

This plane was a Flying Dutchman named Princess Margriet.



AAN BOORD VLIEGTUIG
ON BOARD AIRCRAFT

VAN
FROM
DATUM
DATE

Teheran

NAAR
TO

Staubel

13 May 1956

Dear Family,

High above the clouds over Turkey. Earlier this morning there were no clouds and we had marvellous scenery to look down at - lakes and snow-capped mountain ranges and a splendid view of Mt. Ararat. We left Teheran at 7 this morning having first had breakfast at the hotel. Now it is 10:30, we've set our watches back 1 1/2 hours, had another breakfast on the plane, just now morning coffee & cake. Never have I collected so much loot on a plane. KLM has presented each passenger with a small box of cigarettes, a book of maps, a bottle of brandy and a box of chocolates. I also put away my breakfast cheese for future reference.

To visit Iran (Persia), we discovered, is quite an experience in red tape. Never have we encountered anything so complicated. In order to cash your travellers checks or other foreign money, you must go to a bank where the transaction is entered in your passport. However, when we arrived on Thursday the banks were already closed (everything official closes at 1 pm - summer hours.) Since Friday and Saturday were holidays & we were leaving early Sunday morning, the only way we could get money for meals, hotel, etc. was to take a taxi to the airport where a plane was due in and the small branch bank there was open. Very handy! The holidays also interfered with our getting our exit visas and we spent a great deal of time going from Foreign office to Embassy to Police to KLM for the proper stamp in our passports. Fortunately taxis were cheap - fourteen cuts would take the two of us anywhere in town. The holidays were the end of Ramazan - which is a month-long period during which the Muslims cannot either eat or drink from sunrise to sunset. As you can imagine this is pretty hard on their dispositions and we were advised not to go into the bazaars as there might easily be trouble. On Thursday evening when we walked thru the streets we were impressed with the glumness of the people or

2.

AAN BOORD VLIEGTUIG
ON BOARD AIRCRAFT



VAN
FROM
DATUM
DATE

NAAR
TO

they pushed their way along the streets. The next day we hired a taxi thru the hotel and had a lovely time seeing the town - one of the managers at the hotel planned the trip for us + told the driver where to go, as the driver spoke no English. The trip was well planned - we saw the adobe huts in the poor area as well as the luxurious homes in the mountains, including mosques and monuments + markets on our way. We explored restaurants, a *tipperun* on each evening, but found only one good one. Breakfasts and lunches were ate at the hotel which was a small Pension type - much like a second rate small town English hotel. The manager, however was very friendly + helpful. The chief virtue of the hotel was the balcony of our room where we sat in the evenings waiting for *adik* so we could get some dinner. The balcony overlooked a small tree-lined river with snow-capped mountains not far behind. The first evening the scene was quite deserted - but the second evening there were streams of people walking along the river toward the 7:00 o'clock service at the mosque which would end their month long fast - and later that evening there were groups of people singing and chatting - the whole atmosphere of the place had changed.

They certainly are not accustomed to nor prepared for tourists - there were no tours of the city - no booklets telling what there was to see - no source of information what so ever. There were lots of signs of money - many large cars, houses etc - but also much poverty - many people in very ragged clothes and many beggars. The city itself is well planned with wide tree lined streets - very clean after Bangkok + Hong Kong - with wide gutters along the curbs where water from the mountains rushed down - like Salt Lake City. The whole area, except for the water from the mountains, is very dry - it never rains, and only irrigated areas grow any things.

Must stop - please send this to the Hansys, Aunt Edith and La Jolla - more soon - love - Margaret