

Passage through Pakistan (Part 2):

Karachi to Kathmandu
June to September 1976



Adrian Hall

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CHAPTER 3: August 1976

Floods and TV Site

Sunday 1 August 1976 – at 02:00 the rain stopped. Later we heard that in just 24 hours over 9 inches of rain had fallen in the Lahore district – that's almost half its annual rainfall in a single day! A quarter of the city was under water – but mercifully very few people had been killed by falling houses. No Sunday School, as St Andrew's compound was completely under water. Roz, Liz and I waded round to the servants' quarters to 'cheer them up' [*there's a photograph of me, dressed in light blue shalwar-kameez, up to my knees in water*]. Morning coffee with the M's (Mrs M teaches at Sunday School) – their back wall had fallen down. Afternoon at M-s-b, trying to decide what to do – it kept raining, and eventually we decided to play Scrabble. Evening service at which Charles preached a magnificent sermon on the need, as Christians, to ask for and be filled with God's Holy Spirit – it seemed to strike the right note, as our worship at St Andrew's is certainly 'drier' than it should be. All to supper at St Hilda's.

Monday 2 August 1976 – The morning after... Flood damage everywhere, but made progress on Studio D survey. After dinner we were invited to visit Major L at Aitchison College, the 'Eton' of Pakistan. Major L was the headmaster of the preparatory school, and he wanted to show us slides of his recent expeditions in the Karakoram and the Himalaya. It was impossible to get a rickshaw, so we ended up walking (over 2 miles), and arrived nearly an hour late. Some of the scenery was simply breath-taking – Chitral and Gilgit valleys, Batura and Nanga Parbat. We had a really good time afterwards over coffee (in huge mugs with lids, like German steins), hearing fascinating stories of Major L's exploits. He was serving in the Indian army in 1947, and was in a train half-way between Lahore and Amritsar on the night of Partition – hardly the safest place to be! He also said that the loss of Bangladesh had actually helped West Pakistan by ridding her of an economic burden. We left late, managing to get a rickshaw back into town.

Letter to my parents dated 2 August 1976

Just this minute got your letter dated July 25th. Yes, ALL IS WELL – It's all really going so well: the only thing that isn't going well is hearing that you've still not received any letters since Karachi! Yes, it's sad knowing that you're worried, and not being able to do anything about it except send telegrams and write off letters as quickly as possible. My letters have been as follows:

Letter No 1 sent 23.6.76 from Karachi, received (aerogramme)

Letter no 2 sent 30.6.76 from Lahore, airmail letter

Letter No 3 sent 22.7.76 from Lahore, airmail letter

Letter No 4 sent 26.7.76 from Lahore, aerogramme and telegram, sent the day after I got yours.

I hope by now you'll have at least got the telegram to assure you that all is well. It appears that Letter Nos 2 and 3, which were both airmail letters have not arrived, and I can think of two very probable reasons, only I'll have to explain when I get back – only another month after you get this!

I'm sorry about the three-week gap between Letter Nos 2 and 3. Actually life was very hectic just at that juncture, and I wanted to wait until after our trip North from July 13th to 16th, so I could write a long letter full of news. Yes of course I wanted to send 'all news', or as much as I had time to write, but most of my news is in those two letters – you can't fit very much into aerogrammes! So all that news will have to wait – a pity, as tremendous things happened, and the impressions gained are not as vivid as when I wrote of them. How, I'm keeping a diary (of sorts!)

Here's the recent news – since Letter No 4 dated 26th July, which I reckon you should get about August 3rd, as hinted in my last letter, I wasn't very well, and suffered for a few days

from amoebic dysentery. However, I managed to see a *very* good doctor, that the N's know, had it diagnosed and treated. So I'm now 100% well again. The work is really going ahead. It's fascinating, and I think I'm learning a great deal. I've just begun my main task – of setting out (with devastating precision) Studio D for Pakistan TV – very difficult for my first building! All the complications thrown in – inadequate drawings supplied by the consultants, and the client is not very cooperative in clearing the site.

I wonder if it was on the news, but on Saturday, in just 24 hours, Lahore had over *9 inches of rain* – imagine! A quarter of the city was under water, and many of the non-pukka houses fell. We just sat at home (St Hilda's Guest House) watching it thunder down. To walk anywhere you sometimes had to wade knee-deep, even crossing a road!

Just before this happened, we visited the famous Badshahi Mosque (for the second time), climbed the minaret, and came back by horse-drawn *tonga* in the most beautiful sunset imaginable – heralding the arrival of the monsoon proper. It will be after August 7th when this reaches you, but Janet D is holding a party on the Saturday evening – all my friends (Heather and Dave from Cambridge) are coming to Lahore that weekend – preceded by a visit to Shalimar Gardens at dusk, which on Saturday nights are floodlit, with all the fountains working. Imagine, what a perfect setting for a 21st!

Tuesday 3 August 1976 – Full day's work setting out points for reference baselines for the construction of Studio D – wooden pegs with nails for earth, and metal pins with centre-pops for concrete. Very hot, sweat dripping on to my theodolite! In fact I had to return to St Hilda's in the afternoon because I'd run out of water and had had a very hot meal of *chapattis* and curried ladyfingers.

Wednesday 4 August 1976 – Another hard day's setting out. I saw some recording for television in progress – traditional Pakistani music, drums, violins, *zitar*s, and a sort of play in which it seemed nobody did (or said) anything! Then they hired a buffalo to record a village scene – a huge creature which got a bit temperamental on the Studio D site, nearly knocking over my wooden pegs and theodolite! In the evening Simon led the Bible Study at St Andrew's, on Jesus' healing of Jairus' daughter and the woman with the issue of blood. There were enough people there to generate a lively discussion. Kenneth, a teacher and member of St Andrew's, walked back with us and came to dinner. We talked till quite late about life in Pakistan. He shared some penetrating insights into our culture too.

Thursday 5 August 1976 – Simon came and helped me on the TV site. It rained, as usual, but we spent the time we couldn't work looking around the television vans, and being shown round the recording rooms above the studios. We reckoned we could exert some control over the weather. To make it rain, all that was necessary was to take out the theodolite, set it up true and level, while dismantling the theodolite, and (with much effort) getting it back into its box was the signal for the downpour to stop! Eventually we used a large, multi-coloured parasol, which a labourer held – it kept me dry at any rate, but poor old Simon had to hold the other end of the tape! Baseline completed – but on checking the diagonal lengths and angles, we found we had a closing error of three quarters of an inch, which is not good enough. We deduced that the error probably lay in the original setting out of the marks along the existing wall, as we were using a very old and broken tape. We went over to Gulberg after duty and saw David – the N's had just returned from a very wet holiday walking in Kaghan Valley. He said the baselines weren't accurate enough, and that we should try to redo them (it'll certainly be easier when the site is properly cleared!) He also said it was OK for us – the BMMF HOP team – to lead the service at St Andrew's on Sunday evening. We went round to M-s-b later that evening – we discussed the service, and decided that the theme should be on 'worship' and that I should preach!

Friday 6 August 1976 – Morning marking out the positions of column centres ready for excavation, then mid-morning – joy! Mr S, the Purchasing Officer, arrived with a brand new tape! We re-taped the baseline along the existing wall, finding the overall discrepancy was only $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, but that we had wrongly positioned the first theodolite station – about 3 feet out from the existing wall – and that all my points now had to be moved $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch away from

the second baseline. I spent the evening preparing my sermon on 'worship' under the headings (i) What is worship? (ii) Whom do we worship? (iii) Why do we worship? (iv) How do we worship? The sermon was based on Revelation 5 v 11 to 16, which includes the words "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!" Others came over to put together the service. Heather, Zena and David O arrived safely at M-s-b from Sialkot and Sahiwal. My last day as a minor...

21st Birthday

Saturday 7 August 1976 – My 21st birthday! A day full of the unexpected – a solemn and significant day, of course – but at the same time one of the craziest, silliest birthdays I have ever experienced! I had a very unusual dream in the early hours of the morning. I was looking at a photograph, taken around the 1920s of the 'family', particularly of Darsie (my grandmother) – all the women were dressed in grey pleated skirts and socks and holding tennis rackets – and in the background was Aitchison College, in Lahore! Then Deaconess Soni was trying to do some repairs at St Hilda's. She was shuffling around (as she does), putting in purchase orders for Lawrencepur sand, bags of cement etc. Meanwhile in India I was busy sighting a whole line of columns with a theodolite!

Breakfast at 06.15 as usual. Soni was ready with a present (packet of biscuits) and a card, and she sang "Happy birthday to you," and "Happy long life to you!" That was such a heart-warming gesture.

Busy morning on site, repositioning the markers to try and eliminate the $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch closing error. I was just getting a bit depressed about Theodolite Stations A and B, as it was still not working out, when a site labourer came running up to me, "Sahib ji! Teleglam!" – GREETINGS FOR A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY LOVE FROM US ALL MUM DAD. While we were packing up things for lunch at 12.00, Mr M arrived – having remembered it was my birthday – with a cake and sausage rolls and sweets – and so we had a Pakistani-style celebration with the TV site staff!

In the afternoon it poured with rain, dashing any hopes of having a barbecue in the garden at the N's house. We visited the Lahore Museum, which I thought was very badly maintained, but it had some really fine things. We particularly enjoyed the collection of 17th to 18th century water-colour miniatures depicting scenes from India, including one depicting a poem about Krishna. But of all the Buddhas and Hindu deities, in a class of its own, was the famous Fasting Siddhartha, an amazing piece of sculpture – the way the clothes hung, webbed over the emaciated body, the look in his eyes, hollowed like a skull – a strange mixture of suffering and serenity. I thought, this sculpture shows us what Christianity saves us from – that is, we don't have to go through such measures to find God (if he ever did) – Christ has already died for us, and we can know God and be reconciled to Him. I remember, after visiting the museum, one of our Pakistani Christian friends remarked, "Isn't the God of the Bible beautiful?"

Back to St Hilda's in the rain – we changed, packed and set off for the N's, aiming to be there at half past six – as it was our original plan to see the Shalimar gardens floodlit with the fountains working. Literally just as we were about to go out through the front door, the telephone rang and it was Andrew N to say that we were not going to Shalimar (as it was raining) and could we please not come until 7.30 pm? Well, that really put the spanner in the works and changed the whole course of the evening [*noting that this was all before the days of cell phones!*]

First we thought we'd better go over to Mahan-singh-bagh and tell the others not to arrive until 7.30 pm, as they'd been planning to get there at 6.45 pm. We left our suitcases in the front hall, so that Elaine G could pick them up on her way (in her VW) and take them to the N's for us. Then we trundled our way to M-s-b (through the pouring rain), now resigned to the fact that we were going to get thoroughly wet – and therefore thankful that we had dry clothes to change into at the N's when our suitcases arrived. On arrival at M-s-b we found

Zena, Heather and Dave, and made plans for the journey – deciding that the girls should go with Elaine and Ros in the VW (collecting our suitcases on the way, of course), while us lads got rickshaws and taxis and came along in our own time. Meanwhile it had got dark...

