

Soest - III / Netherlands

Soest 1963
March '63

3/12/1963
3-12-63

I'm in my Dutch hotel now. It is called De Lage Vuursche. All I know so far is that it is closer to Soest than the Gooiland. It is a small, quite modern cafe-restaurant hotel combination, with rooms almost like the ones you'd find in a motel in the States. It is a little bit confusing in that when you come in the door from the hall, you kind of go through the bathroom. The little ante-room has a washbasin in it and off of that is a room with a toilet and a shower. After going through this little ante-room you come to a fairly large room with twin beds and plenty of extra space with a couple of nice comfortable sitting chairs and a 3 ft. square coffee table sort of thing. The lighting system is quite nice also in that the overhead light can be turned on and off at the door or through a string pull between the twin beds, and there is a very nice light over the head of each bed. This is certainly a more modern sort of place than the White Hart.

Bill Tinlin met me at the airport and advises that not only has Fred Mooi gone to Foxboro, which I knew; and Rus White, John Burnett, and Marten Niermeijer gone to Brussels, which I knew; but also Ben Borgman is off on a service trip to Germany. This doesn't leave very many people to talk to here, but I guess they have got a lot of problems or at least questions they want to talk about.

3-19-67

Tuesday night - Back in the Hotel - Looks like I got off on the wrong foot as far as the name of this place is concerned. I guess the name of it is "De Kastanjehof". The name I gave you before "De Lage Vuursche" is the area in which it is located and means "The Low Land".

I just spent the evening with the Tinlins - all of them - eating a peaceful quiet family dinner and coming very close, I think, to being accepted as one of the family. I gave Marge a package of cake mix and the frosting to go with it. This morning when Bill and I went by to pick up a belt which he promised to lend me, seeing as how I have been operating on that camera strap for over a week now, Marge had been sick and having a hard time staying out of bed for several days now, so I thought maybe the cake mix would be easy for her to fix up. I gave it to her with the request that she not fix it up for dinner tonight because I brought it over for them and not for me.

Spring is sure coming over here now. Marge and Bill and I walked around after dinner all over their lot, and just about everything was budding. Quite a few of the flowers were starting to pop up through the ground. It has been a rough winter but a few days of sunshine like the very warm one today really do wonders.

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Interesting thing happened this evening. While/were sitting and talking in the Tinlins' living-room, a little car drove up next to the telephone pole across the street, a soldier got out and tied a sign up to the pole and then moved on after having consulted a map. When we went out and looked more closely at this apparent sign, it was a form roughly made out by hand giving room for about 20 people to print their name, sign it, and put time of arrival. This apparently is some sort of army maneuver and the Tinlins tell me that this sort of thing happens quite often, although this particular method of signing in is new. It seems that the somewhat deserted land across the street and over into the sand dunes is quite commonly used - sometimes for overnight camping, sometimes for just a rendezvous of some sort. Every once in a while some of the senior army men accept the Tinlins' invitation to come in their house and have a cup of coffee or something, but the younger ones apparently feel less secure and will not accept the invitation.

Tape #5

Wednesday morning - I've eaten breakfast and I'm sitting out front waiting for Bill Tinlin to show up. It is a foggy, chilly morning and the gardener is out here loosening up the dirt around the plants in front. - It is a little after eight o'clock. Breakfast here is quite something. They don't deliver it to your room like they do over at the Gooiland. You have only the choice of what you want to drink - coffee or tea - of course, I take milk. Automatically you get a soft-boiled egg, four different kinds of bread, couple of slices of cheese that you could lay on a newspaper and read through, and two or three slices of meat about the same thickness. A little crockery pot of butter - seems to be fresh every morning, or that refilled and a fancy pattern on top of it. A sauce dish of jam of some sort and a can of toast - that toast should be in quotation marks! Bill told me yesterday what it is called but I forget. It comes in a can about 10cm in diameter - maybe 25 cm long - and they are nice round disks of "toast". Of course, they are cold but they are crisp and about 1/2" thick. I just remembered what the toast was like at Godstone at the White Hart. There the toast was probably 1/8" thick undoubtedly it was hot at one time but they delivered it to you in a

rack standing vertically a little bit like a phonograph record storage, so that of course it will cool down in the minimum of time.

The fellow taking care of this place in the morning is a pretty flexible guy. He is the desk clerk, the waiter, the cook, general handy man and I know that he can talk Dutch, English and German; I'm not sure what other languages because those are the only people that have been around that I could hear him talk to. Yesterday morning when I came down, he asked me in German if I was in Room "sechts". I answered him without thinking, "Iie, fünf". He can keep his language straight but I can't. He quickly realized I was American, so he talked English to me.

