

Do I Really Want to Be an Archaeologist?



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Letters from the Field
1968-74

Karen D Vitelli

ARCHAEOLOGICAL LIVES



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Archaeological Lives

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Contents

Acknowledgements.....	ii
Chapter 1. The Background to the Letters	1
Chapter 2. Getting to Greece. Off to my First Dig, 1968	15
Chapter 3. My First Dig, Porto Cheli, 1968	28
Chapter 4. Fall Term at the American School, 1968.....	46
Chapter 5. Winter Term at the American School, 1969.....	59
Chapter 6. More Digs: Turkey and Back to Greece, 1969.....	82
Chapter 7. Beginning Dissertation Research, 1969-70.....	105
Chapter 8. Wrapping up the Dissertation Research. Nafplion 1970: April-August.....	116
Chapter 9. Avoiding, and Finally Starting the Dissertation, Athens 1973.....	137
Chapter 10. Finishing the Dissertation, during a Revolution.....	155
Bibliography	188

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A number of good friends read early drafts of this collection and encouraged me to keep working on it: Catherine Perlès, Tracey Cullen, Anna Stroulia, Mo Gewirtz, and Julie Rea were especially helpful. Lisa Freeman and the rest of my (non-archaeological) Wiscasset Book Group posed good questions and are largely responsible for the clarifications of archaeological and academic jargon. After reading an early draft, that group engaged in lively discussions about how each had experienced life as, and the expectations for young women in the 1960s and early '70s. Those discussions led me to think the letters might be of interest to a non-archaeological audience. I tried a number of mostly small commercial publishers, collected a number of polite rejections, and pretty much put aside any thoughts of publication. But Anna Stroulia wouldn't let it rest. She continued over several years to gently nudge me to 'get it out there.' She eventually steered me to the Archaeological Lives series at Archaeopress. Thank you Anna. Thanks, too, to Steve Rifkin and Henry Lyons for help with my terrible old snapshots. I'm glad Reg can't see them—the only good thing about his absence.

Chapter 1.

The Background to the Letters

I write looking back on a rich and satisfying career as an archaeologist and academic, who specialized in the beginnings of pottery and the people who made it in prehistoric Greece, and in archaeological ethics. The experiences and choices that took me there came mostly during my years in graduate school, although at the time I generally imagined different directions and careers. The letters included here show that I was trying on different personas, adjusting to fit whatever group I was with at the time, slowly figuring out which ones fit, sort of, and eventually becoming my own person.

My father was an English professor, and enjoyed a good story. He saved all the letters I wrote home from my early years studying in Greece, and encouraged me for years to turn them into a book. As a busy academic, however, I had serious research and administrative projects going and academe still didn't encourage popular writing other than textbooks. I am now long-since retired, a widow, living in rural Maine. I still have some professional commitments (although I have published everything I committed to), and have been back to Greece in recent years to give short summer workshops, but our long Maine winters leave me time and inclination to return to the computer and writing. Several years back, I remembered Dad's idea and pulled out some of my old letters—starting with those from my junior year, spent at the College Year in Athens. I was appalled! So adolescent (which I was), so embarrassingly shallow. You could hardly tell I was writing from Greece. How could Dad have thought they were worth sharing? I moved on to other things. Then Alan Kaiser's lovely book, *Archaeology, Sexism, and Scandal*, came along. He mentions the old-fashioned use of a railroad car to remove excavated earth from the site of Olynthus in the 1930s. Yikes. We still used railroad cars that way at Gordion, in Turkey, almost 40 years later. I wondered if I had written home about that. I went back to the old letters and found the passage about railroad cars at Gordion (see Chapter 6)—and began to see what Dad had seen.

The Years before the Letters

The following chapters consist largely of the letters I wrote home to my family from various places in Greece and Turkey, while doing fieldwork and research as a graduate student in classical archaeology at the University of Pennsylvania, from 1968-1974. This introduction summarizes the years up to that point, providing a context for the references to people, places, and events mentioned in the letters.

My Family

Dad taught English and American Studies at Lafayette College, in Easton, PA. Mother had majored in history and art, and was a fair artist, although she didn't have much chance to paint for herself (she did lots of theater sets and costumes for Lafayette College productions)

until her five kids were pretty well grown. She was also an accomplished gardener (with an organic garden, well before the term and practice became widely known) and naturalist, and passed those interests on to her kids. Mom and Dad met at Trenton (NJ) high school. Both graduated from the College of Wooster (Ohio), and married soon after. Dad served in the navy, mostly in the Pacific; mother followed him to Tiburon, San Francisco, where I was born, on D-Day, 1944. After the war, Dad went to grad school at the U of Pennsylvania on the GI bill, the new family living with their in-laws (in Trenton, NJ and Yardley, PA), and enlarging rapidly. My brother Jefferson was born three years after me. I have vague memories of, a year later, being tucked into bed with baby brother Jeff while Dad took mother to the hospital for the birth of Eloise.

