

mead



NAME	Dave Wozny
SUBJECT	Scatica '93



80 sheets/college ruled
7³/₄x5in/19.7x12.7cm

1 subject notebook



45482 The Mead Corporation, Dayton, Ohio 45463

Wednesday 23rd June 1993 – Day 1

Flew over on a Virgin 747. Had a window seat and was terrified during take-off. Food on the plane was excellent. Arrived at JFK at about 3pm.

We were then driven on a coach to Columbia University in Upper Manhattan. Went past Shea Stadium (NY Mets) and also went through Harlem.

Had a room on the 9th floor of the CU building with a great view of Lower Manhattan.

In the evening, myself and five others decided to have a look at Manhattan. We started walking down Broadway from 117th Street. Temperature was in the high 70^s and it was sweltering hot. We stopped at a diner and I had a Pizzaburger to eat.

We then took a bus down Broadway to Times Square (42nd Street) – it didn't seem very impressive. We found 5th Avenue and walked to the Empire State Building. Went on an elevator (\$3.25) to the observation deck on the 80th floor – only took about 40 secs. From there was a magnificent view (open air) with perfect visibility of Manhattan and the other boroughs. Went on a further elevator to the 102nd floor observation room.

Wandered around lower Manhattan a little more then caught a bus back to CU. I sat next to a woman who tried to persuade me to go to her church for all of the journey.

Got to bed about midnight after something like a 22 hour day – shattered.

Thursday 24th June 1993 – Day 2

Breakfast at CU at 7am – scrambled eggs, bacon, waffles and bagels. Left CU for camp at 1:30pm – there were about forty of us going together.

The camp is in the Catskill Mountains but it looks more like the New Forest. Arrived at 4pm and temperature was in the high 90^s.

We were then shown to our bunks. I am in a two man cabin with another English lad – Jimmy who is the baker. I think we will get along fine.

The cabin is about 14' x 9' with two single beds. It is filthy dirty and the mosquito nets are full of holes – but it's quite roomy and I think it has quite a lot of potential.

We had dinner at 6:30pm – meatballs, pasta and salad bar. I then went and played tennis on the nearby courts.

At 8:30pm we had a barbecue and got to meet some of the other support staff. They all seem like a good bunch – there are Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Americans and of course, English. They all speak good English and are friendly.

At this point I am really looking forward to the summer.

N.b. Ivy League: Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Cornell, Columbia, Brown, Penn State and Dartmouth College

Friday 25th June 1993 – Day 3

Last night was bloody cold and I ended up sleeping in my clothes – I am going to have to get something sorted out for tonight.

Breakfast at 8:30am – fruit, bread rolls, scrambled eggs and cereal.

Spent all morning driving around camp in a Pontiac Parisienne station wagon doing jobs like delivering staff luggage to their assigned bunks and running errands between the office and the infirmary, kitchen, etc.

Lunch was pizza and it was very good – I had three huge slices.

In the afternoon I had my first drive off camp when I went to drop someone off at Rhinecliff train station – a trip of about twenty miles. I have immediately become accustomed to driving on the right. Dinner at 6:30pm was chicken wings which weren't very nice.

After dinner I did some more driving on camp and thought that I had finished at 7:30pm. At 8:30pm, Irwin – the camp director, came and asked me to do another job. I had to take three of his friends back to their homes. The journey was a maze of un-named country lanes and I thought that I'd never be able to find my way back.

One of the men was so fat (looked about 25 stone) that one of his friends had to pull him out of the car! I got back to camp at 9:30pm – a long days driving.

Saturday 26th June 1993 – Day 4

Breakfast at 8:30am was pancakes and cereal – I am presently refusing them.

First job was to drive north to Hudson to pick up some food (about a forty mile round trip). Lunch was "meat slop" and coleslaw. In the afternoon I had two more trips out of camp and ended up having dinner at 7:30pm – roast beef, mashed potatoes and peas – it was excellent.

Played some football and table tennis in the evening with Levvi (Hungary), Lazo (Slovak) and Jacob (Czech) – good fun.

Went to sleep at 10pm because I was very tired. I now seem to be getting over my cold.

Sunday 27th June 1993 – Day 5

Breakfast at 8:30am was scrambled eggs and cereal. In the morning I dropped off fire extinguishers to all of the cabins. Lunch was tuna salad and bread.

In the afternoon I did a fifth mile round trip just to pick up a dust pan. I then had the rest of the afternoon off and swam and sunbathed. Dinner was vegetable lasagne.

No jobs in the evening so we had a big game of football. The temperature was still high and I must have sweated half a pint. Bitten three or four times by mosquitoes.

Monday 28th June 1993 – Day 6

Today was the day when all of the campers arrived. Some came in Mercs, some in Cadillacs and some in stretched limos who seemed to take pleasure in belittling their chauffeurs. I has given jobs delivering their baggage all around the camp.

I also managed to give the Pontiac a good cleaning and hoovering – after all, I will be in it for the next seven weeks. Lunch was sliced meats and bread rolls and it was really quite good.

All afternoon was spent doing similar jobs to the morning. Dinner was chicken wings – yuk, and croquettes which were excellent.

I played football in the evening with a black South African man called Andy. He is soccer mad and loves talking about English football. I asked him what players he liked and the first name that he said was Garth Crooks – it was spooky.

When it became dark I went to the canteen which is where everybody meets in the evening. Played table tennis then chatted to the Europeans for a couple of hours.

N.b. Levvy and the Italian poet!

Tuesday 29th June 1993 – Day 7

Breakfast was pancakes – pass. No work all morning besides the mail. Lunch was chicken burgers.

I now have about ten mosquito bites.

There was very little to do in the afternoon. I am anxious to get out of camp to be able to buy some things.

Dinner was baguette with melted butter inside it and also meatballs and pasta – it was good. In the evening I played a lot of tennis then went to the canteen.

I had my first real encounter with the American children – it wasn't very pleasant. I ended up telling one of them to get lost – and worse.

They are so obnoxious which is strange, because all of the adults that I have met have been genuinely nice.

Wednesday 30th June 1993 – Day 8

Breakfast was scrambled eggs and cereal again.

I went into Red Hook in the morning and did little else. Dinner was hot dogs.

In the afternoon I had nothing to do except the milk so I just went to sleep in my bunk.

In the evening I played tennis with Frank then drank beers with Jan and Daryius – Coors Extra Gold (four cans)

Thursday 31st June 1993 – Day 9

Breakfast was cereal and buttered toast. In the morning I just did the regular jobs.

Lunch was pizza and it was excellent. In the afternoon I went to Ginsbergs with Levvy and bought some more beer.

Dinner was hamburgers which were horrible (really oily) and croquettes.

Slept in the evening then had four beers.

Friday 2nd July 1993 – Day 10

Breakfast was cereal and scrambled eggs.

In the morning I did the run to Ginsbergs on 66. One of the guys at the counter was based in Stoke-on-Trent during WWII prior to the D-day landings. It was very interesting to talk to him, he said his group was assigned "D+7" (they went seven days after the first landings).

Lunch was grilled cheese sandwiches which were OK.

The afternoon was easy with just a run to Red Hook and a trip to Stone Church to pick up some ammunition for the firing range, the guy there was a real, genuine "hick" and he was really sharp and to the point (I wouldn't like to have an argument with him, he had a whole shed full of rifles).