Wednesday evening - Bill Tinlin, Bert Enting, and Tom Italiander have just left. They ate dinner with me in the Dining-room downstairs and then came up and looked at my selection of Japanese stereo pictures. Tom hasn't too much experience with stereos and was extremely impressed. All of them were interested in what Japan looks like. They wanted to talk quite a bit about the Japanese people also. Bert asked me if I knew about some particular city, close to Osaka he thought, which had been a prisoner camp in which his father died from pneumonia. I should follow up on this some and learn a little more from Bert. Maybe there is something I can do for him. -- Incidentally, I haven't repeated Maarten Niermeijer's tale to me about his experiences in Japanese prison camp down on the Burma Road. I should do this one of these days. -- Tom mentioned that he had been fighting for the British during the war. He hasn't got much love for the British Navy, which apparently let them down several times at very crucial times. For dinner I followed Bill Tinlin and got "Biefstuk Tatar" -- that means "raw, ground-up best beef you can find, all mixed up with all sorts of chopped spicy vegetables, Worcestershire Sauce, pepper, salt, in fact everything that was on the table plus a couple of other things he went away to get, such as wine and an egg - a raw egg - as a binder" - it was certainly good, but there were so many ingredients I'm not quite sure what did it but I'll guarantee it was necessary to start with high-grade beef.

The Stuttgart Army Radio Station just made an announcement that due to popular demand they were starting a Russian Language Course for any of the army personnel that wanted it.

Thursday Morning - Not quite as dull as yesterday morning - that is, there is no fog, but there are clouds. This room, like the room I had Monday night, looks out over a backyard across a dirt road lined with tall trees on to a soccer field, with woods on beyond, so this is really very much in the country. I'll try to get a picture before I have to move out of this room into another one, come Saturday. There seems to be a little problem of communication. The reservation was made for one night only originally.

I don't know whether I mentioned last night or not that the trio of Maarten Niermeijer, Russ White, and John Burnett showed up at the Plant about five o'clock. They were tired enough, however, that we made these other arrangements for dinner.

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Thursday evening - I got back in my room about 10:30 and proceeded to string up a clothesline and fill it with washed clothes since I've gotten a little behind.

Went to dinner at Maarten Niermeijer's tonight. I ate with the whole family - his wife, Ans; oldest son, Jan; daughter, Anne Maria; and 11-year old twins, Peter and Barthold. But I talked too much about Japan - I must watch myself. I keep trying to cut down but I don't do too well. The dinner was a good substantial meal with good roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, and another vegetable that had a little bit of a taste like artichoke but physically it is much like broccoli - forget the name of it. -- Showed about ten of my stereo slides of Japan and Maarten in turn showed me several of his reels of stereo Viewmaster pictures of Bali and some of the other countries in that part of the world. He also told me the tale of the spelunking that he and some other fellows did. He tells about the way these three or four people went into a cave that had been marked as tabu by the Catholic missionaries. Inside, after going through quite an elaborate set of passageways they came to a feast room apparently, because of all the bones of animals, and then they in a passageway that went off high up on the wall of this cave they found a subterranean lake in which were the bones of scores of apparently young girls, mostly killed with a spear in the back or an axe in the head. Apparently this whole cave had been lost for many years and contained the evidence to prove that the tales told by the Catholic priests were correct about some of the orgies these natives had prior to the time the Dutch people had landed on the island. -- He also showed me on an excellent map the towns and cities that Ans and the boys were born, he showed the various areas that he had done geological exploration in. That was quite a life he led. -- Right after dinner we moved into the living-room and Ans had coffee but gave Maarten and me some hot anijs milk. It is a centuries old drink that is often sold right out on the ice during skating season. They gave me a little box of these tablets to take back and show other people what it is like. It has a very nice way of hiding the distasteful aspect of hot milk, and of course is non-alcoholic. -- Maarten told me a lot about the Boeke School to which three of his youngsters go. It is an extremely popular and well-known school in Holland and has the largest attendance of any grade school. It has very modern attitudes and philosophies. They give the youngsters a great deal of freedom and informal atmosphere - so informal that they call their teachers by their first name, even the head of the school. Maarten tells me that his father knows many Boekes and knows their family story quite thoroughly and that Jan is one of the Boeke family but a couple of stages remote from the teacher. Apparently the Boeke family is a quite independent family, so much so that there are many clans that don't speak to any of the other clans, but the family has an extremely good name in Holland because of the number of outstanding people that have been members of the family.