A Maine Winter

By then, the living arrangements were getting uncomfortable. Dad had finished his course work and needed to write his dissertation. A friend from their high school days, also married to his high school sweetheart and with several kids, had inherited some money about then, and bought an old farmhouse in South Jefferson, Maine, which he planned to turn into a chicken farm. In the post-war years, many Mainers thought they were going to make their fortunes in chicken farming. It didn't happen, but we, at least, had fun trying. Charlie's new property included, besides the big old farmhouse and barn, the old village post office building—a three-room basic box with some electricity, but no plumbing, insulation, or heat, other than from back-to-back pot-bellied wood stoves in the middle of the main room. My parents jumped at the offer of living in it, rent-free, and helping Charlie and Jean get the farm going.

So we spent a winter in 1948-49, learning, *inter alia*, how to keep warm. Mother had been raised on a farm and knew her way around rural. City-kid Dad had to learn to cut, haul, and split wood. I recall being out with him and my little sled, when he hollered 'Run!' I innocently asked 'Why?' as a sizeable tree crashed down very close to me—and the lecture that immediately followed, from a no-doubt terrified father, to the effect of 'When I say run, you run first and ask why later!' Other, gentler memories of that year contributed to my life-long love of Maine and determination to return, something that had to wait on my retirement, since Mainers are still trying to find the chicken farm that will provide abundant gainful employment, if not make their fortune.

I doubt Dad did much writing that year, but he did land a job teaching at Lafayette College in Fall 1949. (While shredding his old tax documents recently I found his withholding statement from 1951, when the total family income, including savings, came to \$3399.96.) We moved to Easton (PA), where Dad spent his entire teaching career and we kids all grew up, bar a couple of significant overseas interruptions.

Trieste, Italy

In 1956, Dad was awarded a Fulbright grant to teach at the University of Trieste, an Italian port city on the Adriatic Sea, closely bordering Yugoslavia (now Slovenia). This was only two years after the Independent City State of Trieste had become an official part of Italy—a fact of no interest to 12 year-old me, although my parents must have been keenly aware of the recent political history of the region. By then, we had another little brother, Steve, two years

old. Late that summer, the six of us, along with lots of other Fulbright families, sailed to Italy aboard the SS Constitution. Poor mother was seasick the whole time. It turned out she was pregnant. Whether because of that first miserable experience of long-distance travel, or just because, she was never a good traveler, turning green at even the sight of boats, ships, or planes. My siblings also suffered, but I loved the crossing—even won first prize in the ping-pong tournament (because I was one of very few, along with my Dad, who was not suffering from sea-sickness), and helped the ship's staff decorate the halls for the various parties offered the few passengers able to attend. Dad and Mom had supplied us three older kids with notebooks in which, when they needed some peace from us, we were to write our impressions and experiences throughout the trip. I don't know what happened to those journals, but they were surely the beginning of my life-long practice of recording such things and talking myself through whatever was bothering me, whether in a journal or letters home.

Once in Trieste, we found housing in Opicina, a small town some 300m (1000 feet) above the city, where many of the US Consulate crowd also lived. My siblings enrolled in the local elementary school in Opicina. I rode the cable-car/tram down the steep hill daily to attend the Scuola Media Dante Alighieri. I was thrilled, recently, to find photos and a description of my beloved 'tram d'Opcina' (the spelling in dialect)—I still remember most of the words to the song about it—on Wikipedia ('Villa Opicina'). It looks exactly as I remember it. (Since I first wrote this, I have learned from Enzo, a friend from those days who still lives in Opicina and with whom I have renewed friendship via email after 60+ years of silence, the poor old tram has been retired.)

My classes were all in Italian, including my first encounter with Latin, and, when Dad's grant was extended to a second year, French. At age 12, I learned the languages pretty easily, and found wonderful friends in my Italian classmates, as well as some of the American kids from families with the US Consulate, one of whom, Kit, has joined the current email exchanges with Enzo.

The two classes with which I had the most difficulty were *Economia Domestica* (Home Economics) and *Disegno* ('art' class). In home ec, we learned to knit—by producing, first, some ten to twelve little square samplers of the major stitches, using white kitchen string. All my classmates turned in their full collection of samplers in the first week (I suspect their mothers' hands at work), and immediately started knitting cute little baby goods in lovely colored yarns. I worked the entire term on my samplers, the white string turning grayer and grayer as I unraveled and redid each one over and over until I had an acceptable version. I have been knitting ever since, a way to be doing something productive while my brain rests or roils.

Disegno class brought similar anxieties and painfully slow progress. Mother had always encouraged us to be creative, to 'color outside the lines.' In this class, her advice worked against me. We made repetitive designs using T-squares, triangles, and compasses, and inked them with old fashioned drafting tools that I struggled to control. If I managed to get all my carefully measured pencil lines to intersect exactly, I inevitably spoiled the whole drawing when it came time to tap just enough ink between the metal claws of the 'pen' and tighten the screw to get the perfect width of line. Always, my 'pen' dripped spots of indelible India ink splat in the middle of the drawing. I associate lots of tears with that class. Many years later,

however, it proved the perfect training (including how to repair splats of ink) for drawing pottery profiles and other archaeological finds.