Dinner was pizza (two days old).

In the evening, me and Jimmy went to the laundromat. It was well needed because I was down to wearing my fire socks from the Virgin flight. Washing was \$2.50 and drying was just 25C for each ten minutes which was very good.

Later in the evening we had some beers (four cans Extra Gold).

I have become increasingly tired, tomorrow I must definitely have an early night (I said that yesterday).

Saturday 3rd July 1993 – Day 11

Woke up at 7:45am and I was really tired. Breakfast was cereal and pancakes.

In the morning I did two runs into Red Hook and was really busy. Dinner was Ziti (pasta) and tomato sauce which I forced down.

In the afternoon I did very little, which was just as well because I was very tired. Dinner was French fries and sliced steak which was OK.

In the evening I played tennis with Levvy, then got my head down at about 10:30pm.

Sunday 4th July 1993 – Day 12

Independence Day? You'd hardly know it!

Breakfast was cereal and scrambled eggs, the same as any day. In the morning I worked very hard because I was determined to spend some time in the afternoon at the waterfront.

I went to Red Hook twice and I bought a £1 ticket for the NY State Lottery - the jackpot is \$4.5 million, I heard on the radio that the Iowa State lottery jackpot is £100 million.

Lunch was simply bread and cheese. In the afternoon I was finished by 2:45pm so I went to the waterfront. The weather was in the low 90's. At the waterfront there is a large dock and several diving platforms. I was diving of the springboard into the lake then drying off in the sun – it was very relaxing. My shoulders feel a little bit sore from the sun.

Dinner was meatballs and chips. In the evening I watched the camp talent show and it was absolutely rubbish – "talent" was an inappropriate word.

Later I had another four Coors Extra with Jan, Levvi, Lazo, Jacob and Alex. I slept very well.

Monday 5th July 1993 – Day 13

Breakfast was cereal and pancakes. In the morning I was very busy doing general gopher jobs. I also did some shopping for Ruth at A&P and had the order changed three times, one time I was in the hardware store, when an assistant told me that she had received a call indicating that I should go back to the grocery to buy some marshmallows – it was farcical.

Lunch was pizza – excellent. I finished work in the afternoon at about 3:00pm and went to the waterfront to do some serious sunbathing – the weather was in the high 90's – an absolute scorcher. I have burned all across my shoulders, that should clear my skin up! I have to walk around with a wet towel around my shoulders.

Dinner was chicken which was awful. In the evening I just lazed around listening to my Walkman. Later on we had more beers (four) and discussed travel plans for our days off. Present it seems that we will go to Boston, New York and Washington DC.

Tuesday 6th July 1993 – Day 14

Breakfast was scrambled eggs and cereal again. I will not mention it anymore because it simply alternates every day between scrambled eggs and cereal, and pancakes and cereal.

Busy all morning and in the afternoon I went over to Rhinebeck to pick up a rental car from Ren-a-Wreck, an '88 Chevy Corsica 2.8efi for our anticipated trip to Boston on Wednesday.

Dinner was leftover pizza from lunch and some horrible macaroni creation. In the evening we drove over to the superstores in Hudson to pick up some gear – I bought flip flops. Went back to camp and tried to get some sleep in before we were to leave for Boston at 3:00am.

Wednesday 7th July 1993 – Day 15

Woke up at 2:00pm, showered and prepared to leave for Boston. We drove over to the main gate to find that the night watchman had cleared off half an hour early and left us locked in the camp. We knew the gate wouldn't open again until 7:30am so we decided to abandon our plans for Boston.

We went to see Irwin early in the morning and he was sympathetic to our problem and said that he would pay for our wasted car hire since the night watchman leaving early wasn't our fault. He reimbursed us for \$32.50.

The morning and afternoon was really busy and I did one trip to Hudson where I had my hair cut for \$6 + \$1 tip in a real old fashioned American barber shop by an old pro. The next time I'm going to have the full Monty with a cut-throat razor shave and everything else.

A few words about the temperature for the last three or four days, it has been in the mid to high 90's, it is absolutely scorching. The real killer though is the humidity, according to the radio station, although the thermometer reads 95°F the "effective air temperature" (what it feels like) is actually 114°F. At night the temperature does not drop below 95°F – it's so uncomfortable.

Dinner was turkey breast and mashed potato and was quite good. In the evening I wrote a little, read a little, talked a little then went to sleep at about 10:30pm.

Thursday 8th July 1993 – Day 16

I survived the 75°F and humidity of last night very easily because Jimmy brought down his fan from the bakery, although it was very noisy. All the other staff were complaining like hell about the sleeping last night.

The morning was nothing special to talk about, as was lunch - curried rice, I ate none of it.

In the afternoon I ran Charlie and Floyd into Rhinebeck, they are the funniest dudes on the camp. Charlie had to go to a wake.

Dinner was hamburgers, and again I couldn't eat any of it.

In the evening I had to run the minibuses to and from the nearby camps, dropping off and taking on the campers. I was finished at 9:10pm.

Friday 9th July 1993 – Day 17

I was so hungry that I forced down a great big plate of scrambled eggs and English muffins.

Morning was hectic with a run to Rhinebeck to pick up Charles and then a massive amount of letters and packages.

I was late for lunch, but it didn't matter as there were only Frankfurters.

I was finished by 3pm, so I went to the waterfront and went out in a kayak. Temperature was 100°F. My back has been peeling badly but it doesn't hurt so it's no problem.

Dinner was meatballs, garlic bread and pizza which was OK. After dinner I tried to play tennis but it was impossible because of my sprained right wrist. So, instead I tried to get some sleep, but Jan came in complaining about Ruth bossing him around. Later some of us had some beers in Derek's cabin (five), they were Genesee, a cheap bear which costs only 45c, but they were OK.

Saturday 12th July 1993 – Day 18

This morning I tried a pancake and they were disgusting – I don't think there were any eggs in them. The morning was non-stop hectic activity and this seems to be the norm now.

Lunch was some kind of macaroni creation that I couldn't eat so I had myself a salad sandwich.

I finished work at about 2pm and went down to the waterfront with Jan and we took out a sailboat. There was very little wind so it wasn't too good. Dinner was sliced beef so I made sure to get a good fill.

At about 9:30pm a bunch of us went "over the river" to Kingston where there was a funfair. Some of the rides were very good but also very dangerous – you were thrown violently backwards and forwards in the carriages. We arrived back at camp at 1am and I was knackered.

Sunday 13th July 1993 – Day 19

Sundays are supposedly an easy day for the driver, with no email and very little activities going on but somehow I had to work through to 5pm.

In the morning I found myself driving all over the place packing up supplies. Lunch was spaghetti so I had none.

In the afternoon I did the routine maintenance and washed the whole fleet of camp vehicles. Ruth was also sending me all over the camp doing errands. I discovered that it is worthwhile to check the seats and floors of all the minibuses for coins – today I found about £3.

Dinner was chicken nuggets which were OK. After dinner I played tennis but had to stop after about ten minutes because of the pain in my right wrist. Went to the cabin to sleep at 9pm in anticipation of the long nights driving to Boston the next day.

Monday 12th July 1993 – Day 20

Today was just a normal working day with nothing out of the ordinary. Lunch was pizza, but there was too much of the tomato sauce filling so it didn't taste very good.

