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We are writing to thank you for your contribution to the picture we were given on leaving Keele. As you perhaps know it shows the farm on Blackstone Edge on the road from Royal Cottage to Longnor. The sky is very threatening but there is a bright part where the sun is trying to break through just behind the farmhouse. It reminds us so much of the many walks we have taken in the Peak District and the times when we have been both wet and dry. As will emerge, it is not yet hung but by the time you receive this it should occupy pride of place in our new flat.

Thank you also for the present which you brought to our farewell party. As you may guess, we were busy afterwards so we actually opened them on Christmas day, feeling somewhat embarrassed because we had so many presents. We did enjoy the party so much ourselves in the company of our best friends; the presents brought it all back again.

We arrived here in Germany in good order and are gradually getting things sorted out and settling down. The packers arrived on the Wednesday before Christmas and the furniture went off the next day in the trailer of an enormous German truck driven by a chap from Melton Mowbray and a Scotsman. That evening we had a bridge party in the half-empty house using the remaining two tables and eight chairs where we drunk up the rest of the champagne from our farewell party.

We then rushed out to buy a suite and bed for the house as we have some Spaniards coming in at the end of January. This was punctuated by a nice Christmas dinner with the people from the lab. and also by Christmas itself which we spent in Lincolnshire, enjoying the warm hospitality of Graham & Margaret Wuidart who are the parents of Jo, Stephen's girl friend. Then back to more buying before setting out on the 28th.

We sailed from Harwich getting there via Milton Keynes, London and Peterborough and thus visiting all our boys and Pat's parents as well. We had a good drive down here (650 miles) stopping overnight and also visiting the student who had been teaching us German at Keele.

We arrived on New Year's Eve and moved into our empty apartment. Customs are different here so the apartment really was empty with no lights or even fittings for them; we were lucky that it has a built-in kitchen belonging to the owner; we could have been faced with just three pipes in the wall as it is not unusual for people, when moving, to take the whole built-in kitchen with them. Also fortunate was that we had the use of a one-roomed flat next door belonging to the owner, so we camped between the two for the five days until the waggon turned up with our belongings at six in the evening.

We brought some apparatus from the lab. and it took five hours to unload everything here and at the institute. Since then we have been unpacking the forty odd boxes; putting up lights and shelves and endlessly shopping for furniture, curtains, carpets and so on because, although the flat is not large compared with Berne Avenue, we left much of our stuff there so as to be able to let it. The decorators are coming on

Monday; it is always a condition of letting here that a property is left in the same state as on occupation and this includes decoration. That's why so many flats have white walls here; it is easy and inexpensive to redecorate. We moved in so quickly that there was no time for the redecoration to be done so that happens on Monday.

The flat itself is very pleasant and Pat, who had not seen it, is very pleased with it. It occupies the whole attic of the house and has a large bedroom at the front, (North), and an enormous living/dining room at the rear. The living room windows command splendid views of the snow-covered mountains and we can sit in the sun with the view, having our lunch. In the summer, there is a large balcony on which to have breakfast. There is a view from the front too and also from the skylights which serve the kitchen, bathroom and spare room. There is room in the kitchen to have breakfast so we seem to have enough space, indeed too much when it comes to trying to carpet it! Along the eaves of the house there are spacious cupboards, so large in fact that in one we have installed a washing machine and another we use as a workshop; the head room in these is however more suitable for a dwarf!

Work started on the first Monday and people have been very helpful. I am working with a friendly, very-able, Norwegian who will be going back home in March at the end of two years secondment from their environmental research institute. Everyone speaks English for my benefit but this will gradually change as I get a bit more confidence (and competence, I hope!). I am gradually mastering the procedures and beginning to see both the advantages and the problems with a big research project such as EUROTRAC. I have to travel a bit; I was in Brussels last week, and I have meetings scheduled for Bologna in February, Oslo in April, Stockholm in May, Norwich in July and Varese in September. While it is not unreasonable, it is still a surprise to get paid full expenses to attend meetings and not to have to fork out oneself.

On the scientific side, I am having chats with the group leaders in the Institute and expect to visit several other labs. elsewhere in Europe in order to get something going; the most likely line at the moment is developing instrumentation for measuring specific pollutants either in the field or in aircraft. We expect to start some left-over work in March for Unilever; Pat will build an apparatus with the stuff we brought and we shall have a contract for a couple of months.

It is odd working monitored hours. I usually start at eight in the morning and finish between five and six. However the hours are logged so I can take Friday afternoons off or other times if I am above forty hours (i.e. we have flexi-time).

Garmisch-Partenkirchen is a very pleasant but unusual town. Being surrounded by high mountains and having a nice climate, it is both a winter and summer resort. It therefore has lots of hotels, restaurants, chic shops for clothes and skiwear and so on. But it also has the remains of an Alpine Village; thus one of the streets I walk along each morning on my way to work, which is only 50 meters from the centre of town, has large houses with barns at the back for cows, geese, ducks and chickens. At ten to eight, there are people bringing out small milk churns to be emptied by the dairy lorry at eight o'clock. As we saw in the summer, the cows go up from the town to the meadows but at four o'clock, they all come down and make their way through the traffic in the middle of the town back to their sheds.

Pat is getting used to the shopping; the few supermarkets are equivalent to Loady's in Paris avenue so we miss Sainsbury's. Similarly there are not the range of do-it-yourself stores. But there are a lot of nice shops too and as we get used to being served personally again (albeit in German) we shall find it very pleasant.

So all is well with us; we have to try to build a new social life; there are some concerts and plays here by visiting groups but I think we shall be going to Munich a lot. We are starting to go out again and hope to have a party reasonably soon where, of course, we shall try to make our new acquaintances play games. Ah! we have been skiing. unusually there is no snow left in the valley( thats what these places always say!) but it was wonderful on the Zugspitze last week. Tomorrow we shall try Seefeld in Austria which is only about 25 km away.

Once again, thank you for such a marvellous expression of affection and good will

With all our best wishes.