., 8/25, we left the Halifax area and drove north to Truro. We got there only 45 minutes before the tidal bore, so decided to try again for a sunny shot of it. The sun seemed to be almost breaking through. It was not to be, but Jim did photograph it again in bright overcast conditions.

We ate an early lunch in the Pallisers Restaurant. Unfortunately it wasn't nearly so good as before: overcooked poached halibut and lousy service.

After that we drove as far as we could, ending up in Lepreau, New Brunswick (Cherry Tree

Trailer Park) between St. John and the U.S. border. It rained most of the drive and most of the night.

The morning of Fri., Aug. 26, was foggy, but not so that it hampered driving. We headed for the Maine border. (Customs was a breeze.) Drove to Ellsworth, which isn't too far from Acadia National Park. Jim headed for a phone right away and ordered film from New York. It should arrive Tues--two working days delivery. We're in a very nice site in a rather full campground. But people are quiet and it's got lovely tall trees. Some sites are rather crowded, but ours is quite spacious and on the end of the row. So we look out across the campground perimeter road to some trees and a bit of meadow.

Friday afternoon I spent \$82 in a U.S. grocery store stocking up on the staples I wouldn't buy in Canada, as well as some U.S. meat. Canadian meat is really awful. There I mostly bought chicken and hamburger. Steaks, pork, and lamb are all very expensive and poor quality. (Lamb is OK, I guess, but Nova Scotia lamb was about twice as expensive as frozen New Zealand lamb.) It's almost impossible to find a steak or a pork chop more than 1/2 inch thick.

Yesterday (Sat., 8/27) I spent the morning at the Ellsworth laundromat. (The laundry in the campground has only cold water.) To my disgust, one of the three machines refused to spin after the final rinse. The attendant gave me \$1.00 to cover it, but the only thing I could do was stick the stuff in another machine and wait through the entire cycle again. These commercial washers can't be advanced by hand like a home washer can.

The afternoon we spent resting--doing embroidery (me), playing Ms Pacman (Jim), and watching PBS on TV. You can't believe how starved we've been for good old PBS. We watched the station all afternoon and evening, turning it down only for pledge breaks and the hour devoted to Dr. Who (a kids' science fiction show). The CBC (Canadian) has some good good shows, especially the concert series they've been doing on Tues. nights. But most of their fare is either U.S. drama shows (action-adventure or sitcom) or Canadian-made look-alikes. The news programs there are probably better than most U.S. local news shows. Less emphasis on sensational stories. National news is comparable to that in the U.S. and includes an amazing amount of U.S. news. For example, we heard in-depth analysis of the Dan Quayle controversy, with a panel of U.S. experts, on the morning program which resembles NBC's Today. It's too bad U.S. television doesn't cover Canadian news as well.

Friday night, our first one back in the U.S., we headed for a U.S. restaurant. We weren't disappointed. Had a wonderful prime rib dinner. Why is Canadian food so poor and New England food so good? We found Canadian food usually OK if we stuck to fresh seafood simply-prepared. But everything else was pretty poor--and inevitably accompanied by overcooked diced carrots!

Last night we ate some left-over short-ribs that I'd had in the refrigerator. But tonight again--and as long as we're in New England and close to restaurants--we're going to eat out. (From previous travels throughout the U.S., I've found restaurants in New England to be better than in any other section of the country.) We're going to try a large Chinese place I spotted. It looks very popular.

This morning (8/28) it was foggy again, so we decided we didn't really want to see Acadia National Park under those conditions. Besides it's Sunday and probably crowded. I had spotted a nature center, Birdsacre, only a couple of miles away. So we decided to check it out. It's a rehabilitation center, old house, bird feeders, several acres of forest with nature trails. A struggling operation, as all such private places are, but doing the best they can. They have quite a number of unreleasable raptors (hawks: Broad-winged, Red-tailed, Kestrel. Owls: Great Horned, Barred). Also a few passerines. Had a nice chat with the man in charge. His attitude about bird rehabilitation (realistic) was much the same as ours.

Jim took photos of an Evening Grosbeak which had been released after rehabilitation, but refused to leave. Also of a Downy Woodpecker, which came to the suet feeder. We came back to the trailer for lunch. Jim has gone back there again, while I stayed here to write this.

