

## Documents

### A HOOSIER SOLDIER IN THE BRITISH ISLES

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[Editor's Note—Our average reader may question the propriety of printing these two little gems in a historical magazine, though surely no one would question the desirability of having them in print. It seems, however, that history has come to be a very inclusive study, and that there are those who believe that intellectual history is the very heart of all history. If this is even approximately true, one need not explain the appearance of these items here.

The experience of many an American in the British Isles during the present war may build a foundation of friendship which will make impossible in the future the prejudice with which so many Americans have regarded our English brethren in the past. A young man like Larry McFaddin cannot be influenced by the cheap political practice of twisting the British Lion's tail as preceding generations of Americans have been influenced. These delightful week-ends will long be remembered. The kindness with which our boys have been treated can never be forgotten. May we not hope that a tradition is being developed like that between the United States and Canada which will make war between the United States and the British Isles impossible.

The author enlisted when a junior at Indiana University December, 1942. He served in the Office of Strategic Service in England and recently has transferred to Germany. The trip to Scotland was made October 15-23, 1944, and the one to St. Ives, May 22-31, 1945. The letters were written on a very old typewriter, the servicemen standing in line to use it and hurrying to make way for others. None of the mistakes are serious, and the manuscript is printed without change.]

#### SCOTLAND

Perhaps I should call it my "Highland Fling;" perhaps I shouldn't attempt to title the past week. Regardless, it shall always be a memorable seven days—a week of wonderful enjoyment and disassociation from the countless things that make life seem complicated, in spite of their relative unimportance.

Monday, John Meloney and I were in London, completely equipped for our trip to the North. We were to meet Fraser Stokes and Don Dunbar later in the day. The day beginning our furloughs had arrived

suddenly, for it had been a furlough unexpected (but none the less appreciated!) We had been warned numerous times by rugged Scotchmen of treacherous bogs in the moors, blinding mists in the mountains, and dangerous ledges, and especially of the cold there in Scotland—all of the warnings only made the anticipation greater, and we sincerely hoped we might scare up a ghost or two in an old castle!

I spent a short time with Hugh that morning and learned that he was planning a trip to Edinburg later in the week. John and I then went to St. Jame's Palace to meet "Sir Norman," (a title which he used only when formality necessitated it—he preferred "Speedy"). We had a wonderful dinner at the "Trocadero," just off Piccadilly Circus. He's a good fellow—a nice sense of humor and a person who has had a great number of interesting experiences all over the world. We spent several amusing minutes standing on the Circus (an appropos name!) and watching the people, who never stopped passing by.

A couple of hours later we met Fraser and Don at the station and fortunately, got seats on the train. The only part of the night I remember is, at each awakening, finding myself in a different position, each more impossible than the previous. I had visions of never standing up again! By morning we were well into Scotland, for we had passed through Perth quite early. The Scots swear that the air is purer right over the border, and somehow it did seem different. It was a beautiful day—perhaps that alone accounted for the difference.

The country was already becoming pretty rugged, altho the real highlands were much farther north. Already I could feel the barrenness of them, for from a distance they appear quite bald. We were too late for the real autumn season—the heather had turned brown by frost and rain, but there was a sober loveliness in the hills that somehow almost equaled the vivid colors of early fall. The birch trees, which were sparce, however, were bright yellow, and the spruce, of course, retained their year-round dark green. The hues here on the hills were very much alive—the large ferns had turned a dark rust. We still were traveling on the Dee side of the mountains.

We changed trains at Aviemore, and in a few minutes were in Boat of Garten, the village of our destination. It's a funny little town of two or three streets and very plain, but secure, looking houses. Years ago, so the good folk said, there was a boat which made the crossing of the Spey on which the town is located. Progress, however, caught up, and a bridge was built. The name remained the same. Incidentally, we never discovered the bridge, and the river is much too narrow to warrant much more than a canoe. We stopped at MacDonald's grocery to find the way to Lynchurn, the home of Mrs. Grant, where we were to stay. The farm is half an hour's walk from town past a little mill pond and a bakery. We had learned of Lynchurn through Lady Ross and her daughter in Oxford, for they often spent their vacations there.

The four of us stopped at a farm on the way, and apparently frightened the good farmer's wife, for she disappeared and returned with husband, offspring, and Granny. In wonderful Scotch brogue, Granny told us how to reach Mrs. Grant's. Our reception along the

road was mostly that of barking dogs, disinterested cows, and friendly, but suspicious, glances from the people.