In the afternoon I went to pick up our rental car from the agency. It was an '89 Plymouth Reliant which was clean, drives well, and has very good air conditioning. Cost was \$34.95 per day with free mileage.

Dinner was chicken drumsticks and rice which I passed on and had some of the leftover pizza from lunch. I played a little tennis in the evening but had to stop because of the pain in my right wrist. I then had an early night in preparation for the night's drive to Boston.

Tuesday 13th July 1993 – Day 21

Awoke at 12am, showered, shaved and drove the car out of camp at 12:30am. First mistake was to believe Irwin's map: I went down Route 8 for about fifteen miles trying to find the Taconic Parkway, it wasn't there! So, I returned and went up to Claverack before joining it – one hour and thirty miles wasted. Anyway, I then found I-90 quite easily and stopped at a service station to allow Frank – my Hungarian co-driver to do some miles. No such luck! His driving was awful – as soon as he was on the highway he put his head back against the headrest and was almost facing the ceiling. His speed control was erratic and his lane changing was rough – we were getting tossed around in the back of the car. So, instead of having some rest, I was getting mentally exhausted. I took over and drove us to Boston, getting there at about 5:30am. We rested until 7am then set out to see Boston.

Initially we wandered around the commercial district which is just a series of massive bank buildings – impressive stuff for architects but not really for us. We went to a tourist info. Centre, got some maps and were advised to go around the "Freedom Trail". This is a route through downtown Boston passing many historic buildings from "War of Independence" times. I had never heard of any of the places before and it was pretty tame stuff anyway, so we abandoned the route.

We found the Boston Garden, where the Boston Celtics basketball team play and wanted to look around, however it cost \$4 for a tour (of an empty stadium) so we didn't go. We walked to the Cheers pub, real name Bull and Finch. Then through the park in the centre of Boston – temperatures were searing – the peak was 95°F in the afternoon and the humidity was also very high.

Lunch was a Big Mac, fries and shake. The afternoon was much better, we first went to the Hancock building – a sixty storey glass walled building. We went to the observation deck and I took some photos of the Boston skyline. I then took us to the Boston library, which was a mistake because I showed them the INFOTRAC data retrieval systems and they were tech-struck and I couldn't get them away from the computers – I think they looked at every piece of information available on Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

We then made a tactical decision to cross the Harvard Bridge into Cambridge and on to Harvard University. The map had a misprint, it said 1½ miles from the bridge, in truth it was 4½ miles! Anyway, we saw MIT and also a whole range of bookshops for students.

The Harvard campus is a whole range of smallish buildings spread over many square miles. There is not really a focal point, possibly the library which contains over five million volumes. My favourite moment was standing in a water fountain and getting thoroughly drenched – a nice relief from the searing heat.

We decided to catch the "T" (underground train) back to Boston and got the car about 7pm. At the waterfront we saw the ship over which the famous tea was thrown overboard at the Boston tea party. Metropolitan Boston was a nightmare to get out of with speeding traffic and weird junctions.

Returned to camp at 11:30pm. The trip was about 360 miles in total. I drove all the way back because I didn't trust Frank!

Wednesday 14th July 1993 – Day 22

Woke at 7:30am for breakfast and was knackered. I couldn't face the pancakes so I just ate loads of cereal. I searched the mail anxiously, but unfortunately I had none – I was dying to find my exam results. Lunch was a chicken and salad piece of baguette which was OK.

I was busy all afternoon with a couple of long drives, which I obviously didn't welcome. I was becoming very tired. Finished at 4:30pm and wrote my Boston postcards.

Dinner was sliced beef, mashed potatoes, carrots and gravy – it was very good.

I decided to postpone my trip to the laundromat because of my fatigue. After dinner I had to make another trip to the pharmacy – it's ironic, just when I wanted an easy time I end up working all day.

In the evening we drank some beers (five Genesee) which was really good. We were all telling jokes and nobody was laughing – they must lose their humour in translation – it was hilarious. Went to sleep about 11:30pm, very tired.

Thursday 15th July 1993 – Day 23

Felt like a zombie. I had to take a cold shower to wake up. Nothing much happened during the morning besides Nora fainting in the office which was a little spooky. Lunch was Tacos and the meat filling was disgusting so I only ate one.

In the afternoon I had to go into Red Hook with Irwin to pick up the station wagon with a trailer attached. It was 20' long but was not visible through the back of the car which made it really difficult to manoeuvre backwards.

Went for a swim in the lake later in the afternoon, the temperature was "only" 80°F so it felt quite cool. Dinner was pasta shells which I didn't eat. So, I went into Red Hook and bought a BLT (bacon, lettuce and tomato), and it was exquisite.

Played table tennis with Levvy in the evening then went to sleep. Had two beers.

Friday 16th July 1993 – Day 24

Overnight the temperature dropped quite low so it was an uncomfortable night. It wasn't helped by the fact that our smoke alarm went off, nearly giving me a heart attack. I couldn't switch the damned thing off so I had to rip it from the ceiling. A little later the chimney blew off Jimmy's bakery right in front of me. What would happen next? Nothing much did really happen – the mail was not delivered to the Post Office in over ten years.

I went to Rhinebeck to the Key Bank to exchange some pounds to dollars for Jimmy. The clerk there didn't know whether to multiply or divide by the exchange rate (1.41)!

Lunch was pizza which was excellent. The afternoon was very busy and I worked straight through to 5:30pm. Dinner was a chicken wing which was very poor.

At 6pm I had to go into Red Hood to pick up some people, then I played tennis with Levvy for about half an hour. My right wrist is still causing me problems.

I then had to be in Rhinecliff at 8:15pm to pick up Andy, the nature freak. He wasn't there so it was a wasted journey, I got back to camp at 9:15pm. I had been "on the go" all day and I was sick of driving.

Went to sleep at about 10pm. N.b. Weather's much cooler now with daytime maximums of about 80°F / 82°F.

Saturday 17th July 1993 – Day 25

Received the letter with confirmation of my degree class so I was obviously chuffed. I would have phoned home if there was no news today. I did all the mail, milk and errands in the morning in the hope that I would get some time off in the afternoon. Lunch was toasted cheese which was so greasy.

In the afternoon I spent 1½ hours in the laundromat cleaning some camper's soiled bedding. I then had to spend an hour in the pharmacy in Red Hook because their computer system broke down. I started to feel really tired, so when I was finished at 4:30pm I had a little nap.

Dinner was steak – oily, and potato cakes which were OK.

I played tennis with Levvy in the evening and I felt very little pain in my wrist but it is very weak and I cannot strike the ball very firmly.

I bought a case of beers for a few of us and we drank them to celebrate my degree results.

Sunday 18th July 1993 – Day 26

A rest day for me. Got up about 8:30am, had some cereal. Walked down to the deli to pick up a NYT. Spent all morning just lazing around reading the paper.

Walked down to the second deli for lunch where I had a BLT sub for \$4. I couldn't face the pasta shells from camp.

In the afternoon I did some sunbathing then spent 1½ hours at the waterfront and also played some tennis. Dinner was chicken burgers which were OK.

In the evening I lay around a little more, then me and Jan and Derek drank a little Polish vodka. It had a very strong taste and was quite difficult to get used to but I had to drink it to be polite.

Went to sleep at about 11pm.

