

It was a very pleasant drive.

In the evening Abe took us to Seekford Hall Hotel for dinner a few miles out in the country from Ipswich. It is a most fascinating old Tudor Mansion with Oak panelled walls, all carpeted, the oldest of the old doors and furnishings and trimmings. A place at which I should love to spend a week or two. It has the most beautiful parkland, a lake and walled garden, but most expensive. There are only twelve bedrooms and the terms are ten to thirteen guineas a week or 24/6 to 29/6 bed and breakfast. Now writing this some years later those prices as compared to today's prices were dirt cheap. Today I expect they charge what they like, say five guineas a night for a bed only and perhaps continental breakfast. However, I think judging by the crowd we saw that most of their money is made in the bar and dinner parties. The place was certainly crowded in the night we were there. Mostly country folk and a number of horsey looking people who were terribly noisy, loud with shrill voices who had evidently attended the local point to point races. Many of them had evidently partied on the way for many were well past the merry stage, very inebriated especially one woman we saw. People are so utterly foolish or act foolishly when intoxicated. After a very good dinner we reclined in the easy chairs in the lounge. We had what was supposed to be chicken but Geoff with his hunting experience said it was very well camouflaged rabbit for my portion was definitely thigh bone and not chicken leg. At about 10-30 we bid adieu to the hotel which is owned by Sir ? Harewood and his son who was once controller of the King's household. I think that meant that he was in charge of the Royal wine cellars. It was at the end of the war that he bought the Hall for a mere song. Abe said one of his friends was keen to buy it, £500 it then was, and spend thousands in restoring it and furnishings. The lounge, a delightful room, and how I should love to have one just like it in every way. The cocktail bar and the cloakroom are all breathtakingly lovely in their great age. We did not see any of the bedrooms as they were too busy to show us around, but I cannot say I should appreciate such a place so beautifully furnished with race courses scattered around for these racy people can go wild especially after a good win. Lamps, small tables, tapestry, covered chairs, heavenly portraits hanging from the walls and they have a lot of drunken people sprawling about. Things are so easily ruined and the most precious treasures have no value to people in that state, who defile the place. But I suppose Sir ? Harewood does not mind for it is this bread and butter and the more they drink the richer he becomes.

Anyway, it was a very pleasant evening and we were glad to have seen the place of which we had heard quite a lot. Geoff wore his sports coat and slacks and I wore my beige jersey frock. Mary and Abe were dressed much more smartly but the joy of England is that you can wear anything and not be odd. The sporting folk were dressed in tweeds, some wore evening frocks, some afternoon frocks and, well mine is a winter frock.

Geoff: I will take over for a while. From Ipswich we went to Selling in Kent to spend a weekend with my old POW friend Ellison Macartney.

We left Ipswich on the 30th April for London where we were to spend a few days. Actually we were to be there until the 5th May. When we set out I thought we would have a bit of trouble driving through London to the Regent Palace at which hotel we had reserved accommodation, but it turned out to be a straight run. I stopped at a garage to fill up with petrol, handing over the coupons, and asked what route we should take. His reply was 'Just drive straight along the road you are now on, no turning left or right and you will have no difficulty'. He was quite right but where I made the mistake was instead of driving into Trafalgar Square I turned right at the street before, thinking it was a short cut to the Regent Palace. As I turned into the street a policeman's hand went up and said 'Sorry this is a one way street' and seeing the foreign number plate he gave a broad smile and saw me back

on the right road/