

[This document is Joann's transcription of notes I recorded in a notebook during our visit to England in 2006. Text in square brackets was added to her transcription by me for clarity and was not found in my original notes. I have not corrected my grammar or my spelling errors. The photo used here of me on a train from London to Cambridge shows the tan-brown journal I used. Following Joann's transcription are a pair of photographed pages from it. This document is destined for my future Presidential Library, or, if I should fail to ever be elected President of the United States (the bar has never been lower!), to languish unread until some distant date when an educated survivor of the coming environmental catastrophe unearths it on a resuscitated Internet Archive server and uses it as an example of early 21st century humanity's "fiddling while the planet burned." – Steve 3/6/2020]



Tuesday, July 18, 2006

MSP-Dulles

Plane left an hour late from Minneapolis [on Tuesday evening for the red-eye to London via Washington DC]. Sat on runway for ~30min (more?)

Arrived in Dulles (Wash DC) with 7 min until scheduled departure. Ran the length of the concourse (from D18 to C3) only to find that the plane to London was delayed due to a hydraulic leak. I overheard a woman talking on the phone who said that this was the last flight to London that night, and they were going to replace the plane if the problem could not be resolved. At length, the problem was resolved and the plane boarded and left DC about 45 min late.

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

LHR

Arrived at LHR [London's Heathrow Airport] on the ground at 10:45am (45 min late). No trouble with luggage or with finding the Heathrow Express train.

First impression of London was of the trainway from LHR to Paddington Station. Shouldn't have expected this to be beautiful, of course, but it was quite ugly. Lots of graffiti on both sides of the track. Industrial, "working-class" area.

Paddington Station

Big, busy, hot! This station, familiar from the "Paddington Bear" stories (stuffed bear was found at PS) and used in opening scenes of recent "Lion, Witch, and Wardrobe" movie reminded me of NYC's Grand Central Terminal, though only because of its size.

Hot. It is already obvious that it is very hot in London. We gratefully received a free sample-size (and very cold) can of Coke Zero, which is apparently just hitting the market here. Drained it quickly and then found that there are no trash cans (dust bins) in the terminal.

To Hotel

Pulled our luggage the ~1.1 km to our hotel along Craven Road (mostly). Took a wrong turn which slightly lengthened our journey. (We were following a route suggested by "transport London" site.) Impressions: Narrow, busy streets and hot!

Hotel Arrival

Central Park Hotel on a street (Queensborough Terrace) that runs perpendicular to Bayswater Road. Our hotel on first block north of Bays Road just north of Kensington Gardens. This block almost entirely

taken up by hotels which are in converted flats. Our hotel nicely presented from the outside, clean, spacious, and modern lobby. I remarked on the heat to the check-in staff person, who tells me that today is expected to be the hottest day on record in Britain! (Left bags then went to Whitely's, see later) Room is small, clean, and hot! No A/C! Electricity doesn't appear to work, but a call to the front desk reveals that we must insert our "key-card" into a slot to activate power.

Some quick unpacking and we get out of hot room (after opening windows for ventilation). See Bombay.

Kensington Gardens

We walked into what *we thought* at the time was Hyde Park. Actually, it was Kensington Gardens which is adjacent to it (with little or no marked boundary).

First impressions: Dry and unmowed grass very "un-parklike," at least what we tend to think of as a city park. People everywhere laying in what looked to us just like dry weeds.

Lots of people enjoying the hot weather in the park. Soccer (football) and rugby games being played.

Most of the players were not speaking English. I kicked an errant ball back into a game. People walking with dogs in park. Most or all were unleashed.

Saw first British bird: a blackbird. Size of European Starling with bright yellow bill just like Starling, but all black. (This was a male, subsequently we saw lots of females, which are mostly brown.)

Round lake in Ken Gardens with ducks and geese. We did not have binocs, but we could ID Canada Gees and ___ Swan. [Later ID'd lifers Eurasian Blackbird and Greylag Goose. Did not record what was likely a Mute Swan.]

Found bathrooms at SE corner of KG. Saw Prince Albert Hall at south border of KG but did not approach it closely.

Whitely's/Movie

After leaving bags at hotel at about noon, we walked the very short (~2 km) way to the Whitely's Shopping Center. It is a famous old store that has been converted to a mall.

Ate a sandwich (we split it) at the Rapollo's café in the mall. Warmish coke with it and very small "salad" (couple pieces of lettuce).

Saw the movie "Pirates of Caribbean II: Dead Man's Chest" at the Odeon Theatre in Whitely's. Attended mostly to escape the heat and kill time until we could check into our room after 3:00pm. Unfortunately, the A/C in the theatre was out. Sign informing us of this wasn't visible until we'd purchased our ticket and walked in.