So we set out into the night (and the pouring rain), with our trousers rolled up to our knees, looking thoroughly silly (and behaving like it). We positioned ourselves either side of Mall Road. Half an hour later we realized it wasn't quite as easy to get transport as we thought. Empty taxis and rickshaws had a habit of just zooming past, refusing to pick up anyone. Dave and I (standing on one side) decided to cross over and contact the others – and then realized they'd disappeared – obviously they'd been in luck. So we split up and waited either side of the Mall, hoping the others would tell the N's where we were standing, so eventually they'd come and fetch us...

So we waited... and we waited... in the cold and the dark and the rain – it was now about 9 pm. Then suddenly I saw the funny side of it. Here I was, on my 21st birthday, with a party all specially laid on for me, in the middle of Pakistan, standing out in the monsoon rain... you could just imagine the guests at the N's chatting away, playing silly games, eating good food and thoroughly enjoying themselves – and saying, "Isn't this a lovely party! And it's all in honour of dot-dot-dot... *but he's* standing in the middle of Mall Road in the dark and pouring rain waiting for transport!" Two Pakistanis on a bicycle rode past, and looked around, "Hello-sahib-good-morning-how-are-you!" – so I just put my fingers to my lips, "Brrrrr... rrrrrr!"

Eventually a policeman (of all people), who'd been watching us for the last hour, asked what we were doing (in Urdu), and managed to get us a rickshaw (with his whistle), and even settled the price for us. So we had a very draughty and cold ride to Gulberg. On the way – as expected – we saw David in the VW minibus driving in the opposite direction to fetch us. Then the rickshaw driver couldn't find the Gulberg post office... When we eventually arrived he tried to make us pay double, so we just paid the originally agreed fare, walked off and left him shouting in the rain... So we arrived at around 9.30 pm, walked into the N's lounge to find about 25 people (Europeans)... and they *were* all playing silly games! Then... and then – yes, you've guessed it – I *discovered* THAT THEY'D LEFT MY SUITCASE BEHIND!!! So... I had to spend the rest of the evening in wet clothes (though actually David did lend me a shirt).

BUT it was a delicious barbeque (though indoors), with icecream cake to follow. After dinner Major (Geoff) L showed us some more of his fabulous slides of hill walking in the Chitral and Gilgit valleys (Hunza province). Then we had the cake-cutting ceremony. As it was Simon's 22nd birthday in 10 days' time there were two rows of candles, and we had a race to see who could light his own row first – unexpectedly difficult because the roof was leaking and drips would hit the candles and put them out! This was followed by present opening, as we relaxed over lemon tea and birthday cake. As the party dispersed around midnight, I went back to St Hilda's with David, as he took the others home to M-s-b, and had great difficulty 'house-breaking' into the bedroom from the balcony – to retrieve my suitcase! Back to Gulberg, and turned in at around 01:00 am, after the longest and funniest birthday I've ever had!

Sunday 8 August 1976 – Walked over to Mahan-singh-bagh at 5 pm to put together the evening service. A really amazing thing happened – we suddenly noticed *the sun was shining!* I rushed up on top of the roof – an incredible sight – completely clear blue sky above with the late afternoon sun shining brightly, except on every horizon – all the way round, 360 degrees – banks of towering grey storm cloud.

The theme of the service was WORSHIP – and there was a sense in which we were able to really worship God "in Spirit and in truth", and enjoyed a freedom we had not really experienced until now. I preached – Whom do we worship? – Why do we worship? – How do we worship? – using some verses from Revelation. We had a great time! Everyone appreciated the service of evening praise and worship – and that was what really made my 21st birthday weekend...

Letter from David N, 7 August 1976

49 Main Gulberg, Lahore, Pakistan. Saturday, 7th August, 1976 [*this letter was given to me by David on my birthday, and I read it on the following day*]:

Dear Adrian, Just twenty-one years ago this year my father wrote me a letter on the occasion of my twenty-first birthday. I have kept that letter, and sometimes I turn it up and re-read it. Janet and I feel, therefore, that a few words from us will not be inappropriate on this very special occasion, *your* twenty-first birthday. You are far from home and loved ones at this important event in your life, our paths have crossed, and for this very special day you are in our house, in our home, and we can say as Rachel said, "The Lord has added to us another son" (Genesis 30 v 24). But this is not the word we would give you at this time. Here is the verse and word we want to give you: "The Lord was with him, and he was a prosperous man." You will find it in Genesis chapter 39, and verse 2. You may not, at first, see the connection between your own life and that of Joseph, of whom these words were written. And yet, we feel there are a number of parallels which should help you. At the time when it was said that Joseph was a prosperous man, he would be about twenty-one years of age – a very important milestone in any young man's life. So, as we congratulate you on attaining your majority, we would add: "May the Lord be with you, and make you prosperous."

We would like you to consider Joseph for a moment. You will see, there are three divisions into which his life could be put. One could consider his past life, his present and his future. All our lives fit into these three headings. Joseph's early years were surrounded with love – we read that his father loved him more than all his children – and his father showed it too. Now, it is not wise to favour one child more than another, although in our human frailty, we do tend to find one child more lovable than perhaps another. The point to remember is that by making it apparent, we cause great harm in the family. That coat of many colours was really the 'last straw' to those other brothers. And yet, in his everyday life, Joseph was honest and obedient. When sent by his father to see how his brothers fared, we read that he brought back their evil report. All his life Joseph remained honest and straightforward.

But the biggest thing in his early life was his *spiritual experiences*. We read that he dreamed dreams. These were no idle fantasies; Joseph knew that God was speaking to him. And yet, he had to learn that often nobody will listen to our dreams. You, Adrian, have had your spiritual experiences when God has spoken to you, and yet it may seem that those promises seem to be improbable of ever being fulfilled. Further, you may, like Joseph, have had a lot of 'cold water' poured over your enthusiasm. In Joseph's case, the brothers became bitterly antagonistic to him. How many have found this so in their own families. When one member of the family is converted, or has visions of God's call, whether for full time service, or whatever else He may call them to, the rest of the family will rise in anger. And yet did not Jesus speak of this very thing in Matthew 10, verses 34 to 38? The evil in the brothers' hearts culminated in the shameful selling of Joseph to the merchants as a slave. He could have remained forever bitter against his brothers, but we find not a trace of bitterness. Through life, Adrian, you will find those who will seek to 'do you down', but if "the Lord is with you", then you will be able to live above them. Did not Jesus set the example for his children to follow, when he said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

So much for the *past*. And now, for the *present*. We read that Joseph was a prosperous man, but let us not run away with the idea that all was a bed of roses for him. At that time, he was separated from all his loved ones. He was a stranger in a strange land. More than that, he was a slave, over whom his master had the exclusive powers of life and death. Some people's conditions and environment are not enviable, but I think one would have to go a long way to beat Joseph's. And yet, in spite of it all, because the Lord was with him – in his heart – guiding him, giving him wisdom, inspiring him to give of his best in the humdrum menial jobs that fell to his lot, it wasn't long before his master took knowledge of him that "the Lord was with him." In Genesis 30 verse 3 it says that "his master saw that the Lord was with him." Here is a point for each of us to ponder. May those for whom we work "take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus." You do not need us to remind you that true prosperity does not depend upon material success. The blessings of the Lord maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow thereto.

Now, finally, just a few words about the *future*. In the first place, we would remark that the future, for all of us, is hidden. In spite of all those wonderful dreams, Joseph did not know what the future held for him. Nor do you, nor we. There are things that came into Joseph's life, which you may meet as you pass over the threshold into manhood. It wasn't long before Joseph came up against *temptation* of a very subtle kind. As he rose in position and responsibility in the house of Potiphar, he became an object of desire to Potiphar's wife – a woman of loose morals. It is probable that Potiphar was away from home for long periods, and possibly his wife was a lonely and neglected woman. But because "the Lord was with him" he was able to say no. He was able to say "no" because the Lord was with him. But he had to learn that virtue is not always its own reward – at least not immediately and outwardly. So we find him in prison. Here again we read that "the Lord was with him". The keeper of the prison was able to trust him with the supervision of the other prisoners. Then there is the story of the butler and the baker of the king, and their dreams. How Joseph's hopes must have been raised when the butler eventually left the prison to return to Pharaoh's service. In Genesis 40 verses 14 and 15 we read of Joseph's appeal to the butler to remember him, and to do something about getting him out of the dungeon. Alas, the frailty of human nature! In spite of all promises the butler soon forgot about Joseph. You will find that. Sometimes, when you are banking on somebody's help or assistance, they will let you down. But Joseph did not altogether despair, because "the Lord was with him." The arm of flesh may fail you, but Jesus *never* fails.

But Joseph's life was not altogether black. The break came suddenly in the end, when perhaps he had begun to give up hope of ever leaving prison. What followed must have surpassed his wildest dreams. Sudden promotion to great responsibility and leadership. God was still with Joseph. He was not afraid to tell his dreams to his brethren, nor was he afraid to witness in the prison house, as to Who could interpret. Then when brought before Pharaoh (Genesis 41 verse 15), and the great monarch says to him; "I have heard say of thee, that *thou* canst understand a dream and interpret it", Joseph is quick to say: "It is not in *me*. *God* shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." The higher one gets in this world, the stronger will be the temptation to take the credit for one's position. May He remain with you and keep you *humble*. At the end of his life, Joseph could look back over his pathway and realize that God had been with him right through, and that he had been in the line of His will.

Well now, Adrian, these are just a few thoughts, and we hope you will find in them an echo of your own life. How many of these Biblical characters had problems and trials just as we have! But of course, the real lesson throughout the Bible is that God is just the same – yesterday, today and forever. Our prayers for you, Adrian, are that he may guide you, and direct you, and use you mightily in His service. So we close by repeating the text; "*the Lord was with him and he was a prosperous man.*" With our united love in the bond of Christ on this happy occasion. Janet and David N.

PS Like Joseph, like you, someone stood in for my father and we were all separated and in strange lands. J.

Last days in Lahore

Monday 9 August 1976 – Busy day on Studio D site marking out column centres. Conditions were very trying: either it was over 100 [degrees F] with very little wind and high humidity – or, if it clouded over it was bucketing down with monsoon rain. Dinner at Chez Continental – seats by the window looking out on to the Mall and watching the world go by. A chance to appreciate our time in Pakistan, reckoning that even if we flew home tomorrow it would all have been very worthwhile.