A bit of Nova Scotia miscellany that I collected and wrote down in my field notebook as we drove along:

More town and village names:

Whynott Settlement

Pockwock

Pugwash

Head of St. Margaret's Bay

Big Lots

Lower Sackville (one in New Brunswick, too.)

Road signs:

Blind Crest (before every hill)

Flying Stones

Yard ornaments are everywhere. A particularly popular item is a little black boy holding a fishing rod. Sometimes he's white, but usually black. I wonder what U.S. blacks would think of it. Other popular items: rear exposure of a bloomed fat woman stooped over, 3 huge butterflies on the side of the house.

Jim just returned all exhilarated from his afternoon's efforts. Got pictures of Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, Black-capped Chickadee, Evening Grosbeak.

Mon. Sept. 5 (Labor Day)

Charlotte, VT

I guess it's high time I discussed Louise, a guest who has been with us for nearly a month. Jim called her Charlotte for a long time, but I told him that was trite.

Louise is a spider who has been with us either from Truro or from Catalone near Louisbourg, Nova Scotia--probably the latter. (I suggested the name Louise for Louisbourg, rather than Charlotte from *Charlotte's Web*.) She spins her web under the rigid awning which folds up and down over our front trailer window. When we fold it down to travel, she rides along in a little space between the awning and the window. Every morning when we wake up in a new spot, there's her web in exactly the same place.

The past week or so Jim has really become attached to her. He's forever catching flies alive in his fist, wrapping them in Kleenex, paper sack, etc., and bringing them home to Louise. He then releases them and shoos them toward her web. She immediately rushes down and drags them back to her lair under the edge of the awning. Sometimes she merely encapsulates them in place.

It's become sort of a challenge to see how long she can be kept alive. I suppose she'll expire when we encounter some extremely hot weather on our way west, but knowing Jim, he'll probably try to catch her and transport her in a cool jar in the truck if the weather gets hot. He's already talking about where in the back yard to release her when we get home.

To change the subject back to our travels:

We remained in Ellsworth until Wed. The film didn't arrive Tues., as expected. Jim called the N.Y. store and got some incomprehensible reason--something about a contradictory address. Anyway, they hadn't even mailed it Friday! Fortunately it was early enough in the day that next-day UPS delivery was possible. Even with that hefty fee, it made the film less expensive than if we'd bought it locally. In fact, it worked out to only a little more money than Maine sales tax would have been.

Our time in Ellsworth was spent either in the trailer while it was foggy or it rained (hard because a deteriorating hurricane met a cold front) or over at Birdsacre. It cleared off Tues., so, after not getting the film in the morning, we decided to drive down to Acadia National Park on Mt. Desert (pronounced "dessert" with accent on last syllable) Island. It was just as I expected--absolutely mobbed with people. The east has so few national parks that what I call the "national park syndrome" is especially virulent: People go someplace not because it's intrinsically any nicer than some other

nearby place, but simply because it's been designated a national park.

Anyway, every rock on that "stern and rockbound coast" seemed to have people crawling all over it. We drove the loop road and to the top of Cadillac Mtn., but Jim took only a few pictures--of a few inaccessible coastal rocks and from the mountain top, places without people in them. Cadillac Mountain is the highest coastal mountain on the Atlantic coast north of Brazil! I forget the elevation, but it's not extremely high. (1530 ft--looked it up later)

The film arrived Wed., 8/31, at 11:00, so we left Ellsworth shortly thereafter. Had a late lunch in Skowhegan at a downtown restaurant recommended by AAA. We got there just a few minutes before 2:00, when they closed for three hours. They had a luncheon buffet, which still looked very nice at that late hour. so we ate a combination lunch-dinner. It was excellent! Spent the night at Stony Brook Recreation Campground, Hanover, ME. Had a site which was an alcove in a dense coniferous forest. Even overhead it was totally shaded. Very pretty, but I'd not have liked it for a long stay. It was too dark.

Thurs., 9/1, we drove only a short distance--into New Hampshire and the scenic White Mountains. I had picked a campground near Franconia, but it had sites out in the open on a lawn. They were nice enough to recommend another campground back in Bethlehem, called Apple Hill Camp. There we found a nice spacious site under some pine trees.

It was a lovely day again--blue sky and puffy clouds, so we drove down into Franconia Notch. I thought Jim had to pay his respects to The Profile, alias Old Man of the Mountain or Great Stone Face of Nathaniel Hawthorne fame. (Jim had never heard of it, though. I guess he hadn't read the story in high school, as I did.)