Nevertheless, the theatre was comfortable enough and we enjoyed the movie. Theatre was nearly empty. Patrons almost all (perhaps 20 other people) were young teenagers and some were quite loud thru first half of film. Not very distracting, though.

After movie, checked into room (see earlier).

Bombay Tandoor Restaurant

Our favorite food is Indian and London has no shortage of Indian restaurants. One is located right across the narrow street from our hotel, and it was here where we took our dinner. Buffet-style food. Just OK, not quite as good as what we are used to at the Taste of India buffet in Maplewood. Drink consisted of small (half-pint) glass of Diet Coke. Not very cold and no refill. We paid (with tip) about ___ for dinner.

End Wednesday

After walking KG (~8:30pm), returned to our room, then went back to Whitely's where Joann bought a large bottle of very cold water for .99 pounds. I bought a lukewarm can of Diet Coke at the Rapellos's café so that I could get a free half-hour of wireless internet connection.

Back to room where we, with open windows, will lie down for the night... [;]

Thursday, July 20, 2006

Birding Hyde Park

Up early to walk in Hyde Park and look at the birds. Walked the north edge of KG to Hyde Park then around the Italian Plaza (?) and Long Lake (?). We saw a total of 18 (?) species, most "life birds" for us. These included many waterfowl: Coot, Grey Heron, Greylag Goose, Moorhen, and others. Several songbirds as well including several Great Tits, a single European Robin (surprising quite distinct from the American Robin). We met an elderly English lady out with her binocs looking for birds. We were looking at (what turned out to be) a Blackcap. She was hearing it as it sang up a storm, but she could not find it. We were able to point it out to her and she was thrilled to see it. Its varied song reminded us of the Grey Catbird and, in fact, its black capped appearance (as in the GC) makes a close relationship probable. A complete list of the birds we saw follows: _____

Marble Arch/Speaker's Corner

After leaving Long Lake (?) [it was actually the Serpentine] we walked along the north edge of Hyde Park to the Marble Arch. On the way we saw monument to the supposed site of "Tyburn Tree" (gallows, where among others the three-years-dead corpse of _____). We also saw several police cars and an ambulance assisting the victim of what appeared to be a minor car accident on Bayswater Road. After a few minutes we arrived at the Marble Arch, which stands at the NE corner of Hyde Park. We gawked at it, photographed it, and then descended the stairs down to our first "tube" excursion.

The Tube

We puzzled over the London Underground Subway's (The Tube's) explanation of pricing policies and ticket prices and decided that our best option was to buy a 7-day Oyster Pass. These credit card-sized passes cost us 22.20 pounds a piece and allow us unlimited tube travel [for a week] in zones one and two (which covers all of central London and quite a bit of territory outside of it; all of the tube travel we are likely to require will be covered). (These cards have proved to be wonderfully convenient!)

Breakfast

Ate our first continental Breakfast at our hotel. Just as a couple of reviewers had posted on the internet, it was overcrowded and unimpressive. It featured two types of dry cereal: corn flakes and something like uncooked oatmeal [muesli?]. Rolls and toast, thimble-sized glasses of orange juice, and coffee brewed in a vending-machine type coffee maker. But it is free and one can drink as many thimble-sized glasses of OJ as one wants.

Westminster Abbey

Took the tube to Westminster Station. Climbed out of the station to our first really awe-inspiring look at an iconic London scene. The Tower of Big Ben on the east side of the Parliament building loomed directly over our heads as we exited the station. Wow! To our left lay the Thames and the Westminster Bridge (we'd cross later). To our right and north we could see the spire of WM Abbey. A short walk (~one block?) and we were there. We waited in a short queue, paid 7 pounds to enter and another 4 pounds each for a guided tour.

The verger (church official of some sort; priest? Monk?) who led our tour was a shortish, thin, gray-haired man. He was a pleasure to listen to.

First "room" we visited was the central raised platform (about 50' x 50' or so) where the tombs/coffins of Edward the Confessor (the centerpoint), Henry II, Edward I, Henry V and others were located. It was Henry II (I think – check this) who had the present church built in c. 1250-1279 (?). Dedicated the shrine to Ed the Confessor. Abbey was located on same spot since before Norman conquest (1066) and every English monarch (but two) coronated here since Bill the Conqueror (William I).

Saw the grave of Eliz I and her sister Mary I (buried in same tomb). The effigy of Eliz I (if accurate, and why wouldn't it be?) showed her to be a smallish, hooked-nosed, fairly unattractive woman (she was very old at the time of her death in 1603).

