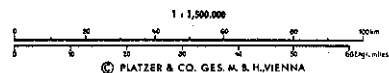


KARTE VON ÖSTERREICH

MAP OF AUSTRIA

CARTE DE L'AUTRICHE

- | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | Staatsgrenze | Frontier |
| | Landesgrenze | Provincial border |
| | Eisenbahn | Railway |
| | Ort mit Seilbahn oder Sessellift | Place with cable car or chair lift |
| | Flugplatz | Airport |
| | Pass | Col |
| | Autobahn | Autovoute |
| | Strasse | Road |
| | Fahrtweg | Voie carrossable |
| | Berghotel, Schutzhaus | Hôtel de montagne, refuge |
| | Schloss, Burg | Château |
| | Ruine | Ruine |



ABER MADS '66 - - - AUSTRIA TOUR

June 24 - July 18

Members of the UCW Elizabethan Madrigal Singers
who went on the 1966 Tour of Austria - .

Sopranos:

Jacqueline Briddes: "I only sleep when I get my head down".
Carol Clough: "I'm just going for a walk".
Anne Davies: "Tell him, Carylin! Tell him, tell him, tell him!"
Carylin Faires: Interpreter Extraordinary.
Mary Jones: Little Turtle Dove.

Contraltos:

Joanna Dark: "Can we do some shopping?"
Susan Riley: "I quite like being abroad".
Ann Stacey: "Atishoo!"
Julie Thomas: "There's a Schloss. Where's me camera?"
Alison Williams: All the Aperture.
Elizabeth Williams: Comparative Commentaries Unlimited.

Tenors:

John Harding: "Must get some fags".
Gordon Maslen: "Don't look at it - just take a picture for the
folks back home!"
Keith Mitchell: "There'll only be two early starts".
Jeremy Timmis: "Light as a FAI-ry!"

Basses:

Michael Brewer: "A - a - a - a - aeelll - mmmmaaah!"
John Hearne: "What's the address of this place we are going to?"
Hywel Roberts: "We're all gungey".
Garrod Stephen: Local Wildlife Expert.
Huw Thomas: "Bells Again"

Conductor:

Peter Jenkins: "Never mind what the audience are doing".

Driver:

Dai Evans: Not afriad of any German!

Bws:

ERF 601 B. Bedford Duple 'Bella Vista' 29 Seater. TK Diesel.

June 24. "Where are you off to?" - "Austria. Coming?"

Aberystwyth, midday. Outside the Chinese Restaurant. Rain.

The Bws was waiting for us. It was grey and black, very smart, but had no name on it and bore a Staffordshire registration. So as Mads arrived on the scene we set about decorating it to show that it was taking us - ABER MADS, none other - to Austria. Across the back window in red and green DayGlo paper we had ABER MADS '66, red and green dragons on each side, and brochures and other propaganda on other windows. Later we altered the destination blind to Llandudno, the only decent Welsh name on it apart from Rhyl. We were ready to leave at noon in the rain.

"Ta-ta, love," John Hearne called to a policewoman as we left the Town, and she even smiled. We had a tea stop at Leominster, and acquired some Royal Welsh Show stickers from a local bus, and added some "Keep Wales Tidy" stickers. In Worcester we all but captured the very gay helmet from a teenage policeman on a moped!

It was an uneventful run via Oxford to London, with a tea-stop at Stokenchurch; we went round the S. Circular road in the early evening with little trouble and joined the dismal Dover road. It is sad to think that this untidy highway, with its dead cars and decrepid gypsy hovel-camps, is many foreigners' first impression of England. This part of the Garden of England does us little credit.

It was getting dark as we arrived in Canterbury, but we went on to Dover for a meal. We had difficulty finding Ann Stacey who was due to join us here from home, but we tracked her down eventually in the Dock Terminal. Some of us ate in an Indian restaurant, which was very entertaining. We went aboard the 0300 ferry after a brief canu in the dock café, where Jerry lost his watch and had it publicly retrieved for him. We walked aboard, singing, while Dai brought the Bws on later, backwards.

Dover seagulls do not appear ever to sleep, and neither did most of us. It was cold on deck. Dawn was breaking as we left. There was a slight swell but the crossing was not rough and no-one was ill. The dawn was pretty and the sun came out briefly as we neared Ostend, and watching this made the otherwise dreary crossing more interesting for those who were too cold or too excited to sleep. But the weather ahead looked grim.

June 25. "So. The match is over, yes?" [German Border Guard]

Ostend - Aalst - Brussels - Frankfurt.

We landed at Ostend in the early morning and had no trouble with the Customs; we left the town at 07.30 with almost everyone asleep. The weather became dull and close, and the scenery was of no particular interest, all rather flat.

We decided to pull in for breakfast at a little town called Aalst, near Brussels. We tried one restaurant on the outskirts, but the owner was in evening dress, there were two dead cars in the courtyard, and none of us liked the look of the place. So we went into what turned out to be an interesting little town.

It was market day, or something. The square and all the side streets around the centre were packed with stalls. We nearly got the Bws stuck in a side street in our efforts to find somewhere to park. Finding breakfast was not easy as the place was so full of people and the stalls obscured what few cafes there were. Some of us found a place that served us tri-lingual omelettes, and coffee in huge cups with personal percolators clipped on top. We left Aalst later than intended, after a lengthy breakfast, and the boys had to be persuaded that the girls of other towns en route might be even prettier than those here.

We rejoined the autoroute to Brussels, but by-passed the city, though we did have a good view of the Atomium. Most of the party were now very tired. We thought we had missed a turning in Leuven but it was the road into the city 'zentrum'. Getting back to the main road was complicated. The Belgians drive with about as much care and discipline as marauding rogue elephants, and this was all the more noticeable on the bumpy, badly cambered main road between Brussels and Liege. The scenery did not inspire us to keep awake either, the towns and villages being scruffy and untidy and lacking in character.

The weather deteriorated towards the afternoon, and when we came to the German border it was raining. A comical little official came aboard to check our passports and we all insisted on having them stamped. He took great pride in this, using the ceiling of the Bws to rest on, much to Dai's consternation! We had a long wait here while the German road tax was paid, and some of the boys decided to have a game with The Ball in No Man's Land. But the Border Guards did not approve, and vetoed it.

Now came the famous German autobahnen. We by-passed Aachen and later had a lunch-stop. It felt like late afternoon but was only just after midday. We ate at a rather Americanische eating house where the idea seemed to be to bolt down your sauerkraut and get back on the bahn as schnell as possible. We later by-passed Cologne, crossed the Rhine, and got on to the Frankfurt autobahn. This is one of the older roads: the surface is terrible and cut down our speed a lot in places. No wonder one sees very few old cars in Germany.

Away to our right was the Rhine Valley, and the scenery became like a background for German fairy tales, with little red Pied Piper towns and deep wooded valleys. We crossed one enormous viaduct with river far below and a steep hill either side, and a wind sock on the bridge itself. Later the road around Limburg was spectacular: a long steep hill down to another huge viaduct across the Lahn river and a magnificent fairy-tale castle perched on a rock above the town. (One month later this was the scene of the terrible Belgian coach-crash).

But the last leg of the journey to Frankfurt was tedious. Everyone was tired, including Dai, who had done a marvellous job but who was still far more wide awake than most of us. We approached Frankfurt from the south after passing through torrential rain on the Taunus Mountains. We found our hostel without difficulty, close beside the River Main. We unloaded into a milling crowd of multi-racial students and were allotted dormitories which were a bit cramped - but we could have slept in trees!

After supper about a dozen people wanted to cash travellers' cheques so went with Dai to the Station. But one got lost on the way back and the party arrived back at 22.03 and had a lecture from the storm-trooping porter whose mission in life it was to curfew the camp at 22.00!

June 26. "Der Fuehrer ist Tod." (Hotelier in Munich)

Frankfurt - Nuremburg - Munich.

We left the Haus der Jugend at 09.30 and went into the centre of the city in order to find some breakfast. But this was a Lutheran Sunday and there was nothing open - except the Railway Station again. Here we all managed to get breakfast, and buy fruit and papers.

We left Frankfurt-in-the-Rain at 10.30 after a car nearly wrapped itself around the front of us, and made for Nuremburg. The scenery was much the same as in Rheinland - sombre forests and wide-sweeping hills, grim legends brooding in the rain, but cheerful little red towns every so often to lend colour, each one as correctly typical in architecture as the next.

On the way to Nuremburg we made more propaganda for the Bws, to tell the world who we were and where we came from. We had an excellent lunch in a small restaurant opposite a big sign saying "Nurnberger Tombola"! We were amused at how particular the Germans are about correct service - even the plates had to be the right way round so that the crest of the restaurant was at the top! Afterwards we had difficulty finding our way out of the city and as a result had a tour of the centre. There are some interesting old buildings, many rebuilt after the war exactly as they were before being bombed.

It was a good run from Nuremburg to Munich. The autobahn is spectacular in places and we were able to cruise at high speed. It was interesting to note the various nationalities of cars that passed us, the occupants of which always showed great interest in us. Nearer Munich the scenery became less interesting and the country flatter; the rain continued, and was very heavy at times, causing a couple of minor accidents earlier on.

We arrived in Munich at 19.00 but had a little trouble finding our hotel. It was a small place in the south of the city, opposite the shop of Matthias Dick! When we were checking in, Carylin, who was as usual interpreting, referred to Mitch as the 'Fuehrer' (of our party), and was told gently that the Fuehrer was dead. Difficult! We had a light meal in the bar, with comical Deutsch TV, and a bit of a canu after. But later a few of the boys joined some of the Munich locals in a beery canu which got louder as it got later and was fine for international relations if not too good for the throat. They were still at it at 01.30 with the dubious help of a seafaring guitarist.