Tuesday 10 August 1976 – Took a trip to the Old City in the evening to Wazir Khan's mosque – fine examples of mosaic tile work and painted cut plaster, older and (in my opinion) more beautiful than the Badshahi, situated right in the heart of the Old City, with bazaars and crowded streets on all sides. An open courtyard surrounded by porticoes and walls, with octagonal minarets decorated with glazed tiles at each corner; fine examples of floral designs and calligraphy. A gorgeous bright blue sky and highly coloured gateway reflected in the pool, where Muslims made their ablutions before praying. Unfortunately we

weren't able to go up the minaret, but we met some very helpful young folk who showed us around, and introduced us to the 'holy man' – a Muslim 'saint' who was 97 years old (and still going strong, as – apparently – he had a 2-year-old son!). We pushed our way through the gold and brass bazaars until we emerged at Lohari Gate. Evening with the R's beyond Gulberg – beautiful clear night with a full moon just rising.

Wednesday 11 August 1976 – Our setting out nears completion, with all base lines and centerline of building established, now giving almost zero closing error in the diagonal cross checks. Today it was a case of establishing column centres, and then checking that they were all in line (which they usually weren't!). Bible study at St Andrew's vicarage. Elaine said afterwards that there was a possibility of our being able to help with flood relief work next week – either with UCH or with the Diocese. We were invited back to supper with Kenneth, who lives close to the church – just a small house with four rooms, one of which was in danger of collapsing because of the heavy rain. There was a sense of it's being a very typical Pakistani house, similar to the village houses I had visited in Kenya – enhanced by the fact that everything was candle-lit, as the electricity had failed (again)! Kenneth is highly educated, having graduated in Mathematics and Physics, and hopes for an opportunity for further studies in the UK. It seemed a bit incongruous, in such surroundings, to be discussing Vector Calculus and Laplace's Equation!

Letter to my parents dated 11 August 1976

Just time for a quick line as we've arrived at some friends an hour early! Thank you very much indeed for all the cards, letters which all arrived in time (i.e. cards from all family, handkerchiefs, two letters from you both, card from Mrs Price, and telegram)! It was quite a birthday! A solemn and serious day, yes, but at the same time one of the craziest, silliest birthdays I've ever had! You just *have* to have a sense of humour in Pakistan, otherwise you've had it! A day full of the unexpected. Morning at site – and I was just getting frustrated after repositioning various markers, and still getting a closing error of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch with the theodolite, when a site labourer came running up to me, "Sahib ji! Teleglam!" It couldn't have come at a better moment! At the end of the morning, Mr M (Site Engineer) came with a cake and sausage rolls, and we had a Pakistani-style party with the staff on site. From midday on it simply poured with rain (as it had done virtually all week). I went to the Lahore Museum in the afternoon – some really good exhibits, including the famous 'fasting Buddha' (4th century).

The plan was to have a party at the N's in the evening, starting with a visit to Shalimar Gardens (floodlit) at dusk. All the BMMF team were in Lahore (8 of us), and the N's had invited a few other friends (mainly Europeans). But Shalimar was rained off, so we set out to get transport to Gulberg (4 miles from Mall Road) to arrive around 7.30 pm. But it was dark, and bucketing down with rain, and by 8.30 pm Dave C (from Cambridge) and I were still on Mall Road, soaked to the skin, and taxis just wouldn't stop! It was annoying of course, but at the same time incredibly funny – by 9.00 pm the party would be in full swing, but there we were, standing out in the monsoon, in the middle of Pakistan – quite a unique 21st! Dave will certainly remember it as quite the wettest 21st party he's ever been to. Eventually a kind policeman unexpectedly flagged down a taxi with his whistle, and even settled the price for us. So we arrived at 9.30 pm, wet and cold. I'd packed a suitcase of extra clothing, as Simon and I were staying that night, but the others who were travelling by car had forgotten to bring it! So I had to spend the rest of the evening in wet clothes! But it was a delicious barbecue (indoors), and cake – which I shared with Simon as he was celebrating his 22nd birthday. Some super presents – I'll show you these when I get home. The BMMF team (staying in Lahore) led the evening service at St Andrews the next day (Sunday), and I preached – it seemed to go really well, and that *made* our weekend.

Last week with Z – site work, either at 90°F in the shade and very humid (i.e. over 100°F), or in torrential monsoon rain – what a climate! Next week, we either go to Murree or, if we get the opportunity, and travelling North is risky in any case, we will help with flood relief work (the situation in Punjab is critical). I'll write again before leaving Pakistan (probably August 23rd). I went to Wazir Khan's mosque in the Old City yesterday, rightly called the 'gem of Lahore', mosaics of many colours and octagonal minarets, older and I think more beautiful than the

Badshahi Mosque. Late news: flood relief for a week, distributing food, clothing and medical supplies sounds probable. No room for more...

Thursday 12 August 1976 – This morning we read in the Pakistan Times: SHEIKHAPURA ROAD CLOSED: OVERALL FLOOD SITUATION FLUID (!) Then there was an article describing how “365 cattle-heads” were reported missing from one village! Site meeting at TV, after which David had a ‘five minute’ (= ½ hour) session with Mr R and a ‘15 minute’ (= 1½ hour) session with Mr M, Simon and me on the Studio D site, looking over our setting out and discussing plans for site layout. During this time billowing grey clouds mounted the heavens from the east, and down came torrential rain. Dinner at M-s-b with Elaine and Liz. We sat out on the roof afterwards and watched fireworks because of *Shab-i-Barat*, when the souls of the dead are supposed to visit their loved ones – a sort of Muslim Hallowe’en. I read relevant parts of John Carden’s book ‘Empty Shoes’ describing the same scene observed from the same roof top.

Friday 13 August 1976 – Last day with Z. In the closing minutes of the morning – and in temperatures of 110 degrees F – we were hammering in the last peg for column centres. Sad farewells at TV site and at the office, and then we were driven to Mr M’s home in Muslim Town to have lunch. His family, though Muslim, was less strict about Islam: we all had lunch together, *memsahib* included. Afterwards the Land Rover took us on to Liberty Market in Gulberg to meet Mr S the architect, who took us to see an Urdu film. We bumped along in the back of the open Land Rover, absorbing characteristic scenes of flooded green fields, water buffalo and brightly coloured flowers. A wonderful feeling of satisfaction and peace, now that our work with Z is finished and we have 3 weeks’ holiday on the Indian subcontinent to enjoy! The film *Mohabbub aur Mehngai*, ‘Love and Cost’ (or Love is Costly) was fairly typical of Pakistani films. Essentially a love story – heroes and villains, with some pure fantasy woven in. Rich houses and cars, love scenes and songs – a contradiction of down-to-earth everyday life in Pakistan, or perhaps a temporary escape from it. One song summed it up neatly: every line ended with the words “*Nehi he,*” meaning ‘it isn’t’ or ‘it doesn’t exist’ or ‘it could never really happen’! We walked on afterwards into Gulberg III, through suburban quietness, with green open spaces and roads bordered by trees, and with the setting sun behind – a refreshing contrast to the noise and busyness of central Lahore. We spent the evening with the G’s, who were at my 21st birthday party. Jim is a civil engineer working on the Tarbela project; Isabel comes from Perth (Scotland) – a much traveled family, having recently spent a year in Ethiopia during which time they took a holiday in Kenya (hence the picture of Kilimanjaro in the drawing room). It was particularly interesting to hear about the Mangla Dam project, as Jim had worked there with Binnie and Partners. A very stimulating evening, to a background of music ranging from Scottish Strathspey and Reels [*with some demonstrations of Scottish dancing, as I recall*], to Mozart played on superb stereo equipment – we didn’t fetch home till midnight.

Saturday 14 August 1976 – Pakistan Day, though celebrations were somewhat muted on account of the floods. Special service at St Andrew’s, after which Elaine briefed us on the flood situation and relief work. It seems we’ll be going out with the T’s (Australian family) on Monday on spec – i.e. we’ll not continue if there’s no useful work we can do. David was there, and suggested we go out in the Land Rover this afternoon to assess the flood situation. So we set out from Gulberg with the N family, Liz and Simon, and followed the Ravi Bund road. The river was in full flood, having burst its banks, and the water came right up to the crest of the bund. Across the Ravi bridge and on to the Lyallpur road – fields, houses and factories were awash, and there were many signs of the devastation that had taken place – houses caved in, some washed right away; families living in tents in poverty and squalour by the side of the road. We proceeded to Sheikhpura along the road that was officially closed, having to cross a dozen stretches of swiftly moving waters where the road was submerged – no difficulty, it seemed, for Land Rovers, horses or pedestrians! We passed the Dawood Hercules fertilizer factory, one of the largest in the world, built by Z a few years ago (the project that really put Z on the map), through Sheikhpura and on to

Hiran Minar, a royal hunting lodge built by Emperor Jehangir in 1620 as a monument to his pet antelope. It was a rather beautiful octagonal pavilion set in the middle of a lake. A five-storey tower afforded a superb view of the lake, and the surrounding Punjab – flat as far as the eye could see, giving a real sense of the earth being a globe. A most dramatic sunset on the way back – enhanced by its reflection in the flood waters as we crossed the submerged roads – bright crimson and purple fast moving waters – somehow ironical to see such beauty in the context of the devastation and tragedy all around.

Rapid change into *shalwar-kameez* and taxi to Mr M's uncle's house on the Ferozpur road to go to a Muslim wedding, scheduled to begin at 7.00 pm, arriving at ten to 8, just as Mr M was giving up all hope of our coming at all. Needless to say, the bridegroom did not arrive until half past 8, and when he did arrive – dripping in gold – the men began dancing, the Band of the Ninth Battalion of the Punjab Regiment started playing – on bagpipes and out of tune! – and the wedding began. And what a ceremony! We really had the works – 500 guests, outside on a lawn all beautifully lit up. Strict *purdah* – with a great big canvas barrier to separate the men from the women throughout the entire ceremony, including the meal. We witnessed the signing of registers by the groom and relatives, while the man-from-the-mosque sang texts from the Holy Qur'an. Buffet style supper of chicken curry and pilao rice, and then we were entertained by the Pakistani equivalent of Morecombe and Wise – comedians who even made jokes about us: they said that “our English friends here” had walked all the way here from the UK – so that's why they hadn't had time to shave (Simon's beard!) and why had we come? Not for the food! But to see who was wearing American aid second-hand shirts! (Well, they thought it was very funny.) Eventually we were taken to see the bride (who'd taken till 10.30 pm to get dressed up) by Mrs M – beautifully attired in gold, but looking ever so sad. At last the bride and groom could be seen sitting together – but never looking at each other – in the front courtyard of the bride's father's house, while sticky sweetmeats and cakes were passed around. This seemed to be the only part with a parallel in English weddings – the equivalent of cutting the wedding cake. Finally the bride and groom were escorted to a car to take their leave – the bride was weeping on her father's shoulder. Surely a traumatic day for her – suddenly to be wrenched out of her childhood home and made to live with a strange man (she's probably never seen before, except in photographs). Soon after, we said goodbye to the host, Mr M's uncle, who looked really exhausted and strained. It's quite a responsibility arranging a marriage for your daughter; it's your fault if it doesn't work out. Also, very expensive, as the wedding cost him 1 lakh Rs (= £5,000), and he has four more daughters!