Mary Queen of Scots was buried here by her father James I after his ascension (and, of course, after her execution[-ordering cousin] Eliz I was gone). Her burial monument is at least the equal of her cousin and rival Eliz's and is located in a symmetrical spot in the church. (see my sketch)

Impossible to write in much detail of all we saw. Walked on the graves (it's OK to do so) of (among many others) Charles Dickens, George Handel, Charles Darwin, and Isaac Newton. Saw the gravesite and monument to Geoffrey Chaucer (d. 1400).

The one grave in the abbey that it is not permissible to walk on is that of the "Grave of the Unknown Warrior."

Beautiful enclosed "yard" that I took a photo of Parliament from.

Lunch and a Nap

Tubed back to the Queensway Station, which is two blocks from our hotel and which will be our central "jumping on and off" station. Ate a quick lunch at a restaurant just around the corner from our station (name of restaurant?). Had an appetizer that included chicken strips, tortilla chips and salsa, other foods at two diet cokes.

We left the restaurant walking towards our hotel. I was talking about credit card security when Joann realized that she'd left her purse in the restaurant. As we ran back to the restaurant in a small bit of panic, we saw our server outside looking for us. I should have given her an additional tip. She, by the way, had what I take to be a Russian accent. There is a strong Russian presence in our little corner of London (the Bayswater neighborhood in the city of Westminster). [Much later I learned that the Russian embassy is and was located in the very near vicinity.] Our Frommer's guide calls this area a "quite diverse" area with heavy Arab and Russian population. This has been quite apparent, and is a quite interesting and exciting area.

Back at the hotel for a quick nap. Still very hot in London and in our room.

To the Globe

Tube to St Paul's station. Photo'd St Paul's church that was (famously) designed by Christopher Wren after the Great Fire of 1666. Walked the short distance to the Thames and the Millennium Bridge. The MB was built in 2000 and is a pedestrian-only bridge that reminded us (in some respects) of the Turtle Bay Bridge in Redding, CA (bridge designer?).

Hungry! We looked around for somewhere to eat. It was about 6:30pm or 6:45pm. I had made reservations at a restaurant that is located very near the Globe, and we found it – the Greek ____ - but my reservations were for 5:00pm. Other restaurants in the area include an Italian (pizza, etc) place but they were crowded and we weren't sure we'd be able to eat in time to see the play.

We settled for the Globe's café, and asked the maitri'd if we would have time to order and eat before the play. He assured us that there would be no problem. Our waitress came to our table right away and asked if she could take our order. We told her that we'd need a minute but that we would take two Diet Cokes to drink. She said she'd be right back with them and to take our order. Well, five or ten minutes later a different person brought us two miniature glasses of Coke but did not take our order. Minute after minute passed, we finished our Lilliputian Cokes, and still no waitress. Finally we had to get up and ask the maitri'd for a check so that we could pay for our drinks and leave. He took a 5 pound note from me and we saw him "chew out" our waitress as he retrieved our change. We left the café. I bought a tuna sandwich and Joann got ____ at a small food stand in the theatre lobby.

Coriolanus

The playhouse is a faithful (as possible) re-creation of the original Globe Theatre (c. 159?-1613) on a spot very near to where the original stood. It is complete with what looks like, at least, some sort of sod roof. (It is an open-air theatre, so this is not a compete roof.) Rough-hewn timbers serve as posts and walls and (uncomfortable) bench seats. We did pay 1.50 pounds a piece for seat cushions. This was undoubtedly some of the best spent three pounds on our trip. Unfortunately, the seat cushions did nothing for my sore right knee, which was cramped during the show and hurt throughout.

The play and performance were top-notch. The title role was played by [Jonathan Cake]. I'd never heard of him, but it seems that he is a well-known actor in London (we saw an article about him in one of the tabloids), and he's very good. It's a tough role for an actor, as he's the lead actor in the play and while he's not really a villain, he's an unsympathetic [character]. While it is understandable that this is not a popular play, it was well-worth seeing. Quite a bonus to see it in this setting.

Night-nighty

Tubed back to our hotel, where we slept just OK despite the heat and humidity. Somewhat difficult to fall asleep as the noise from the nearby parties? cafes? Went on for some time. It's a lively area.

Friday, July 21, 2006

Breakfast

Today was our first chance to venture beyond London on our BritRail pass. We started with breakfast at the hotel. Same poor fare as before and even more crowded. Large numbers of Japanese tourists travelling in groups descended upon the hotel restaurant at about the same time as us (right at 7:00), while large buses wait just outside the front door of the hotel, ready to take them en masse to that day's destination.

Journey to Brighton

Tube to Victoria Sta for our train journey to Brighton. Brighton is almost directly south of London on the English Channel. It is famous for its beach and pier and for its Imperial Palace and grounds. The train ride to Brighton is just over an hour, and we arrived at its station after just over an hour. [Imagine that!] The train ride was quite comfortable and smooth. The temperature inside our air-conditioned car was downright chilly. A welcome change from the heat of the past two days in London (but too cold for Joann's tastes).

