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Traveling Adventures

When George and Roland were young, we had many exciting family vacations based on driving to wherever Paul's professional meetings were being held. One of the highlights of such trips occurred when the boys were about seven and ten, when we took an extended trip from Dallas to New Hampshire and back. The boys excitedly help plan the itinerary.

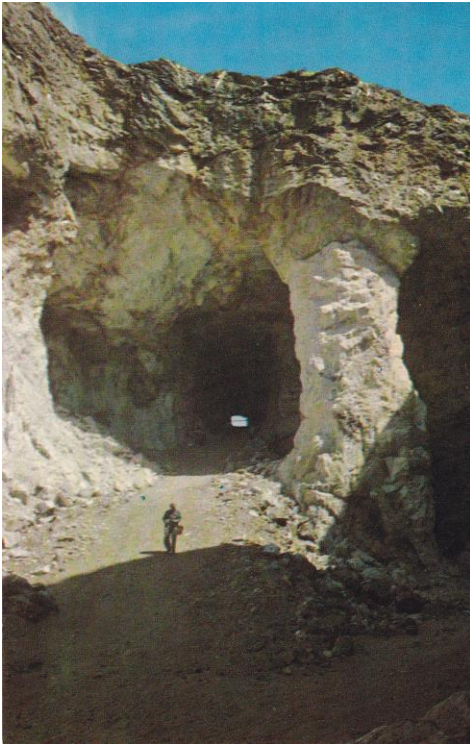
Roland had always been curious about his birth place, which we had left when he was six months old. Consequently, he looked forward to our finding the hospital where he had been born in Radford, Virginia, and visiting the apartment building in which we had lived in Blacksburg. We circled the hospital to satisfy his curiosity and drove on to Blacksburg where we paused at his first home, the Winway Apartments. We toured the town, finding the pond where George had been taken ice skating just before Roland's birth, and renewed our acquaintance with Kroger's, where he had begun his interest in learning the alphabet. There was a huge "K" reaching from bottom to top of the side of the building, which evoked a "K for Kroger's" from George every time we passed by.



Along with other stories we told the boys about our memorable year back then in Blacksburg, we mentioned the lobster feast we had enjoyed seven years before in Roanoke with some of our Virginia Tech friends. We couldn't find that restaurant, but we discovered that the Holiday Inn where we spent the night was actually the successor to that restaurant. Naturally, adventuresome George ordered lobster, but began to doubt his choice when the friendly waitress insisted on tying a bib around his neck, offending his ten-year-old dignity until we pointed out other adults around us were also wearing bibs. He greatly enjoyed the lobster, but again quailed when the waitress placed before him the first finger bowl he'd ever seen. By that time, he was accustomed to the gentle teasing of the waitress but somehow doubted her suggestion that he drink the water containing a thin slice of lemon. He dipped his fingers into the bowl with great savoir faire and clearly felt he was a man of the world.

Part of our destination was New York City, where the boys enjoyed the All-Star Baseball Game at Shea Stadium, as well as the World's Fair. When we visited the top of the Empire State Building, George greeted casually a neighbor boy who was in New York for a Scout Jamboree. The boys were not impressed by that coincidence, but their parents were. The boys only exchanged a casual "Hi, George," and "Hi, Dan."

Other stops included a week's residence in a lovely lakeside cottage in New Hampshire, where we spent one afternoon looking for garnets at the Ruggles Mine nearby. Then we went on to the Baseball Hall of Fame at Cooperstown, New York, where two baseball saturated youngsters pored over the exhibits.



The next significant event happened in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, where George met his first really great Southern accent. We had another friendly waitress who called the boys "Sugah" to their discomfort until they decided the extra attention she gave them was part of the fun. They talked for weeks afterward about her picturesque speech.

(See "George with Sugah")