Monday 19th July 1993 – Day 27

I thought that after a rest day yesterday I would be refreshed and feel little tiredness. The opposite was true: I felt lethargic all day and couldn't wait to finish. I think that the weather had something to do with it. It was miserable all day with some quite heavy rain throughout the late afternoon and evening.

Anyway, lunch was ziti pasta rolls in tomato sauce, I couldn't eat any so I made myself a cheese sandwich. Work was quite simple with just a couple of Red Hook runs. When I finished at 3:30pm I just went for a sleep until dinner, which was sliced roast beef, potato croquettes and peas.

Listened to some music in the evening, then went to the video room to watch Cape Fear starring Robert De Niro. The film is not as good as the hype – it was too fantastic for words – more like 007.

Tuesday 20th July 1993 – Day 28

A very busy day, with no stops from 8:30am until 5:30pm bar about twenty minutes for lunch.

First off, I had to gas up the camp's whole fleet of vehicles. Later I went to pick up my developed photographs from Red Hook. The photos from New York are not as good as I had hoped for, but it was nice to have a photo of mum and the kids.

I also took the opportunity to play Lotto on the New York state lottery; first prize is \$14 million, but the odds are 12,913,583:1. Lunch was toasted cheese and poorly cooked French fries. After lunch I did a Rhinebeck run followed by a Ginsberg / Hudson run.

Temperatures were in the mid 80's and it was also fairly humid.

Dinner was roast beef again. After dinner it was tennis again, my wrist is getting a lot better. Later Derek was offering vodka and Coke again so we obliged.

Wednesday 21st July 1993 – Day 29

Just a regular day's driving with many trips to Red Hook and Rhinebeck. Advanced \$100 from Irwin, should last until the end of camp, but who knows?

Lunch was Frankfurters and beans so I had a good fill. It was very sunny in the afternoon so I really wanted to get away early but I couldn't. Dinner was chicken nuggets which were absolutely awful – I think they had been cooked a week ago. Watched Die Hard 2 in the evening which was pretty bad.

Thursday 22nd July 1993 – Day 30

Today was a first. I actually enjoyed breakfast, lunch and dinner. Morning was nothing special, just dossing around camp doing odd jobs. Lunch was pizza, Jan had done a special one with tomatoes, peppers, pineapple chunks, etc. It was excellent.

In the afternoon I serviced the whole fleet of vehicles, including gassing them all up. Most of the vans were nearly empty so I was absolutely knackered when I had finished. Odd jobs also kept me busy until 5pm.

Dinner was French fries and roast beef, which was actually OK.

Found out today that my finishing date is four days later than Levvy's: this may be a problem for him. In the evening I played some tennis then had some beers (five) with the others. We had a heated argument over our relevant living standards – they were all pleading poverty and I was having none of it.

Friday 23rd July 1993 – Day 31

Not too bad a day. The weather is hitting about 81°/82°F which is really quite comfortable.

In the morning I had to go to the laundromat to clean a camper's sleeping bag and blankets – I really don't like doing this. Lunch was sliced meats with baguette type rolls which was really good.

The afternoon was slack, just doing simple errands. Dinner was fried chicken and pasta rolls, which was a joke.

After dinner I had to go to Red Hook to pick up some people from the loop. Frankie (Sajad Amin) had gone to Poughkeepsie even though he hadn't booked a day off. Irwin was wise to this and waiting for him as he returned. Fired. The guy was an idiot – he constantly bragged to us about how little work he did. Later I spoke with Levvy and we firmed up our post-camp travel arrangements. I will spend two nights in New York.

Saturday 24th July 1993 – Day 32

Last night I had a wicked dream about English food that I'm not eating over here: steak and kidney pies, lamb chops, fish, etc. I hope I'm not getting homesick!

Today was visiting day for the parents of the campers. The whole place was packed out. I expected to see masses of "executive" cars but there were very few. It was mainly just new Nissans, Accuras, Mitsubishis, BMWs, etc. I think there was probably only 35% American cars and most of those were Ford Taurus (Sierra). A lot of the people were real phonies: forty year olds trying to look like twenty year old cheerleaders. I had a nightmare driving back and forth between the kitchen at about 2mph through a sea of people.

Lunch was actually quite good with French sticks and sliced meats and a good salad bar.

The afternoon was again spent dodging the masses. Dinner was ravioli which was just about edible.

At the dinner table there was an argument and all of the English staff displayed magnificently all of their arrogance and ignorance by insisting that only English be spoken at the table. When challenged by Jan and Levvy the best that they could come up with was to become angry and insulting. They then sang the national anthem with all their bitterness displayed. It really was too embarrassing for me and I had to leave before I got involved in a nasty argument. I could have torn them to pieces.

Later I played tennis with Derek and it was really good. I am improving. The evening was rounded off with five beers with Derek, Levvy and Frank.

Sunday 25th July 1993 – Day 33

Today was probably my easiest day of work at camp. There was virtually nothing to do. In the morning I was finished at about 10:30am and I went to the waterfront until about twelve. It was really a hot day, about 90-93°F I would guess.

Lunch was some rice dice which I didn't like. After lunch I did a little work then was finished at 2:30pm and again went to the waterfront, this time with Jan. We took out a canoe and circled the entire lake. There are some fantastic weekend residences situated around the lake. I knew that dinner would be hamburgers so I had a BLT sub, absolutely wicked.

Later I played some tennis, read the Sunday paper, wrote a letter, and then got some sleep.

n.b. I had, I think, six showers today: this could be a record.

Monday 26th July 1993 – Day 34

Another easy day for me. The morning consisted of just a couple of Red Hook runs and errands. I was finished by 11am. Lunch was turkey which was OK.

In the afternoon Irwin and Ruth had to drive to New Rochelle to inspect their house which was water damaged from a pipe burst on the second floor. So I had the whole afternoon off, and I just rested.

Dinner was potato croquettes and toasted cheese.

Frankie and Brad reared up at the dinner table. There had been a long running atmosphere between them and so far they have thrown each other's clothes in the toilet, on the roof of the cabin and into the branches of a tree. It's hilarious to watch.

In the evening we just chatted and had some (four) beers.

Tuesday 27th July 1993 – Day 35

Today was really busy, but I enjoyed it. In the morning I did the regular chores then had a run into Poughkeepsie to pick up some medical equipment from a laboratory that looked like something from a science-fiction film. I knew I wouldn't be back for lunch so I ate out and Ruth reimbursed me, very good.

In the afternoon I did a run to Ginsberg – Hudson – Catskill – Hudson and it was incredibly humid so I was absolutely knackered. Finished at about 5:15pm.

Dinner was chicken and soup and rolls. I had to do a little work after dinner so I was finished by about 8pm. Just walking around the camp made me sweat, the humidity was overpowering, so I just did nothing.

Wednesday 28th July 1993 – Day 36

I didn't manage to get off the camp all morning, just small errands. After lunch (hot dogs in baked beans) I had a Jamesway run but I decided to take a liberty and ran over to the Champion shop in Hyde Park. I bought two pairs of shorts, a tee shirt and some tracksuit bottoms for just \$25. I returned about 4pm and thought that I'd finished. At 5:15pm Irwin came to see me with an emergency job to return "87" to Binkmans. He gave me the wrong directions and I spent about 1½ hours trying to find some where just twenty miles away. Got back about 7:15pm and Irwin gave me money to go to the deli. I bought a multi-sub and it wasn't very good. Then Charlie offered me some pork chops which were great – a taste of home. Just chilled out in the evening.