The Beach

A short walk, all down a pretty steep grade, led us to the beach. A very nice sight. Very few people were out on it at this time of the morning, but we were happy to lay in the sun for 45 min to an hour or so. The beach consists of smooth penny-sized rocks, not sand, and was clean and comfortable to lay on even without a towel.

After laying on the beach for awhile (long enough to noticeably tan – almost sunburn), we walked a couple of hundred meters or so to the pier. By this time crowds were picking up and we could see lots of British tourists, mixed with Americans and continentals, out on holiday. (It turned out that the day before – Thursday – was the start of the summer school holiday all across Britain). Lots of elderly British out for a bit of a sunny holiday. Their pasty-white complexions made us pasty-white Minnesotans feel right at home.

The Pier

We stopped for awhile at the pier to relax on loungers in the shade, but didn't buy and food or drink while on it. Enjoyed the nice view of the Brighton shoreline (lots of gleaming-white hotels) and saw lots

of Herring Gulls, some ___ Gulls [probably immature Herring Gulls I know now], and of course the ubiquitous Rock Pigeons.

Lunch

We left the beach in search of something to eat and found a small café on St James St. This section of town is filled with small shoppes that occupy what were once the small cottages of Brighton fishermen. Our café had a small outdoor sitting area in the back that adjoined the cottage/restaurant's small English garden. Not a beautiful one, by any means, but just a small plot of green out the back. I had a hamburger and chips (fries) while Joann ate ___. [This was my first taste of Stilton cheese.]

No beer or ale available at this café, and it seems to us that perhaps "café" (as opposed to "pub" or "restaurant") denotes a small eating establishment that is not licensed to sell alcoholic beverages.

[Brighton] Museum [and Art Gallery]

From the café we walked to the Imperial Palace [Pavilion] and the museum on its grounds. The museum's permanent exhibits include a collection of furniture design from the 19th and 20th centuries and a history of Brighton itself. The highlights at the furniture collection were two 20th century couches. One is made of leather in the form of a baseball mitt and was inspired by Joe DiMaggio. The other is made of red vinyl in the shape of Mae West's lips. The Brighton history highlighted its past as a fishing village, its transformation to a resort during the reign of King George [IV], and its early development as a welcoming place for gay culture and tourism.

Back to the Beach

After the time spent at the museum, we walked back to the beach area. We walked along the row of restaurants and souvenir stands that lines the embankment above the beach. It was quite in the full sun at this point (most all of the early morning clouds had burned away), so we picked out a table under an umbrella at the ___. I ordered a Strongbow, which was (I thought) an English beer. It turned out to be a hard cider or cider beer. Tasted quite good and seemed perfect for the beach. Joann enjoyed a Diet Coke and an ice cream cone.

Back to London

At about ___ we walked back uphill through Brighton to the train depot. After the hot hike, the air-conditioned train was a relief. I spent a good portion of the ride jotting down notes in this "travelogue" and read a little of the book "To See Every Bird on Earth."

A Short Pitstop

A short pitstop back at our hotel for a very brief nap and showers. The room was too hot to be comfortable, so we weren't tempted to stay long

Charing Cross/Subway Sandwiches

We took the tube to Charing Cross station in hopes of taking a short boat ride on the Thames. Saw Charing Cross and read that this cross marks the spot where all distances to London from within the UK are measured. (Story of the Crosses.)

It was too late to get a boat ride at this time (it was approx. ___ by now), and so we looked for some food. Lots of restaurants and pubs lay in the area between Charing Cross and the river, and most of those were very busy with young London professionals (British yuppies). We needed food soon, not later, so we chose the familiar American institution: Subway. Very similar selections to any Subway in the States with some minor exceptions. Not all of the vegetable mixings that we are accustomed to were available (no leaf spinach or banana peppers) and some that we do not see here (corn). Chip selection (not chips here, but crisps) was interesting. It had "roast chicken" flavored potato crisps. I can't really recommend them. It was very nice to find a place with a "fill-it-yourself" soda fountain

(complete with ice!). [Looking back, I am amused to read my repetitious complaints about British portion sizes – particularly drink sizes – and to recall how we noted on several occasions that every overweight person we saw seemed to speak with an American accent. Hmm.]

Trafalgar Square

We walked in the direction away from the river [north-ish] and found Trafalgar Square. A large crowd of people has gathered around the central fountain watching a rehearsal for what was to be on the following night, a world-record setting choreographed dance performance. [See “Big Dance UK” Wikipedia page.] The BBC was filming the rehearsal and it was quite an entertaining spectacle. While in the Square we viewed Nelson’s Column, the church of St Martin’s-in-the-Fields, and the huge edifice of the National Gallery.