The first Christmas we spent in Opicina, I got my very own pair of skis (acquired second hand from one of the Consulate kids, who got a new pair for his Christmas present)—and a several days trip to Sappada, in the Italian Alps, alone with Dad. I was terrified, having no concept of skiing other than from a few newsreels of men skiing down vertical rock faces. But a vacation with just my Dad sounded pretty special. It turned out that skiing was, too. We made silly mistakes right off, got separated on the slopes, eventually reunited, sucked in our pride and took a beginner's lesson, and after that, had a glorious time—so much so that the next Christmas, we returned with the whole family.

The first January in Opicina, my little sister Lillie was born. (The five of us kids each has a middle name after an author my father was engaged with at the time, hence: Karen Donne, Jefferson Blake, Eloise Adams, Stephen James, and Lilliana Clemens.) Albina, a patient young Slovene woman, helped around the house and with shopping—mother was an extremely talented woman, but languages, were not her strong suit—and cooking. When Lil was born, my Italian grandmother joined us, so we were a large family, living in relative (to our life in the US) luxury. At Easter, the whole family went to Florence/Firenze for a week, staying at the Pensione Analena. Dad must have been doing some research to justify the extravagance, but what I remember is lots of visits to churches (boring) and museums (some, like the Uffizi, exciting even for me—if not my siblings—especially with mother as impassioned guide), wonderful hours in the Boboli Gardens, amazing meals at the Pensione, where we were astounded by watching the other visitors (elegant Italians), peeling their oranges with a knife and fork, and learned to do it ourselves, over many trials and much friendly laughter from the rest of the diners.

We left Trieste in the summer of 1958—many of my Italian friends saw us off on the train to Genova, all of us in tears and swearing to stay in touch and return soon. In Genova, my parents took us all to the huge Staglieno Cemetery, which I now know as a place of considerable historical and artistic interest, but at the time seemed a really dumb thing to do on a brief visit to a big city. What I remember of the cemetery is that some of us got separated from the others and only barely managed to find each other in time to get back to the ship before it left port. From Genova we sailed home, past the Statue of Liberty at sunrise, and back to ordinary life in Easton. I missed several months of classes with rheumatic fever the first year back, but managed to keep up with school work and make up tests when I returned, so continued on with my original class. In 1962, I graduated from high school and, in the fall, began my college career at Wooster, in Ohio. I found, waiting in my dorm mailbox, a hand-written letter from Warren Anderson, the Greek professor, suggesting that, given my language background—I had continued studying Latin and French after our return from Trieste—I might enjoy starting ancient Greek. I did, and became a major in Ancient Greek and Latin.

Round the World

The next family overseas excursion came during my junior year in college. I had long planned to spend my junior year abroad, preferably in Italy. I found, instead, a relatively new program called College Year in Athens (CYA), where I could continue my classics major and get full

credit for the year at Wooster. One of the perks of Dad's position at Lafayette, compensating somewhat for the then-dismal salaries of college professors, was a tuition exchange program that paid up to the tuition of Lafayette at any school to which his first three children were admitted. I was made very conscious of the fact that this left two of my younger siblings without a pre-paid deal for college, one of many ways my Dad instilled in me a sense of financial obligation to the whole family. We couldn't afford a year's break in my college career, so getting full Wooster credit for CYA was the deciding factor in choosing that program. Dr Anderson guided me to a topic for Wooster's required junior-senior year Independent Study project that would take maximum advantage of being in Athens: Aristophanes and the Topography of Athens.

Meanwhile, Dad, who had had a minor heart attack the year before, had still accepted a position at the University of Bombay (now Mumbai) for the same academic year (1964-65), through the University of Pennsylvania, as part of a US government exchange with India. It took a great deal of financial and other finagling, but come June, the whole Vitelli crew flew from Philadelphia to San Francisco (my parents had decided that since we were going half way around the world, we might as well go west, through brand new territory), to Honolulu for a few days of sunburn and our first experience of culture shock: After a pre-dawn jet-lagged walk along the deserted beach, Eloise and I stopped at a little place for breakfast pancakes—and, assuming the bottle on the table was syrup, poured soy sauce all over them.

From Hawaii, we flew on to Manila, for a visit with college friends of my folks (and my first earthquake—minor, but thrilling), and from there, to Japan. Tokyo was crazy with noisy construction in preparation for the Olympics. We escaped after a single night, via train, some 70km north of Tokyo to the lovely park-like mountain town of Nikko and a small Japanese inn. From there, back to Tokyo (where we kept losing brother Steve, now ten and into his climbing stage: he'd shinny up lamp posts or trees or whatever he could find while we were waiting for a traffic light to change, so when we got across the crazy busy street and counted to make sure we were all there, he was invariably missing).

Then, on to Hong Kong, where we had to stay rather longer than planned, waiting for our Indian visas to come through. While we waited we made a trip across the island to the beach at Repulse Bay. We were pretty much the only Caucasians on the beach, and it felt like everyone was staring, pointing at us, and giggling. I self-consciously assumed my two-piece bathing suit was the cause, but when several Chinese men asked politely if they could take a picture of their wives standing next to some of us, we realized it was Dad's hairy chest and my towering height (5'8") next to their tiny wives that they found so amusing: a vivid taste of what it feels like to be 'other.' Finally the visas arrived and we went on to Bangkok for a few delightful days, and at last, Bombay.