After that we took the gondola lift to the top of Cannon (pronounced Canaan with the first "a" long.) Mountain. It was getting a trifle hazy, but we still had a lovely view all around at the first true mountains we've seen since we left New Mexico. It made me a bit homesick for the west.

Bethlehem is a town I remember well from our 1977 trip, for Mother and I stayed just west of there at Baker Brook Lodge. (It's still there, but no longer listed in AAA. Remember the "crooked little house" we had, Mother? And our struggles in the area trying to find block ice for the ice chest? All they had were "little blocks," which we knew as ice cubes.) When we were there in mid-summer, Orthodox Jews from New York City, with their frock coats, beards and long hair, were all over town. There are several very old hotels there which cater to their strict Kosher laws. This time we saw none of these people, and the hotels seem to be all closed. I guess the season is over.

Friday we set out and drove straight for the Burlington, Vt., area. It was the start of the Labor Day weekend, and, although we had called ahead for a reservation--the only time all summer we've done so--we wanted to be able to select a nice site to wait out the long week-end. We were amply rewarded and are situated way back in a lovely maple grove. Even with the closest sites occupied, we're hardly aware we have neighbors. It's only EW. The EWS sites were all reserved, but we wouldn't have wanted one of them anyway. They were too close together and some were in the middle of a lawn. (The Old Lantern Campground in Charlotte, Vt.--accent on last syllable of "Charlotte.")

Birds are thinning out. Only a few summer visitors remain. Here in our grove the birds of both kinds (permanent and summer) are pretty wild. A few times we've seen Blue Jays at our food, but mostly it's chipmunks that come.

Saturday we spent six hours at the Shelburne Museum, perhaps the largest collection in existence of American arts (some fine and much folk) and crafts. We returned Sunday for five more hours. Fortunately the tickets are good for two days. I loved the needle arts building, especially its large collection of quilts. They display them like the pages of a book, in huge vertical racks which can be swung around on an axle. Each quilt is behind heavy plastic so hands don't touch it, but the detail of it is clearly visible from up close. Or one can step back and get the overall effect. I must have spent a couple of hours just examining them.

Jim was most taken by the 8-minute 9-projector multi-image slide show, which they have to introduce people to the place. It's extremely well done. Uses many of the special techniques of the

craft in a most effective and unobtrusive way. (We've seen slide shows elsewhere where the techniques seemed like gimmicks used for their "gee-whiz" effect, rather than their effectiveness in conveying a message.) He must have watched that show 8 times. I saw it 3 times.

Shelburne Museum is housed in a collection of buildings, mostly old and brought to the site from around New England. Some are decorated as they might have been when built. Others house collections: tools, cigar store indians, dolls, dishes, hunting trophies, circus posters, painting and sculpture, buggies and sleighs, etc., etc. Among the more novel structures are a two-lane covered bridge and a very large Lake Champlain excursion boat--the latter transported intact two miles over land. Also a long U-shaped building that houses a 500-foot-long circus parade carved in wood.

No one should visit this part of the country without visiting the Shelburne Museum--and allowing two days for the visit!

It rained last night, but is supposed to clear by noon. We'd like to drive around some Vt. back roads, so hope it does.

Sat. a.m., Sept. 10

Lewiston, NY (Niagara Falls area)

Louise has now been supplemented by another pet. I found a Chinese mantid (aka praying mantis) under our trailer steps on Thurs. when I folded them up. Jim had to bring it along to photograph. This he did yesterday. Now he's decided to take it home to eat aphids off the orange trees!

We stayed Mon. night (9/5) in the Burlington area (Charlotte). That afternoon after the rain stopped, we took a drive around the countryside looking for a farm selling maple syrup. Found only one and their price was about the same as the best store we've found. Also, it was grade A, and I've decided to buy lower, and more maply-flavored, grades. So I bought all I wanted at a Dakin Farms store not far south of Charlotte.

Tues., 9/6, we spent driving across the lovely Adirondacks with just a hint of fall color on the trees. More color than we've seen elsewhere, though. Beautiful lakes and puffy clouds in the morning, but became nearly all cloudy in the afternoon. That's a common situation even over land here. The TV weatherman one night explained it as he showed a satellite map of land and Great Lakes: The land heats up during the day, while the lake does not. So the warm, moist air over land rises more than that over water. This moist air reaches the cool upper atmosphere and cools, its moisture condensing as clouds. (Usually these clouds don't produce rain.)