Picadilly Circus

Hopped on the tube at Charing Cross for the ride back to our hotel and decided, “What the heck, let’s pop up at Picadilly Circus Station for a peek.” I’m glad we did. Full of life and very much reminiscent of Times Square in NYC. Looked around for just a few minutes before descending back to the underworld for the quick trip back to our hotel, exhausted.

Saturday, July 22, 2006

Train to Stratford-upon-Avon

After the usual free (and worth every penny) breakfast at our hotel, we took the tube to Marylebone Sta to catch a Chalken Railways train to SUA. I bought a cup of coffee from a familiar-looking coffee shop in the station – Starbucks. It was the first good cup of coffee I’d had since we stepped off the airplane at LHW. But wait, it wasn’t actually Starbucks at all. It was from a chain named Costa Coffee. This chain, I later realized, is thick on the ground thru the whole of England and employs a logo that can only be meant to invoke Starbucks. (Starbucks are everywhere too, as well, and in fact there is both a Starbucks and a Costa in the Whitely’s Shopping Centre near our hotel.)

The train ride to SUA took us through some very scenic landscapes (prettier, from the train at least, than the route to Brighton). In one field we saw a fox trotting along. The ride was just over two hours long.

Stratford-upon-Avon

The train station is an easy walk from the center of town. Just across the road from the train station was a “farmer’s market/flea market” in operation at the time of our arrival. We did not shop.

On the walk into town we saw throngs of tourists, including the usual groups of Japanese travelers. It wasn’t as bad (at least at this time of day, at about 9:30am?). We would have avoided visiting SUA on a Saturday, except that it would provide our only chance of seeing a play. It would be a very slim chance, since we didn’t hold tickets, but it was better than no chance at all. When I began planning this vacation, months ago, I bought a pair of the few remaining tickets to see the play “King John” on Thursday evening, July 27. Unfortunately, we could not arrange our travels to allow us to make this performance (we will depart London for home early in the morning of July 27). No performances are scheduled at all on Sunday or Monday, and the shows on Tuesday night would not be possible since we would not be able to return to London after the performances.

So...we arrived at the box office shortly after 10:00am to ask about the availability of tickets for the 1:15pm performance of A&C. One single seat was available. Possibly, the ticket agent informed us, a return would materialize in the three hours remaining before the show. Not likely, she said, but possible. There were, though, a pair of “standing room only” tickets to be had, were we interested? YES!

We took them, and after turning back our King John tickets, paid only two pounds for them! We were thrilled!

Lunch

We ate lunch at the theatre [complex's] restaurant. We ordered and split the Vegetable Platter and Fish Terrine. I drank a Kronenbourg 1664.

Play [Anthony and Cleopatra]

Now we had seen A&C at the Guthrie in Minneapolis in 2003(?) and were fairly disappointed with the production. So this would afford us the opportunity, perhaps, at a more satisfying experience. If not, still we'd have the opportunity to see a RSC production in the "cradle of Bardcountry." Well, the performance was spectacular! The well-known TV and movie actor Patrick Stewart (Star Trek, The King and I) played the part of Antony. He was great in the role. At intermission, we had a short conversation with a group of five British playgoers – three women and two men, all 60ish or so – and they were raving about his performance to that point. One of the ladies commented quite excitedly about the "remarkable shape" he was in (he was frequently shirtless on the stage). She was fanning herself and appeared quite flushed at the thought of him! [We were equally impressed by the actress who played Cleopatra. Only later did we realize she – Harriet Walter – is a pretty big deal herself.]

Speaking of the intermission (or "the interval" as it's referred to over here) I took this opportunity to have a pint of Guinness. It would've been somewhat perverse to spend a holiday in England without quaffing at least one pint of Guinness.

The Swan Theatre (one of three RSC venues in SUA) is a close intimate indoor theatre and is built in a Tudor style with exposed rough-hewn lumber throughout. Our standing area was located near the jutting corner (right-hand?) of the thrust stage on the first level (of two) above ground level. A good view, but occasionally obstructed by a wooden column. No complaints though.

At about 20 minutes before intermission we heard a crack of thunder and could hear that a fairly significant rain shower was pounding the roof of the theater. Shortly after that, a loud pop and sizzle was heard, and most of the lights in the theatre went out. I thought at first that this was related to the storm and that some bit of the lighting had been affected, but I wasn't completely sure. The actress playing Cleopatra appeared to flinch at the loud pop, but she continued with her dialogue and the three other actors on stage with her at the time showed no hint, that I could see, of anything amiss. Within a minute or two, however, an employee of the theatre walked on stage to interrupt the play and announced that he regretted to tell us that the power was lost in the building and that they could not allow members of the public to remain in the theatre under those conditions. A loud groan rose from the members of the audience, and then, almost immediately the lights came up. The groan turned into applause! There were smiles all around on the actors, and in particular "Cleopatra" was relieved and accepted a hug and words of encouragement from the members of the RSC who had come onto the stage. The play resumed with an added edge of excitement as we heard the thunderstorm continuing to rage and kept our fingers crossed that the power would hold up for the duration of the performance. It did.