India

I stayed with the family through the monsoon season, first in hotels—ranging from the Taj Mahal (which quickly became too expensive—and where I watched a man fishing from the rocks across the street be swept off and away by wicked monsoon waves, and the other men, with whom he'd been talking just moments before, just kept on fishing—another vivid lesson in cultural differences), to the Sea Green (too cheap and wretched— where little brother Steve

was assaulted in an elevator by one of the men who worked there, and rats ran across the dish towels drying in the courtyard), to a third, where Eloise came down with typhoid fever and was whisked off to Breach Candy Hospital. Then Steve and I came down with it, but had to stay hidden in our hotel room, because our doctor told us ‘three cases represents an epidemic’ and the authorities would have to get in on it with miserable consequences and endless red tape.

So we tossed and sweated in our hotel beds, ran endlessly to the bathroom, and wanted to die for several days, but as it calmed down, I taught my little brother to knit, while our parents searched desperately for a suitable apartment.

Finally they found a place, and a car that could get us there and wherever else we needed to go, and outfitted the household with the required ‘servants’ —including a cook who claimed to know English cuisine and brought us dishes that looked just like, e.g., apple pie, and said ‘apple pie’ in browned egg white letters on top, but tasted just like everything else he cooked: spicy and very Indian. We also had a tailor who came to the house, measured us for saris and western styles that were either ‘small tight’ or ‘large big.’

Until it was time for me to leave for Greece, I went to lots of receptions for the expat community, for Dad, and other academics, and the Indians who wanted to meet them or who were going to the States to university and were anxious to meet some Americans before they left. For me, those gatherings inevitably led to dreadfully uncomfortable dates with young men desperate to please, but little idea of how to do so. Once I was taken to a huge, brand new hotel restaurant and ballroom looking out on a wild, angry sea, for dinner. My date (heading to the US to dentistry school) and I were the only diners. He told me to order everything I wanted from the pages of offerings on a huge, gilded menu I could barely hold. I chose something rather modest, I thought, and he...ordered a cup of tea. Nothing more. Dozens of waiters helped him watch my every bite. When I’d finally finished chewing, they watched us dance a very awkward box-step to the western tunes of a live orchestra. Why, oh why had I thought traveling was going to be so wonderful?

Another young man, heading to my Dad’s college, invited Eloise and me to tea at his family’s apartment. We were shown in to a large room, empty except for two chairs in the middle, on which we were invited to sit. The whole extended family lined up in a crescent in front of us, giggling and whispering, while a series of servants brought us one strange (to us) dish after another, all flavored heavily with cardamom. Clearly, cardamom was a dear and special treat that they were very proud to offer us, but our taste buds had not yet been trained. After the first few treats, I found it increasingly difficult to swallow. When we finally left, we ran around the corner, out of sight of our hosts, and threw up loudly and gratefully. Only recently have I been able to stomach the spice again.

On My Own

Beirut

I was due in Athens in September. No flights went directly from Bombay to Athens, so I had to decide whether to go via Cairo or Beirut. Sitting in the travel agency office, Beirut sounded very exotic, so I opted for that route, which would involve an overnight and a long day free to

explore. I was thrilled to be traveling on my own, without having to constantly count siblings, extract Steve from whatever he had climbed this time, or rescue Lil's woven straw-monkey basket (from a Bangkok floating market, her treasure that always snagged strangers' clothes or popped open and spilled embarrassing contents all over an airport waiting room we were rushing to leave). I landed in Beirut—in 1964, a beautiful, clean, brightly modern, sunny city, with a fantastic beach a couple of blocks from my hotel, right in the middle of the city. Less than a minute outside the hotel door, men began approaching me with propositions of some kind, whether to take me to see the sights, wink wink, or a more direct offer. Going to the beach alone was clearly a bad idea. So I bargained with a taxi driver for a guided tour of an archaeological site. I don't even remember what site it was, only that, once we were well outside of the city, in a deserted place that did, indeed, have some fallen column drums, the driver grabbed me and tried to kiss me while pushing me into the bushes. I fought him off, and somehow got him to take me back to the hotel—where I cowered in my room, hungry and upset with my own stupidity, until it was time to head back to the airport.

Greece

Finally, Athens. What a relief to be back in western civilization. My much rehearsed instructions to the Athenian cab driver got me right to my new apartment and a very warm welcome from Mrs Phylactopoulos, the founder and director of CYA. Mrs Phyl, as she was always known, had had a long correspondence with my parents, working out the tricky financial arrangements for my year with CYA. Dad was being paid well, but in non-transferable rupees; I was on a very tight budget, unlike the other students, and arriving from India was certainly unusual. I shared an apartment on the first floor of a relatively new, modern building with Pam, the daughter of a CEO of a major American company. We were apparently considered the more serious and trustworthy students. The rest of the girls in the program lived in apartments upstairs, closer to the housemother, Mrs H, and where the lounge and dining room were also located. Classrooms were across the street in the Hellenic American Union. The boys also lived in apartments, safely on the other side of Lykabetos hill.