The farm house is way up on a hill—a beautiful spot. The river Spey runs through the valley just below it, and for miles around you can see the ranges of the Carn Gorm [Cairngorm] mountains. Mrs. Grant was at the door to meet us—such a wonderful little person—friendly and amusing, a delightful small caricature: gracious with the gift of real sincerity. She showed us first our sitting room—a nice comfortable room with a wonderful fire in the hearth. Already I had fallen in love with the place. Our rooms upstairs were lovely—two tremendously large rooms and one small one at the front of the house. It seemed the windows only framed the view to the front. The tile washstands were classic, and very lovely. However, I'll take my water hot! Which, by the way, I did; for we had our own bath.

And speaking of this very essential room, I think the bathtub deserves special mention. It was the biggest one I've ever seen—terrifically deep (speaking in relative terms, of course!) and long enough to lie completely flat. Really a wonderful idea! Too bad most of us are space-savers. And speaking again of essentials, the "W C" was without doubt the coldest object upon which I have ever rested. There was no central heating, and my teeth played a beautiful stacatto.

When we went down there were milk and gingerbread waiting for us—real milk—that wonderful cow! It was the first glass I had drunk since leaving the States. Soon afterward we had dinner—scotch broth, fried chicken, brussel sprouts, carrots, two pitchers of milk—and hot gingerbread with cream so thick you had to help it along with a spoon. That alone looked like paradise to us, and it was only the beginning. Fresh eggs (I hadn't seen one for weeks!), lamb chops, steak, roast duck, more chicken, hot deserts—all in our own dining room. Perhaps you can better understand our deep affection for Lynchurn!

The first afternoon there, we dozed around the fire, had a delicious tea at 4:00 and dinner at 8:00 (by kerosene lantern!) Then we sat around the fire and talked for several hours. It was a wonderful feeling of being completely away and yet closer to the things I consider priceless than I had felt for weeks. We talked of home, of course, and for a few too short days Lynchurn almost became home.

Wednesday morning we got up early, had a wonderful breakfast, and started out for Mt. Carn Gorm, several miles away. In Aviemore we met a Mr. Mackay, who possessed the village taxi, and he drove us to the hunting lodge at the foot of the mountain. The lodge itself is on Loch Morlich, a lovely lake right up the mountains. From there we took the path along the stream which followed a narrow ravine up the rise. The heather was thick there, and in some patches was still bright purple. The climb itself after reaching a certain level becomes uninteresting unless you look—stop every short while to look back. The view is beautiful—much too lovely for my description. Far up on the peak we could see the snow and clouds which made the top invisible. During the entire climb, as we looked back we could see a rainbow, which seemed to begin in the loch and end at the foot of the mountain facing Carn Gorm. And yet, as we watched, we could see it move slowly—it seemed to follow us up the mountain side. Far

below were the lodge and the loch—the black aberdeen-angus cows appeared as small dots. Intermittently we got a little of the rain from the storm we could see on a distant range. There the peaks were far more rugged and looked ugly and dark.

A short distance from the top we stopped and looked at a curious formation of weathered stones. The air was cold and the wind almost strong enough to knock one over. Apparently I had overrated myself as a mountain climber—our pace had been swift, and I was completely winded. The other three went ahead, and I liked the sensation of being alone there. It was that wonderful sense of freedom and complete, yet perhaps momentary, independence and at the same time the feeling of utter insignificance. I ran several hundred yards down the slope to the pile of stones. The wind was blowing so strongly that I could scarcely hear myself shout. I tried to eat my lunch there, but my hands became numb. The sun on the levels below looked much better.

I went down a different way, disregarding the path and the stone trail markers. On one level were dozens of clear springs on the mountain. The beds were of small quartz stones, and the water clearer than I've ever seen. Strange how natural a thing water becomes; yet the water [in] those springs actually tasted better than I've ever known. Farther down the slope, I stopped at the loveliest spot there. The entire slope is covered with thick heather and ferns. Directly below me, several hundred feet, was the stream we had followed. It was a wonderful spot—the peak, no longer visible and no longer inviting, behind; the valley below; and the mountains all around. I fell asleep on the heather a short time and was awakened by a "pack" of congenial dogs followed by an elderly man. Farther down the trail were another fellow and a horse. They were going up to bring down the two deer they had shot the previous night.

It was an unforgettable day, and the beds at Lynchurn seemed even softer.

Thursday Don left for Dufftown in search of some relatives. That morning we hiked along the Spey and in the evening went up into the hills behind the farm to watch the sunset. The hills were lighted up beautifully, and in an instant, when the sun disappeared behind the mountains in the back, became dark and indiscernible. The clouds for several moments were lovely—and suddenly dark and chilling.