Sunday 15 August 1976 – Lunch at St Hilda's, after morning service and coffee with Ros. Evening service, possibly our last at St Andrew's [*but I was to return in 1979*]. Certainly we led the choruses for the last time – going over the new ones we had taught them. Then Eddie N preached, and really gave the church a 'rocket' – as things have not been quite as they should recently, and much of the liveliness and enthusiasm for the Lord's work had gone since Padre (Sid) G had left (for 6 months furlough in Australia). Certainly there had been a lot of tension and discord within the fellowship, with not everyone pulling in the same direction. David remarked afterwards that this was mainly the result of lack of leadership – no one to take Padre's place, make decisions and have the final authority in the church – so the members were “like sheep without a shepherd”. Elaine pointed out, over supper at her house, that it was good that St Andrew's should have 6 months without Sid, in preparation for when he finally leaves in 3 years' time. The present (and probably temporary) lapse shows that church members had relied too heavily on Sid, and not enough on the Lord himself – that was the burden of Mr N's message. “Consider Jesus...” As Christians we have to keep our eyes upon Him. Much interesting conversation with Ros and Elaine: about the successes and failures of the BMMF HOP programme (Dave Cameron and Liz never got full employment); also on Ireland, as Elaine comes from Eire, while Simon of course is from Northern Ireland!

Monday 16 August 1976 – Breakfast at M-s-b, hearing about Dave's and Charles' crazy trip to Lyallpur, and back. I got my road permit to India – a bit silly as we're traveling by rail, but it is required for all overland transit, for people who have been in Pakistan for more than one month. After lunch – flood relief. We piled into the T's Land Rover, together with a Pakistani nurse and two students. We didn't really do very much ourselves, as this was a survey visit to locate flood affected areas and try to find out their needs.

The first village whose address we were given was 10 miles beyond the Ravi bridge – accessible only by a *katcha* mud road, submerged in places. Needless to say we got stuck, and that was the only bit of really useful work we did – pushing the Land Rover out of the mud – a hairy drive otherwise, slithering all over the place and bumping up and down like a mad elephant! When we got as far as we could, we found that the 'village' consisted of only three houses, all of which were still standing, and the only medical need was that a child had boils and needed some ointment. Medicine having been dispatched forthwith, we turned round in the mud (with great difficulty), and charged back again on to the *pucca* road.

The next place, close to the Ravi bridge, was more tragic. Here, in the Christian *busti* sector, 200 to 300 houses were completely destroyed. We could see the tide mark on some of the *pucca* buildings, 5 to 6 feet above ground level; and you could see the agony and despair on some of the faces – the team intend coming back here with relief supplies later in the week. Finally we arrived at another Christian *busti* on the other side of Lahore. A fascinating walk through the village – which was not in fact that badly affected, and through the courtyard of one of the houses, until we emerged on to the flooded area – the strip of land between the Ravi and the bund road, where about 12 houses had been destroyed.

On return to Lahore we discussed plans with the T's – tomorrow would be another day of survey, so it would not be till Wednesday or Thursday at the earliest before Simon and I could do any useful work, so they suggested we go on up to Murree. We decided – as we relaxed over ice-cold Fanta in the Mall – to spend tomorrow packing, saying goodbyes, shopping etc. and go up to Murree at crack of dawn on Wednesday. So, no more flood relief work, but I was very glad we'd had this day out – giving us some insight into the tragic conditions flood-affected areas have to face. When you read about floods of watch TV programmes, you tend to think of the situation in an impersonal way, of the people who suffer as just statistics to put in a newspaper – but when you actually go there, you find real people, facing a real, personal calamity. To M-s-b after dinner, probably for the last time. Liz was staying with the N's, the boys with Mr K, so we had tea with Roz and talked till 11 pm – she showed us the fantastic gifts she had bought in Afghanistan, including bright woolen fabrics, and vases made from characteristic blue-green glass, and we discussed gift shopping in Pakistan and India, travel to Murree etc.

Tuesday 17 August 1976 – Lie in till 08:30! Our last day in Lahore. We visited Minar-e-Pakistan, the monument shown in the 1 Rupee note, next to the Badshahi Mosque. We had a particularly good view of the mosque sideways on, with part of the great court visible, and a priceless view of hundreds of buffaloes wallowing in a canal below! We remarked on how flat a city Lahore is – the only high-rise buildings, apart from mosques and cathedrals, are WAPDA House and a white office block. I suppose the next high building will be the State Bank (if it ever gets built!) Sadly, this was our last view of Lahore. We went back through Anarkali Bazaar and then raced back to St Hilda's to escape oncoming torrential monsoon rain. We got back in the nick of time. Souvenir shopping at Jaanico Handcrafts and then on to Gulberg to say goodbye to the N's. I went up on to the roof and gazed at the sky – so calm and peaceful – it just seemed ages since my first view from the rooftop, on our first weekend in Lahore. David drove us back, full of refreshing optimism – three bumper years ahead for St Andrew's, when Sid G (the Padre) returns. Financial turnover of Z continuing to increase steadily – he hopes soon to get going on housing schemes: cheap, but well-made and flood resistant, for the middle classes of Pakistan. And so, goodbye – but I hope 'au revoir', as the N's come home to the UK on leave next June.

Murree and Miranjani

Wednesday 18 August 1976 – On the road by 04:00, and found a rickshaw to take us to Lahore station. Simon and I managed (by devious means) to procure one seat (for the two of us) in the Lower-class carriage of the Railcar Express. We pulled out at 05:30 and arrived at Rawalpindi at 11:00 after a fast and quite pleasant journey, watching the sun breaking through the clouds at dawn, reflected in the floodwaters. Bus (which took 1½ hours to get out of Islamabad) up to Murree, this time clear of cloud. We stayed at Hill Lodge, another missionary guest house, but what a difference! The place was full, mostly with newly-arrived missionaries doing language study in Urdu. We walked on to Kashmir Point, where (if it's not monsoon) you can get a good view of the Himalayas. Although they were covered with cloud in the distance, we caught glimpses (in between white-outs) of the beautiful surrounding country – steep, pine-forested hills. We called in at Happy House and saw Cathy B (BMMF volunteer from Scotland working at Murree clinic) – she's coming with us to Delhi and Nepal. I listened to a tape after dinner of David Pawson (from Guildford Baptist Church) giving a summary of Romans, in which he explained the uniqueness of Christianity very succinctly: "In all other religions, including Judaism, God says 'You make yourselves good, and then you can come to me,' whereas in Christianity God says 'I will make you good, so that you can come to me'".

Thursday 19 August 1976 – We set out for Nathia Gali, about 25 miles north of Murree on the way to Abbottabad, to do a couple of days hill walking. Very hairy bus journey along roads cut into the hillside – so there was a precipice on one side the whole way. We looked for accommodation at Nathia Gali, but everyone seemed to be full up as there was a conference on nuclear energy going on. All we could find was a cold and dirty floor in a Government High School.

We had four hours before the last bus back to Murree, so we set off for Mount Miranjani, without having decided whether to be back in time for the bus, or to spend an uncomfortable night at Nathia Gali. We rode on horseback to the Governor's House and the beginning of the path up Miranjani, only about ¼ mile and an absolute swindle – the horse *wallahs* were clearly out for as much money (and for as little work) as possible: "Oh yes, sahib! You take *my* horse! Is very fine horse, sahib, very *big* horse!" Our ascent took us through pine forests as the weather steadily deteriorated. We reached a high point from which we could see Miranjani towering about 2,000 feet above us still, with thunder all around us and beginning to rain. So we decided to turn back, and came down to Nathia Gali, where we were met by two very nice Pakistanis (one a lecturer in chemical engineering), who directed us to the Taj Mahal Hotel, found us a room and even settled the price for us (only Rs 10 each)! So accommodation at Nathia Gali was fixed, enabling us to spend a full day's climbing tomorrow. A beautiful sunlit evening – we watched, from the solitude of the pine forests, the clouds clear from Miranjani, and looking due east, gazed across the Vale of Kashmir to the very foothills of the Himalayas!

Friday 20 August 1976 – Early start to climb Miranjani, trying to reach the summit before the monsoon clouds came down. This time we walked to the Governor's House, carefully avoiding the horse *wallahs*. Beautiful ascent through pine forests, and on to the open slopes above the tree line, with the summit clear of cloud until we reached it. Overcast above, and clouds sailing along the dark green valleys below us, until – as we relaxed at the top of the mountain – the clouds came up to meet us, pine trees standing on ridges became ghostly shadows and were swallowed up into the mist. Eagles gliding through the valley below, the humming of bees and the fresh scent of brightly coloured mountain flowers, as we descended through the mists...

Lunch back at Nathia Gali, and then we managed, almost immediately, to board a Murree-bound bus. Agonising journey back – the bus spent hours just 'hanging around' Ayubia (with the engine running)! Evening at Happy House; stars fantastically clear; Milky Way plainly visible.

Four words from the Lord (Part 1 – Pakistan)

The first 'word from the Lord' came to me as we were climbing down from Miranjani, near Nathia Gali, Pakistan:

"In quietness and in confidence [trust] shall be your strength" (Isaiah 30 v 15) – the problem is, we're not confident enough because we're not quiet enough. Be quiet, be still before the Lord each day. Seek His will, then go ahead and do it – confidently, because He is with you.

Saturday 21 August 1976 – Up at 06:00 to see if the mountains were clear. I had caught a glimpse of distant ranges from the Hill Lodge back garden, so I hurried out to Kashmir Point, the eastern end of the Murree-hills ridge, where I could see – to either side of the just-risen sun – range upon range of mountains, pale blue silhouettes against the bright morning sky. Forests cascading down the lower slopes of the Murree hills, the haze of the Vale of Kashmir, and foothills beyond – and in the very distance sharp peaks – no snow visible, as I was looking straight into the sun. I possibly saw Nanga Parbat (26,660 feet) on a bearing of 25 degrees, but no one believed me at Hill Lodge, saying that it was impossible to see Nanga Parbat from Murree. But according to the map it is roughly on a bearing of 25 degrees from Murree, at a distance of about 125 miles, so I think I did see it!