It was a wonder-full year, with lots of serious academic learning, but also plentiful not-so-serious learning about Greeks, Greece, life, society, and ourselves. We did a fair bit of legitimate studying. During one all-nighter, when I was typing a paper for my Greek philosophy class on a borrowed typewriter, we had an earthquake, strong enough to spill coffee on the pages I'd just typed. We laughed at the novelty of being able to legitimately claim a paper was late because of an earthquake. Another earthquake hit when I was soaking in a hot bath. Half the water splashed out of the tub, while I tried to decide if I should stop to get dressed or just get the hell out of the building. Fortunately, it was over before I made up my mind.

We bussed all around Greece to significant—and not so significant—sites, always uphill from wherever the bus parked. We met many of the important figures in Greek archaeology on those trips, in our classrooms, at lectures, and at parties at the Phyls' lovely home in Psychiko on the Athens College campus, a prestigious prep school for boys (now co-ed), where Mr Phyl taught.

Early on, we were introduced to, and drank our share of retsina (fondly referred to as 'retch'), the resinated Greek wine that did, indeed, taste strongly of turpentine—that was served

everywhere and was the only wine we ever drank (it has now become difficult to find in Greece); and ouzo, the strong, anise-flavored drink, clear until water (or ice, although that was rare in the '60s) is added, when it turns milky. But one evening, a group of us girls went out determined to find 'real drinks'—maybe a gin and tonic or scotch and soda. Hard liquor was essentially unavailable in Greece at the time (pre-EU). Shops that dispensed alcohol carried only local ones like ouzo and brandies. Mixed drinks could be had (we later learned) at the Hilton bar, but nowhere else we had seen. I think we headed to Syntagma Square and asked people where we could find an 'American drink.'

Eventually someone directed us to 17 Voukourestiou Street, where we were instructed to go down the steps and through the unmarked door, into a semi-private club—basically a bar, though with no external indications of same—run by a Greek American, recently returned from Vermont. We opened that door with some trepidation, but found a very American-style, dark, cozy bar (which, at that point, I knew only from movies), with a friendly bartender who spoke English, and a few older male patrons. We ordered our 'real drinks' and were soon explaining our presence in Greece to the gentlemen in the bar. They paid for multiple rounds of drinks and were quite charming, urging us to return whenever we felt like it. A few of us became semi-regulars, on weekends at least, and were well taken care of by the older men—lawyers, yacht brokers, businessmen.

We assumed they had no wives (who would never have gone out to bars in any event). They always bought the drinks, often took us out to expensive restaurants, water-skiing when the weather was good, and other upper class entertainments we'd not otherwise have even known existed. At least in my experience, they expected only the pleasure/status of being seen in the company of a young, attractive foreign woman. Certainly they provided a vivid contrast to our daily scene as students, our frequent hikes in the countryside to monuments and sites, the hours standing in front of museum cases. We said as little as possible to Mrs Phyl about the Club, as she did not approve (although she probably figured, rightly, that we were safer than with young Greeks picked up on the streets).

In the spring (1965), my family finished their assignment in India and sailed from Bombay, through the Suez Canal (I've always regretted missing that part of their trip), to Naples. They had bought a VW van that was to be waiting for them at the dock, and from which they planned to camp, while traveling in Europe for the summer and then to ship home—an arrangement not uncommon in those days, as it was cheaper to import a VW directly than to buy one in the US. Dad was to be back at the University of Trieste for the summer; in the interim, they planned to take the ferry from Italy to Greece and spend some time with me. The plans more-or-less worked (see Chapter 5). They spent a week or so at a seaside motel outside of Athens, and I joined them between exams and classes to show them around.

Little Lil was rather sick—eventually diagnosed with hepatitis. Fortunately, while we collectively picked up most of the diseases then common in India, we mostly caught different ones, and all recovered.

The final CYA trip of the year, to northern Greece, fell just then, so I climbed on the big bus with the rest of my classmates and headed off to various sites to the north, with the little blue and white Vitelli van following along behind. The joint trip culminated in a spring snowstorm

in the mountains of Metsovo, where my family stayed in a little inn not far from the CYA group hotel and joined us for a final evening together. My little brothers entertained the group playing guitar and singing. Eleven-year old Steve, in his sweet boy-soprano voice, sang a hauntingly tender version of 'Norwegian Wood,' leaving tears in every eye in the room. Mrs Phyl was especially moved by that evening, and never failed in future years to ask after my 'sweet little brother.'

From there, the CYA bus headed south again, while the Vitelli van went on north through Yugoslavia, to Trieste, where they camped at the Sistiana beach campground for the summer. Dad commuted from tent to University. Jeff and Eloise took a train north, looking for employment. Jeff went to Koblenz, to stay with Craig and Madeline Moore, family friends from Easton who were running their family's business in Germany at the time. They found him work on a dairy farm—until he, too, came down with hepatitis and my parents had to drive up to retrieve and return him to the campground at Sistiana. Eloise went to visit a pen pal in Vienna, where she found a job as nanny for an American family. She later flew, with her charges, to Rome, and rejoined our family at Sistiana at the end of the summer.