The second half of the play did come off without a hitch. The actress who played Cleopatra (____) [Harriet Walter] was very impressive in the play, and we thoroughly enjoyed it.

Trinity Church

A light rain was falling as we left the theatre. We walked north (?) down ____ street towards Trinity Church to see WS's grave. We arrived to find that there were perhaps ten visitors in the entire church. We walked to the altar to view the grave, and during the five or ten minutes that we were there, no one

else except a custodian (who was doing some light cleaning). When I saw that someone near the back of the church had taken a photo, I asked the guide if this was allowed. He told me that, yes, it was. They used to prohibit photography within the church, but with the advent of cell phone cameras, relaxed their restriction.

Near the grave was a photocopy of the baptismal record and, near that, the baptismal font where the infant Shakespeare would've been baptized.

We left the church and walked around the church yard to look for the WS monument. I was sure that I remembered reading that it was outside the church itself. When we couldn't find it, we went back into the church where I asked about it. Turns out that it is inside the church, over the wall near the grave. So we went back in to see it.

Other Sites

After leaving the church we walked around town and found the birth house, the site of "New Place" (the house WS bought on Henley St and retired to). A reconstruction of this house exists on this spot, and the original foundations are still visible in the yard.

Lastly, we saw and walked across Clopton's Bridge. This bridge was built in the century before WS's birth and he would have crossed it many times.

Dinner

We dined at the Pen & Parchment pub which is by Clopton's Bridge. I had beer-battered cod and chips with a Strongbow cider beer. Joann ate some chicken pasta and had a glass of Chardonnay.

Train to London

Back to London on the train.

Sunday, July 23, 2006

Sleeping In / Mass

I slept in while Joann got up a little later than usual to attend the 8:45 Mass at [St Mary of the Angels]. She walked the 1.5 km to church.

I got up at around 9:00 and went downstairs to eat the hotel breakfast. At least the crowds were down from earlier days. After breakfast I walked to Whitely's to use the internet.

Subway

We walked to our normal tube station (Queensway) to find six or seven emergency vehicles and a closed station. I asked some German girls who appeared shaken, and was told that they had witnessed a man "fall in front of a train." I didn't ask for details, but I think he must've been dead (a suicide?). No one seemed to be rushing anyone up to the ambulance. (We watched the news later, and read the free daily paper "The Metro" the next day, but didn't read of any accident at the station.)

We walked down the street to the Bayswater Station and made a couple of connections to get to the Liverpool Street Train Station.

Sketchy notes on pages torn out of the notebook:

Cambridge (Sunday)

-Baywater Station to Oxford Circus (Circle Line) then central line to Liverpool Streets (took an hour to get to LPSS)

Notes from 2006 visit to England

- Train to Cambridge
 - beautiful scenery from nearly empty train
 - saw cricket game in progress
 - woman and three children, she from Orono MN (grad of U of M), sister grad from Hamline
- Cambridge
 - Ate at Regent Café , Beef and Ale Pie and Chicken Curry. Stella Artois beer
 - Tourist Office
 - the "Backs" walk
 - saw punters near bridge
 - Moorhens in canal near pathway, baby mallards, wood pigeons
 - Walked thru St John's College
 - Over Bridge of Sighs
- Ate at All for One
 - Duck quesidillas, hummus and naan bread, chicken strips and curry, Bombadier beer, Pims and lemonade