June 27. "You should have an umbrella?"

Munich - Salzburg.

Breakfast at 08.30, with many caustic comments about last night's roistering! We left at 10.00 after having had some time for shopping. It was raining a little. We passed two spectacular lorry-crashes on the way, one involving two vehicles, several drums of oil, and at least one human casualty. Later we saw a big Mercedes-Benz wagon which had run out of road and was lying like a sleeping lion on the grass in a ditch. Near Frankfurt we had seen a big wagon which had swopped lanes and directions and had caused no end of havoc in doing so. The wagons usually haul trailers which gallop along behind like obedient children most of the time, but are inclined to be self-willed when the roads are wet. And when a few tons of trailer run

amok the consequences can be colourful, as we saw this morning. The road to Salzburg passes a large lake - Chiem See, which boasts a playground for US Army personnel. We passed also a sign to Berchtesgaden, Hitler's one-time summer hideout. The sign was in English only - the Germans are not keen to advertise it.

At the Customs on the Austrian border we came up behind a bus-load of people who showed great interest in us - they were a Lutheran church outing. Earlier we had been overtaken by a busload of girls, but saw no more of them: they were much too fast for us!

We arrived in Salzburg at midday and stopped in Mirabelplatz in the busy centre, causing much interest to passers-by and slight concern to drivers of over-long trolley-busses. Mitch went off to find Prof. Sturzl of the University, and they eventually came back with several students and we were allotted to our accommodation for our stay in Salzburg. Most of us were with families and went off to have lunch, after which some of us went back into town to do some shopping, but it rained - and how! Salzburg is famous for its rain, and one of our lasting impressions of the place is of everyone carrying umbrellas - men carrying pretty umbrellas, pretty girls (oh yes!) carrying prettier umbrellas and draped in Salzburger black capes; people on bikes and in narrow alleys and even in shops with umbrellas up and all banging into one another; black umbrellas, multi-coloured umbrellas, folding, collapsible, transparent, conical, comical, and commercial - everyone has them, but hardly anyone seemed to wear a raincoat, for the rain just comes straight down and an umbrella is evidently considered to be sufficient protection.

In the evening we all went to see a student production of "Cosi fan Tutte" (Mozart of course) in the Mozarteum. We had been advised to dress appropriately (they take their opera seriously) but had been warned that it was 'only a student effort'. But their modesty was misplaced. Although some of the voices showed traces of immaturity at times, the whole production was so scintillating that everyone enjoyed immensely. It also served to show what was expected of us!

We all went home immediately afterwards, because the Austrians go to bed early.... But they also get up early.....

June 28. "And have you proved ze room?" (President of the Mozarteum)

Salzkammergut - and the first concert.

We all met at 09.00 at the University building. There was something dogmatic about the way the rain came down. We went first to Hallein with the intention of visiting the salt mine, but every other visitor in the area had the same idea and there was a two-hour delay. So it was decided instead to do a brief tour of the Salzkammergut region, despite the rain. We were travelling in our own BWS, but our guides were Suzanne and Peter, two students from the University.

We went first to Mondsee via the autobahn, and visited the church which was used for the wedding scene in the film "The Sound of Music". The church is riotously ornate, as was the wont of the Baroque style, but the acoustics were to our liking and we sang two anthems - "Laudate" and "Ave Verum" [Byrd] - not "How da ya salve a prablum like Ma-ree-ya"! - to the great delight of some English visitors who happened to be in the church at the time. This was followed by coffee

and sumptuous cakes at a nearby and much-patronised café, with more songs. We returned to Salzburg via Fuschl, with alternate sun and heavyweight rain.

There was a thunderstorm lunchtime which thoroughly drenched some of us and thus delayed the start of our planned afternoon rehearsal in the Mozarteum. Our first concert was immediately afterwards at 5pm. We were all rather keyed up, perhaps too much so at first, but a warm welcome from the President of the Mozarteum and from the capacity audience quickly put us at ease, and the concert was a notable success and a worthy start to our tour. We were warmly acclaimed by the audience and highly praised in the local press (as we found some days later). It was also a memorable experience to sing in such a magnificent hall as the Wiener Saal, with its lavish decorations and glittering chandeliers and its aura of having housed a long list of distinguished performers. The only trouble was that with the oppressive weather (there was another storm just before the concert) and the large audience, the acoustics were less favourable than when we had "proved the room" earlier!

For our evening meal we were taken to an Austrian establishment that would appear to have no English equivalent. A vast building that had once been a monastery was devoted to drinking, eating, and general roistering. We commandeered a 30-foot table and pulled out all the stops. Food, colourful, heavily-salted and highly-spiced, was dispensed at a buffet counter, the idea being to go for what you wanted and no holds barred. Beer and other drinks were served in pint-sized pewter mugs, energetically delivered by fifteen-stone ale-wives who carried six pots in each fist and probably pulverised their husbands each week for the housekeeping money. We began to sing, but presently one of the staff of the place who had a fearsome squint (he could never have been a monk!) came and emphatically silenced us. We obeyed, lest we be cast by the ale-wives into some horrible nether dungeon. The ban was later lifted by the Abbot but by that time the original enthusiasm had gone.

It was curious to see how early the local revellers went home. The halls were rapidly emptying by 21.30. Prof. Sturzl joined us at this time. But by this time most of us were obliged to begin to make our ways home - by trolley-bus, most of which either pull trailers or are articulated. The conductor sits at a little cash desk and punches holes in tickets that look like a map of a treasure island.

The Austrians drive with a gay panache that gives them obvious enjoyment but a rather high accident rate. Riding around Salzburg in a V6 Taunus Sport with a carefree lady driver on a wet day can be exhilarating.

June 29. "And now we slide down forty metres...!"

The saltmine at Hallein. Salzburg - Horn.

About half the party went to the saltmines again, and met at Mirabelplatz at 08.30. The other half spent the morning in Salzburg visiting some of the innumerable churches, and doing some shopping.

We went to the mines in the Bws. This time there was no long queue and we were able to board the cable cars almost immediately to be taken up to the top of the mountain. Four people ride in each car, and they soar over the tree-tops and out over a deep ravine, with splendid views down the valley to Salzburg. From the station at the top there was a short but very steep walk down to the entrance to the mine, where there were several men about, dressed in voluminous white overalls with generous padding on the pant-seats and under the armpits. We were provided with similar garb, which prompted wild speculation as to what the padding was for. The visit to the mine began with a very long walk through a narrow tunnel, all in step, heigh-ho, heigh-ho, and complete with commentary translated by Peter. We were shown some old workings, how the salt was extracted and how the tunnels gradually contract over the years and have to be abandoned. Then we came to the first slide and the fun started.

The method of getting from higher to lower levels in the mine is drastic but effective. You simply slide down the bannisters! Two wooden rails about nine inches apart run steeply down into dark oblivion. Six people and the Guide sit on these rails, one cheek on each, feet astride and legs in the air; the Guide lets go, and the lower level just comes up to meet you! Now we knew why we had padded seats! Apparently nylon underwear has been known to melt.... One party slid straight off the end of one chute, but then Mitch was at the front....

There were several of these slides, but one of them was longer than the others - "one hundred and forty metres!" - and gave one a bottomless pit sensation after the other shorter ones. We walked along more tunnels and even walked into Germany. We were shown exhibits of samples of the rock salt, and models of the mine and demonstrations of how salt is refined and used in industry.

We went across an underground lake in a little boat, singing, and the lake was surrounded by little coloured lights. After more rapid descents by primitive traction we boarded a little train, sitting astride a bench, and hurtled through dark and dripping tunnels at what seemed to be breakneck speed, shot through a small area in the open air, then back again underground until we slithered to a halt at the exit and owlishly posed for a group photo on the train. Finally we boarded a toast-rack train hauled by a spluttering diesel engine and went back down the road - phut-phut - to the entrance building, where we extricated ourselves from our protective garments and went back to the Bws. It was parked demurely beside a big Dutch coach which was "All-Climate Air-Conditioned" for the benefit of a raucous gaggle of Americans who had followed us round the mine.

We all left Salzburg regretfully at noon, after a big send-off from students and hosts in Mirabelplatz. We drove eastwards along the autobahn in very heavy rain, with the scenery gradually becoming less alpine and more Central European. The farms in this area are huge fortresses of agriculture, generally with all the buildings built together in a square.

We stopped at Linz in the early afternoon and had lunch at the station, but Gordon went off to look up an old scouting pal of his. It was raining and there was a very cold wind here. Linz is an industrial city and was not very inspiring on this cheerless afternoon. Gordon later reappeared with 'Mopps', who greeted us in Welsh! He arranged to join us at the weekend in Vienna.

It was still raining determinedly when we left Linz and continued our journey eastwards towards Horn. The autobahn between Linz and Vienna was not yet complete and came to an end half-way between Linz and Ybbs, and we joined a rather inferior major road. The rain continued and we were obliged to drive on lights as everybody was doing so although it was still several hours before dusk. We left this road at Ybbs, and crossed the Danube. It was not blue. It was a muddy grey, swirling and sullen and overfull from recent rains. Big barges paced us as we drove close alongside it - very close, with precious little protection between the road and the water, very active and of doubtful depth. To our left were the vineyards of the Wachau, rich and green and orderly. And across the river to our right were the thick green forests of the country around Melk with its magnificent monastery, sphinx-like atop a shrub-covered crag. We passed close under the Castle at Durnstein, where Richard the Lionheart was once imprisoned.

