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George With Sugah

When George and Roland were young, we combined our vacations with Paul's professional meetings, which were always held in exciting places, frequently half a continent away. Planning our automobile trip to and from our destination was a family affair, with much consulting of maps to plot the route both to and from. This planning always considered which Major League baseball teams were playing where and when, along with opportunities to visit friends and places the boys had heard about in family conversations or at school. Over a period of several years, we were able to see baseball games in St. Louis, California, Chicago, New York, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati. We also visited Disneyland, the Grand Canyon, Niagara Falls, the baseball and football halls of fame, as well as the World's Fair in New York and a feldspar mine in New Hampshire. One special trip stands out in my mind because of the food we enjoyed and because of two different waiters.

George remembered family talk about a dinner Paul and I had gone to when we lived a short time in Blacksburg, Virginia, when he was three. We had several times talked about the friends at that dinner as well as the funny things that had happened, but the main attraction for George was the lobster (in Virginia?) Paul and I had enjoyed. The restaurant, located between Blacksburg and Roanoke, was famous for its lobster, and George wanted to correct the fact that he had never had a whole lobster.

On the second day of our trip, we stopped at Radford as well as Blacksburg so that Roland could see where he was born, and to remind George of the year he had lived there in the Winwood Apartments. Then we began looking for the "lobster" restaurant, as George called it. We became discouraged as the day lengthened into night and we hadn't found the right place. Reluctantly, we stopped at the first Holiday Inn we came to outside Roanoke; we were tired and very hungry. The in-house restaurant looked pretty good.



In talking to the waitress, a life-long Roanoke resident, George discovered that this very Holiday Inn had been built on the spot of the "famous" roadside restaurant we were looking for (maybe, maybe not). Sure enough, lobster was on the menu, and George, about ten then, quickly ordered it. None of the rest of us did, although probably one of his parents should have kept him company in his adventure with his first lobster.

The meal did not get off to a particularly good start when the waitress started to put a bib on George. In answer to his suspicious, "What's that for?" she said, "Oh! I'm going to have *fun* with you!" She spoke with sufficient authority that George allowed her to bib him, although he was plainly unhappy to have a child's thing put around his neck. However, the food was a success with all of us, especially George, who really savored his lobster. When he had demolished the red creature and the waitress had cleared the table, she presented him with a pretty little bowl of water on which floated a slice of lemon. Again, he balked and suspiciously asked, "What's that?" to which she replied, "Your dessert; you drink it." I was feeling rather ashamed and inadequate as a mother who had not acquainted her children with the niceties of dining with finger bowls. Paul pointed out the state of George's fingers after his feast, persuading him that his dessert *would* taste better with clean fingers.

After that our vacation went along without a hitch, including seeing the All-Star Game at Shea Stadium in New York and living ten days by the side of a lovely little lake (pond-like in size) in New Hampshire, while Paul attended a conference nearby. The lakeside cottage came complete with access to row boats we could use on the lake. (The oars were behind the sofa.)

The final "episode" in our journey happened in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, where we spent the last night of our trip. There, in a pretty little restaurant, our waitress always addressed George as "Sugah," causing him the kind of embarrassment only a ten-year-old boy experiences. Any time after that, when we wanted to get George's attention, we only had to say "Sugah" to evoke our friendly waitress in Mississippi.