Shopping in the Mall, beautifully free of traffic. Sale at St Denys' School – very English and a bit boring. I met Paul B, who showed us how to get to Murree Christian School (MCS) for a Country Fair – and discovered that he had taught at Packwood in 1959 for a term after leaving school! *[All because we passed a Pakistani man with a ruddy complexion and he had remarked, "He looks like a Shropshire lad."]* He didn't think much of P-W (the Headmaster), and tendered his resignation half way through his first term there – small world! I walked to MCS down a steep path which plunged through the mist and shadows of pines. Quite an amusing evening, including an 'American' meal of hamburgers and potato salad, but we left early as we wanted to be back up that path by nightfall, and to have time to see Mark and Anne H – young English missionaries based in Quetta. Mark is the doctor at the hospital there (and they know a friend at Cambridge). The conversation ranged from shooting dogs on the hospital compound because of rabies (an unusual missionary task), to cancer and problems for Christians in Pakistan – a minority in a staunchly Islamic state – the fact that I have to very careful what I say (in public), lest wrong impressions get into wrong hands. Came back (late) to Hill Lodge, and was promptly sick – as were many others who had been to MCS – we think it was the potato salad, which had been 'treated' with soap and potassium permanganate!

Letter to my parents dated 19 to 21 August 1976

I'm writing this in a '*katcha*' (opposite of *pukka*) Pakistani hotel at Nathia Gali, half way between Murree and Abbottabad, where Simon and I are staying for a couple of days to do some hill walking. It's a really beautiful place – we've just come in from gazing across the Vale of Kashmir, to the foothills of the Himalayas – all in cloud, alas – having spent most of the day getting here from Murree, and trying to climb Miranjani, about the highest in the Murree hills, a 2,000 to 3,000 foot climb. We had to turn back because of wet weather and lack of time, but we'll try again tomorrow if it's reasonably clear – we have the whole day. Beautiful, steep, pine-forested hills, a bit like the Taita Hills, and the Alps foothills, and wonderfully cool – such a contrast to the heat and dust, and crowds and noise of Lahore.

On Monday we tried some flood relief work, going out to surrounding villages with an Australian couple and a Pakistani nurse, to find out where help was most needed. Quite an eye-opener – terrible devastation in some places, but the needs were mainly for medical aid. They decided there was not much we could do (being non-medics), and suggested we proceed to Murree (actually the only useful thing we did was to push the Land Rover out of the mud when it got stuck!) One of our reasons for coming here for half a week is to 'collect' Cathy B (BMMF volunteer from Scotland), who wants to come with us to Delhi and Nepal.

Our last week in Lahore was really good. I managed to finish the setting out of Studio D on the very last day (Friday), then had lunch with Mr M, Site Engineer, who's worked in the UK, and met his family – then on to an Urdu film (quite an experience), before going out to dinner

with the G's. Jim worked on Mangla Dam and is now working on the Tarbela Project. In fact I don't think we had a single meal in St Hilda's the entire week – everyone inviting us out, as it was our last week!

Saturday evening (August 14th, Pakistan Day), we were invited to a Muslim wedding – Mr M's wife's cousin was the bride. We really had the works – 500 guests outside in the garden, beautifully illuminated (it didn't rain!), but strict '*pardah*' – men separated from the women by a great canvas barrier. Delicious meal – a band from the Punjab Regiment playing! The bride and groom were 'dripping with gold' – full description on return! Earlier on Saturday, we went with David and family on a trip to Hiram Minar, a beautiful Moghul (17th century) hunting lodge near Sheikhpura, 20 miles from Lahore; also to see, on the way, something of the floods – in fact the road was awash in several places, particularly bad around Lahore outside the protective Bund Road.

I'm sending this to Inverpolly, as posts may take time from Murree. I'll write again from Delhi, giving an address for telegrams, just in case. Otherwise I'll ring from Inverness or Ullapool – if I'm going to be delayed (e.g. stranded at Damascus), I'll send a telegram. Otherwise, expect me on September 8th or 9th.

PS Climbed Miranjani yesterday (Friday) – some clear views, but cloudy. Got up at 06:00 this morning [*Saturday 21 August*] – and saw the Kashmir Himalayas and Nanga Parbat (26,660 feet) from a high point in Murree.

Sunday 22 August 1976 – Worshipped at Holy Trinity Church, on the Mall – the church was packed out, mainly with ex-pats and missionaries in the hill station, about to return to the plains. We left Murree after lunch with Cathy, and Russ, the American padre who took the morning service. Minibus from Rawalpindi, and but we didn't get into Lahore till 11 pm! At St Hilda's the supper was still there waiting for us: lukewarm kebabs and cold chips!

Passage to India

Monday 23 August 1976 – Morning in Lahore getting road permits and travellers' cheques for Cathy. Last *tonga* ride and walk down the Mall. Taxis very difficult to get at midday, but Eddie N picked us up on his way from the State Bank site and took us to the train. Farewell, then, to Eddie and farewell to Pakistan. Short train journey to the border (Wagha), where the Pakistani police aboard our train leaped out and said goodbye, and then we pulled into Attari station, the first town in India – customs, immigration and a celebration Coca Cola. We noticed many differences immediately – many of the Indians wore red turbans because they were Sikhs, there was no *pardah* (segregation of men and women), and we felt a sense of release – freedom from the restrictions of an Islamic nation. Amritsar – we met several other 'world travellers' from Europe and the States. Second class sleeper on the Frontier Mail to Delhi. Settled down to an uncomfortable night.

Tuesday 24 August 1976 – Uncomfortable journey on bare boards, and getting really filthy with particles of carbon – as it was a steam train and the windows were all wide open because of the heat. I woke up at a station at dawn, where a chorus of 'hawkers' were all shouting "Chai! Chai!", which they served in unfired clay [*biodegradable*] cups – just what we needed! We crossed the Jumna River, passed the Red Fort and so arrived at Old Delhi Station. The R's, BMMF missionaries, very kindly put us up for a few nights. They live at Jangpura, south of New Delhi. The morning was spent chasing around airline offices, finding out about flights to Kathmandu and arranging a trip to Agra. I was impressed by the orderliness and beauty of Delhi as compared to Lahore and 'Pindi. Cathy fainted on the bus coming back! Christian fellowship meeting at the R's after supper. A teacher named Cathy, who was staying, told us about her school near Poona, where many of the girls had become Christians, and then found it really difficult in the holidays having to go to the Hindu temples with their parents.

Wednesday 25 August 1976 – to Agra with 'Panickers' Tours – the name was appropriate as the bus that was to pick us up was 1½ hours late, and we nearly 'panicked' and gave up waiting! Journey through country similar to Punjab. We saw a small elephant being pushed

through flood waters about a foot deep and several miles long (it seemed). We visited Akbar's Tomb – rather a spooky place, a dimly lit tomb stone covered with velvet cloth, smelling of incense. We visited Agra Fort in the afternoon with a very good guide, the best preserved Moghul fort. It was easy to visualize the kind of life Akbar must have enjoyed, with his 3,000 dancing girls ("jumpin' lasses", as Cathy from Scotland described them), perfumed fountains and splendid pavilions inlaid with gold and silver. From the Octagonal Tower we had our first view of the Taj Mahal on the banks of the River Jumna.

The entrance gate to the Taj was a monument in itself – calligraphy (qur'anic texts) and floral mosaics of inlaid semi-precious stones – jade, onyx and other stones set in marble... and so through the gateway to the Taj Mahal itself, indescribable in its beauty – no photograph or model can ever do justice to the experience of actually being there. For the first few minutes the sun, filtering through the clouds, made the Taj gleam white against a black sky of thunder clouds. Then as we approached the central pool, and saw the main dome reflected in the water, the first raindrops fell – and by the time we reached the Taj building itself, torrential rain was lashing down! The tombs themselves were exquisite. Mumtaz Mahal's tomb was truly central – stones inlaid in marble, translucent if you shone a torch through them – surrounded by an exquisitely carved marble screen, illuminated by a brass lantern and once again pervaded by the smell of incense, giving us a deep sense of the Orient. Mumtaz Mahal was Shah Jahan's favourite wife, for whom the Taj was built. The real tombs are actually directly beneath the 'false' ones at ground level. We looked in more detail at the mosaic in the central arch, as the downpour, accompanied by lightning and thunder, continued, and found beauty in each inlaid stone. Then back through the rain as it began to ease – only for a fleeting moment did it actually stop, and then the full reflection of the Taj Mahal was visible in the rain-washed avenue... but such moments last only an instant, and the image began to break up again as more rain fell. *[Back at the entrance gate, I recall, there was a very aggressive but somewhat amusing salesman, who succeeded in getting me to buy some poor quality slides: "Here is Taj Mahal by sunlight, but what about Taj Mahal by moonlight? Or Taj Mahal by midnight?"]*

Back through Agra, and at dusk we stopped at Madhura, Hari Krishna's birthplace, a Hindu temple and shrine. Altogether it gave us the impression of being a rather sinister place – the evil and idolatry really hit us in a way we hadn't expected – something we'd not experienced with Islam in Pakistan. A band playing weird, discordant, trumpet-y music (a bit like an orchestra tuning up), young children dressed up in lavish costumes to enact the life of Krishna, old men and women prostrating themselves before an idol of Krishna in a garishly coloured shrine (rather like a puppet theatre), the temple priest blowing a conch, temple domes, spires and cupolas black against a stormy sky, as dusk fell and night drew on. It was a long journey home, including an alarming drive through a really deep flood, following two horse-drawn carts. We knew we were in deep water when their axles completely disappeared! Back in Delhi at midnight.

Four words from the Lord Part (2 – India)

The second 'word from the Lord' came to me on the journey back from the Taj Mahal, Agra, India:

Put your trust in God, and not in man. "Put your trust in the Lord... It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to put confidence in man" (Psalms 4 v 5; 118 v 8).

Pray much. Move forward only as the Lord leads you. Applied to CICC Mission, but relevant to all Christian endeavour and work. God must bless, God must do the work, or everything else will go for nothing. Same idea as building with silver and gold, as opposed to straw and stubble (1 Corinthians 3 v 12, 13).

Thursday 26 August 1976 – Quiet day, not feeling too good, mainly due to lack of sleep. We were going to go on a round-Delhi tour, but Simon and Cathy went in to get that postponed and to book flights, train tickets etc. They came back at lunch with return air tickets from Patna to Kathmandu booked, and having met Dave, Heather, Charles and Liz at the Tourist

Office! In due time, in walked Dave and Heather, shattered, having just arrived from Lahore, travelling overnight as we had done. They're coming with us to Kathmandu, while Charles and Liz (staying at Dilaram House) are going to Bombay and taking a boat to Karachi from there. A relaxed evening, finalizing plans and listening to music.