We ended up in Rome, NY, at a KOA half-way between Rome and Verona. Had a lovely site way in the back surrounded by pines and other trees.

Jim inquired in the KOA office about a hobby shop selling wood-working tools. (He needs some finer tools than those in the set he bought in Arkansas.) They knew of none, but did tell him he ought to visit the Harden Furniture Factory in McConnellsville about 15 miles away. They have tours every Wed. morning, so we went there the next day.

It was a most interesting tour. They make excellent furniture, mostly from cherry wood grown in their own forests. We saw the whole operation. Computers take all the wood from individually tagged logs to finished product. They make all kinds of furniture, including upholstered sofas and chairs, as well as dining room living room, and bedroom sets--also office desks. All very good--and very expensive.

Some of the machinery was quite elaborate. One that fascinated me carves designs in the wood. A man directs a little head through the grooves of the design on a metal template. His hand-directed head is connected to about 20 more, which are grinding the design into 20 pieces of wood.

They make up several hundred of a particular item, leaving the wood unfinished. Then they store it in the attic until orders come in. Then they stain and upholster it to the customer's wishes.

That afternoon we drove around trying to find a lumber yard selling pieces of hardwood. After several mis-interpreted (or mis-heard) directions, we found a place. Jim bought several small

bundles of cherry, maple and poplar (the latter possibly a mistake) to carve.

Had good lunch (Table d' Hote Restaurant in Rome) and dinner (Joel's Steak House in Verona) at places recommended by KOA.

Thurs. we spent the morning at Erie Canal Village, a collection of mid-19th century buildings along the old Erie Canal. The buildings were similar to others we've seen, but I particularly wanted to learn more about the canal. It was built in the 1820's and ran from Albany to Buffalo. An engineering marvel with the tools of that era: small hand plows, picks and shovels were about it. It was all through land--not across lakes--so the tow path for horses could be right along-side.

After the steam engine was developed, so ships could go across lakes, the N.Y. State Barge Canal (sometimes called the Erie Barge Canal) was built on a slightly different route. The latter is still used for barges--none very large. We saw both canals. The old Erie is mostly grown over now, although there are hiking trails (state park land) along its banks.

Thurs. afternoon we had a long drive (210 mi) the rest of the way across N.Y. to the Niagara Falls area (KOA in Lewiston). The country is so pretty--farms, many small fields and orchards (apple, peach, plum, etc.) The entire road was lined with countless produce stands. I bought peaches, melons, tomatoes, broccoli, cucumbers, etc.

Yesterday, 9/9, we spent seeing Niagara Falls. Unfortunately the weather was very gray and hazy, so the pictures will be uninteresting. We walked all around Goat Island, between the American and Canadian (horseshoe) falls and saw both falls from their brinks. After that we drove across to the Canadian side, but didn't park and walk to the edge there. They wanted \$5.00 (ca. \$4.25 American) to park, and there were mobs of people around.

The Canadian side has gotten blatantly commercial since 1952, when Mother and I were taken there by her half-brother Delbert and his wife Luella from Buffalo, with numerous high-rise hotels and high towers with restaurants, etc., on top. The worst one is huge and has KODAK emblazoned on it in enormous letters. We were turned off by all the wax museums, amusement parks, helicopter rides, etc., etc., designed to extract dollars from tourists. The falls are worth seeing, though, and Goat Island State Park in N.Y. was lovely.

Morning, Sept. 15 Ogallala, Neb.

Since I last wrote, we've moved west fairly rapidly, spending most of our days driving.

We were fortunate to start out on the Buffalo-to-Chicago megalopolis on a Sat. morning, so had a minimum of traffic. Sat., 9/10, we spent the night in Trav-L-Park, Milan, Ohio. It was right near the freeway, so we wondered if the traffic noise would bother us. We needn't have worried about that, for a seed-drying plant drowned out the freeway. The roar was incessant--reminded me of the tunnels at Cal-Compack Foods chili dehydrators. (That was my father's business.)