The next day was rainy, in standard Scottish fashion, and we spent a lazy day inside, sleeping and eating—in general doing a beautiful job of doing nothing.

Saturday we traveled up to Inverness, primarily to see a Mrs. Gooch, the grandmother of a Mary Grant, whom we have known for some time. What a wonderful person she is—young to be a grandmother. She's head of the Women's Volunteer Service in northern Scotland and has recently flown back from the Shetlands on a governmental survey. Such an active little person, drives with great enthusiasm, and doesn't miss a trick. She took us to lunch and drove us out to her present home, Castle Hill House. First we drove up Moray Firth towards the sea. We stopped at Culloden Moor, the famous battle ground of Prince Charlie and some dozen Scottish clans. "The Young Pretender" landed in western Scotland, in his quest of the

“rightful” inheritance of the English throne and fought across the country to this spot, high above Inverness. Apparently the Grant clan played a smart game and watched the battle closely before choosing sides. And from the grave markers were quite successful. Apparently the MacIntoshes were extremely vulnerable! Incidentally, Prince Charlie slept in Castle Hill House the night before the battle. That was in the 1770's.<sup>1</sup>

At Castle Hill we met Mary's great-grandmother, who is 96 years old. She is truly a remarkable person. I sometimes feel my mind is less alert than hers is now. She was determined to learn our names and homes, for she expects us to pay a visit again. She told me how clearly she remembered seeing the troops leave Edinburg Castle for the Crimean war, in 1850's. We also met Mrs. Gooch's sister and a charming Miss Ellis. I've never seen such vitality in a woman her age—she had just been stag hunting the day before. We had tea with them in their lovely old home and then Mrs. Gooch drove us to our train. Her son-in-law is the Grant who owns such great tracts of land and several homes in Inverness Shire.

One doesn't have the opportunity to meet people like these often. My contacts here have been so wonderful, [I] shall never forget them. One can't easily forget the cordiality and friendliness we've received here in England and Scotland. I particularly like the Scotch people—the way they laugh, their frankness and complete friendliness.

Sunday morning we hiked through the pine forests behind the farm. We walked through them just as the sun started slanting in. It was so lovely, it seemed almost a sacrilege to make any kind of noise. The ground was covered with thick moss growing through the years' carpet of pine needles. That afternoon we left—for all good things must end, and spent the night in Perth.

We arrived in Edinburg Monday morning and had made arrangements to leave on the night train to London. John left in search of a friend, and Fraser and I first walked up to Edinburg Castle. It was a good climb, for the massive castle is located on a steep hill, approachable from one direction, with three sheer bluffs on the other sides. The history of the castle is quite interesting, and, of course, I know but a sketch. The first parts are over nine centuries old; yet the castle, through the strife of England and Scotland, has been sieged and sacked, and each time rebuilt. The entrance is through the courtyard in front—on which square public executions took place and witches were burned at the stake hundreds of years ago. Then across the old moat and up the winding stairs to the top. From here one can get a truly beautiful view of Edinburg, a city of spires and shrines. At the highest part of the castle stands the tiny chapel built by St. Margaret, Queen, in the 11th century. Under the altar lie her remains—she died upon hearing of the death of her husband and son. By far the most interesting to me was a small plot of ground jutting out rather precariously from the castle side. Here is the “Soldier's

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<sup>1</sup> This is obviously an error. Prince Charlie, the Young Pretender, landed on the west coast of Scotland, July 25, 1745. He was defeated at Culloden Moor, April 16, 1746.

Dogs' Burying Ground." The Scottish War Memorial within the castle is a beautiful shrine. The coats of arms are so vivid and bright, the atmosphere so light and reverent.

From the castle we walked along the famous "High" to Calton Hill, on which stand Nelson's Tower, the Observatory, and the Scotsmans' Disgrace." (A building begun modelled after Athen's Parthenon and discontinued through lack of funds.) On the way we stopped at an old cemetery where are buried many of Scotland's illustrious. At the foot of a rather ostentatious tomb, I saw a small white stone, carved in the shape of a heart. On it were inscribed the words: "Here lies sweet Marion, asleep." I remember it above all the others; yet who Marion was, to whom death came so soon, I shall never know.

From there we walked to the Royal Palace of Holyroodhouse, the palace in Scotland for the royal family, who, by the way, had been there a fortnight previously. According to legend, it was built in recognition of luck while hunting during the days of Arthur. We walked through Mary Queen of Scots audience chambers, bedroom, and dressing rooms. Mary's bed, one of the few remaining pieces of furniture, looked terribly uncomfortable! As did her husband's, Lord Darnley. (Modern psychologists say this two-bedroom business definitely leads to marital dischord!)