Thursday 29th July 1993 – Day 37

A day off for me today so I decided to go to Poughkeepsie because there are two large malls there, Levvy also went.

The malls were quite big but don't compare to the mall in Sheffield in size. The prices were however ridiculously cheap. Electrical hardware, particularly computers, and sporting goods were all at bargain prices. I spent about \$150 and got myself three pairs of shorts, two t-shirts, tracksuit bottoms, cross trainers and a Truman biography. I think that the same goods in England would probably cost £170-200!

When I returned I picked up my mail with details of my prize from the IMechE, so really I had a free days shopping.

In the evening I had five beers and bought some for the others.

Friday 30th July 1993 – Day 38

Morning was very simple, with just a run to Rhinecliff to drop Floyd off. Lunch was Frankfurters and baked beans, I also managed to snatch a slice of pizza.

The afternoon simply consisted of a trip into Hudson.

Dinner was chicken wings – boring!

Today I received a letter from Andrew which was very welcome – all the latest football news, etc. In the evening we had a practice game of soccer in anticipation for our supposed match on Tuesday with Camp Pontiac.

I started to read Truman, it seems very good, but I think it will take a very long time to finish.

Saturday 31st July 1993 – Day 39

Woke up at about 2:30am with a really heavy sweat, the bed was drenched so I slept at the other end. I've no idea what caused it because I was very comfortable when I went to sleep.

Morning was just a simple Red Hook run. Lunch was pizza made by Jan. It was fabulous. I ate three slices until I was nearly sick.

The afternoon was also very easy but it was very hot so when I got a Red Hook run I just cruised around for a couple of hours.

For dinner I had another slice of pizza left over from lunch. After dinner I just lazed around, I didn't want to play tennis or soccer because I want to save my feet for the big game against Pontiac on Tuesday. In the evening I had four beers with Derek and Charlie.

Sunday 1st August 1993 – Day 40

Breakfast was bagels and cream cheese so I scoffed myself full.

Today was alumni day so there was lots of preparation work to be done, just running around the camp.

Lunch was beef and bread which wasn't too good.

The afternoon wasn't too busy, but I had to hang around all the same. It was very humid so I was a little cheesed off. Dinner was spaghetti and meatballs. In the evening I had a couple of beers with Levvy, Jan, Frank and Derek.

Monday 2nd August 1993 – Day 41

The morning consisted of just the usual stuff. Lunch was grilled cheese.

Afternoon was virtually blank with just one Red Hook run.

Dinner was turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy.

Did nothing in the evening then went to sleep about 9pm to try to catch up on some of my own tiredness.

Tuesday 3rd August 1993 – Day 42

I ate pancakes for breakfast so I must have been hungry.

The morning was very simple and I finished by about 11am so I went to the waterfront for a swim and a bathe. Lunch was pasta shells in tomato sauce.

The afternoon consisted of a Hudson trip to take a girl to the optometrist. It took ages, I didn't get back until 5:15pm. Even then I had to do the milk, UPS and odd jobs. I decided to pass on the camp dinner which was hamburgers and went to the deli for a BLT sub.

At 7pm we had a soccer game against Pontiac. We lost 3-1. Our team had no organisation or shape, probably because this was the first time that we'd all played together. Had four beers in the evening with Levvy, Derek and Alex.

Wednesday 4th August 1993 – Day 43

No aches or pains from the match last night so I was very pleased. Morning was very simple with just a Red Hook run. Temperature is soaring to about 92°F, very hot. Lunch was tacos.

Went down to the waterfront after lunch to catch some rays. Simple jobs in the afternoon.

Dinner was chicken again – crap.

In the evening, I read parts of some books that Irwin lent to me.

Thursday 5th August 1993 – Day 44

Morning consisted of a run to Rhinebeck followed by a run to Hudson. I knew that Ruth and Irwin were going to New Rochelle for the day so I was determined to get everything done as early as possible to get me some free time in the afternoon. Lunch was a turkey salad roll.

In the afternoon Charlie persuaded Joe to give him the afternoon off so me, Charlie and Floyd went to the Galleria in Poughkeepsie. I spent my time at the Barnes and Noble and bought four books for just \$50. Returned about 5:15pm, dinner was meatballs or soup.

In the evening I wasted two hours waiting for some people returning from a LOOP. Had three beers later.

Friday 6th August 1993 – Day 45

Very cold last night – had to wear all of my clothes. Had scrambled eggs for breakfast. Nothing any different happened in the morning.

Lunch was pasta rolls and also toasted muffins with butter – I ate about twelve because they were really good.

The afternoon consisted of a long Hudson run. I fell asleep later and missed dinner but I was a little lucky because Ruth sent me out to pick up a counsellor from a pizzeria in Rhinebeck and I got some free pizza.

In the evening I did some good reading from a book Irwin loaned me. Later I had four beers with Levvy, Derek and Frank.

Saturday 7th August 1993 – Day 46

Breakfast was bagels and cream cheese – excellent.

The morning just consisted of runs to Rhinebeck, Red Hook, etc. Lunch was chicken burgers in batter which were OK. Peggy made some cheesecake and gave us all a slice which was very nice.

In the afternoon Irwin allowed me to take a car over to Hyde Park to go to the Champion sport shop. Everything was very cheap, but the quality was dubious so I didn't buy anything.

I knew that dinner was chicken wings so I skipped it and went to Jean's deli and had a BLT sub.

After dinner I played a little basketball then read some. In the evening I had four beers.

Sunday 8th August 1993 – Day 47

The morning was very simple with just a run to Rhinecliff. I knew that there was little else to do in the morning so I decided to drive over to Hudson Valley Mall in Kingston. I took route 103 from Rhinecliff and it was just beautiful – just like driving through Derbyshire. The mall was not quite as big as Poughkeepsie and not as good. Still, there was a good bookshop so I bought two books – a Vietnam book and an almanac.

Lunch was Frankfurters and beans.

The afternoon was again very simple – a carnival was happening on camp with the counsellors setting up little stalls and sideshows and it was very good. Dinner was chicken nuggets.

After dinner I played a lot of tennis with a good racket from the closet. 8-26-4.

Went to sleep at 9:30pm in anticipation of the following day's driving.

Monday 9th August 1993 – Day 48

The morning was very simple, I didn't even get one trip out of camp. I managed to grab 45 minutes down at the waterfront before lunch. Lunch was pizza, without the trimmings.

In the afternoon I went over to Kingston with Charlie, Floyd and Jimmy. I didn't buy anything but I managed to finalise my details for staying at the Y in NYC after camp.

Later in the afternoon I had trips into Red Hook and then Rhinebeck to pick up the rental car. I was late back so I got a BLT sub from Jean's deli. I then just relaxed and went to bed about 9:30pm.

Sunday 10th August 1993 – Day 49

Up at 12am, showered and ready to leave for DC at 12:30am. Drove the car up to the gate the – shock and horror – somebody told me that one of the headlamps wasn't on. A blown bulb would have prevented us from going. I took the bulb out then placed it back in and hey presto, it worked; much to the relief of us all.

Anyway, going south we went on I-87; Garden State Parkway; New Jersey Turnpike; JFK Memorial; I95; Baltimore-Washington Parkway. Arrived at 8:15am, total distance was 350 miles, I did 250. Parked near Union Station.