This finishes the personal bits of the 5 tapes (the 5th one was mailed Friday, March 22) ---

Friday Morning (22 March 1963) Just pulled the curtain back to look outside and believe it or not, the ground is covered with a thin film of snow - just when Maarten and I are talking about going out on a long hike this weekend.

For Kay's benefit, I don't know the names of snowflakes, but looking outside now it is essentially not snowing but about every 5 or 10 seconds a great, big, floating snowflake comes down - so big and fluffy that even though there isn't much wind they kind of float along sideways, almost like feathers.

Saturday Morning - I am with the Niermeijers. First picture I have is in the town of Naarden ^{of} -/an ancient fort - the picture shows the center of a star-shaped fortification that surrounds the town. The earthen walls are tunneled all away around the fortification, and at one time the troops were actually sleeping there - as recently as 1940!

Saturday Evening - It's eleven o'clock already.

Maarten and Ans brought me back to the Inn, and I think it's better called that than a hotel, about 4:30 or 5:00. I came up to my room and have been working on the IEEE paper to figure out what I wanted to say in verbal presentation as distinguished from the written paper. I will admit I did a little sleeping too.

To go back and cover the activities of today - After we left Naarden, we stopped by to see the Muiden Castle, or as the Dutch say it - Hetmuiderslot.

(I'm really disgusted with these European AM stations - they don't seem to be able to keep music going more than about five or ten minutes at the most, and then they stop and chatter away and chatter away. This includes the BBC stations that one can pick up. I happen to have just picked up a British station now and it says that the last of the roads that were blocked with snow has just been opened.

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Apparently these are up near Aberdeen, Scotland.)

Back to the Muiden Castle. I have a little folder on the Castle and Maarten and I took a few pictures from the outside. The Dutch Government is doing a very thorough job of preserving this castle. They only started recently and they are having quite a bit of difficulty reconstructing part of it. They are going through and embedding radiant heating piping in all the floors, since it isn't practical to use any other form of heating and keep it reasonable comfortable. The Dutch guide was an extremely capable individual and it is hard to understand how he can be paid enough to stay in a place like this. As he went through the descriptions of the various things in the castle, he showed how many of the well known phrases in Holland today developed from 13th and 14th century customs and devices that he was able to show in the castle. Maarten was very intrigued by all these because they explained many phrases that he had no idea of the origin of. ---- One reason for our interest in this particular castle is that it is known primarily as having been a center of culture and literature through many centuries - with the biggest name being that of Governor P. C. Hooft, who lived there in the 17th century. ---- Some of the things that were seen in it - canopy beds, in which the canopy is solid wood with curtains around the side and in order to avoid it becoming too stuffy, there is a little tipping door on the top that had a cord on it one could pull and open the door for ventilation. -- There was a spring-wound spit with three different take-off points, depending upon what gearing was desired, and a speed control consisting of two vanes swung around in the air and these vanes were adjustable to give a fine variation in speed. A bell on this device could be used to time the length of time the spit was turning. -- There was a very interesting swinging arm for putting ^{pots} ~~marks~~ over the fire in the big

kitchen fireplace. This had an adjustable height, very easily operated.--There is a little shaft opening from the wine cellar up to the kitchen, from the kitchen up to the dining-room for convenient transportation; and another one from the kitchen up to the walls so that boiling oil could be pulled up.--The castle is built with all of the living rooms on the sea side and just plain walls with the platforms near the top on the inland side. Every window in the entire fort had a little seat right by it, so that an observer could be reasonably comfortable while standing on guard duty.

--There was a money box that was really well designed. The top had a lip down the side so that a crow bar could not be used on it, and the combination for opening it included locating the key in several different places and turning it in the correct direction for the correct amount. --- One room had many examples of extremely well preserved armour, most of it dress armour - not fighting armour - also in this room were quite a variety of swords, muskets, and pikes. One of the muskets was of the very earliest design, which required lighting the powder quite some time in advance of the time that the charge went off. In fact, so much that if the wind were blowing toward the target, he normally had an opportunity to lie down or get protection before the gun went off. This is the basis for one of the better known phrases today in Holland - it means a warning of some sort. --- Maarten has been here in the past. In fact, he came to a party here once many years ago - they sat under the big candle chandeliers since there is no electrification in the main part of the castle. --- In front of the fireplaces there are long benches with the back supports hinged at each end so that it is possible for the people to sit facing the fire until their backs get too cold, swing the back over and sit so as to heat their backs.