Sunday we continued west on the turnpike, but got off around noon and drove across the southern edge of Michigan, then across just south of Chicago. We ended up at KOA, La Salle-Peru, Ill., about half-way across the state. It was very nice--about two miles off the freeway. Lots of beautiful old oak trees. A brook meanders through the park, and we had a site in a U in the brook's path.

The drought was very evident in Ohio and Indiana. The corn was barely two feet high and all shriveled up. This was especially apparent when compared with what we've been seeing more recently in Iowa and eastern Nebraska. They had more rain there and can do some irrigation--mined water, of course. Here it is six feet high.

Mon., 9/12, was another driving day, as we headed for Des Moines, Iowa. Stayed in Timberline Camp, just west of the city, for two nights.

Spent all day Tues., 9/13., at Living History Farms. I had visited it on a spring trip in 1983 with Mother, but wanted to see it during harvest time. There they have reproduced an 1850, 1900, and today/tomorrow farm. Farm methods of these periods are demonstrated. There is also a little 1875

town. I could go on and on about the place. Even Jim, who is getting a bit jaded about collections of old buildings, found it interesting to directly compare various periods of life.

The drought affected the demonstration farms, too, especially the 1850 people's. These were people who had just arrived in the area and were trying to scrape a living out of a new land. Corn crop nearly failed. Only apples did well. Vegetable garden very poor. Creek nearly dry. If the people demonstrating the farming life truly had to live there, they would very likely have returned to where they came from in the east for the winter--if they could afford it--we were told. I suspect that they could not have afforded it and that Father would have gone off alone to try to get work and send money home to buy food.

The farm of today/tomorrow was not finished in 1983, so was all new to me. The main attraction there is a partly-underground house, which attempts to use solar energy to heat and cool the place. There's a deep pool of water to absorb the summer's heat and store it for winter. It's actually a sequence of shallow pools one above the other, with barriers between them. Each successive one has a higher concentration of salt (NaCl) to increase the boiling point. That plus the hydrostatic pressure of the water above it, permits temperatures to get quite high.

They also have a wind generator for electricity, which doesn't work very well--even when the wind blows hard enough, which it usually doesn't.

I didn't like that house. It was clammy and smelled musty. Only had windows on the south. I like to see out.

There was also a demonstration garden of all the grain crops grown in the mid-west today, along with some of their ancestors--especially ancestral corn. Very interesting. Now we can recognize some of the crops as we drive along the highway--especially sorghum and milo.

Tues., Sept. 20

Home

I didn't finish getting caught up last time I wrote, so had better pick up where I left off before I forget everything.

We left Des Moines Wed., 9/14, and drove all day, ending up in Streeter City Park, Aurora, Iowa. It's not far from Grand Island. There was no charge for camping there, and the place had E plus a dump station. One problem, though: the site looked firm and hard, but turned out to be soft and muddy. We thought we had the truck on firm grassy sod, even though the trailer was in the mud. But the next morning we barely got the truck tires free. Had to sacrifice two small rugs (grass-look carpeting, no great loss) that we use to wipe our feet on. Even then it was touch and go. We were about to give up and seek help when our last effort of backing up six inches, then driving forward, did the job, despite much wheel spinning.

I selected Aurora because there's a museum, Plainsman Museum, which sounded interesting (starred in AAA book). It was very nice, and especially so for such a small community. Amazingly large. Had reconstructed and brought-in buildings, all enclosed in a larger building. All furnished as they would have been in the 19th century.

The highlight of the place for me was a special (temporary) showing of quilts--all made by a *man* who is now 89 years old. He started in the 1930's when he saw his wife quilting a top her mother had made. He complained that the edges of the pieces did not come together precisely. She retorted, "If you think it's so easy, do it." So he did.

He's an engineer and soon did all his quilts, both piecing and quilting, on an old treadle sewing machine. The corners *do* match precisely. I've never seen such precision. And his designs were marvels of engineering--very intricate with odd angles, etc. His colors were sometimes a bit strange and not as pleasing as some quilts I've seen other people do. Also, I really don't like the look of a machine-quilted quilt. (I'm an all-hand-work purist.) But the geometry was what made this man's quilts so amazing. He's even written a book on his methods. Some sections from it were posted on the bulletin board, and they looked highly competent. I wish I remembered the man's name. Could

be Eric Haight but I'm not sure. [Decades later: Googling "Eric Haight quilts" produced nothing.]