The remains of the royal chapel are quite impressive and very lovely. They are of Norman architecture of the 12th century. The roof is no longer there, for it disappeared when Cromwell burned the palace. However, ancient stone lattice work is still standing. The floor is nothing but tomb markers. On the floor also were several stone caskets, and for the first time, I knew what tomb, stone-cold, meant.

After leaving the castle we walked up some funny little side streets and stopped in a Scotch Tartan shop to look at some plaids. Apparently the McFaddin clan set up permanent residence in Ireland, for none seem to exist in northern Scotland now. The closest I could find was the MacLean Clan, of which MacFayden is a part. In any case, "our" plaid is very colorful. I still can't visualize myself in a kilt, although I saw dozens of them. Fraser and I met John for tea. Could it be that I'm becoming a synthetic Britisher, demanding my tea at 4:00, pouring the milk first and feeling indignant if the milk isn't hot?

Later, we met Don and boarded the train for rainy London. Yes, a good week. A nice week to remember. . . .

#### ST. IVES

"As I was going to S. Ives . . .," I met no polygomist, but rather a number of people who must have known the charms of Cornwall which I was to discover. The night train was slow, but time was not important then, for I had eight days ahead—eight days which were completely mine. My first glimpse of the sea came when we entered Plymouth, the city which, a year previously, had seen hundreds of ships leaving for the invasion of the continent. It was early and grey and cold, and the water of the channel wasn't any color. A few hours later we reached St. Erth, a small Cornish inland village, just west of the pirate's playground of Penzance. There I caught a wonderful little

two car train, bound for the coast . . . a little two car train with a holiday whistle.

In ten minutes, St. Ives was in view, a toy village on a peninsula stretching out into the sea. The Gulf Stream is blue, but St. Ives Bay was bluer that day. Blue, and sunny, and beautiful. Pedn Olva, our hotel, was just a short walk from the small station. I had hoped that it would be near the water; that perhaps we could get a glimpse of the sea from there. I never expected a lovely place, built right in the rocks—the foundation of which was washed by the tides. Yet, there it was, facing the sea, on the sea. I had a late breakfast in the lounge; yet as hungry as I was, I sat and looked out the bay window at the water, and the beach below. The sun was out, and the boats were sailing—and London seemed a million miles away.

Bill had arrived earlier that morning and was already somewhere below, on the rocks, sunning himself. Our room overlooked the harbor. Beyond St. Ives we could see the Atlantic, and straight down were rocks and the sea. Three miles out in the bay was the lighthouse on a small island. I stood by the window and looked, knowing there could be no other place the same. Then I climbed down to the beach to look for Willy . . . it was difficult to walk, when I wanted to run. The sand was soft and fine, and the tide was beginning to come in, each wave reaching a little farther up the beach.

Our table in the dining room was in a small bay window, overlooking the garden in the back of the hotel. Beyond the garden and below were the beach and the water. Flowers on the table, a pitcher of ice-water (Londoners never drink water!) and excellent meals, usually topped with fresh strawberries and cream. The view alone was worth the sitting there, but the food made it even more attractive. After coffee in the lounge that first day, we embarked upon a week of contented laziness, which, unfortunately, didn't end with the expiration date of my furlough papers. The entire afternoon we sat on the beach, wondering if our good luck in finding this spot were true. Unknowingly (undoubtedly stimulated by the sea air) I went dashing down the hot sand into the water. I emerged, dripping, and a ghastly shade of blue. Never have I been in such freezing water. The effect was even more colorful the next day when I blossomed forth a brilliant lobster red.

Tea was each afternoon at 4:00—how delightful it was to sit on the terrace and think of nothing except how delightful it was! I longed for some color film to capture the scenes which can never be written on paper. The small garden is enclosed by immense lilac bushes and flowers grow up and down the rocks and walls of the terrace. The boats in the harbor were blue, and red, green and orange—wonderfully happy looking.

Early each morning after breakfast we would wander down the hill to the wharf. Narrow, little streets with gay little houses—white ones, blue, yellow, and green. From a distance, St. Ives looked strangely colorless in contrast with the sea. Yet in the streets was the color—yards full of roses, brightly colored doors with polished knockers. And in the grey, drab streets were colorful children. There were no plain children there, for they all seemed to have curly hair, and blue eyes—and inquisitive faces. How strange it is that these children will mature

into the plain old women who sit on the waterfront and knit vests, and men who fish at night and sleep through the days.