-- Incidentally, in order to avoid the chance of getting afire from fire arrows, the wooden beams and floor boards are covered by several inches of sea shells which is again covered on top with a floor made of about 6" square tiles. --

In the early days, Amsterdam was protected by a group of castles two of which I mentioned earlier here, and also by the flooding control from the Rhine River. Apparently they could flood all of the surrounding land except where these castles were. This land they would flood to a depth of 10 to 20 inches, which was too shallow for boats of any size and of course too muddy for heavy traffic, such as guns or wagons. There was a mean trick of letting a lot of boats come in and then draining the land and leaving the boats stranded on the big mud flats - and of course the other way round, allowing their guns to be dragged in quite a ways before flooding and then bogging them down completely. Modern day warfare is kind of rough on this, though!

After seeing the Muiderslot we went on in to Amsterdam, parked the car and hiked a mile or so over to a big department store - by the name of Bijenkors - where the three of us went on in to the dining-room and ate lunch. I took what is called Kaffe-taffle?(this is not fair - I'm just getting so I can manage Japanese but I'm lost with this Dutch - mh) with milk to drink rather than the coffee. This is similar to some of the breakfasts I have had here, in that it is a whole plateful of different kinds of breads and rolls, a platter with very thinly sliced cheese, another with very thinly sliced meat of several different kinds, a nice big dish of jelly, and plenty of butter. I always hate to leave any of this on the plate, so I am afraid I ate a little too much. In fact, I didn't eat any dinner tonight at all on that account.

After wandering around a seeing the store a little bit, and it is

almost exactly like a large department store in America would be - only difference is that this is the first department store of its type in the world, we then went down to where the sightseeing boats hang out and took and 1-1/4 hour trip through the canals and harbors of Amsterdam. I took a lot of pictures - hope a percentage of them will come out. -- These are very fancy glass and plastic roofed boats with the major problem that in cool weather they fog up on the inside. Maarten had his stereo camera also. We were continually having to wipe the windows off and even then I am not sure that we got too good definition on the pictures. It's intriguing to see the great variety of buildings, particularly intriguing to see how these buildings will settle on the side toward the water so that the top may have come forward as much as three feet at the fourth floor level. The buildings are regularly surveyed, apparently, and every once in a while one of them is condemned and they have to jack it up to right it, or tear it down. Quite a few of the houses are built right down into the water, since they were built prior to the time that the fill was brought in. According to Maarten, these houses were built to stay dry by putting in a complete layer of glass a little above the highest water level and thereby preventing the moisture coming up through the masonry. ---- One item pointed out by the tri-lingual guide, who Maarten guessed and the fellow admitted was a student working his way through school, was the narrowest street in Amsterdam - a little less than three feet wide and probably the first example in the world of air rights, in that one of the buildings is built right over this street at about a 7 ft. height.

We walked back to the car, passing by a pipe shop where I got a couple of pipes for Henry Milo and Bob Temple, and we glanced a few

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times to see what the chances were of finding a clock, but apparently Stocker is out of luck right now - the speculators have been around picking up all of the old clocks they can and reselling them for \$125 to \$150 when originally they were \$20 or \$30 at the most.

We came on back and stopped by a little country store and bar combination where the Niermeijer twins were clocking in a bunch of girls, including Anne Maria, riding a bicycle rally. We stuck around until the two remaining girls that hadn't shown up yet came by and then went over to the end of the rally, which happened to be right here where all the girls were having the famous Pancake meal of this place. I guess I'll have to figure out somehow to get one of these pancakes tomorrow. They tell me one pancake is a complete meal and by the description I get, it must be about the same size as an entire pizza.

Bill Tinlin called me tonight to ask me if I wanted to go to the Boat and Sporting Goods Show tonight in Amsterdam. I had a hard time making up my mind but finally decided I had better stay in and work on that New York presentation.

Incidentally, the weather was wonderful in the morning and the bright sunlight quickly melted off the snow that had come down during the night, but about mid-morning it started to cloud up and it stayed quite dull until about half way through the boat trip when it started to clear up and by the time we were coming home it was completely clear blue sky again and the sun set in that way. This sort of weather is unheard of at this time of the year - it is supposed to stay dull and probably rain a good share of the time. I still get credit for this.

Sunday Morning - High cloudiness completely covering the sky. No snow on the ground though. There are some spots in the sky that look a little thinner than others. Also, the weather forecast for England is "clear and sunny" for today, so I have some hope.

My window here overlooks the same area as before, even though I am now in Room 12. Going back through the woods here is a bicycle path along which there is a steady line of people who, I would guess, are going to church. Their ages vary from grade school up through the sixties anyhow, and almost all of them are very well dressed. They all look as though they had on their Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes.