We stopped on the outskirts of Krems, in a little square. Mitch went to phone through to Horn. We inspected the plumbing of the police station; and there was a vintage fire engine on parade outside the fire station. We discovered later that there was a fire-fighting festival or something due. Apparently the local fire brigades run a carnival and the celebrations end up with a ceremonial drenching of the towns! We had passed little groups of firemen apparently in training in several places in the Wachau and had thought at first that they were limbering up in case of flood from the swollen river. They had all waved cheerily as we passed.

From Krems we left the Danube and turned up the valley of one of its tributaries, the Kamp, apparently an old Celtic name descriptive of the meanderings of this rather delightful little river. The villages here were very Van Gogh and looked almost Spanish in character, due largely to the colour of the building materials. Our passage through these places caused a good deal of local interest, for we were now well away from the tourist areas and were seeing the unadulterated countryside. Little roadside huts had dark interiors which were probably full of the raw and ripening materials of the Wachau wines. They had low doors and no windows and outside hung strange harvest-time pagan symbols of the fruit of the vines that were terraced across the hills behind. The road was narrow and winding and largely deserted. The houses in the villages were bright with flowers. A heron stood in the middle of the river, hoping for a fish before dark.

It was dark, and damp again, when we arrived in Horn at 20.30. The town was not as remote as it seemed, being on the main road from Vienna to Prague, and only 20 miles from the Iron Curtain.

We had to locate Dr. Hans Kapitan, the headmaster of the local high school, who had been instrumental in arranging the major part of our tour in Austria. We found a man who knew where to find him, and he took us up a road that was 'up', removing the barriers to let us through! We found Dr. Kapitan at his school, sang a madrigal in the entrance hall, met a couple of his staff, then went back to the inn where we were all staying. Here we were greeted by a tile which suddenly fell off the roof of the Inn and narrowly missed hitting the Bws; and we were welcomed by an Irishman named Bart Woods who was teaching here.

We were given a substantial meal, but turned in early, as the long day's journeyings, both under and over the ground, had been tiring.



CONCERT
OF THE ELIZABETHAN MADRIGAL SINGERS,
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF WALES, ABERYSTWYTH,
WIENER SAAL OF THE FOZARTEUM, JUNE 28, 1966, 5 p.m.

PROGRAMME

CONDUCTOR: PETER JENKINS, B.MUS.

MOTETS

SACERDOTES DOMINI.....BYRD
AVE VERUM CORPUS.....BYRD
SICUT CERVUS.....PALESTRINA
SITIVIT ANIMA MEA.....PALESTRINA
SUPER FLUMINA BABYLONIS.....PALESTRINA

SOFRANO SOLO - MARY JONES

APRÈS UN RÊVE.....FAURÉ

BALLETS AND MADRIGALS

SING WE AND CHANT IT.....MORLEY
ADIEU SWEET MARIILIS.....WILBYE
TO SHORTEN WINTER'S SADNESS.....WOLKES
WEEP NO MORE, THOU SORRY BOY.....TOMKINS
ALL CREATURES FOW.....BENNET

WELSH FOLK SONGS

CÂN SERCH..... arranged by HOLST
Y GLOMENarranged by HEARNE
THE ASH GROVE.....arranged by LLEWELLYN
SUO -GAN.....arranged by DE LLOYD
DACW 'NGHARIAD.....arranged by WALFORD DAVIES

BARITONE SOLOS - JOHN HEARNE

TWO SONGS FROM "ITALI MISCEES LIEDERBUCH"WOLF

PART SONGS AND NEGRO SPIRITUALS

SWEET WAS THE SONG.....SMITH
THE BLUE BIRD.....STANFORD
OH, WASN'T THAT A WIDE RIVER?.....arranged by JACOBSON
GWINE TO RIDE UP IN THE CHARIOT.....arranged by JACOBSON
LITTLE DAVID, PLAY ON YO' HARP.....arranged by JACOBSON

June 30. "That's a six-seater chapel". (Dai)

Horn: Two Concerts. A Monastery. A Schloss.
A Handball Match.

We had to get up early as we were all going to visit the school at 08.30. We inspected it briefly. Schools look and smell much the same in any language; but they did have a fine gymnasium. As far as we could gather it was a kind of comprehensive public (boarding) school though the set-up has no real British equivalent. It was founded in 1657 and has occupied the present new buildings since 1961. Most of the pupils were boarders and we gave two concerts to them this morning in a hall in the town.

Our first concert was to the lower school at 09.15. This was horribly early to be giving a concert to anybody, and it was a bit ropey at times. But the children were very well behaved, considering it was the end of term and the programme was all in a foreign language.

But after a coffee break at 10.00 we sang to the older children at 11.00 and this was much better. They understood the music better and were a very appreciative audience. We were more at ease too, and more wide awake!

Horn seemed to specialise in shops with bizarre names. Hans Band was a Blumen Obst gemund (florist-cum-coffee shop), Josef Bitter was a butcher, but best of all was August Germ who had a gift shop next door to our hotel. A fire engine was on display in the town square, advertising the coming carnival. The buildings in the town had plenty of character and many of them boasted magnificent wooden doors.

We went back to the hotel for lunch, then were met at 14.00 by Prof. Kreissl and his wife. He was on the staff of the school, and undertook with Bart Woods to show us around the district.

We were taken first to a monastery at Altenburg, a few miles west of Horn. It was founded in 1144, but contains a Baroque chapel that is nothing if not lavish. To the non-conformist eye it resembled a rather tall antique shop, with a profusion of highly-coloured statues to various saints, and an overuse of gold paint. But it had inviting acoustics, so we sang a couple of motets for our guides.

The monastery itself contained some sumptuously painted ceilings, and a rather fine library with a large number of priceless (and untouchable) books. There was also a rather weird crypt, underground and dank, with strange paintings on the walls.

From Altenburg we moved on to Schloss Rosenberg, perched on a cliff high above the River Kamp, over whose valley it had a commanding view. The castle was full of mad passages and brooding rooms, dark and damp in the rain. We were told that the floor of one of the rooms was 500 years old: we sang it an appropriate birthday song. The place boasted a large collection of relics of armoury, etc., and was generally more interesting than the monastery, though less well preserved. It seemed to be the sort of place where it would be most advisable to keep on good terms with one's host - unwelcome visitors could be very easily disposed of over the edge of that cliff. The small windows let in very little light to the cramped rooms, and the tiny ("six-seater") chapel was especially gloomy.

Later we travelled to the east side of Horn some 14 km to a place called Eggenburg. We parked the Bws right in the middle of the wide square beside a horse trough and pump, which caused considerable amusement. We all had afternoon tea/coffee/apfelsaft and delicious cakes in a friendly little café before being taken to a sports field to see a Handball match. This is a game peculiar to Central Europe (though the Americans have had a go but appear to have been soundly beaten on every attempt, at least in serious international matches, which this was). It is more or less football played upside down, the ball being thrown, slapped, and punched around the field, the tallest man with the biggest hands appearing to have the advantage. Austria were playing Poland in this match, and Poland suffered considerably from Austria's No.7, so big that we nicknamed him Matterhorn. He looked as if he could easily have thrown the ball across the Czech border, which was only a few miles away, and this possibility of such an international situation amused us, as did the perplexed expressions on the faces of the local crowd when we cheered both sides! The interval was enlivened by the town band, all dressed up in grey suits with black homberg hats: but best of all was the big bass drum, on its own little pram and pulled by a small boy, also in uniform! Austria won, 19-15.

We returned to Horn for a substantial meal at the hotel in the company of the Kreissls and Herr Kapitan, who told us that the Seamen's Strike in Britain was over. He presented us each with a book about the history of his school, and the evening ended with a very noisy canu.

July 1. "What town is this?" (Ali)

Horn to Vienna.

We left Horn at 10.00. But first we went to the School to say Good-bye to the Kreissls - she was dressed in traditional dirndl and gave us some flowers - and we picked up two of the senior boys to give them a lift to Vienna. At last the weather had brightened up and we left in bright sun.

The country between Horn and Vienna is not particularly interesting, being rather flat and having more in common with the Hungarian Plain than with the popular idea of Austrian scenery, but the ripening crops of grain were very colourful. The peasants in the roadside fields were picturesque characters, most of whom downed tools and waved as we passed.

We arrived in Vienna at noon, crossing the now quieter Danube again and speeding along a new motorway into the north of the city. The traffic was pretty wild, and unpredictable trams added to the hazards, but we found our hotel with little difficulty and unloaded all our goods and chattels before going into the centre for lunch. Some of us went to a little café where we were served good food by a waitress with gorgeous dark eyes that gave the boys quite an appetite.

The city centre is called the Ring and was in a state of chaos with a large road repair scheme. It was said that the city fathers had ordered a search for the new Mayor's school certificates because he had not had a college education! While they were about it they appeared to be renovating the tramway system.

July 2. Free day for sight-seeing. Everybody did their own thing.

July 3. "There's no class distinction in this Church"
(Warden of Anglican Church, Vienna).

Sunday in Vienna: we sing at the English Church and at St. Stephen's Cathedral, visit the Volksoper and the Grinzing.

We had to be up pretty early to be at the English Church to sing at morning service. This church is for the benefit of British diplomats and any other British people living and working in Vienna. In fact it felt like a throw-back to the heyday of the British Empire. But we received a warm welcome and sang three anthems as part of the service. The Church is run by a very lively chaplain but unfortunately we did not meet him as he was away in Istanbul or somewhere. We did however hear one of his sermons which was read by a Warden, and which was a very searching study of I Cor. 12:27. We were afterwards entertained to coffee in the crypt, while plans were made for us to visit the Volksoper in the evening. The Church is closely connected with the British Embassy, and the gentleman who gave us all the information on the opera was very much part of the Embassy and lived in a sumptuous flat that felt like something out of Harry Lime.