Olympia and Pylos

Back in Greece, our school year at CYA ended, and most of our classmates headed home. Pam, Peter, and I wanted to spend the summer in Greece, and arranged to work with Dr Nikos Ialouris, then Ephor of Antiquities for the western Peloponnese, who had taught one of our classes at CYA. We had ten days or so between having to vacate our CYA apartments and the time to report for work at Olympia, about \$15 apiece, and minimal luggage. We headed to the Piraeus, planning to take the next boat that was leaving, wherever it was going. Luckily, the next boat went to Zakynthos, one of the western islands, still off the beaten track for tourists, and in the general direction of Olympia. We had a grand time exploring the islands—from Zakynthos we persuaded a local fisherman to take us to Ithaka for free, rented bicycles for pennies, slept on beaches or as guests in private houses, and were treated to plentiful food by locals, who were surprised and pleased to be visited by *Amerikani* who spoke some Greek.

At Olympia, we lived rent-free in the house of one of the museum guards. Our job was to pack up finds stored in the old museum, recently damaged by earthquakes, for removal to the new museum. But not just any finds: these were mostly small bronze figurines, excavated decades before and never even cleaned, much less studied and published, and stored in a little alcove above the main exhibition room. Every day we felt incredibly important, climbing the long ladder over the pediments of the Zeus temple, in front of all the tourists, into our little cramped space, to handle these figurines that almost no one in modern times had ever seen before. Glorious.

Meals proved not to be part of our arrangement, and we had all spent most of our \$15 during our travel to Olympia. We were often provided dinner by Dr Ialouris or the guards or other friends, but many days, we ate minimally: yoghurt (very cheap, and filling) and fruits, snatched from low hanging branches.

I accepted my first and only ride on the back of a Greek motorcycle, with the guard in whose house we were staying. He zoomed off and out of town, down a deserted path, where he stopped

and attacked me. I was totally unprepared for the advance—geez, we were living in his house, with his wife and young kids—but I made it clear I was not available and got him to take me back home. Another evening, after an ouzo with a couple of guards in the village, they offered to give us a tour of a part of the ancient site that was normally closed to visitors. Of course we went. At one point, I was listening to one guard explain some special feature behind some heavy bushes. Pam and Peter had gone in another direction with the other guard. Suddenly the guard pushed me down in the bushes, while he unzipped his pants with the other hand. I had a real struggle to get him off of me and run away to rejoin my friends, to whom I am sure I never mentioned the whole scene.

At the time, Greek women were quite sheltered and would never have been allowed to ride off on a motorcycle, or walk un-chaperoned after dark. Hell, they wouldn't have been in a foreign country without their families, living on their own as we were. So our very presence was seen as an invitation. Even at home, if sexual molestation and rape were talked about at all, they were generally blamed on the woman for 'inviting it.' So I was embarrassed and feeling somehow guilty, and wouldn't have dared admit the occurrence to friends. I was also naïve. These were my first experiences of the taunts from Greek men that we'd been laughing at all year, being acted upon. I was shaken, and much more cautious thereafter—for all the good it did.

After several weeks at Olympia, we moved down to Pylos, again to help with setting up a new museum. Pam and I stayed at one end of a temporary WW II Red Cross shelter outside the village of Chora Triphylia. The room had a central doorway, with one side partitioned off to hold a small chapel. The other partitioned side, ours, was just barely large enough to hold two narrow single beds. To my grandmother I described it as

having a piece of cardboard between us and the next room, where someone we haven't met yet [*it proved to be Piet de Jong, whose nightmares we listened to the whole time we were there*] is busily typing. The beds are a foot wide, five feet long. The room on the other side of us is a little chapel with incense burning in front of an icon to the Virgin Mary. Only 30 meters away, through the chickens and around the donkeys, is a watering trough from which we can fill our pitchers to bathe.

The main part of the building housed the American excavators of the Palace of Nestor: Carl Blegen, his wife, Elizabeth (who was bedridden by a stroke that had left her largely helpless and speechless), Mabel Lang, Piet de Jong, and Marion Rawson, all legendary figures in archaeology. Our room had no entry to the main house, where the bathroom was. We were given strict instructions to use the bathroom as little as possible, so as not to disturb Mrs Blegen. We were terrified of angering the Great People so found a metal bucket, which we kept in the entranceway between our room and the chapel, to pee in. Many was the time when, squatting over the bucket, we had to jump up and cover it and ourselves as someone came to light a candle in the chapel. We sneaked out after dark to dump our pee in a far corner of the olive grove. By the end of the summer, the tree nearest our dumping spot was looking less than healthy.

Peter stayed in the village, in a small hotel room whose only positive attribute was that the window looked out on the empty lot where outdoor movies were shown, so we three were

able to squeeze into the window frame and watch the occasional movies for free—to the amusement of the locals down below.

Made confident by that *disegno* class years before, I volunteered to ink a plan of the Palace for display in the new museum. That meant I got to sit at a desk from which I could watch Piet de Jong work on his watercolor reconstructions of the frescos that Mabel Lang was slowly piecing together. I loved that job. I was so impressed with de Jong's work that, when time came to apply to graduate school and I had to claim a specialty in archaeology, I said I wanted, besides underwater archaeology (having been excited by a talk from Peter Throckmorton at CYA), 'to make reconstruction drawings like Piet de Jong's.' That naïve comment—I didn't know I was expected to choose among prehistory, classical, Hellenistic or Roman archaeology—was responsible, several years later, for my invitation to join the Porto Cheli team as an artist.