Friday 27 August 1976 – Today we left Delhi for Kathmandu and Nepal. Morning's business in Delhi around Connaught Place and the Tibetan market, including getting new visa photographs for Simon as his beard was too long! Train from New Delhi station to Patna, leaving at noon. Charles and Liz were there to see us off. An extremely comfortable journey for second (lower) class – as we had seats booked at the back of the very last coach, the train wasn't at all crowded, and we'd taken foam rubber mattresses (which the Delhi BMMF had lent us) to make the hard wooden seats and berths more comfortable. Great arguments over the food, as the waiters had given us twice the amount we had ordered, and then overcharged us! So in future we decided to keep to our own rations of squashy bananas and biscuits. We played chess and 'Bible Scrabble' – every word has to occur in the Bible and you have to quote chapter and verse as you put the word down – and I read some of Anna Karenin, as we headed further east through Kanpur and Allahabad. Fabulous sunset – bright orange, sinking beneath grey storm clouds.

To Nepal and the ends of the earth

Saturday 28 August 1976 – Sunrise, as we crossed a tributary to the River Ganges and saw people bathing and labourers in the paddy fields harvesting rice. Mud villages and tall palm trees – fertile country, absolutely flat and yet so very different from Punjab. We arrived at Patna and took a taxi to the airport where we waited for the 9 o' clock flight to Kathmandu. We took off in brilliant sunshine, leaving Patna and the Ganges far below us. Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation (RNAC) – a very civilized airline that even served us Carlsberg lager as, through the broken clouds of the monsoon, the plains of the Terai gave way to dense forest, rising into heavily cultivated foothills, while the snow-covered ridges of the Himalayan mountains rose up out of the horizon ahead. An hour's flight, and then down into Kathmandu Valley. This was the moment we had been waiting for – as the wheels touched down on the runway and we entered Nepal!

We found our accommodation at the Shanta Bhawan hospital [*United Mission to Nepal, UMN, now Patan Hospital*], staffed by several BMMF missionaries. Dave, Simon and I stayed in the guest house, while Cathy and Heather were staying with Winnie T (BMMF doctor) just down the road. We walked 'downtown' with John, an Irish medic, crossing the sacred River Bagmati. Soon we reached Dharbar square, where the Royal Palace is situated, and where pagodas, temples and Hindu shrines abounded. Here at last was the true East – with nothing to remind you of western civilization except a few wayward tourists and world travellers (like us!) – temples of carved wood plated with gold, grotesque Hindu and Buddhist deities, brightly dressed Nepalis placing their offerings in front of shrines, beggars, and doubtful looking characters offering to "change your money", i.e. sell you hashish, at every corner. After a few hours we emerged in the old part of the City, quite overwhelmed. It was strangely refreshing to hear, in the City Park, a military band playing Scottish bagpipes! Cathy went wild! Back at Shanta Bhawan – quietness and hills, a soothing contrast to the flatness, heat and incessant noise of Lahore.

Evening at Dilaram House, a Christian community house near Shanta Bhawan, whose ministry includes rehabilitation of hippies, drug addicts, world travellers, and down-and-outs who've frankly had enough, finding that even the mystique of Kathmandu hasn't satisfied their longing for spiritual reality. In many cases they find a completely new life of satisfaction and purpose in Jesus Christ – the One for whom they have been searching. Fantastic sunset from the roof of Dilaram House – the clouds, orange, grey and pink drew back to reveal a jagged ridge of snow-covered peaks catching the sun's last rays. Relaxed evening, meeting the Dilaram folk, playing table tennis, singing and playing Indian drums.

Sunday 29 August 1976 – Church at the Lincoln School, very much a westerners' service – in English but very much American! 'Downtown' with Winnie T, shopping for fruit and vegetables in the bazaar. After lunch we decided to visit Swayambhu, a Buddhist *stupa* 2,500 years old on the top of a hill just outside Kathmandu. Impressions: fine 'aerial' views over Kathmandu Valley, pagodas, temples with gilded roofs, the famous *stupa* bright gold in the sunshine with sinister 'all-seeing' eyes on all four sides, shrines and Buddhist prayer wheels. This was Buddhist, and not Hindu, but there didn't seem to be much difference. The highlight (or perhaps 'lowlight') was a visit to the adjoining monastery – dark inside, then, emerging from the shadows, a huge, towering figure of the Buddha – while, from behind a partition there was a deep, hollow, steady drum beat and monks chanting. The sound had a kind of hypnotic effect and gave you a peculiar feeling inside. Down flights of steps from the hilltop into Kathmandu. I took a silly photograph of Heather sitting cross legged in front of a Buddha, trying to look inscrutably serene, but unable to keep a straight face! The back streets of Kathmandu – perhaps the highlight of the day was watching carpets being woven by hand, mostly by Tibetan refugees, men and women working side by side, no *purdah*, and all singing cheerfully – old women spinning by the roadside, men drilling holes in wood using something looking a bit like a loose violin bow – crafts practised from time immemorial. Shortcut back to Shanta Bhawan, crossing the river Bagmati by a very unsteady suspension footbridge at dusk.

Bible study together after supper on Isaiah Chapter 55. From our experiences in Kathmandu, we saw these truths in a new light, as we thought of disillusioned world travellers (and tourists) and the superstitions of eastern religions:

Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters;
 and he who has no money, come, buy and eat!
 Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.
 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
 and your labour for that which does not satisfy?
 Hearken diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in fatness.
 Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live...
 Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near...
 For you shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace;
 The mountains before you shall break forth into singing,
 and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. (Isaiah 55 v 1 to 3, 6, 12.)

Monday 30 August 1976 – Beautiful morning with some of the mountains clearly visible from Kathmandu. Walked into Patan – Dharbar Square was particularly interesting, full of temples, pagodas, shrines, bells etc. We went into one of the temple courtyards and were impressed by its architectural beauty. We browsed round a Tibetan refugee carpet shop, having recently seen such carpets being woven by hand. We reckoned they would cost five to ten times as much in the UK, so some of us got very close to buying one. On to Kathmandu, and spent the rest of the morning tramping round airline offices and bus booking offices, arranging travel to Pokhara (and back to India overland for Heather and Dave), and getting pretty frustrated at the slowness and inefficiency of it all, and the yards of red tape! Lunch at 'Aunt Jane's', enjoying its speciality – chocolate cake and peanut icecream! It rained in the afternoon, so we spent it quietly at Winnie's, reading, writing letters, listening to music and making cakes. Fellowship at Dilaram House in the evening, meeting Liz T, Dave P and Simon W from Dilaram Delhi, BMMF volunteers who'd just arrived, after travelling overland from Delhi – a time of singing and sharing.

Tuesday 31 August 1976 – Cathy, Simon and I left for Pokhara, while Dave and Heather decided to stay an extra day in Kathmandu, as they're not coming back, but going on

overland to Butwal and Gorakhpur. 05:30 start down the hill into Kathmandu to catch the minibus, which left at 07:00. We climbed out of Kathmandu valley, over a pass and down a precipitous road with hairpin bends into a steep valley hidden in cloud. We followed a large, westward-bound river until it turned, as all rivers in Nepal must, toward the south – we crossed it by a suspension bridge and then followed a tributary that flowed east. Steep hills rising from the river, sometimes so precipitous that trees would appear, growing out of the hillside, hundreds of feet vertically above the road and silhouetted against the sky. Sunshine on smooth brown rivers flowing swiftly, but even as we came out into the wide Pokhara valley, no sign of the really high snow-covered mountains.

We took a taxi from the Pokhara bazaar up to the Boys' Boarding School, a stronghold of BMMF missionaries. At the end of the bazaar the taxi dived off on to a really *katcha* [poor quality, opposite of *pucca*] rain-washed mud road fit only for Land Rovers. Needless to say the suspension of one of the front wheels came adrift and the steering rod came off! So we got out and helped (unsuccessfully) to fit it back on, until a lorry full of young men came along – we were blocking the 'road' – they all crowded round to help / spectate, and so we left them to it and walked the rest of the way! We met Doug C, a PE teacher at the school, a Canadian with BMMF and a friend of Winnie's – who found us accommodation at an empty staff house. We had dinner with the boys, sitting at 'High Table'. A privileged school, one of the best in Nepal, taking in students from all over the country. It is not a Christian school as such – the Government would not allow this, but many of the staff, including the Principal and all 'House Fathers' are Christians, so there's an ideal opportunity for evangelism and Christian teaching, in a country where, on the whole, the gospel is not welcomed. It was really wet (as the rain began) – and we literally 'crashed out', half hoping to be woken at 5 am if the mountains cleared, sprint up a hill and view them from a nearby ridge before they clouded up with the rising sun.

CHAPTER 4: September 1976

Wednesday 1 September 1976 – Saw Machapuchare (alias ‘Fish-tail’), the Matterhorn of the Himalayas, several times in my sleep – going so far as to appear, on one occasion, beyond the park at Legbourne, and then disappearing again when I called everyone out of bed to see it! But at 5 am it was still raining, and at 6 am it was still raining, and at half past 9, after some 12 to 13 hours sleep, our chances of seeing the peaks were gone – so we went over to Doug’s and had a late breakfast / early lunch of thick pancakes and honey, and decided to climb a nearby ridge which had just about come out of cloud. Although all day long the mountains remained obstinately behind a bank of thick white cloud, the scenery was really beautiful, the views exhilarating enough, and it was good to see a bit of rural Nepal (= real Nepal) – hill folk living in simple thatched mud houses, farming little terraced fields and having the odd cow or buffalo. The valley below us, where the school was situated, comprised a patchwork of paddy fields – bright, bright green, farmed by peasants living in small villages or isolated dwellings. A river winding through the valley broadened out towards Pokhara in the south, and turning around, you could trace it back up north, past steep cliffs marking the edge of the flood plain, to a steep valley far way in the distance – the beginning of the pass into Tibet... *[Not only do I have a vivid memory of the scene, but 30 years later the photographs adorned the walls of my office!]* As I sat, musing – alone, except for one or two Nepali hill folk, I felt this to be a kind of ‘watershed’ of our travels – a kind of climax, as every journey from now on would be homeward bound...

Four words from the Lord (Part 3 – Nepal)

The third ‘word from the Lord’ came to me on top of a hill near Pokhara, Nepal:

“I am with you always, to the end of the world [to the close of the age]” (Matthew 28 v 20).