At noon we went to Stephansdom, the huge city Cathedral of Saint Stephen where we had been invited to sing some anthems at midday mass. It was in direct contrast to the simplicity of the English Church, and to observe a Mass in progress was a novel experience for many of us. We sang five motets during the course of the Ritual, and the acoustics of the place were a joy to perform in. Some English visitors came to us afterwards and told us how delighted they were to hear Byrd in Vienna.

Outside, it was very hot. We had lunch and returned to the hostel to relax and later to rehearse for an hour or so to keep in trim. Gordon's friend from Linz ("Mopps") coached us in our German pronunciation in one of our pieces which we were due to sing in a competition later in the week.

In the evening we went to the Volksoper to see "The Gypsy Baron". We had a snack in a typically Viennese coffee-house beforehand. It was very stuffy in the theatre but the show was most enjoyable. It seemed to recapture the gaiety of the great days of Vienna, was exuberant and very colourful. Mopps gave us a synoptic translation at half-time which added to our enjoyment of the show.

Our visit to the Grinzing afterwards was more atour of duty than a spontaneous success. This is an area of open-air cafés dedicated to consumption of the products of the surrounding vineyards. Pseudo-gypsy music and highly-salted food designed not to stem hunger but to increase thirst did not prove to be the most welcome end to a tiring day, and we did not stay long.

July 4. "Who'll take me to Vienna Woods?" (Jackie)

Vienna to Gleisdorf - and what a welcome!

It was very hot again when we left Vienna at 10.00. Mopps came with us as far as Wiener Neustadt, and he kept us informed about all the landmarks en route. He was also able to direct us out of Vienna around a bewildering 'umleitung' caused by some further road works. Otherwise we may well have landed unintentionally in Vienna Woods! We were indeed sad to have to say Goodbye to Mopps.

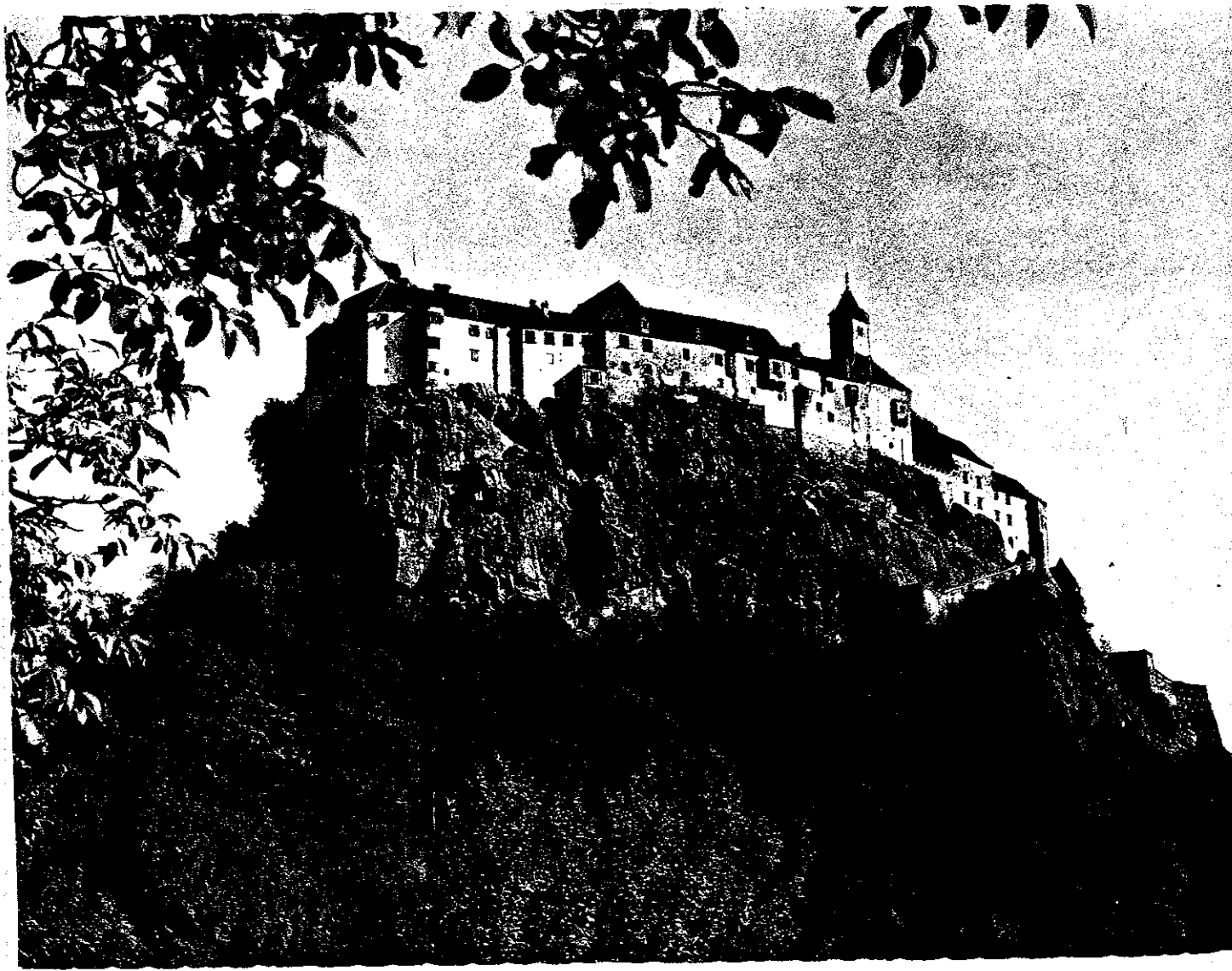
We continued due south from Wiener Neustadt on N54 into darkening weather. When we arrived at Aspang a fair old storm was getting going so we pulled in for lunch at an old railway hotel. We were greeted outside by a huge St. Bernard. The storm hammered away in the nearby hills while we had a long but satisfying lunch.

From Aspang the road climbed up into the exotic hills of Burgenland, the last high ground in Austria before the great open plains of Hungary. Indeed at Friedburg we nearly took a wrong turn and all but went towards Szombathely. No doubt someone would have stopped us before long! The road was very bad in places, and one unexpected ramp 'bottomed' the suspension of the Bws and played havoc with our lunch-time omelettes. The surface was made the more treacherous by frequent thundery showers, and one little Steyr-Puch had landed upside down on the verge not long before we passed.

For these reasons we were about an hour later than we intended in arriving at Gleisdorf. But as soon as we appeared at 16.00 we were given a fantastic welcome. As if from nowhere there appeared a delightful school choir - a couple of dozen charming little girls dressed in colourful dirndl costume - and they sang some welcome folk songs to which we had to reply, which wasn't easy, especially as we were not in national costume by any means! They carried little posies of wild flowers which they presented to our girls; we had a traditional welcome swig of local cider and a hunk of heavy bread; the Mayor made a speech, which was translated for us by a very elegant schoolteacher named Erika, who was to be our guide. All this took place in the square outside the Town Hall, into which we were then taken to be allocated our accommodation.

Most of us were staying in a little gasthaus on the edge of the town (popn. 4000) but some of the girls were staying at a house by the square. Before supper we began a guided tour of the town but this was cut short by a cracking good thunderstorm that banged right into the centre of the town and was quite an entertainment. While it was blowing itself out we sat in a café drinking coffee and having a really swingin' canu.

We had an enormous evening meal which bolstered us for the shock we received when we were told that we were to sing in the local senior school at 08.00 next morning!! So most people went to bed early. But Carylin was busy translating a synopsis of next evening's concert programme into German.



July 5. "I hope we're not going too far: I haven't taken my pill!"
(Carylin - who wishes to remain anonymous)

Two concerts, 11 hours apart. Swimming. A schloss.

Fancy giving a concert at 8 o'clock in the morning, then! Several of us got up at about six in order to be wide enough awake by 08.00. As a result we managed to sing quite well. The audience comprised senior pupils of local schools, and they were wide awake as they normally start school each day at 07.30! They were very attentive and appreciative.

We sang in a Community Hall in the town centre, a very well-equipped building provided for cultural events, dances, public meetings and the like. This little town even has its own cultural adviser! After our first concert we were given coffee, rolls, etc., and there were even cigarettes provided for us. But then came news that our next concert, due for 11.00, had to be cancelled owing to an outbreak of diphtheria among the younger children in the area. After our coffee we visited the secondary school, a very fine building with a very pleasant central courtyard complete with fountain.

Our guide here was Prof. Liener, who was a real Anglophile, even to the extent of running a Triumph Herald and having quite a taste for tea! He took us out to a swimming pool at a village nearby called St. Ruprecht, on the River Raab, which crosses into Hungary, changes its name to Raba and eventually makes it to the Danube. The sun was hot and the swim was vigorous; we returned to Gleisdorf for lunch.