With all the moving around of our various family members, and all of us staying in out-of-the-way places and short of funds, we quite lost track of, and touch with each other for most of the summer. I remember writing to my grandmother back in the States, and finally learning from her where my siblings and parents were and when they were expecting me to join them for the return trip to the US. I think she provided a few dollars to make it possible for that to happen. Someone did, as I had money for what proved an adventurous train ride through Yugoslavia.

That train had the usual crowded compartments of entire families, live chickens tied together and hung upside down from the luggage racks, constant insistent offers of slivovitz (a raw version of ouzo or Italian grappa) for breakfast—but the adventure was unique. Not too far from the Italian border, the train stopped in the middle of nowhere. Literally. No town or buildings of any kind were visible anywhere in the vicinity. Several officers of some sort came through the train asking to see passports. When they looked at mine, they motioned me to follow them, off the train and into a tiny sentry box, with room only for me to squeeze onto the wooden bench, field of vision restricted to straight ahead. A soldier stepped up, a foot or two away from me, pointed his rifle at my head, and the officers walked off with my passport. Then the train, with my luggage, pulled out and went far enough that I couldn't hear it anymore—and there I sat staring down a rifle barrel, with a vague view of brown fields in the distance, terrified and wondering what in the world I had done and how and if I would ever get out of there. After what seemed hours, but was probably 20 minutes or so, the train steamed back to its original position, the officers returned, handed me my passport and motioned me back onto the train, and whatever it was, was over. I never did find out what it was all about.

My parents met me in Trieste and took me back to their tent in Sistiana, where, miraculously, the whole family was reunited, more or less on schedule. From there, we drove to Rotterdam, camping in soggy apple orchards along the way, and sailed home on the SS New Amsterdam, with the VW bus packed with Carso rocks for the terrace we planned to build once home, and a year's worth of luggage and treasures for seven people. The US customs officer at the dock in NYC took one look at Dad and his motley crew, and the mountain of battered luggage and said, 'If you've got any contraband, you've earned it!' and waved us through.

So we returned from our long trip around the world and re-embraced normal life in the USA. Normal life included dealing with the IRS. Amongst the brittle tax documents Dad saved, I

found his letter to the District Director of the IRS, asking to delay payment of his 1965 taxes: 'The loan I made to pay the 1964 tax exhausted my borrowing capacity. My 1965 taxes I hope to be able to pay off at the end of this summer when I shall receive earnings for a Summer School teaching assignment.' The year of travel had emptied our bank—but none of us ever regretted it during the lean times that necessarily followed.

Back in the USA

I returned to Wooster for a typically busy senior year, during which I completed my Independent Study project on Aristophanes, and became engaged to Harvey, the son of colleagues of Dad's, and a guy I'd known since elementary school, but never dated until that year. We graduated in June. I headed off to the University of Pennsylvania the following fall, while Harv waited to see where he'd be assigned for Peace Corps training. The relationship suffered from separation and differing new directions and styles; I broke it off on New Year's Eve. He left soon thereafter for training in Hawaii, before being posted to Thailand.

Shortly after the holidays, on the day before our diving course was to begin, to prepare for diving on a shipwreck in Turkey with Prof. George Bass the following summer, I was admitted to the University hospital, diagnosed with tuberculosis, manifested in my right eye. I'd been joking about my 'daemon' (a classicist's reference to Plato), a little spot in one eye that followed everywhere I looked, to various classmates. At lunch that day, Peter (Sterling) Vinson, older than the rest of us and apparently understanding it was no joke, marched me over to the phone in the cafeteria and made me call the Student Health Center. They told me to come right over, and I was admitted immediately. The doctors agreed I'd picked it up in Greece, probably during that last summer working in small villages, where, unbeknownst to me, TB was rampant.

A Medical Detour

I was lucky to be in that teaching hospital, with an unusual form of the disease. I was told that TB always begins in the lungs, but can migrate to any organ of the body. It rarely moves to the eye, so my case was unusual. The doctors took lots of close-up pictures of my inner eyeball. Those photos illustrated medical textbooks for many years. The doctors secured grant funding to study my case, and covered all my expenses, which otherwise would have been disastrous for my family. It was also lucky that the hospital was directly across the street from the University Museum, where all my classes met, so friends could easily visit. Once I'd caught up on the sleep all graduate students miss out on, I felt pretty good, but I was potentially infectious and had to stay for several months, in the isolation ward—fortunately on the ground floor, with a window onto the parking lot. Since I was so close to the university, classmates and professors often brought books and treats, to the window (strictly against rules, but the nurses looked the other way) and visited frequently. They had to put on robes, gloves and masks to enter the room, but were allowed to bring pizza and beer (sipped through straws inserted under their masks) on Friday afternoons. My memories are of good times, although the experience as a whole was hardly fun. The doctors at the Sheie Eye Institute were able to save the vision in my left eye, and halt further deterioration in the right, but I have only peripheral vision in that eye, which affects depth perception (for things like skiing and tennis). The scar tissue in my lung forced cancellation of my intended career in underwater archaeology. Eventually, I

was allowed to leave, first to my widowed grandmother's for a few weeks, and then home to Easton, where I was not permitted to leave the house and yard and had to eat and drink from my own dedicated plates.

