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A Dream Come True- I Traveled Through Europe

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A Dream Come True—

I Traveled Through Europe

Foreign countries no longer seem strange to Mary Dodds, '47, former director of the Homemaker, who spent the summer in Europe.

THE sunlight and the blue-green sea made the deep green of the Isle of Wight stand out in relief. After 5 days of nothing but ocean, this first view of England was an even greater experience than I had anticipated. As we came into Southampton harbor on the Queen Elizabeth, Lois Stewart and I looked at each other: "We are in England—Southampton, England."

But there was a thrill beyond that of being in a new place. It was like Christopher Robin saying, "I went into a house, and it wasn't a house." We went into a foreign country, and it wasn't a foreign country—because we were there. Wherever we went we had that same experience. France wasn't foreign, nor Switzerland because ourselves, those with whom we were most familiar, were there.

Friendly British

Most of the people in our class were British. This gave us an introduction to their habits and attitudes. All of them were friendly. They helped us learn their monetary system by popping two shilling pieces in our faces, saying, "What is this?" Everyone wanted to help us plan our tour, so that we would see their part of the country which was always "the best spot." We had planned to use this time on the ship to set up our itinerary in the British Isles. But we found that we had done nothing on it when we reached England. So we spent the first week in London, sightseeing by day, planning at night.

After meeting Mary Alice Barber, '47, in London, the three of us headed for the Lake District in northern England. Here we bicycled for 1 day and were so tired that we put the bicycles, purchased in London, on the train for Glasgow. We traveled by bus to Edinburgh, Everness and back to Glasgow. This trip took us through the highlands of Scotland, along Loch Ness and Loch Lomond.

Visiting Iowa State Alums

After picking up the bikes in Glasgow, we six, three girls and three bicycles, took the overnight to Wolverhampton, England, where we visited two Iowa State graduates, Jean Gustason Adams, '43, and Larry Adams, '43. It must have been a great sight, three tired travelers wolfing hamburgers and white cake with chocolate frosting as if they had never seen food before. I had never realized there was such a thing as American food.

From here we began cycling in earnest. The Adamses carried us and our three bikes in their little Ford to Stratford-on-Avon and left us in the youth hostel. We saw Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice" in the Memorial Theatre, strolled wide-eyed through his birthplace and looked at the outside of Anne Hatha-

way's cottage. We didn't have the shilling it took to get in. We hitchhiked on a truck to Oxford, bicycles and all.

Mary Alice sailed for home and Lois and I went to Switzerland for a week, then to Paris and home. Switzerland was clean and picturesque, with all the comforts available for the tourist. The shops were full of lovely clothing, household furnishings, precision instruments and souvenirs—such a contrast to the England we had left and the France we were coming to.

Food Shortage

In England the finest products are made for export and the second-best kept at home. In Paris, prices on many things are so high that the average person cannot afford to look in the shop windows. Food in both of these countries is, of course, the critical item. We were never actually hungry because we had taken supplies with us.

The trip was completed on less than a thousand dollars, half of that being the price of the passage. I took four pieces of luggage, one large suitcase, a medium sized bag, a make-up kit and a large valise.

We found that by moving from place to place as we wanted to and not joining any set tours, we met more of the people of each country. Although we saw many of the sightseers' meccas, we felt that the people with whom we became acquainted on buses, in the small hotels and in youth hostels were the most valuable part of the trip. Through them we learned that the world is not so large after all, that people are much the same.

In true tourist fashion Mary Dodds and Lois Stewart hopped aboard their bicycles and two-wheeled it through Great Britain