In the afternoon we all went on a trip to Riegersburg. (It was not too far, so Carylin was reassured!) In fact it was about 16 miles S.E. of Gleisdorf, its main claim to fame being a splendid schloss perched on a crag so steep that the castle holds the distinction of never having been taken in a war. It's not surprising. Even to walk leisurely up to it in peacetime is quite an ordeal, especially on a sweltering day like this. But it was well worth it if for no other reason than to meet the Guide. He was a retired schoolmaster from Graz. He looked like a cross between Mr. Pastry and Sean O'Casey, and his commentaries on the architecture, furnishings, paintings, and history of the place were so vigorous and colourful that one hardly needed to be able to understand German to be able to appreciate what he was talking about. His graphic description of what used to be done with a scimitar was particularly telling. Prof. Liener added his own descriptions of certain things, such as the puking bridge outside the banqueting hall (!) and the chair specially designed to prevent its besotted occupant from slumping ignominiously to the floor after six days' imbibing! In one of the halls we were shown an old pipe organ that was especially interesting because it was in pre-Bach mean tone tuning and could not be played in such keys as Db major. We sang in here and in the chapel, which pleased Mr Pastry no end.

Despite the strenuous climb up to the castle, it was well worth the effort. The building contained some magnificent inlaid wood ceilings and doors, scores of relics, and some fantastic old stoves that formed a primitive central heating system. Its extraordinary position afforded some extensive views of the beautiful Styrian countryside, and on clear days it is possible to see as far as Hungary. Just below the castle is a very impressive but simple monument to local men killed in war service.

The scramble down from the castle was almost as difficult as the climb up, and we were glad of a cool drink on the terrace of a café in the village before the return journey to Gleisdorf. The weather became almost unbearably hot, and big storm clouds built up in the south-west. While we were having our evening meal a wild storm came sweeping across the plain and engulfed Gleisdorf in another half-hour deluge. The suddenness and violence of the storm was quite alarming, but we were told that even this was mild by local standards.

Our evening concert for the townsfolk was very difficult. We were wilting under the pressure of such overwhelming hospitality - the meal we had just had was the climactic contributory factor! After a dawn concert, a morning swim, and afternoon's mountaineering and an evening banquet we had to work very hard indeed to produce any sound at all! But it was quite an event for us since it was Pete's 100th concert as a member of Mads; and we felt we had to try and return the warmth of the welcome we had received in this little town by putting on a good show, for, as Mitch said in a vote of thanks, to us now, Austria meant Gleisdorf.

But they hadn't finished, not by a long way! After the concert we were taken to the best hotel in town and introduced to the local wine - if we dared! - in company with town dignitaries and some of the prettiest of the local girls. What a day! What a night!!

July 6. Goodbye to Gleisdorf, eventually! Graz. Wolfsberg.

They wouldn't let us leave Gleisdorf until the latest possible moment. We spent the morning shopping and dodging the showers, while Mitch, with help from Prof. Liener, fixed up overnight accommodation en route to Spittal. We finally left after lunch at about 13.30, but not before we had been given a tray of fresh peaches! And two girls stopped us as we passed their home, and gave roses to Mary. "Gleisdorf", Mitch told the Mayor, "is the capital of Austria as far as we are concerned." They all came to see us off: Prof. Liener with his Triumph Herald, and Erika our guide, and the Cultural Adviser.

We went first to Graz and got all tangled up in some diversions due to road works and seemed to do an unintentional tour of the whole town. One policeman on point duty nearly had apoplexy when he realised our Bws was right-hand-drive! We got out of the place eventually but not without a struggle, and continued on N70 towards the Packsattel Pass. But first we stopped at Voitsberg for tea, and parked the Bws in the main street where it provided a lot of interest for the local old age pensioners.

The views from the Packsattel were spectacular, changing constantly as the road snaked up over the mountain pass and took us into more rugged country. We arrived at Wolfsberg in the late afternoon, having passed down a steep valley with tortuous bends in the road (for the negotiation of which Dai was suitably applauded) and past a foul-smelling phosphorous works at Twimberg. It's a beautiful valley but the air is brown!

We spent the night in a new guest house built over a garage, which meant we had a bit of fun finding it. Our Bws, meandering around the town, caused so much interest that one girl walked straight into a lamp-post while watching us! The plumbing in the guest house was all up the creek: the cold taps produced warm water, and the toilets

were flushed with near-boiling water! Furthermore, the toilet windows were large with plain glass that afforded splendid views both ways, and on one floor the electric wiring had got a bit mixed up so that the switch outside the gents' toilet was found to control the lighting for the ladies. Hm! After a very nice meal in a nearby restaurant we had a rehearsal in the car showroom in company with a BMW 2000, a Simca, a Skoda 1000MB, and an NSU Prinz. The acoustics were good but there was nothing to sit on and it was tiring, so after a quiet drink we all went to bed early.

July 7. "Elisabethan Madrigalchor aus Wales, England" arrives in Spittal-an-der-Drau for the Choral Festival.

We left Wolfsberg at about 10 and made for Klagenfurt, where we found ourselves right in the tourist area. We did not go right into the town, but stopped by the railway station and had a very poor meal at a café which had a juke-box and two pianos. We got all three going!

The road from Klagenfurt to Villach, alongside Werther-See, was very busy with international holiday traffic, predominantly German with very few British cars. Beyond Villach there were several road improvements in progress, but at this stage they caused a lot of hold-ups. But we arrived in Spittal in the early afternoon. In the town centre were flying flags to represent each nation taking part in the Chorbewerb 1966, including a huge Union Jack specially for us. We were very soon given all the gen., and taken to our hotel, which was in a very pleasant spot on the meadows near the Drau and overlooked by the Goldeck mountain.

As soon as we arrived at the hotel we all had a big dhobi session till there was no more hot water and the clothes lines were full of Mads' clothing. Later we had a rehearsal in the hotel basement, along with a juke-box and big fridge full of that bright red sausage meat that the Austrians seem to be so inordinately fond of but which we were finding played havoc with our digestive systems. In fact we had it for our first evening meal here and the proprietress was not a little put out when very few of us ate any. But we later discovered that she was a person who seemed to be not a little put out about life in general anyway.

In the evening we dressed up in uniform and went to the first concert, not to sing, but to listen - to the local choir, Singkreis Porcia, who included in their programme music in honour of each country represented. For us they sang Auld Lang Syne and then we were announced as coming from Wales, England!! But they were a good choir. They also sang some motets and madrigals, but mostly fairly simple things, and finished up with a lot of rather dull and harmonically starved Carinthian folksongs. They were dressed in National costume and looked very smart.

Most of the other choirs were in the audience and we took an instant dislike to "La Faluche" from Paris. But we met members of other choirs from Sweden, France, Burgenland (Austria), and two from Yugoslavia, one of the latter being accompanied by a character who spoke remarkably colloquial English, said he was their doctor ("I gotta sedate our men: they are very potent!") but who looked just like Napoleon Solo from U.N.C.L.E. In general it looked as though we were up against some pretty fair competition, although the Italian choir had yet to arrive.

However, we were determined not to spoil our ^{own} chances by riotous living, and went to bed early.

July 8. "If we give of our best and watch Pete, we may surprise ourselves." (Mitch)

Spittal. The first day's competitions and a lazy afternoon.

We were all keyed up this morning, with an early rehearsal before we went into town for the first competition, and a pep-talk from Mitch. The competition started at 10.00 and the Swedish choir sang first. They had very fine tone, their sopranos making an especially sweet sound. The first of the Yugoslav choirs, from Maribor, looked very much like a People's Choir and made a robust but insensitive noise. We liked the look of the little choir from Lyon. They were a university group much like ourselves and they sported only two tenors! They sang very delicately but were not at their best in folksongs. The Burgenland choir were nothing special, and Austrian folksongs do not give much opportunity to display technique. Nor do Welsh ones for that matter! We came next. The ultra-suave announcer had a lot of fun pronouncing Aberystwyth correctly which seemed to put us more at ease. We were rather nervous, since we were still not quite sure what sort of an overall standard we were likely to be up against. But we were followed by 'La Faluche', the conductor of which was all dressed up in an electric-blue zoot-suit and who addressed his flock in English just as we were coming off stage: "So, we conquer Spittal, yes?" But they sang with a most extraordinary style, and we felt it was much too over-sophisticated for folksongs anyway. Furthermore they wore funny little berets ("faluches", we were told) covered in bobbydazzlers and lucky charms - a gimmick that seemed quite out of place. They were a large choir, and were followed by a large choir of large young people from Belgrade who roared through a couple of wild songs that both seemed to have about eleven beats in the bar. But the choir from Sudtiroil (Italy) still had not appeared so we did not get a chance to hear them at this time.

After the competition we were introduced to a very charming member of Singkreis Porcia - Linde Reichal - who was to act as our guide while we stayed in Spittal. She spoke good enough English, and came back to the hotel with us for lunch.

In the afternoon Linde took us to Millstatt-am-See, a few miles from Spittal and an idyllic spot. The little red-roofed town is set on a small promontory half way along a lake which is surrounded by thickly wooded hills, with snow capped alps in the far distance. A more delightful place it would be hard to find anywhere. We had a very leisurely afternoon here; some people went boating, while others just sat by the lake, ate ice-cream and talked. Nobody went swimming. After our experience at Gleisdorf we thought it best to conserve our energy for singing!

Before going down to the lake we had sung a couple of pieces under a lovely old linden tree in the village churchyard. When we left Millstatt later in the afternoon we saw some of the Lyon choir also doing a spot of sight-seeing. We returned to our hotel to have supper and then get ready for the evening competition.

This was held in the forecourt of Schloss Porcia, but a huge tarpaulin across the top kept in the sound and the acoustics turned out to be excellent. The previous events had been held in the Festsaal, which had tended to be rather dry acoustically. Now the evening was cool, and we felt we sang well. Mary's voice came over particularly well, and our 'cool' style seemed to go down well with the audience. Once again we were very impressed with the singing of the

Swedish choir, but decided to leave before the end of the competition in order to get in yet another early night. We were determined not to lose anything by being overtired.