Monday, July 24, 2006

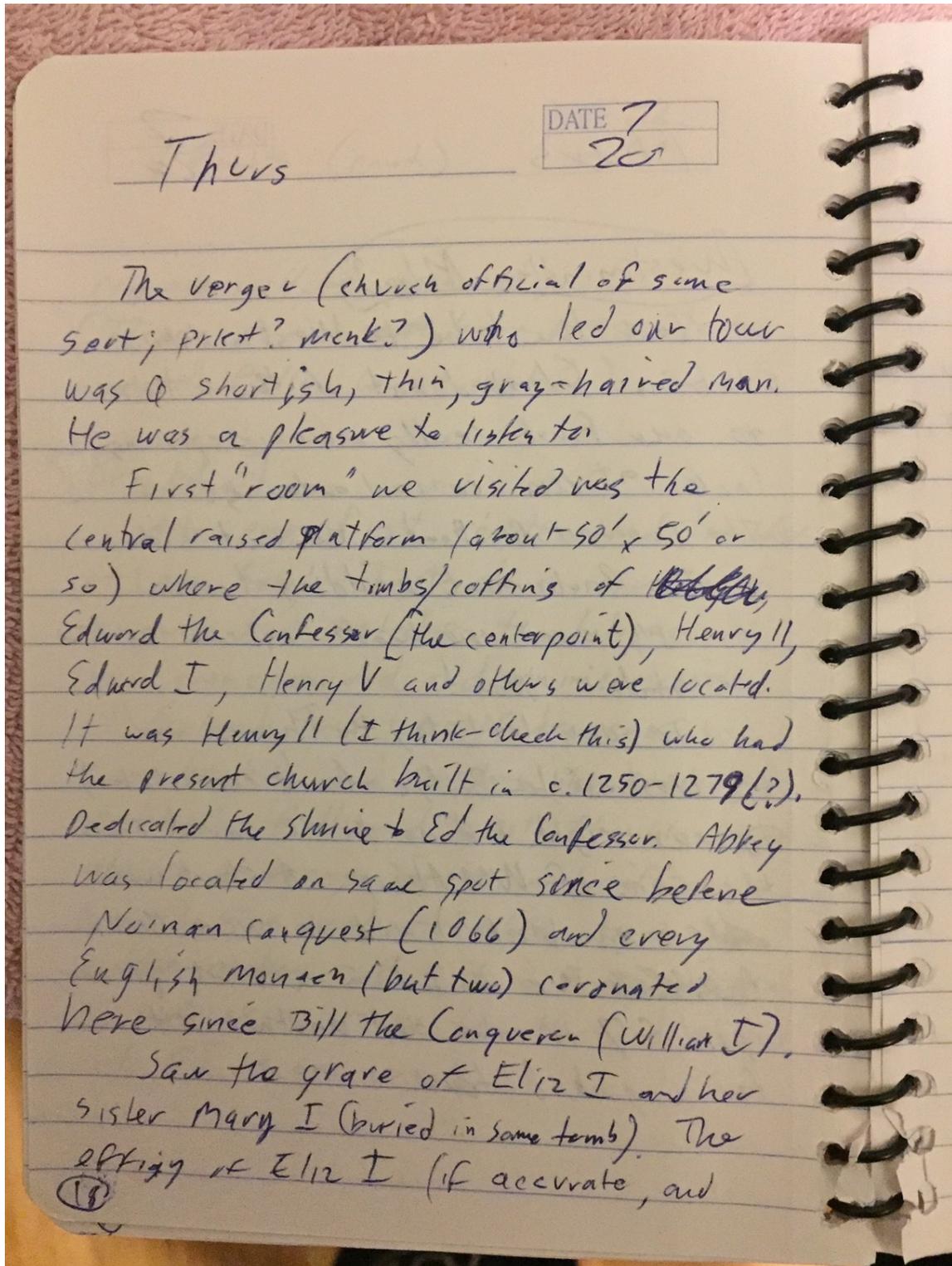
- Breakfast 7:00am sharp, not crowded
- Walk to Paddington Sta
- Train to Bath Spa
 - Rabbits
 - agriculture fields
 - Red brick houses with English gardens
 - crows (in groups), which ones? (Actually: crows, ravens, or rooks?)
- Tour with guide Diana
- Lunch at Rat & Parrot
 - Sausage and Mash, three-bean chili, John Smith beer
- Roman Bath
 - Commentary by Bill Bryson
 - Tasted the water
- Napped in Parade Park (1 pound to enter)
- Boat ride on Avon
- black-spotted gull [they were immature Herring Gulls!], cormorant, peregrine falcon, mute swan