Monday - I got to the airport kind of early and had the first choice of seats in the whole plane. The fellow up front that weighed me in was an extremely cooperative guy. In fact, he very carefully conducted me over to pay my excess baggage, then conducted me up to pay my six guilders for the airport tax, then chatted and joked with the emigration man as he checked out my passport, then he took me in to the reservation desk, where he very nicely requested the best window seat in the place and to block the two seats beside me so I would have a full three, spent about ten minutes trying to find out where the emergency exit door was so that I would have more leg room there. I couldn't quite see giving him a tip because he is an employee of the airline, so I assumed that was just nice service. But as the crowd started to gather, all of the seats in the 3 rows behind mine and 2 rows ahead, and all 6 rows across the aisle, were picked up. Back down the plane nobody was getting any space. Then I began to look at the passengers -- I am afraid I am vulnerable

to being called biased but the darnedest bunch of arguing, complaining, irritating people of the Jewish race started gathering. I figured these must be the people that picked up all the seats around me, so I went back and moved. I now have a window seat with the two seats blocked about 2/3 of the way back in the plane with nobody yet in the two or three rows ahead or behind or across the aisle. The girl at the desk explained it would be lots noisier there but I explained that I didn't mind engine noise but I was disturbed by people noise. She seemed to understand and was very cooperative in changing me over.

Well, I was right! That's where they all went - right in the front - but now that we have taken off and have been in the air about half an hour they are all moving back in on me. At least I have my strip of three, but the gal ahead of me here decided she wants to go to sleep early and she has her seat completely reclined, which gives me about 11 inches between my nose and the back of that seat.

See if I can get some sleep now - things are getting kind of noisy around here though and I'm afraid I'll have some trouble.---- Well, I give up - the gang moved back, spread out in the seats around and proceeded to holler back and forth - holler about everything under the sun almost; and then there was an old couple across the aisle from me. The man got to feeling a little sick, so his wife got him to lie down, occupying the full three seats, and she asked me if she could sit in the aisle seat of my group, so of course I had to let her, which means only two seats for me. I guess it wouldn't make any difference, regardless of the number of seats - the noise level is too high.

On the way to the airport today Maarten drove me in Bill Tinlin's car. He pointed out in the town of Naarden, which we were in the other day, the famous five wooden houses of Naarden. It seems a permit was given some years ago for these five house to be built of wood. They are the only wooden houses in that part of Holland - maybe in all Holland, I'm not sure. The fire regulations insist upon a brick exterior to all house and apparently everybody lives by this ruling.

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On the trip Sunday, with Maarten and his family, we saw quite a few different kinds of birds. We saw the common sparrows; hawks that were extremely capable of standing absolutely still at 50 or 100 ft. altitude for a period of 5 to 10 seconds then flying hard again and repeating the procedure; a moderately large black bird with a bright yellow bill (not sure what this was) - this bird is common all over Holland; Winter Crows - very large birds with grey body, black wings, and black head; all over the place were plovers. There was at least one man tramping across the fields looking for plover eggs probably, since the person to bring the first plover eggs to the Queen's Palace every year is given an audience with the Queen. I believe last year a grade school youngster was the first. --- There are many curlews - these are small birds with long spindly legs and an extremely long, constant diameter, beak. The bird drives this beak all the way into the ground to catch his worms, I guess. Lucky he's not in New England or his beak could be worn down a lot shorter. -- Saw meadowlarks and swallows, and the somewhat startling magpie with the contrast of white and black. ----- We saw an American windmill, at least that is what it was called, which was an efficient but somewhat ugly windmill with maybe 30 or 40 blades on the rotor - not as beautiful as the traditional Dutch windmill. It seems the Americans

are criticized more for the ugliness than they are credited for the efficiency.

With the Niermeijer family we were looking for a little harbor near the entrance of the Een River. We finally found it, but in the process went to the dead end of four or five different roads, one of them being at the location of the new pumping station. The station wasn't completed but enough of it was built that Maarten was quite sure it is of the newly re-established screw conveyor type of pump. Typical of most of these stations, they are pumping against ahead (?) of only a relatively few inches and so the main thing is to pump large volumes of water with a low pressure drop and preferably with a fairly easily adjusted rate of flow. Right near by this new station was an old small windmill-driven pump which we played a little with in spite of the "verboden" sign that was on it. We didn't figure out all the detail of how it worked, but it had a lever on it that seemed to be operated by a paddle meter in the water down below and ahead of the pump. As this lever moved it varied the angles of two steering vanes, one of them essentially directly behind the main windmill and the other off at right angles. The windmill is turned into or away from the wind by these relative angles and therefore the amount of power in the pump is adjusted this way and adjusted automatically. Seems to me George McNabb should be told about this. This is a self-contained pump, power supply, flow measurement, and flow control with no wires.