The Sudtiroil Choir had arrived at last, and turned out to be good, but their folk music was the mixture as before, and all arranged by somebody called Jaeggi. All the choirs had taken a lot of trouble over their appearance, some of course being in national costume, but our turn-out, with the girls in their blue-green dresses that they had made and paid for themselves, took a lot of beating. Our gay little Bws also helped our image. Covered as it was with posters and other propoganda it was very much our "personal transport", and being driven by Dai who was also very much one of us, it seemed to help us achieve a feeling of unity. Some of the other choirs also travelled in coaches, but none were as self-contained as we!

July 9. "I can't see what's going on behind me, so why should you?" (Pete)

Spittal The second day's competitions. Mads in the limelight.

We were back in the Festsaal for the first competition of the day, which comprised the two set pieces and a piece of our own choice, in our case Britten's "Ballad of Green Broom", which gave us a chance to show a different side to our technique. We were on second, after the Belgrade choir.

It was very interesting to hear how the other choirs tackled the set pieces. One was a very lovely madrigal by Hans Leo Hassler, "Ich scheid von dir mit Leide"; but the other was an anthem by Alessandro Scarlatti, "Exsultate Deo", which was one big shout all the way through and gave no scope for any subtlety of treatment. Nevertheless there was a lot of discrepancy of interpretation amongst the conductors in this piece, particularly over the tempo in the middle section. We preferred our own interpretations of these pieces to any of the other choirs, however, in spite of the non-English character of the music, and "Green Broom" also seemed to go down well.

The Swedish Choir, and the little Lyon group, we felt to be our keenest (and friendliest) rivals. They seemed to share our ideals both musically and as groups. We admired the Swedish purity of tone, and the French delicacy of technique.

We spent another very lazy afternoon. The sun was hot but pleasant, and while some people sat in the sun at the hotel, others explored the road along by the river. We did not know what to think about the competitions and the way things were going for us. We felt we stood an even chance with several of the choirs, and even dared to think we were much better than some of the others. We were taking it all pretty seriously but we had nothing to lose since we were not depending on any prize money to supplement our finances, as we later found some of the other choirs were.

We had a final rehearsal after supper. Pete gave us an earnest pep-talk on watching the conductor, etc., and off we went. This was really our big chance to show our paces, for we were on our 'home' ground with English madrigals and a piece of Palestrina. Lyon sang some beautiful pieces, including one by Sermisy called "Au Joly Bois" which really took our fancy. Sweden sang some really difficult contemporary pieces and we felt they were on top of their class.

Contrasts in style were now more than ever apparent, and it was interesting to see how each style somehow represented the type of people represented in each choir. The Yugoslavs were lusty and full of the sun and wine and wild dances of the South. The Swedes had a detached, highly polished yet restrained style that was in harmony with their national character. The Austrians and Italians were simple in outlook, though the Sudtiroil Italian choir had a very polished style and at times beautiful tone. The two French choirs contrasted with each other markedly. Lyon had a sincerity of approach that made their delicate style very appealing whereas Faluche had a brashness and an overdone and self-conscious theatrical character that made us want to pinch one of their funny hats and stick it on top of the flagpole in the town square that bore the Union Jack!

We were on next to last, just ahead of Faluche. We seemed to have become local popular favourites. We sang a contrasting group of 3 madrigals (Morley, Tomkins, and Bennet) and a motet (Palestrina - 'Super Flumina Babylonis') and when we finished the audience went wild for us. Schloss Porcia seemed to explode into applause as we left the stage. So many people came and congratulated us afterwards and told us we were sure to win, that we wondered what the official verdict would be. We were really rather pleased with ourselves when we went to bed that night. But even if we did not win, the reaction we had had from the audience was worth a lot, as were the words of encouragement from the other choir members. It was also a fitting climax to all Pete's hard work in his two years as conductor.

July 10. "We hate singing!" (Lars Blom, conductor of Swedish choir!)

Millstatt. Cable car up the Goldeck. Almost to the top.....

All the choirs had been invited to sing around the Linden Tree in Millstatt in the morning. Faluche had already sung at Mass in the little church when we arrived. The sun was already hot and it was sweltering in the courtyard; in fact it was too hot for the informal concert to be successful, and the Belgrade choir sang too many songs and overstayed their welcome. Then a rumour went round that we had won the second bout, but the fact was that we were in the first three somewhere so still had to wait until the evening event for the final result.

We returned to the hotel for lunch, having sampled cheap but delicious ice-cream in Millstatt. In the afternoon Dai washed the Bws, some people stayed in the hotel to sunbathe, but most of us went up the Goldeck mountain by cable-car. This was a real swinging ride. It was quite amazing to observe the distance between the pylons supporting the cables and to note the speed at which the 30-passenger car tarvelled up the mountainside. Halfway up we had to change

cars for the second leg of the journey to the top. It was then a few hundred yards' walk to the peak of the mountain.

The view across the Drau valley was tremendous. And away beyond Millstattersee the mountains bounded away into the dim distance until they were lost in the clouds. On top of the mountain was a wooden cross on which we left our visiting card, and we were pleased to see we got there before Maribor and Faluche who came along a few minutes later and did the same.

We also met members of the Burgenland choir as we walked over the mountain, and we stopped for a chat. They were a jolly crowd. It was very pleasant up there. From way down in the valleys we could hear the gentle clonking of cow-bells, and although the rarified air at such a height was inclined to be chilly, the sun was still quite warm. The pure air was a real tonic for singers anyway!

We decided to have some tea in the top station of the Goldeckbahn; there we met some of the Swedes, and a pretty mad crowd they turned out to be, too. Nothing dour about them! While waiting for the next cable-car we all had a canu in the resonant gangway, and among our audience was a little Alpine Guide who looked as though he'd never been below 6000' in his life. The ride down in the cable-car was even more exciting than the ride up. The thing left the top stage as though someone had pushed it off the edge, and then swung like a shopping basket for a while as it plunged down.

After supper we had another rehearsal of pieces to sing at the prize-winners' concert, and then went in to Schloss Porcia for the big moment.

The results were fantastic. The obscure Sudtiroil Italian choir won the lot! We had not expected to do very well in the folk-song competition and were not surprised when we were not placed; but we were pleased when the Swedes were placed second. Belgrade were third. So Sudtiroil also took the laurels for the main competition, and we came second, and Lyon third. (Faluche got nowhere!) But the audience went berserk! We had been hot favourites, and the Swedes and Lyon and some of the other choirs also started to shout the place down - for our benefit! Anyway, we did a "lap of honour" and sang more Palestrina and Elizabethan madrigals and the ovation nearly lifted that tarpaulin roof. It was just like Inter-Coll Eisteddfod with Lyon and Sweden yelling AB-ER-YST-WYTH clap-clap-clap and dust rising from where they were stamping in protest on the wooden stage. It was embarrassing! The word got round that the results were rigged since Sudtiroil is a part of Italy that was once Austria and wants to be Austria again and this was a propaganda stunt. We didn't want to believe that. We certainly didn't want to be in the middle of an 'international situation', especially with all those hot-blooded Yugoslavs about. (Where was the doctor from U.N.C.L.E. with his sedatives?) We were sorry that Sweden had not done better in the main event, but pleased that they had done so well in the folk songs, and that Lyon were successful in round 2.

The proceedings officially closed with all the choirs shouting their rarified ways through "Exsultate Deo" at full throttle with the Sudtiroil lady-conductor stirring everyone on. What a sound!

But the scene in Schloss Porcia one hour later was hilarious. The Yugoslavs were singing in 13/16 time at the tops of their voices. Faluche were protesting voluble because they hadn't won anything themselves. And Sweden and Lyon were complaining seriously because Aberystwyth had not come first in the main event. We were quite happy with our result in that we had had nothing to lose and our kitty was now boosted with quite a few extra pounds. Nevertheless we were very surprised at the first placing and hoped that there was nothing political in it!

We ended the day, most of us, in a little tavern in the town, with a few of the Swedes, and Lyon, and Linde, swopping songs, in spite of Lars Blom's excuses, and wishing we could stay longer in this very pleasant town. The Yugoslavs were walking through the town at 02.30, singing in 17/24 time.....

(Only a few weeks after we left Spittal there was a serious border incident in Sudtiroil in which some Italian police were killed in bomb attacks and the situation became even more tense than usual. And during August, Spittal and the Drau valley suffered terrible floods. One of Linde's relatives was killed when his house was swept away, and much of Spittal was under water, including, we presume, the area around our Hotel, the Alpenblick.)

July 11. "Bells! Everywhere we go we get bells!" (Huw in Zurich)

Spittal to Zurich. The Gross Glockner Pass.
Lost in Liechtenstein.

We had to be up at 06.00 to leave at 07.15. We picked up two girls of Faluche who were having a lift with us to Zurich. The rest of Faluche were going on to Yugoslavia. So we set off west in the early morning sun and it was a long exciting day's trip.

We went west as far as Winklern, then turned north for the Gross Glockner Pass. The mountain scenery in the early morning was quite breath-taking. The farmers were cutting hay in their impossibly steep fields, which sometimes meant that they were scything squares of grass above their heads. Waterfalls plumed down the walls of the valley and shone silver in the early sun. Suddenly the great snowy peak of the Gross Glockner mountain stood up on the far horizon, rugged and massive against the cobalt sky.