Temperature was about 85°F and went around all of the sites:

1. Supreme Court
2. Library of Congress
3. Capital Building including Senate and House of Chambers, but no photos
4. FBI Building
5. Washington Monument
6. White House
7. Smithsonian Institution
 - a. Natural History
 - b. American History
8. Lincoln Memorial
9. Vietnam War Memorial
10. Jefferson Memorial

My favourite was the Capital Building – the only drawback was the insistence of no photography in the chambers. The White House was closed to tourists because there was to be a ceremony for the passing of a tax bill where all of the congressmen who voted for it would be present. The upside of this was that we could actually see him on the lawn (from about 300 yards) waving and shaking hands – wicked. (*Addendum – it was Bill Clinton*).

At 8pm we dragged ourselves back to the car and my feet were wrecked. Went into Union Station and I had my second Big Mac Meal of the day. Coming back I missed the turn for the New Jersey Turnpike and had to drive through Philadelphia on I-95. The traffic made the driving intense but it was worth it for the night skyline. Further on I had to take US-1 to return to the Garden State Parkway.

The return trip took seven hours and I drove the whole way. Went to sleep about 4am absolutely knackered. The total trip had taken 730 miles and the cost ran out to £36 each, about £24 – a bargain!

Wednesday 11th August 1993 – Day 50

Woke up at 7:30am, showered, and determined to be positive all day. Morning was very busy, had to gas all the vans, then I had double the mail. Lunch was meatballs.

In the afternoon I went over to Rhinebeck to return the car – he only charged us an extra \$15 for the 730 miles that we did. Finished at 4pm.

Went to my cabin and fell asleep until 6pm. Dinner was chicken legs, mashed potato and vegetables. In the evening I wrote up some postcards.

I then chatted with Charlie and had some vodka. Then I had four beers with Jan and Derek. Went to sleep very tired at 11:30pm.

Thursday 12th August 1993 – Day 51

Was tired when I woke up. I must go to sleep earlier tonight. The morning was very easy with just one simple run into Red Hook.

Lunch was macaroni and I just couldn't eat it so I made myself a jam sandwich instead.

The afternoon was again easy and I finished by 3:30pm so I had myself a little kip. Dinner was hamburgers which were saturated in oil – they were puke.

In the evening I played some tennis with Levvy. Went to sleep at about 9:30pm.

Friday 13th August 1993 – Day 52

I ate six pancakes for breakfast so I must have been very hungry. The morning was very busy; I had to gas up all of the mini-buses then had trips into Red Hook and Rhinebeck. Lunch was toasted cheese which was really greasy – not at all like "ours".

In the afternoon I had a run into Rhinebeck then on to Ginsbergs. I had my Yankees ticket come through so I was well chuffed.

I also phoned Camp America to chase up Levvy's insurance claim – the news was good – he will get \$390. Dinner was soup followed by French Fries. After dinner I parcelled up all of my books very carefully – ten so far. Later in the evening I had four beers with Derek, Jan and Levvy.

Saturday 14th August 1993 – Day 53

Today was my last of my six holidays. I decide to catch the loop into Hyde Park where the Franklin Delano Roosevelt home and library is situated. The house was nothing special but his library contained a museum of his life with some really interesting artefacts. There were schoolbooks from his days at Harvard then Columbia, details of all the agencies he set up under the New Deal and also top secret (now unclassified) letters between Churchill and himself during the war years. I left there at 12:45pm and went to the Poughkeepsie malls where I had a Big Mac meal again. I bought some basketball shoes, swim shorts and some more books.

I got back to camp at about 6:30pm. I played some tennis with Levvy then parcelled the books and tidied the cabin.

Sunday 15th August 1993 – Day 54

Ate three bagels with cream cheese for breakfast – they were excellent. In the morning I had to sweep out all five mini-buses which took about two hours – I was wrecked. Lunch was chicken burgers which were very poor.

I raced down to the waterfront to catch some rays, it was 95°F today and low humidity – wonderful. I was at the waterfront for about 1½ hours and got myself quite red. The late afternoon was simple with just a couple of Red Hook / Rhinebeck runs.

I skipped dinner because it was meatballs. I went to Jean's deli and had a BLT sub. It didn't taste too good – I think that the novelty is wearing off. In the evening I did some reading and listened to the Walkman. Later I had three beers with Derek, Jan and Frank. I was very tired.

Thursday 16th August 1993 – Day 55

The morning got off to a bad start when I had some pancakes in which the mix hadn't been stirred – I got a mouthful of powder.

The morning then consisted of a trip into Hudson which I stretched to 1pm so that Irwin would pay for my Big Mac meal.

No respite in the afternoon with a Rhinebeck run, just to firm up my car rental arrangements for next week. Dinner turkey and mash – OK.

The weather today was lousy - a high of 74°F, with clouds and rain: a total change from yesterday.

I spoke to Irwin today and he said I could leave camp Monday evening – which is OK. In the evening it rained so I just read and listened to my Walkman.

Friday 17th August 1993 – Day 56

A completely dull, miserable rainy day. It didn't stop raining from dawn 'till dusk – a first on camp this summer.

In the morning I had a trip into Hudson and got my hair cut - \$6 + \$1 tip. The guy didn't want to take any off, I had to keep insisting on him taking more off.

Lunch was spaghetti and yesterday's left-over grilled toast – a joke.

I was busy on camp all afternoon but managed to get my books mailed. It cost me \$54.85 for 25lbs – more than I was first told – but it had to be paid.

Irwin checked over all of the salary advances and it became clear that I had advanced more than my total salary - \$30 over in fact. Irwin said he'd take care of it, a nice gesture. I finished work at 5:15pm. Dinner was hamburgers and soup. Did nothing much in the evening until 8:30pm when I had to run some staff into Red Hook in the evening.

Came back, went to sleep, then went out again to pick them up at 11:45pm – a real pain in the neck.

Wednesday 18th August 1993 – Day 57

After three bagels for breakfast, just in case I couldn't eat any lunch or dinner again.

The morning was very busy even though I didn't get a chance to go off camp, I was just running little errands.

Lunch was turkey baps which were really dull; processed turkey. After lunch I had to take a group of CITs (addendum: councillors in training) over to the Taconic State Park. It was absolutely beautiful.

Dinner was chicken nuggets, I ate about fifteen of them.

After dinner I had to spend about an hour moving food to the social hall for the evening's disco.

Had a couple of vodkas with Charlie, then went and had two beers with Derek and Levvy.

Thursday 19th August 1993 – Day 58

What a day – virtually non-stop from start to finish. In the morning must have done 101 jobs on camp.

Lunch was pizza, with no toppings – it was very bland. I raced down to the waterfront after lunch and grabbed 45 minutes in the hot sun. After this, it was all systems go until 6pm.

At dinner I had to tell Levvy that it would be necessary to obtain a VISA for entry into Canada if we wanted to follow our travel plans after camp, he had been hoping that he could enter without a VISA.

Dinner (the banquet) turned out to be just a grilled steak between two stale pieces of bread, it was nothing. Later I played tennis with Derek. I had a bad headache in the evening so I went to sleep early.

Friday 21st August 1993 – Day 59

Last day of camp. I was up at 6:30am and moving luggage around. Most of the kids were out by 9am, it all went very smoothly. I didn't have to do much work, I was mainly just on standby.