Drove all afternoon and ended up in Ogallala, Neb., at Meyer's Camping Park. Countryside beginning to look a bit like the west--more open range with cattle, fewer fields of corn, milo, etc.

Fri., 9/16, we drove all day and spent the night at Chief Hosa RV park 20 miles west of Denver. Roads in the park were awful--uneven and steep. Jim worried about getting out in the morning, but had no real problem. I selected the place because it's only one mile from El Rancho Restaurant, which Mother and I have enjoyed on previous trips. We were not disappointed and had a good prime rib dinner there.

Sat., 9/17, we drove across the 10,000 ft pass of the Rockies. The Truck handled the pull beautifully, if somewhat slowly. Jim had had so much trouble backing the trailer into the campsite the night before, that he wondered if the transmission were going out. But it was just the steep push up into the site. We had no trouble with it the next day. (In fact, the truck has been totally trouble-free the whole trip. Had a slow tire leak once, which turned out to be a repairable puncture--and that was all!)

Spent the night at Fruita RV Park, Fruita, Colorado (near Grand Junction).

The next morning we got an early start (around 6:00), expecting to stay in Cedar City or St. George, Utah. Had breakfast in Green River, Utah, instead of before starting out. Got into St. George around 4:00, so decided to drive on to Mesquite, Nevada. The RV park there looked like a big, full parking lot and was very unappealing, so we decided to go on to Las Vegas. Along the way I read about all the campgrounds there. They were all huge and the reasonable-sounding ones were five to six miles off the freeway.

Jim was getting anxious to get home, and I could tell he didn't want to stay in Las Vegas. So we ate dinner at a Union-76 truck stop in Las Vegas (not bad), then set out at 6:00 pm for Barstow, the next town with RV parks, there being none in Baker.

At 9:00 that night we pulled into the KOA in Barstow, having driven 650 miles! We traded off driving, so we weren't too exhausted, but the drive was twice as far as we usually go in a day when all the driving is freeway. When it's slower roads, we've usually done much less. [That record still stands.]

Mon., 9/19, we drove the rest of the way home, arriving around noon. Jim was relieved to discover that the house was still standing, the water heater was no trouble to light, there were boxes and boxes of film waiting, and that they seemed to be correctly exposed. (He'd been fretting about all these things for some time, especially at 2 a.m. when he was supposed to be sleeping.)

I was confronted with the unpleasant task of cleaning the inside of the refrigerator. We had turned it off when we left, but I'd forgotten to leave the door open. I had Mother ask Gil to open the door, but by the time he got home from a short trip and could go over there to open it, it had gotten pretty moldy.

Our trailer refrigerator gave us problems the last three or four days of the trip. Turned out to be only when running on electricity, not on gas, but we didn't figure that out till the stuff got pretty warm, especially in the un-frozen section. The freezing compartment is so well insulated that, except for the ice cream, everything else was OK and still solidly frozen. But I did have to get the stuff out of the trailer refrigerator and into the house refrig. at once.

A couple of final words about our traveling companions:

Lewis, the Chinese mantid, was last seen in Illinois. For several nights Jim put him out on a twig in the evening. He was still there in the morning, so he was replaced in his box and taken on. However, that last night he disappeared. So much for Lewis.

Louise, the spider who hitched a ride in Louisbourg, Nova Scotia, is still with us. She last spun a web five days ago, though. The next morning Jim gave her a tremendous number of flies. She may be living on them. Or she may be suffering from the ill effects of the trip over the Rockies and across the desert. It wasn't cold--or hot--as it might have been, but it must have been hard on her. She still crawls around some, though. We'll just have to see if the foggy Huntington Beach climate, so much like her Nova Scotia home, revives the plucky little traveler. If so, Jim has already designed

a frame for her web, with a little groove for her hiding place. And he knows just where to hang it in the back yard!

Fri., Sept. 23

Home

Hurray! Louise built her first web in over a week--its usual place on the trailer. Thank goodness we've had to keep the trailer here at the house waiting till the refrigerator part comes in. Jim immediately ran to the shop to make that frame and is doing it now. A perfect conclusion.

1994 postlude

Louise started building defective webs, then finally we saw no more of her. But ever since, Jim swears he sees spiders just like Louise all over the section of the back yard where he placed her. Don't anyone dare to tell him they aren't her offspring!