At Heiligenblut we had to stop and pay an exorbitant toll which took a large slice out of our winnings from Spittal! Then began the long, long climb over the Pass. There are 26 hairpin bends on this amazing road, and we soon got tired of applauding Dai on each one! It is quite impressive to see a 35' Magirus bus swing round one of those hairpins as though it were any old roundabout on a suburban by-pass, with one end of the bus hanging out over nothing. We had a moment's anxiety when the side of our Bws touched the kerb on a right-hander near the top of the Pass, and a loud hissing noise developed which sounded very much like a rear tyre deflating. In fact it was only the exhaust pipe, the end of which had just touched a stone and closed up causing the exhaust fumes to blow noisily against the metal. A minute's poking about with a spanner-end and we were away again, having also taken some photos, breathed in a few cubic feet of wonderfully cool mountain air, and watched a couple of aircraft fly past below us.

The Pass itself is a marvellous engineering feat. Near the top the road is literally on a shelf built on to the mountainside; there is also a long tunnel. There was a lot of snow beside the road at the top. The view of the surrounding mountains was awe-inspiring. The road could be seen curling away down ahead of us when we crossed over the top, and it changes direction so many times that it is difficult to tell whether traffic seen a mile away is coming up or going down. There was plenty of traffic by this time too. We had been lucky to be going over so early in the morning. It took one-and-a-half hours to cover the 30km. of the actual Pass, and when we got down to the other side there were queues of cars and coaches waiting to pay their tolls and begin the climb. We passed an old Ford Popular from Leeds University, and a car from Carmarthen. The road on the lower part is none too wide and called for some very nifty width-judging from Dai when passing coaches and the occasional wagon.

We continued north from the pass right through to Lofer to join the N1 trunk road from Salzburg. The scenery up the Saalach valley beyond Zell am See was interesting. The flat valley floor was bounded by huge cliffs which were topped by trees and often had little chapels hiding in amongst them. One in particular looked very self-conscious perched on the edge of a yawning precipice. We had lunch at a village called Soll, and once again we did well in leaving the beaten track to patronise a small establishment. Lunch took a long time and was complicated, and not everybody got what they expected. Mitch found himself confronted with a plate of jam which he didn't know quite what to do with. And the plumbing in the bogs seemed to be connected to a fast flowing underfloor river. But it was all good for a laugh.

The rest of the day was just a long, long journey. At lunchtime it had been very hot indeed, but later clouds began to gather and we by-passed Innsbruck in a thunderstorm. This made the roads rather slippery and we passed one minor accident, but this was more the result of an Austrian driver's very individual idea of when to overtake. Near Telfs we were held up for some time by major road works that had caused a caravan some trouble. There was a lot of holiday traffic about, since we were now in Austria's principal tourist area. We had another brief tea-stop, then went on to Landeck and over the Arleberg Pass. But we couldn't see a thing since it was pouring with rain and we went through a lot of low cloud. It was difficult to remember what time of day it was.

However, below a certain altitude the visibility was better and our last views of Austrian scenery were memorable as we snaked down the spectacular pass in the gathering twilight to Bludenz. We stopped here for tea and managed to spend the last of our Austrian money. It was quite dark when we left, which was a pity since it meant we would not be able to see the splendid views of Liechtenstein.

At the frontier of this tiny state we all insisted on having our passports stamped and queued up for this service. There are only about four main roads in Liechtenstein but we managed to pick one that was closed when a bridge was down! We had passed an 'umleitung' without noticing it. We did not see much of Vaduz except the fabulous hotel and castle floodlit atop their cliffs. Because of the diversion we had to go right to the south of the state and down to Maienfeld in order to join the N3 road for Zurich.

The signposts couldn't make up their minds how far it was to Zurich, but it was a fast road and we sped through sleeping little towns beside Walensee and Zurichsee. The last few miles were on a motorway and we arrived in Zurich just before midnight. We dropped the Faluche girls at the station and made our way to our hotel, which turned out to be very pleasant, and in spite of nearby chiming clocks we slept very soundly.

July 12. Group Jones slept here.

Zurich to Geneva. Our last concert.

Our stay in Zurich was brief but comfortable. We told an American tourist who wanted to inspect the rooms (he was arriving as we left) that if the rooms were good enough for us they ought to be OK for him. We had to leave at 10.00 since we had another long journey ahead.

It was a pleasant but unspectacular journey through Swiss lowland farming country. It seemed to be "mucking-out" time in the fields: there was a powerful smell of manure in the air in many places. Good for the lungs! We by-passed Bern and took the road to Lausanne.

We stopped for lunch at a little village called Avenches. Some of us went to a hotel for our meal and had a most luxurious repast, surprisingly cheap.

We continued on the road to Lausanne but by-passed it when we joined the motorway to Geneva. From this road we were able to see a distant view of Mont Blanc, but this was all we saw of the true Swiss Alps! We arrived in Geneva at 16.00 and contacted the man from the World University Service who was arranging our concert here for us. We found the prices in this city to be astronomical - 2/- for a small ice-cream (four times the UK price!), this made all the more painful since the weather was so hot. We went to find our digs which were in the Cité Universit . This was a fine new building which eluded us for a long time in spite of the efforts of our English guides in a Morris 1000. But we didn't live in the luxurious student apartments but had stuffy dormitories in the bowels of the building which were apparently reserved for visitors!

We got changed and went back to the English Church for the last concert of the Tour. We gave it in the crypt under the church (does everything happen underground here?). It went reasonably well but conditions were a long way from ideal. The room was small and stuffy with dead acoustics which meant we had to work very hard for our very rich English-Swiss-American audience.

But afterwards we could relax. The hard work of the Tour was over. We had a very noisy meal in a nearby restaurant, and nearly sang the wallpaper off the walls - which wouldn't have taken much doing, by the look of it. We got back to the Universit  in one piece after a detour via the city hospital when we missed a turning. At 01.30 our slumbers were disturbed by some noisy Englishmen who seemed to think that we were sleeping in their bunks. They giggled uproariously because we were dubbed 'Group Jones' by the Universit  since Mary had arranged the accommodation for us. Mitch got rid of our unwelcome visitors with due sober authority.

July 13. "Geneva's not expensive. It's just that we're mean!"
(Dai)

A day by Lake Geneva, avoiding heat and high prices.

We left the Université and went to locate the Youth Hostel where we planned to spend the next night. But it turned out to be in a shambles and we were told to come back at 6pm. But by the look of the place we wondered if it was worth coming back at all. However we had already paid a deposit so decided to make the best of it.

The day began hot and continued thus. Geneva was so expensive we had no choice but to go out into the country and try to find somewhere to spend the day. We went up the Lausanne road, beside Lake Geneva, as far as a small town called Rolle, where we found a handy beach which was not crowded. We stayed here until 5pm., swimming and sunbathing. There was a nice breeze to keep us cool in the hot sun, but back in Geneva the temperature had soared to a searing 100.4 degrees.

The heat made the youth hostel all the more unwelcome. It bore the atmosphere of a refugee camp, with endless formalities to add to the discomfiture and a general air of chaos over the organisation. Dai Bws and John Hearne were too old to qualify for its comforts, and they returned to the Cité Université. They did not stay in the dormitories, however, but had single study-bedrooms on the sixth floor, complete with showers, numerous towels, even a fine view of the city!

We all had a meal at the same café as last night, but had to turn in early to the hostel. The boys were housed in a room 15 yards long by 14 feet wide, and containing 40 occupants. It was a sort of attic and it reminded Gordon of his Grannie's prison. There were 4 taps, cold water. On one side were two windows, 18" triangular. On the other side, 3 windows 18" x 30". Hywel slept on the top bunk by the window and was disturbed periodically by a rota of insomniacs coming up for air. There was no space between the beds. Entry and exit to the British-type Dunlopillos was over the end of the bunk. Pete changed ends during the night without remembering anything about it. Jerry and Garry both got up to splash in cold water. Hire of sleeping bags was compulsory, but the "air" in the dorm. was too humid to make their use necessary - or desirable, since some had merely been refolded after their previous users had peeled them off. Other inmates were Canadians and Americans (the latter left at 05.00) and there was a junkie trying to play a guitar.

At a very early hour everyone was awakened by the concierge pulling at all accessible toes and ears and hair and booming "Debut! Debut!" - which brings us to.....

July 14. "You didn't fall asleep in that place: you just passed out." (Gordon)

The long journey home begins. Geneva - Neuchatel - Basle.

Two Australian girls in the hostel had considered the place not too bad when compared with the hostels in Greece. All the same, it was not what we would have expected of Switzerland - though at this end of the country they seem to be interested only in the money you bring, which at the present rate of exchange means that the British don't bring very much.

Dai and John nearly got lynched by the others when they arrived fresh and clean-shaven and just a little late after having lingered over breakfast after having had showers! Nobody else had even washed and we left the City of the United Nations without looking back. We went up the motorway to Lausanne and then north to Yverdon and up to Neuchatel, where we stopped for lunch and to do some shopping.

We left the Bws in the carpark and went into the town. It is quite an attractive place, but overfull of tourists and with a price range geared to their pockets rather than ours. We had hoped to swim in the lake but the weather was unpleasant. In the afternoon it got hotter but we travelled up to Biel and back into more hospitable German-Switzerland. The difference in the atmosphere of the two areas was quite noticeable, especially in their reaction to us. At Grenchen we took a wrong turning and went into Solothurn via Arch, on the south side of the river Aare. At Oensingen we turned north again and crossed the Jura mountains through very pleasant scenery and improved weather. On the outskirts of Basle we stopped for tea at a mediocre café which was more interested in attending to the needs and pleasures of a coach party of fat middle-aged Americans who were evidently doing Switzerland before sundown, than they were in refreshing a group of poverty-stricken British minstrels. That's the way the Coke fizzes, honey.