Back to Penn

By fall, I was sufficiently recovered to return to Penn, where professors had arranged to renew my fellowship for a second year, even though I had not been able to complete the courses from the previous term. Our departmental offices and seminar room were in a back storage area off the Classical sculpture gallery of the University Museum. The broad hallway had been partitioned to create narrow offices, several of which senior graduate students were allowed to share. I used a table in the one next door to our chair, Dr Rodney Young, a prime location, as the partitions did not extend to the ceiling, and we could overhear all conversations in the chair's office. He of course, was well aware of this, and made good use of it to convey information he chose not to deliver in person. I was there the day that Tom Jacobsen, a Penn PhD and then professor at Indiana University in Bloomington, IN, stopped in for a visit, to tell his former professor about his new prehistoric cave site in Greece and to recruit graduate student staff for the following summer. He needed, among other things, an artist. Dr Young, remembering my application's statement of interest in 'drawing like Piet de Jong,' asked over the partition (well aware I was listening to every word), 'Well, Miss Tivelli, are you interested?' (Dr Young delighted in calling us all by odd names, often involving rearranging the letters in our real names). Thus began my lifelong involvement with Franchthi Cave.

Once I had signed on as Franchthi artist, I panicked because I really didn't have a clue how to make archaeological drawings. Susan Katsev, wife of a fellow grad student a few years ahead of me, had been doing magnificent drawings for George Bass's excavations and publications, as well as for her husband, Michael's, and agreed to provide some lessons. I practiced on coffee cups and objects in my apartment—getting the general idea, but with less-than-promising results.

I worked hard on my course work, and apparently pleased George Bass with a couple of my seminar reports. Or maybe he felt sorry for my time in the hospital and not being able to dive with his projects as I had hoped. At any rate, he invited me to write the chapter on the lamps from the Byzantine shipwreck for the book whose publication he, with a number of other authors, was working on. I was honored and thrilled to have my first scholarly publication in the works, and began the research right away, but the project dragged on and on.

That year (1967-68), I shared an apartment over a Cumberland Farms convenience store in West Philadelphia with three other women, including Cindy Jones (now Eiseman), another archaeologist who went on to dive with George Bass's projects (and to visit me in Greece). I took the entrance exams for the American School of Classical Studies in Athens (ASCSA), the research institute through which all American archaeological work in Greece is organized and permitted, under Greek law; and which also offers a year-long program of classes and intense study trips to ancient sites and museums in Athens, Attica, and Greece in general, for graduate students in archaeology and related fields. It has first-class libraries, and a number of senior scholars in residence for all or part of the academic year, working on their own research. It seemed a daunting group for me to be joining, but I was admitted for the year, beginning the

next fall, right after my first season with the archaeological field project in Porto Cheli. I was excited and anxious.

Ours was a serious academic scene at Penn, but we were also lively young women, with typical interests, i.e., in men. Three of us became best friends, three women who hadn't had a date in months. We plotted and schemed, when not fretting over our next seminar report or paper, about how to meet interesting men: sometimes we even abandoned the comfortable cafeteria in the University Museum downstairs from our seminar room, and headed for the big University dining halls across campus, for lunch. After several tries sitting together, when no one spoke with us, we split up, heading to different tables, hoping to meet a nice guy. Nada. We gave up and returned to the usual crowd in the University Museum. Not long thereafter, Cindy and Marilyn somehow met men they eventually married. I met the guys who lived in the apartment upstairs from us. I started dating one of them that winter. He was Peter, who became my companion on the trip that opens Chapter 2.

Just as I was leaving the States, I learned from my parents that our dear friends from Easton, Craig and Madeline Moore, who were then living in Koblenz, Germany, and their kids, had chartered a yacht for an Aegean cruise in June, and I was welcome to join them 'if I was available.' The timing was perfect. I made a point of being available.

My financial situation was always difficult and therefore, almost an obsession. My university fees at Wooster and at Penn were covered by scholarships and fellowships. At both schools, I worked odd jobs—e.g., shelving library books and clerking in local retail stores—for books and pocket money. That wasn't an option in Greece, so I had to live within my tight budget, knowing I couldn't write home for help, as the family had its own money problems and I couldn't, and wouldn't, ask for funds that were needed for my siblings. Almost every letter home included a discussion of where the numbers in my checkbook stood, wondering whether the University fellowship check had arrived on schedule and been deposited to my checking account, and whether my calculations matched the ones my Dad was getting from the bank. I wrote checks for US dollars, and cashed them into drachmas through the American School, or by going directly to American Express. I've omitted most of the passages about money concerns from the following account, leaving just enough to convey their flavor. I have also omitted the 'Dear whoever' line of all letters (all were addressed to my family), unless a letter was addressed to someone in particular (a brother, one to the Moores, Mother, Dad), but have included date and place.