Tuesday, July 25, 2006

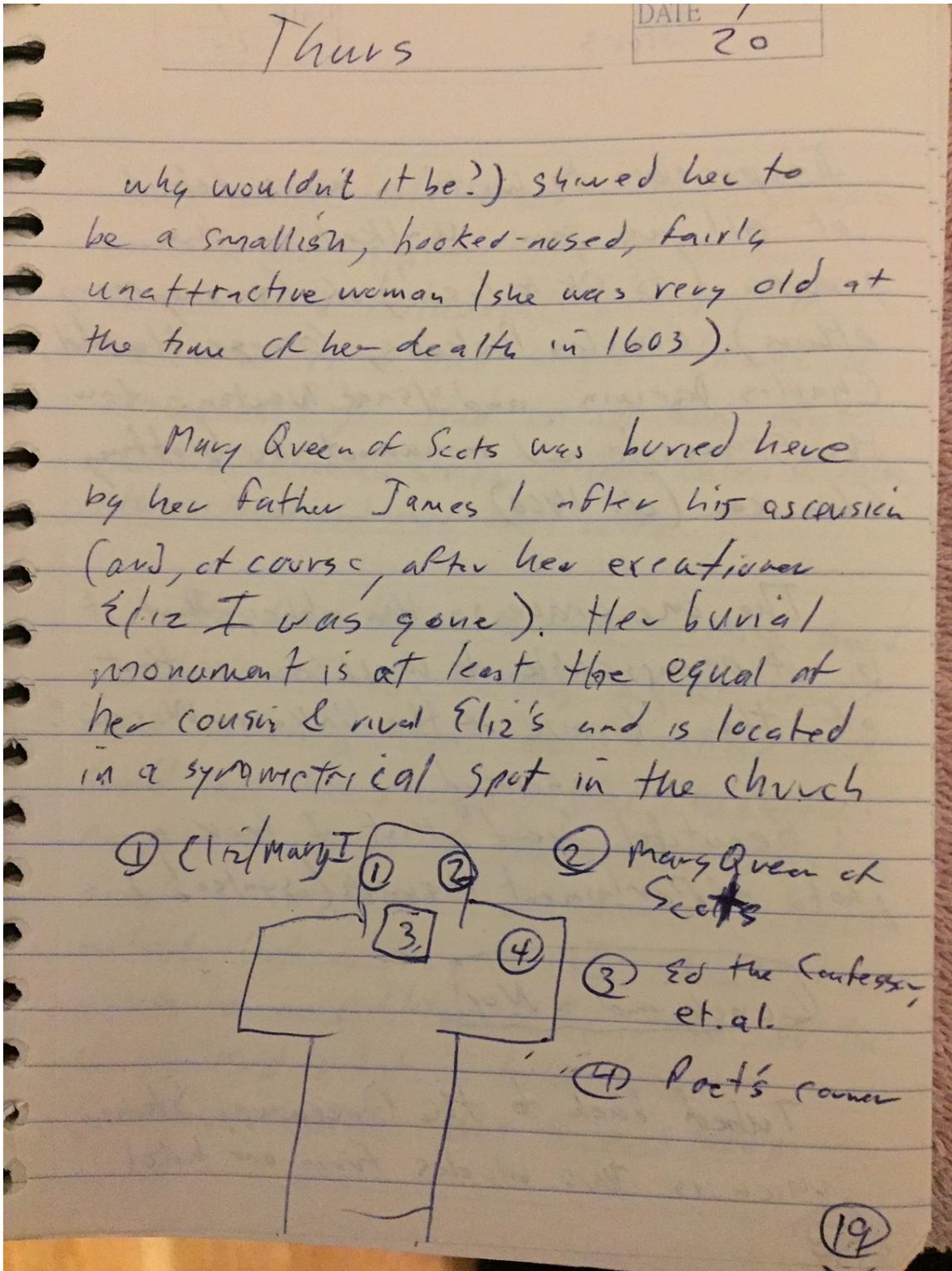
- Birding @Hampstead Heath (*Joann: nothing new here*) [By which she means “nothing beyond what is in the writeup I made shortly after our trip and long ago adapted for the web - pre-Bachblog]
- To room for nap/shower.
- Ate at India Palace for lunch (on Queensway Rd), ate free on my birthday.
- To Baker Street Sta. Sherlock Holmes
- Regent’s park, inner circle, waterfowl all over the place, rose garden, open-air theatre was showing “the Boyfriend,” walked outside of inner circle as far as mosque then back out.
- To St Paul’s Globe to buy t-shirt, met MN girls (St Olaf’s/theater major), and to find Waterloo sta
- Crossed Blackfriars Bridge to BF Sta, train was not moving so bailed and walked along Victoria Emb to Embankment area, ate subway, took tube home – exhausted!

Wednesday, July 26 - Last day

- Breakfast at hotel / Bought tix to Tower
- Central line tube breakdown, had to exit at Marb Arch walk to Bond St, took tube to Tower Hill Station
- No line at Tower?
- Took the “Beefeater” tour
- Saw White Tower, crown jewels, bloody tower, ___ tower, Medieval Palace
- Ravens huge!
- Tube to Embankment Sta, ate at Bell & Compass (burger, chicken salad sand)
- National Gallery
- Charing Cross sta to home
- Napped! Showered
- Whitely for Internet/water (and Boots)
- Souv shopping on Queensway
- “The Shakespeare” pub on Westbourne
 - Mincemeat pie for me, Tiki Masala for Joann, Kronebourg 1664,
 - Football (soccer match) on TV, Manchester United
- Back to room for pack-up



Notebook example page one - Westminster Abbey



Notebook example page two - Westminister Abbey