We then went into the city, slap into the rush hour. We found our hotel without much trouble. It was odd, with rooms like Mike's granny's attic, but comfortable, nay, luxurious by comparison with previous Swiss experiences! We later all went for a meal at the Marktplatz which was close by. There was a quaintness about this area of the city which was pleasant, but one had to be careful of trams which appeared abruptly from tiny side streets and clanged about busily.

The geography of the hotel was a little bewildering, and there was one bog that apparently had a constant flow-flush system which had to be handled with understanding. Doors opened unexpectedly into ballrooms and conference halls, and six of the boys slept in a six-bed mini-dormitory. Late that night they had a visit from R.O. Brady who was an ex-Aber (Panty) American student who was driving to Istanbul and was offering a lift to anyone. He was driving a Volkswagen and had just had a brush with local police for driving it up some steps or something. When we asked if his car was left-hand-drive he replied: "Yeah, the steering wheel is the side I sit." We didn't go to Istanbul. We presume he did. But he spent the night on the floor of the mini-dorm.

July 15. "Goering runs this place." (Mitch)

Basle - Heidelberg - Wiesbaden.

One way of crossing the Rhine at Basle is on a motorless ferryboat that is attached to a high wire and is pulled across by the current of the river. But we drove across one of the bridges and made for the German frontier and crossed back into Germany with no bother. We went due north up the Rhine valley. The autobahn went through very uninteresting scenery. We had a coffee-stop mid-morning. At noon a stork flew across our path. Otherwise the drive up to Heidelberg was entirely uneventful.

We went into Heidelberg for lunch and a look around. We were greeted uproariously by a college jazz group advertising an evening performance of "The Tempest". We regretted that we were not staying in the city long enough to be able to attend. After lunch we did a lot of shopping. This city caters for a large American army community nearby, and we suspected that the shopkeepers were more than usually helpful when they discovered we were British. The Coke doesn't fizz forever, honey. We bought presents, since prices seemed reasonable. And there were one or two excellent music shops with enough choral music on the shelves to keep Mads going forever.

We left Heidelberg at 17.00 and passed a huge traffic-jam on the autobahn which was presumably caused by an accident further south. We went on to Wiesbaden. There was a tremendous amount of traffic about, and driving was typically 'weekend'. But the trip was uneventful.

We stayed in a hostel in Wiesbaden which was far cleaner and more efficient than the one in Geneva, but was run by a character who seemed to have stepped out of his SS uniform only the day before yesterday. He tore strips off Mitch for presuming to use his jugendhaus as an hotel, but he let us in eventually and finally was almost civil. We were given sheets that seemed to be damp, but the dormitories were spacious and quiet (they had to be, ja!) and there were adequate facilities. We were told where to go for a meal but curfew was at 22.00 and we reckoned that was when they got the Dobermann-Pinschers out. So after a substantial meal in a comical little local pub we scuttled back well before curfew and lay low until reveille.

July 16. "Gwynfor is in!"

Rain on the Rhine. Bonn. Brussels. Broke.

St. Swithins Day was yesterday, but it took him an extra day to build up all the rain that fell today. Reveille sounded at an unearthly hour and was followed up with outrageously jovial German band musik which bared out of the intercom. and blasted us out of our bunks. Breakfast was an uproarious affair, bread rolls and bucket-brewed unspeakable coffee amid a mid-European Protestant-Evangelical rally, all theoretically and volubly highly organised, but in reality utter confusion. We left at 08.30 in pouring rain and went down the famous Rhine Gorge which turned out to be something of a disappointment. Perhaps it was the blinding rain, but the scenery was just not as spectacular as we had been led to believe. The big bulky barges wallowing up midstream did not help either, a kind of industrial intrusion into a natural phenomenon.

As usual the rain brought accidents. Someone had flipped a Ford Taunus very neatly on to its roof apparently without personal injury or much damage to the car, but with chaotic effects on the traffic. The first part of our journey down the Rhine Gorge was on the east side of the river, but we crossed over to Koblenz for coffee, which for some of us was accompanied by delicious cakes. We got stuck in traffic jams on leaving Koblenz and this made us much later than we intended arriving in Bonn. So we stopped here for lunch, leaving the Bws in a busy square where it attracted a good deal of interest.

As we left the city at 14.30 we heard on the news that Plaid Cymru had gained a parliamentary seat in a by-election. Gwynfor Evans was, in fact, IN. The weather had cleared a little at midday, but later the rain returned, and the run through to the Belgian border was dull. At the border there was a long wait while we sorted out the problem of German road tax dues. The weather was much the same as when we had passed that way some three weeks earlier, only this time we were more wide awake!

The road between Liege and Brussels was very poor, especially after the efficient German autobahnen, and the standard of driving was appalling. We had a good deal of heavy rain but otherwise this was another dull journey. We arrived in Brussels in the early evening.

The girls and most of the boys were in separate hotels, but we all met for a meal in the city in the evening. The boys had given themselves a forced march from their hotel to Avenue Lloyd George, where believe it or not, the girls were staying. Perhaps they did not trust Belgian drivers enough to risk taking a tram or taxi! Driving in Brussels certainly has an aura of adventure about it, whether you are racing a tram to an intersection or doing 65mph through an urban underpass. Our last Continental meal out was substantial if not spectacular, but memorable in that we spent every penny we had between us on it. We then sang a few songs in the café and gave presents to Mitch and Pete and Dai in appreciation of the enormous amount of hard work they had each put in to make the Tour so successful. But as for a night out in Brussels - we had had it! We went window shopping, and wandered penniless through the city streets. A wonderful feeling, really. You just had nothing to lose, and there was no need to worry about whether you could afford to buy this or go to that or eat these or drink those. You were free!

July 17. Brussels - Ostend - Dover. Singing across the Channel.

We couldn't even buy Sunday papers! We left Brussels at 09.00 and got on the autoroute for Ostend. The scenery on this road is so boring. In Belgium is a grubby, untidy country for the most part (like much of England!) and seems to be the land where it is the recognised thing to write useless slogans on walls, giving the villages a seedy post-revolutionary aura that is intensely depressing, especially in the rain.

And we had plenty of rain again this morning. It came in violent showers that thoroughly disrupted the Belgian weekend traffic and they started banging into each other all around us. Three cars collided up ahead of us, causing the fast lane to slow up abruptly, and two cars shunted each other right beside us! There was only minor damage to the cars; but we were in the slow lane anyway and carried on. We were held up for some time. Traffic crawled along in two lanes and we conversed with some English tourists in the "fast" lane. But we came through unscathed and arrived in Ostend at 11.15.

We had an hour to do a bit of final shopping with English money and get a bite to eat before boarding the 12.15 ferry. Ostend is a ghastly place anyway and any more time there would have been tedious.

The ferry was pretty crowded. The crossing was squally but not rough. The lounge was full of bored, tired, British holidaymakers going home, and Continental tourists eager for impressions of Britain. So we sang to them all and exhausted our canu repertoire - madrigals, motets, spirituals, folksongs, Welsh hymns, pub songs, the lot. It kept the passengers entertained for a good hour or more, and seemed to be much appreciated.

We arrived in Dover at 5pm and were very quick through the Customs. We woke Jackie and took her to the station, protesting that she didn't think she had slept any more than anyone else on the trip! She had to be back in London that night, but the rest of us stayed in a guest house near the station. Several of us went to the Indian restaurant again for a meal and some entertainment, and we had both in prodigious quantities. But we were all tired again and turned in early.

July 18. Back in England, and the return to Wales.

Reactions to being back in England were varied. For the most part there was an air of anti-climax over everything, accentuated by blaring British pop-music on the radio and bumbling Monday morning traffic on the Dover road. We went back up towards London, dropped Sue Riley at Dartford, and then groped round the South Circular and out on the A40.

We stopped on the Oxford by-pass for an atrocious lunch, but as we progressed over the Cotswolds and further west towards Wales our morale rose again. We stopped to buy fruit in the vale of Evesham, and stopped for tea in Kington. And when we crossed the border into Wales we sang lustily all across the mountains.

We arrived back in Aber at 7.15 local time, did a lap of honour round the Prom, and disembarked at Pantycelyn Hostel, bidding farewell to Dai. The Tour officially ended next day when we were to sing at Graduation, but once we said Goodbye to the Bws we felt that the Epic was over.....

GENEVA PROGRAMME

Motets

Ave verum corpus	Byrd
Tenebrae factae sunt	Victoria
Sicut cervus	Palestrina
Sitivit anima mea	Palestrina
Crucem sanctam subiit	Palestrina

Soprano Solos

sung by Mary Jones

Madrigals

To shorten winter's sadness	Weelkes
Weep, O mine eyes	Bennet
Matona, lovely maiden	Lassus
Weep no more, thou sorry boy	Tomkins
See, see the shepherds' queen	Tomkins

INTERVAL

Welsh Folk Songs

Can Serch	arr. Holst
The Ash Grove	arr. Llewellyn
Lisa Lan	arr. Holst
Dacw 'nghariad	arr. Walford Davies
Suo Gan	arr. de Lloyd

Baritone Solos

sung by John Hearne

Part Songs and Folk Songs

Sweet was the song	Smith
Matthew, Mark, Luke and John	arr. Holst
O can ye sew cushions?	Bantock
Three Hungarian Folk Songs	arr. Seiber
1. The Handsome Butcher	
2. Apple, Apple	
3. The Old Woman	