Each morning we would stop on the wharf to watch the fishermen bring in the night's catch. The tide was out at that time of day, and a little one-horse cart brought the fish to the dock from the boats, lying absurdly awkward in the sand. St. Ives was more alive in early morning than any other time. The fish, skates, crabs, and lobsters, after being weighted were sold there on the wharf to the highest bidder. Housewives seemed to be in the majority, but the lobsters were carried away by the owners of the littled cafes that lined the waterfront. After the auction, only the cats seemed to remain feasting on fish heads—the fishermen went off to bed, and the wives took the day's food home.

“. . . each wife had seven bags; each bag had seven cats; each cat had seven kittens.” I'm sure that those cats have been reproducing prodigiously ever since that Cornish verse was first composed. Hundreds of cats—in the windows in the doors, in the shops, in the boats—everywhere cats. They all seemed quite well pleased with themselves and their stations in life. Even the dogs in St. Ives appeared to enjoy themselves more than dogs anywhere else. Centuries ago they must have tired of chasing cats. A nondescript pack of them played each morning on the beach, charging the waves and kicking up the sand.

In addition to being a fishing village, St. Ives is an artists' colony. In almost every street were artists, sitting and painting scenes which were offered no where else in England. The second day we came across an elderly painter, quite at home sitting in a rowboat painting a harbor scene. The shops were full of watercolors, and oils, lovely and expensive. During our week in the village, we visited, I think, every gallery there.

At ten o'clock each morning, we could be found at the Shore Cafe, drinking hot chocolate and eating ice-cream. After two or three days it became a ritual, and at the stroke of ten, we'd head for the little room upstairs, over looking the bay. After lunch each day we sprawled in the sun, a glorious English sun which, for the first, time, warmed me completely. The days, which went so quickly, were difficult to distinguish one from [the] other. However, though their patterns were almost identical, their designs were quite different. Each part of each day there was something new to see, and, if not different, to be enjoyed again.

On the wharf in St. Ives is a magnificent pub. Countless are the “King's Arms,” “Dog and Badgers,” “Running Horses,” “Duke's Head,” “Little White Harts,” and “Red Lions”—but there is only one “The Sloop,” and it is in St. Ives. The ceilings slant, as in a ship's cabin—closing time is the ringing of a ships bell. Great oceans of mild and bitters flowed each night there, where gathered the town's illustrious. Adorning the walls of the largest room in the pub, are caricatures of the best known people in the village. What fun it was to sit there, with a glass of ale, and spot the people whose pictures were on the walls; the whiskered old fisherman, the bartender, the village fish dealer, the funny old woman who sat and screamed “'ello mi love,” at each newcomer.

Centuries ago, an Irish saint by the name of Ives, sailed from the Emerald Isle on a shamrock. He landed on this tip of Cornwall and



built a chapel on the highest hill there. This building, reconstructed some years ago, still stands, viewing the town and the ocean. The hill on which it stands is called "The Island." A long time ago the sea washed over a part of the peninsula and isolated the hill—perhaps believing that in some future time the sea again will do the same, the people have never stopped referring to this piece of land as "The island." From the top can be seen the Atlantic Ocean, St. Ives Bay, and the Irish Sea. Miles of ocean—blue sea, and rocks, and white foam . . . hilly St. Ives and Carbis Bay, leading to rhodedendron covered hills behind.

After lying contentedly in the sun for several hours after lunch, we would climb back up to the hotel for tea at four o'clock. This tea was usually augmented by another one at "The Copper Kettle" at four thirty—toasted scones, and bisquits, and jam. By early evening, the tide was well in, and the boats began to prepare for the night's fishing. All this we watched from the small tea room, which also faced the harbor. Then back up the narrow hilly street we'd go to Pedn Olva, dinner, and watching the sunset from the terrace.

We didn't do much—there wasn't time to take the side trips to Land's End and Penzance as we had originally planned. A week was much too short a time to be in paradise. Seven days were much too brief to hear enough of the waves at night, or see the boats sailing out with high tide and moonlight. Early in the morning, even before the gulls started screaming for day, I would sit up in bed and see the fishing boats returning. There weren't enough hours to feed the gulls, and watch them swoop down to catch bits of bread tossed in the air. Now, as I look out of the window and see the Rhine, Cornwall and St. Ives seem even farther away, more as if I remember them from an early imagination and not from having been there. Perhaps it was a continental fascination, a likeness to the Riviera which people claim exists, that made it so attractive. That I can't say. I only know it was different from the rest of England I knew. I feel as if it will retain an individuality which can belong to no other place. Sometime I'll go back just to know it's still there and the same, as it has always been. . . .