Lunch was pizza, which was much better than the pizza which has been served up during camp. In the afternoon it rained and rained, I had very little to do: just collect the fire extinguishers and milk crates. I was finished by about 3pm.

Dinner was potatoes in fried onions and some of yesterday's chicken nuggets. In the evening I drove into Kingston with Joe, Derek and Frank. I spent nothing. Got back about 9:30pm and went to sleep.

Saturday 21st August 1993 – Day 60

Joe cooked some fried eggs and bacon for breakfast, it was absolutely fabulous.

The morning on camp was spent driving to every building and gathering in all of the shower curtains. It was a perfectly beautiful day, temp was about 78°F, no humidity, and blue sky. It was a pleasure just to be on the camp. Lunch was pizza, no frills – a bit of a disappointment really. In the afternoon I did a few odd jobs and returned the minibuses to Binkmans.

Dinner was lamb steak which was OK. In the evening I drove over to Poughkeepsie Galleria with Joe, Derek and Frank – again I spent nothing. Got back at about 10.30pm and had a couple of beers.

Sunday 22nd August 1993 – Day 61

After the beautiful clear day yesterday it was freezing last night. After 6am I couldn't get back to sleep so I decided to get up and do all of my washing. Breakfast was again bacon and eggs.

The morning was spent collecting bedding from around the camp. I also went to the Holy Cow with Joe and had a mint sundae. Lunch was chopped steak and rice. In the afternoon I had to wash and maintain the cards, I was finished by about 3.00pm so I continued doing all my washing.

Rested until 6pm when I drove over to the Four Brothers restaurant near Rhinebeck. There was Ruth, Irwin, Al, Peggy, Judy, Jean-Luis, Joe, Jim, Frank, Derek and myself. I had heaps of salad for starters, then a steak sandwich. For desert I had a strawberry sundae – it was too much. The food was very good and Ruth and Irwin were excellent hosts.

The worst part of the evening was listening to Jean-Luis and Judy (Irwin's daughter) talking about all of their globe-trotting – yawn.

The bill came to \$160 and I noted that Irwin left a \$25 tip.

Monday 23rd August 1993 – Day 62

Breakfast was again bacon and eggs and also pancakes. The morning was mainly spent sorting baggage ready for UPS. Lunch was pizza with all the trimmings. After lunch I had a run into Kingston and that was it. I bought Irwin and Ruth some flowers, cost me \$23, the really appreciated them.

I tidied all of my things together and left camp at 4:30pm with Irwin to pick up the rental car. It felt sad to be leaving the camp. N.b. Irwin gave me \$50.

I picked the car up and then Levvy from Rhinebeck. Started out proper at 7pm.

Drove straight to Cape Cod and onto Provincetown, about 300 miles. Slept in the car. Had a Big Mac meal for supper.

Thursday 24th August 1993 – Day 63

First stop was P-Town. It is at the very tip of the Cape and it is a lovely, quaint village, bit it is also a harbour town so the beach was useless. I had a bagel with cream cheese for breakfast and it was lovely. About 11:30am we headed out for a beach, it was a National Seashore beach called Head of the Meadow. Temperatures were scorching into the nineties and it was a clear blue sky – perfect. The beach itself wasn't too good though – the sand was quite dark and the entry into the sea was thick with algae, so when you left the water you were covered in it. About 1:30pm we drove south to Marconi Beach which was fabulous, the water was very cold but it was bearable. Stayed on the beach until 4:30pm – red as a beetroot. Had a good shower and washed my hair in the facilities. At about 5:30pm I leisurely drove down to Hyannis. Had another Big Mac meal for my supper. Later had a stroll up Main Street in the breezy ocean winds which was very refreshing.

Parked up at about 9:30pm in the harbour and went to sleep.

Wednesday 25th August 1993 – Day 64

Slept until about 3:30am when the harbour patrol tapped on my window and asked me what I was doing. He was OK and just directed me to somewhere else that I could sleep. Left for Falmouth at about 6am.

We left Falmouth on the Island Queen ferry to Martha's Vineyard, cost just \$9 for the round trip. The journey took about forty minutes and offered a breath-taking view of the island.

We got off at Oak Bluffs and decided to rent a mountain bike each for the day, cost was \$12.

The weather was again scorching in the nineties with clear blue skies. We rode along the east coast to Edgartown, the main town on the island. I had two bagels with cream cheese for my lunch. Went to the beautiful island of Chappaquiddick could be seen. All of the scenery on the Vineyard was spectacularly beautiful, better than the Cape. In the afternoon we cycled back to Oak Bluffs via Vineyard Haven, a harbour. We had cycled in total about twenty miles and I had no t-shirt on so my back was stinging from the hot sun. We went to a beach near the harbour to cool off, the water was lovely. Caught the ferry back to Falmouth at 3:45pm.

I drove up through Boston (excellent skyline), then let Levvy drive most of the rest of the way to Quebec.

Thursday 26th August 1993 – Day 65

I carried on driving from about 11pm and by 1am I was very tired and decided to sleep at a truck stop. We slept until about 6:30am and had breakfast at the nearby restaurant, I had two eggs, bacon, beans and four rounds of toast for just \$3.25 (CAN), very cheap. I then drove the remaining 150km into Quebec.

The city is surrounded by a wall to help fend off the invading English, but it didn't work. The city is very French, it is said that only 5% speak English. It was also superbly beautiful, and again the weather was superb (nineties and clear blue sky). We saw everything then left to go to Montreal. We ate at a McDonalds but when we returned to the car the power steering didn't work – there was a damaged fluid pipe. I couldn't get through to Bob's rental for advice and also couldn't find any English speaking garage attendants to help me. Luckily, there was a tourist information centre ½ km away who pointed me in the right direction. We limped about 5km to a Chrysler-Plymouth-Dodge dealer. Luckily there was an English speaking guy there who could aid us. He told us he could fix it at 2pm tomorrow. It was then 4pm.

We had a map from the tourist information place which showed a camp ground and lake about 3km away. We decided to walk there, but it took about eighty minutes, it was maybe six or seven km. We were knackered so we both had a shower in the sinks because the waterfront was closed. It was still a pleasant evening when we walked back to the car. Went to sleep in the car at about 9pm.

Friday 26th August 1993 – Day 66

I slept well last night despite it being really humid and sticky, I think it must have been all of the walking. We decided to walk to the malls since the car wasn't due to be repaired until 2pm.

The shops were generally very expensive with very few bargains. We both had a continental breakfast at a small café in the mall.

We returned to the car at about 2pm and found that it had already been repaired. It had cost \$177 CAN. Included was \$66 per hour to replace the pipe and \$42 for the pipe itself. We drove straight from the garage to 40 out to Montreal. Unbelievably I drove straight past Montreal without seeing it. I had to turn around and drive about 20km back. We arrived at the Montreal Parc at about 7pm. Admission was just \$4 for the cheapest seats, but once inside we could move around freely. We went all around and up and down the stadium before settling into some seats which should have cost \$15.50. There was a lack of atmosphere in the game but the highlight was when the Houston pitcher, Nolan Ryan, was sacked from the game for repeatedly at the Montreal pitcher, Martinez, when he was at the bat. It was one of those face-to-face duels with the umpire. The game ended 3-1 to Montreal, with one home run from Montreal.