This was – looking towards Tibet – truly the ‘end of the world’ for me. Further east I could not go. And He was with me there. Therefore, He could be with me anywhere less remote – home, Cambridge, next term... This was the ‘high water mark’ of my travels – every step from then on would be part of the journey home: Pokhara to Kathmandu to Patna to Delhi to London to Scotland...

Wednesday 1 September 1976 (continued) – we paused for *chai* on the way down at a village in the hills – the villagers very kindly made it specially, as we were dying of thirst! And so back to the school, where we found Dave and Heather who had just arrived. Last evening together. Doug took us down into Pokhara by Land Rover – to the far side of the main valley, where there’s a huge lake, the largest in Nepal, which we reached just after sunset. Billowing pink and orange clouds on the horizon, red streaks of cloud overhead reflected in the still waters of the lake, and the clear sky in the west turned to a fantastic translucent bluey-green. We took a long, narrow wooden boat out into the lake – very unstable, especially with me in the bows – a perfect moonlit evening, the romance only spoiled by Heather giving me rowing orders from astern! Last meal together at the Himalayan Tibetan restaurant. The food was of very good quality – you’d think their staple diet consisted entirely of noodles, in one form or another. We went to bed in the hope of a clear morning tomorrow, with the rain lashing down on the tin roofs harder than ever... *[I remember we had a time of prayer together. I remember thanking God for the rain!]*

Thursday 2 September 1976 – the high peaks were still in cloud, but the nearer mountains were much clearer than yesterday. Early rise to catch the 07:20 plane back to Kathmandu. Two nasty things; (i) a small scorpion, about the size of a large grasshopper found in the basin; (ii) a huge centipede (very dangerous!) found in Doug’s kitchen! Land Rover and taxi down to Pokhara airport, and while we were waiting for the plane to come in from Kathmandu the mountains began to clear. Annapurna I and II began to emerge from the clouds, and some of the ‘eternal snow’ was caught in sunlight. For a few minutes the high Himalayan peaks of the Annapurna range, still shadowy, began to appear, giving – quite suddenly – a totally different perspective to the Pokhara valley, dwarfing all the lower ridges and hills into insignificance – and we could see how these were not isolated, disconnected

hills as they had seemed yesterday, but together they formed the base of the Annapurna mountains, and in particular Machapuchare. Unfortunately it never completely cleared, the peak of 'Fishtail' never came out (although we saw most of the mountain), and we never really had the view (captured in a photograph taken by Dave C the following morning) of the whole 'Matterhorn-style' peak soaring brilliant white into a clear blue sky...

An enjoyable flight in a small twin-engine aircraft that religiously followed the course of the rivers we'd seen from the Chinese road. We were able to get a good idea of the lie of the land, from the Himalayan peaks to the north, on our left (not visible as we were below the cloud base) to the plains of India to the south, on our right. There seemed to be several distinct ranges of foothills, comprising the main part of Nepal, in between.

We shopped in Kathmandu and had our last chocolate cake and peanut icecream at Aunt Jane's. We took a bus to Bhadgaon, or Bhaktapur, City of Devotees, founded by King Ananda Devi in 889 AD where, according to the guidebook, "every piece of art has a religious significance and every human action has a cultural value." Well, according to some of the 'human actions' taking place in Bhadgaon's streets, it must be a very funny 'culture' – or perhaps that's all part of the 'subculture'! Dharbar Square was very picturesque, containing much the same things as Patan, but arranged in a slightly different order. The Golden Gate, leading to the Palace of Fifty-Five Windows, was interesting enough, but the showpiece was undoubtedly the Nyatapola Temple – the tallest pagoda in the Kathmandu valley. It stands on five receding square plinths and has five diminishing storeys. On either side of the flight of steps are placed (in ascending order) a pair of wrestlers, elephants, lions, griffins and *bhaginis* ('tiger-faced' statues) and *singinis* ('lion-faced' statues) – as the guidebook puts it. It included some splendid oriental sculpture and carvings, but as most monuments in Nepal, it was in a state of disrepair – there was even grass growing all over the roofs! And further East I cannot go – this was the easternmost point in our journeys. Back into Patan, where we bought some small Tibetan carpets – and then we walked back to Shanta Bhawan. Said goodbye to the Dilaram folk – all except Simon W, who flies back to Patna with us, and is also on the same Syrian Arab flight home.

Return to India

Friday 3 September 1976 – Early rise, a-gain! But this morning all the peaks were absolutely clear! It was thrilling on our last morning to see the Himalayas in all their beauty – eternal snows thrown into sharp relief by the early morning sun. After take-off from Kathmandu, many of the high peaks to the east were visible, rising clear above the clouds and mist – and surely one of them, far away (150 miles) must have been Everest! Last view of the peaks as we began our descent into Patna: the River Ganges, rice fields, palm trees and the vast unbroken plains of North India. Patna Railway Station – and more frustration, contradictions, confusion, unclear information and red tape. Eventually we boarded a train bound for Varanasi – or Benares, Holy City of the Hindus. We crossed the Ganges at sunset as we entered the city. We took cycle-rickshaws to the hotel area of Varanasi – an eerie journey at dusk with no traffic, it seemed, except for the cycle-rickshaws, and no sound except for the ringing of bicycle bells filling the air.

Saturday 4 September 1976 – Another early rise, necessary for the best view of Hindu pilgrims bathing in the Ganges at sunrise. Cycle-rickshaws to Dasaswamedh Gath (= stepped embankment), the largest *gath* on the Benares waterfront. We watched Hindus dressed in bright colours perform their various rituals, under the large umbrellas characteristic of Benares, and then family after family stepped forward into the water, the Holy River, performed their ablutions and said their prayers. The sense of evil pervading Benares was outweighed for a moment by the sheer natural beauty of the scene – the strong yellow sun rising up out of the Ganges, the bright varied colours of the pilgrims. We took a boat out on to the river and were rowed upstream (or hauled on occasions as the current was so strong), and then downstream past all the *gaths* – we saw a 'holy man', dressed in white, very old and with white skin as if he had leprosy – until we came to the famous

'burning *gaths*' – a sort of open crematorium with religious overtones. I don't think this warrants a detailed description – just that it was all rather repulsive, another unpleasant aspect of Hinduism.

A self-appointed guide, who had sort of attached himself to us in the boat, took us ashore, showed us round a few temples, and then to see his 'brother'. We were ushered into a sort of padded cell, where we sat cross-legged on mattresses, and were offered cup after cup of steaming *chai*, while the 'brother', who was evidently a dealer in silk, dazzled us with the most beautiful display of Benares silks, *saris* etc. He was a good salesman, and Simon (who had money) took advantage of the comparatively low prices offered. Then we were taken round more shrines and temples tucked away in narrow streets – including the Golden Temple, which had a shrine with hundreds of little night lights burning in front of it, and worshippers throwing flowers and petals at the idol. One man – a temple priest? – who had a stick dipped in *henna* we thought was going to turn nasty, as he kept trying to daub our foreheads with the stuff, like Hindu pilgrims, but we wouldn't let him. The smell of burning joss was everywhere. Perhaps the highlight of the morning – our 'guide' took us to see his 'friend' (no more 'brothers' this time!) who dealt in *sitar*s. He had a really beautiful old *sitar* of his own and played a *Raga* for us. To hear the *sitar* beautifully played on the banks of the Ganges – it was worth coming to Varanasi just for this!

Lunch at hotel and train to Delhi – an 18-hour journey during which I finished Anna Karenin and felt very disturbed – about Anna's suicide, and because of my first-hand experience of Hinduism. No answers, and a lot of thinking needed, but in considering true Christianity – the kind 'discovered' by Levin, not the hypocritical, self-righteous 'religiosity' of Karenin – came a peace and joy I felt more deeply through comparison with the uneasiness experienced in Kathmandu and Varanasi. Just as health is only appreciated after a spell in hospital, or freedom after a period of imprisonment, so the blessings of Christianity which we often take for granted become more real and wonderful after the religions of the East. We were very hot and thirsty, and at every station we tried to find some Coca-Cola, and as we steamed into Lucknow I spied a Coca-Cola stand a-standing on the platform and – I'm sorry, it just came out – I said, "Well, I think we should be in luck, now"! Watching the last of India rolling away into the dusk...

Sunday 5 September 1976 – New Delhi Station at 06:00 after a fairly comfortable night. Much needed shower and breakfast at the R's. This letter was waiting for me:

DELHI EXPRESS TRAVELS (P) LTD (VERY IMPORTANT)

MR A M D HALL, I-28 JUNG PURH, N DELHI

Dear Sir, We desire to inform you that our Timetable has been changed w.e.f. [*with effect from*] 1st September 1976. As per the new Schedule, our flight RB 502 which used to leave Delhi on every Tuesday, will now be leaving Delhi on every Monday morning at 7.00 AM, reaching London the same day at 6.40 PM. You are, therefore, requested to please report at Palam Airport on Monday the 06SEP76 at 5.00 AM to avail our flight RB 502.

Thanking you,

Yours Faithfully, for DELHI EXPRESS TRAVELS PVT LTD

(GHANSHYAM SHARMA)

RESERVATIONS INCHARGE

So this was to be my last day in India. I went alone into town to do some shopping and sightseeing before we all met at the Imperial Hotel at 18:00 for the Delhi Bible Fellowship. I spent until 14:30 shopping in 'Jam Puff' (Janpath) road, particularly in the Tibetan market – managing to get presents for all the family, including a smokey topaz. Afternoon in the Old City, visiting the Red Fort – built by Emperor Shah Jahan (a-gain!). The outside walls and gates were impressive, as were some of the palaces inside, but there didn't seem to be much else. I walked through the Old City to Jama Masjid, the largest mosque in Delhi and

not, in my opinion, half as beautiful or impressive as the Badshahi Mosque in Lahore! I climbed the 'Minar', which commanded views of the city and enabled me to get some idea of its general layout. Particularly striking was the contrast between the crowded, haphazard typically Asian and thoroughly genuine Old City, and the 'modern' New Delhi, built by the British Raj in the 1930s, with its monuments and high-rise buildings and green open spaces. In the mosque courtyard, where Muslims were performing their ablutions in preparation for prayer time, a rather aggressive Kashmiri salesman – who swore he'd seen me in Kathmandu – invited me to his home nearby and tried to palm off some of his jewelry. Eventually I bought a moonstone for Rs 5/- to keep him quiet, and made my escape. A sad, last nostalgic *tonga* ride through the Old City to Connaught Place, and then met the others at the Imperial Hotel.

The Delhi Bible Fellowship – a sort of evening service in the banqueting hall of a five-star hotel! We listened to a wonderful sermon based on 1 Corinthians 3, about Christian service being compared to building – either with gold, silver and precious stones, or with wood, hay and stubble – and that all our works will be tested by fire.

Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble – each man's work will become manifest; for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one had done. If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. (1 Corinthians 3 v 12 – 15.)

[I remember we sang a hymn to the tune of "Jesus, I am resting, resting...", though I don't remember the words. Altogether, it was a wonderful time of fellowship with our Indian brothers and sisters in Christ – and a great way to finish our three months on the Indian subcontinent.]

Supper with the R's at a South Indian restaurant. I didn't get to bed till after midnight as some medical students (nurses) arrived, supposed to be flying out tomorrow with Syrian Arab, but had not confirmed their bookings in person, so were not on the passenger list...

Return to UK

Monday 6 September 1976 – Rise at 04:00 (I'm used to it now!) Very sad farewells to Cathy and Simon and the R's. Endless formalities at Delhi airport, with the plane delayed by two hours (surprise, surprise!) – but the medical students managed to get seats as there were some spare places. Take off at 09:00 and I fell asleep until we reached Dubai in the Emirates, where we had to get out of the plane. It was good to set foot on 'Arabian soil' – even though it was airport tarmac. Extremely hot and arid. We changed planes in Damascus, where there was the inevitable two hour wait on the ground. Then we flew north and east, crossing the coast just south of Turkey and having a really superb view of the eastern end of the Mediterranean, including Beirut, Lebanon. A really sad moment, as this was my last view of the East.

A sudden transformation – some peaks of the Alps (near Kitzbühel) before descending into Munich – green fields, woods, autobahns, factories, cities. By this time it was dusk (19:00), but as we took off again the sun 'un-set' and for a long time remained on the western horizon – sinking very slowly until we reached London. Cruising slowly above the clouds, and then circling over the lights of London, reaching Heathrow at 20:15 local time, though it seemed like 2 o' clock in the morning – Indian time! Customs: I was thoroughly searched for drugs, as I'd come from Delhi. Bus to Kensington, and then I caught the Night Scotsman from King's Cross – with a sleeper as far as Edinburgh. It made such a difference being able to make myself understood! Fitful night's sleep and leisurely breakfast at Waverley Station. Morning train to Inverness, connecting beautifully with a bus to Ullapool. I rang Inverpolly, but everyone was out, so I stood on the road and soon a Croft Commission Officer going to Lochinver gave me a lift to the front door of Inverpolly Lodge! Mum and Dad were really

surprised to see me a day early! By this time it was 18:00 and after six days' almost non-stop travel from Pokhara, I was absolutely shattered and suffering from jet lag. *[I recall going to bed around 9 pm, and waking up at 4 pm the following afternoon, having slept solidly for 19 hours!]*

Four words from the Lord (4 – Scotland)

The fourth and final 'word from the Lord' came to me on top of Inverpolly Hill, Scotland:

"If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free... So if the Son shall set you free [makes you free], you will be free indeed" (John 8 v 31, 32, 36).

True freedom – from guilt, sin, self, the devil, the world – now freed to serve Christ. The freedom and independence of 'doing His thing'. This freedom is something real and wholesome, and can be experienced afresh every day...

...

Floods in Lahore, August 1976



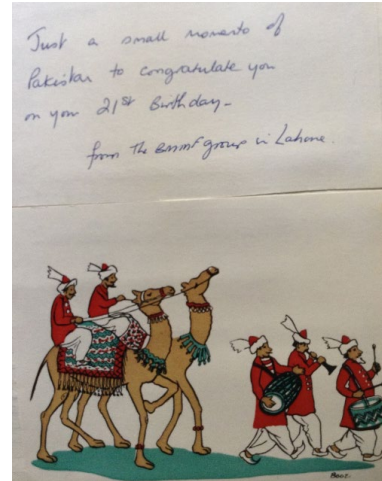
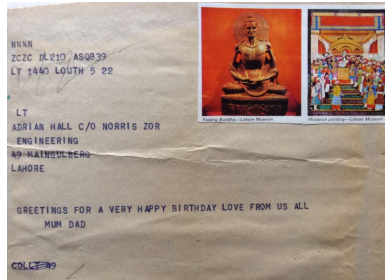
Left above and below: around St Andrew's



Below: torrential rain at St Hilda's

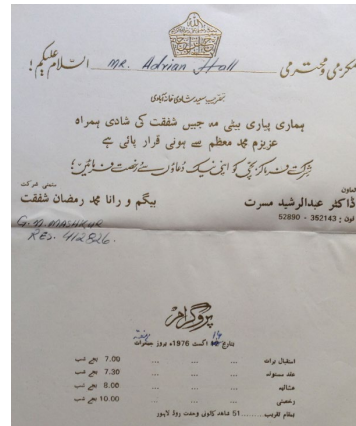
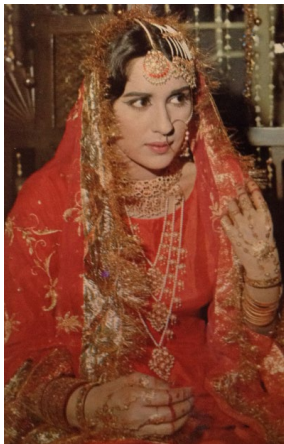


Two birthdays and a wedding, August 1976

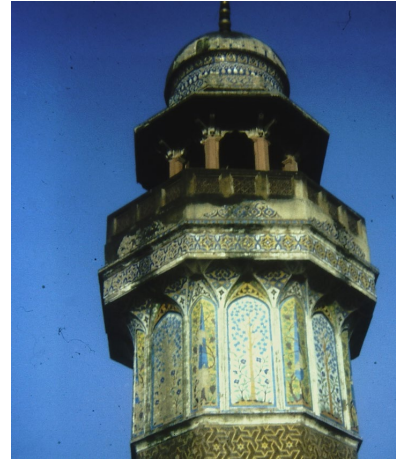
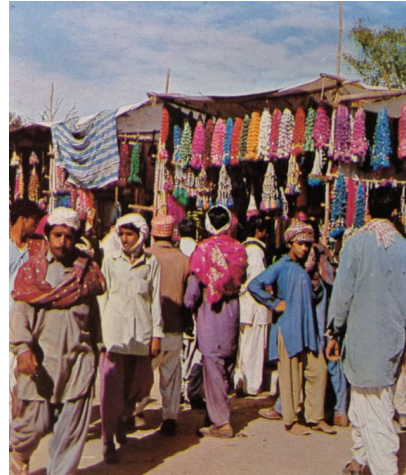
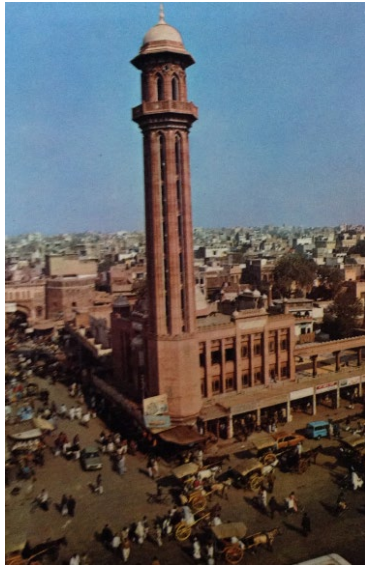


Above and far right: Simon's 22nd birthday and my 21st birthday

Below left: Muslim wedding

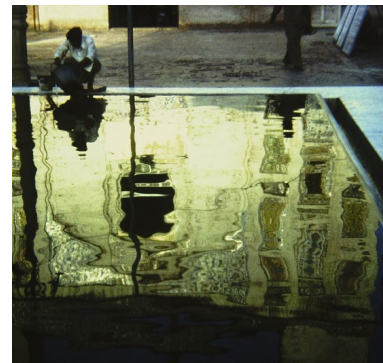


Scenes from Lahore, August 1976

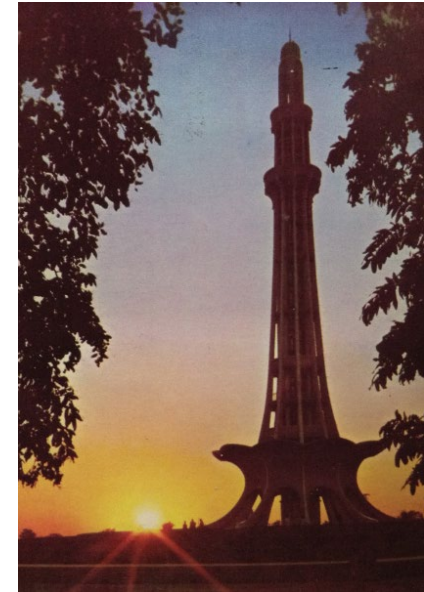


Above: Lohari Gate; Below: Mall Road traffic

Above and Below: Wazir Khan's Mosque



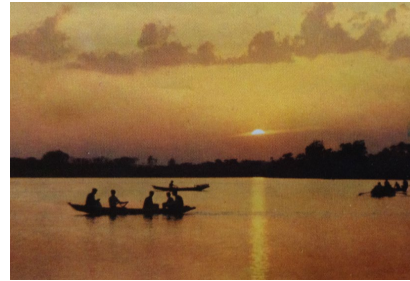
More scenes from Lahore, August 1976



Above: Lahore Railway Station; Below: Empress Road and Anarkali Bazaar...



Floods and the countryside around Lahore, August 1976



Above and Below: Flood relief work around Lahore...

Above: Hospital near Gulberg



Nathia Gali, Miranjani and Murree, August 1976



Above and Below: Nathia Gali and Miranjani

Below: Murree, the Mall



Agra and Delhi, India, August 1976



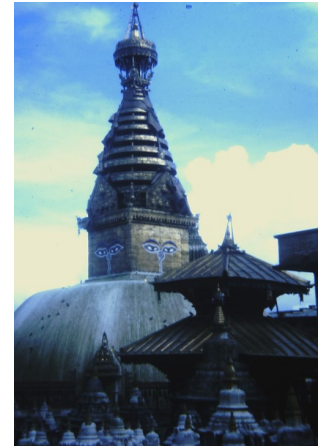
Above: The Taj Mahal, Agra



Below: Red Fort and Jama Masjid, Delhi



Kathmandu, Nepal, August 1976



Above and Below: Scenes from Kathmandu, Nepal



Kathmandu and the Himalaya, Nepal, August 1976



Above: Plane from Pokhara; Below: Kathmandu

Above: View of the Himalaya from Dilaram House; Below: Dilaram House, Kathmandu



Pokhara, Nepal, September 1976



Above left: Machapuchare and Annapurna, from Pokhara, Nepal

Above right and Below: Hills above Pokhara

Below Right: with Simon, Doug, Cathy and Heather, Tibetan Restaurant, Pokhara

