

DESTINATION: AMSTERDAM:

"Ladders and gentlemen, we are now over Belfast. Please keep your seat belts buckled until the plane has stopped, which will be in about 20 minutes." There she lies--beautiful green fields lying between large canals. From this height the canals appear a silver of steel...High dikes! Due to the hotels having two names we did not get a room at the one at end of field. Volkswagen Bus picks us up and takes us to a new hotel about 7 miles away...Lunch...Take Bus to town to arrange for American Express Tour. Then a ride on canal out into the Ocean Harbor. See large ships from various countries..large navy yacht tied up at dock.

ART:

Rembrant Home...Then his Museum! What an artist with the brush! Noted for his ability to shade black and the detail of face and eyes in groups. National monument in the large square in Amsterdam with three tiers of steps at its base. These steps are completely loaded with the greatest "bucket of scum" ever assembled in one spot. Male, female, white and black! The guide called it a "living grave yard!" The Hollanders, rather than fight them, leave them alone and hope that time will eliminate the horrible sight. Whenever you see an American you see a winner hands down, long haired and dirty! The story is told that they sell their air fare tickets home for they know the parents will send more money. "Gott Fater USA" will be milked for more money if parents don't come across.

DIAMONDS:

We visit a diamond cutting factory and the story is told of how it is done from the mine fields to the finger of Frauline or Mademoiselle. The raw stones are cut by saws covered with olive oil. Every speck of this dust is retained; the mixture of dust and oil is used as a polish when grinding the finished stone. Years ago grinding machines were operated by hand by the wives of the men who did the work. Now we enter the rooms where the sales talk and display of diamonds is breath taking! As you view box after box of beautiful settings, clear and in combinations of colors, we wonder how the average person can look at a diamond and tell if it is genuine or just one from the House of Woolworth. I will never know! I fell in love with a stone set in a green setting. They would not accept my S&H Green Stamps. I then asked if "I could bite the dust?" No dice!

FLOWERS.

Flowers, flowers everywhere and what colors! Parks with every blade of grass in place. Street cars, buses, small European cars of all makes jam the streets. In and out of this heavy traffic travel 50 thousand bikes. All ridden by young and old, the fair and not so fair! At the railway station, I kid you not, bikes were stacked in piles. It must be on a "first come first served" basis, as no one could move all those bikes to get to their own if it were at the bottom.