After the game we went to a really greasy café where I had a Hot Dog Michigan (with Chilli) and French fries. I also noticed that the power steering was leaking again!

Saturday 27th August 1993 – Day 67

Last night was damned humid, I was gasping for air and didn't get to sleep until 1am after settling down at 11:15pm. Woke up at 7am and felt really dirty and sticky.

We went into downtown Montreal at about 9am on the Metro. We first went to a McDonalds for Continental breakfast where I realised that I didn't have the car keys with me. All sorts of terrible things crossed my mind about what would happen if I lost them. We traced our way back through Montreal and the subway to where I parked the car. With massive relief I found that I had locked them in the ignition. I first tried to open the door with a wire but had no success. The guy at the car park kiosk phoned a garage and a man came and opened it. It cost me \$35, but still I was a relieved man. We went straight back to Montreal and both took a shower at a facility we had seen earlier – it felt good.

We walked around vieux (old) Montreal and saw nearly everything. Dinner was a pizza at McDonalds.

In the afternoon we saw new Montreal and then walked about four miles up and around Mont-Real for a fantastic view of the city and Saint Lawrence sea way. I had dinner at McDonalds again and again had pizza-deluxe. Then we went to the underground city which is technically superb, but once you in, it just feels like any mall.

My overall impression of Montreal was that it is a very clean and beautiful city, but tiny compared to London or Philadelphia or New York. I had expected much more. The volume of car traffic was also far lighter than I have experienced in a major city.

We returned to the car at about 8:30pm after walking all the way around the Olympic Parc complex.

We decided to abandon our plans for Toronto and Niagara in favour of driving down through New York stated.

Sunday 28th August 1993 – Day 68

Woke up at 6am for the drive down into the USA. Going through the border control was very easy – there wasn't any! It was nice to have signs in English and distances in miles again.

We drove to a town north of Lake George where there were about thirty factory outlet stores, I bought two t-shirts from the Converse shop. Had breakfast at McDonalds.

We then drove further down into Saratoga: first to the lake, but there was no beach so we went on to the Saratoga Spa state park where there was an outdoor swimming pool. It was necessary to get into some water because it was again very hot.

About 5:30pm we drove to Albany where we had a pizza deluxe large at a Pizza Hut. It was huge and we only just managed to put it away. I then drove on to Pittsfield in Massachusetts so that Levvy can possibly cash his insurance claim cheque from Camp America. Went to sleep at about 9:30pm.

Monday 30th August 1993 – Day 69

Had a really good sleep and was up at about 6:30am. We walked into Pittsfield and I had two bagels with cream cheese for breakfast and a large coffee for just £2.50, excellent value.

Levvy managed to get his insurance cheque cashed, so he had another \$390. We then drove slowly back to camp via Austerlitz and Claverack. Met Irwin in the office and he immediately gave me a job to do. I had to drive some beds over to Harry Sunshine's house near Tivoli. Had lunch / dinner at the P&N deli – a BLT sub which Irwin paid for. Bought some beers then went back to camp and did some laundry and sorting of my clothes, etc.

Back at camp, Levvy cooked me and Derek some bacon and eggs which Derek had saved from the end of camp. It didn't go down very well and I had a really bad stomach for an hour or so. Late we chatted and drank some beers. Went to sleep at about 9:30pm, it felt really great to be able to straighten my legs right out again after all of those nights in the car.

Sunday 31st August 1993 – Day 70

Up at 6:30am. Had a shower and repacked my gear.

Left camp at 7:45am and had a bagel and coffee for breakfast at the deli.

Took the car back to Bob, he charged us \$260 which was very good considering we'd had the car for eight days and had done 1430 miles. He then gave us a lift to the train station where we caught the Amtrak to NYC for \$24. We quickly made our way to the YMCA McBurley at 24th and 8th Avenue. \$48 for a double. First we went to the World Trade Centre and went to the roof, 110 floors up, 1320ft. The view of uptown Manhattan and the Statue of Liberty was superb. We then went to Wall Street and inside the NY Stock Exchange. There was a viewing gallery where the hectic trading on the floor could be observed. It must be the most high pressure working environment I've ever seen.

We took the subway to Grand Central and walked to the United Nations building but it was most unimpressive. We then went back into central Manhattan and went around Broadway, Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street, etc. Got back to the YMCA at about 9pm and had a shower. Watched some TV then went to sleep.

Wednesday 1st September 1993 – Day 71

Last night was incredibly humid and I didn't think I got to sleep until about 1am. Up at 7am and head to 5th Avenue for a couple of photo opportunities. Had two cream cheese bagels for breakfast. I then walked around the shopping district: 5th, 6th, 7th between 35st and 45st. I didn't see anything that I wanted, even at Mac's – the "world's biggest store".

Returned to the YMCA at 11:30am. I said goodbye to Levvy, we were good friends.

I decided to go to Shea Stadium in Queens because the Mets were playing Houston at 1:40pm. Took the subway and had a great view of Manhattan when entering Queens. The stadium was great, but the game and atmosphere was lousy. They lost 3-2. Just 500 yards from Shea was Flushing Meadow and the US Open. It was too expensive and I didn't have the time so I opted not to go. I got the subway back and went to Columbus Circle. From here, 59st and 8th Avenue, I could walk through Central Park. I went past the Dairy, Strawberry Fields, and on to the lake. From here there was a superb view: all around trees and the lake but with skyscrapers dominating the skyline above the trees. I left the park at about 6pm and had a Big Mac meal – I was hungry.

I took the subway to 161st Yankee Stadium in the Bronx. I took a risk and wandered about the environs of the stadium. There was more atmosphere here than at any of the other ball games I'd seen, with thousands of people milling around outside. The game itself was a little lacking, until the bottom of the ninth. Losing 5-3, but with the bases loaded, Dan Mattingly came in to bat. A home run would have won it, but alas it wasn't to be. Took the subway down to 34th and was back in the YMCA by about midnight.

Thursday 2nd September 1993 – Day 72

Made my first and only phone call home at 4am to let mum and dad know what return flight I'd be on and my arrival time.

I was up again at 6:30am and out on the streets again at 7am. My first target was Chinatown. It wasn't very impressive, just very dirty. About an hour later, after a few wrong runs I arrived at Brooklyn Bridge and crossed over in Brooklyn on foot. The bridge has a lot of history and the view of the financial district from the bridge was special.

I then walked on to Battery Park at the southernmost tip of Manhattan to catch the ferry to Liberty Island. The trip cost \$6 and it was quite a dull day, but I think that it was worth it. Inside was a museum that showed how it was constructed. Each plate is simply hammered copper around a pattern. There were replicas of one of the statue's feet to give an idea of the scale of the thing, it was truly awesome.

I caught the ferry back, then went on up to Times Square for the last time. After another Big Mac meal, I walked back down to the YMCA. I had a shower then checked out. Caught the A-train to JFK, for just \$1.25, much cheaper than the \$10 bus fare I paid from Port Authority bus station four years ago – and much cheaper.

Got to JFK at about 2:30pm and checked in.

The plane, a BA 767, was scheduled to leave at 6:30pm, but heavy air traffic caused the flight to be delayed for 75 minutes; nine planes could be seen queueing up in front of us, waiting to depart. So, at 7:15pm we were away, the only notable thing on the flight was the showing of an "Only fools and horses" episode on the video. Touched down in Manchester at 6:40am UK time.

Vacation over!