

A Beacon Story, submitted by Holly Taylor  
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The request for some part of my personal history was sparked by my mention of living in Berlin, Germany from 1946 to 1948. So, my contribution will center on the unusual places I have lived.

My parents had separately come to Washington to work in FDR's New Deal programs. My dad was an economist with a Ph.D. from Berkeley and worked in various economically focused governmental units. My mother had accompanied her boss from Ohio to DC and became the Southeast representative of the Rural Electrification Administration, organizing electrical co-operatives. Thanks to mutual friends, they met, and married in 1938. I was born on March 21, 1941, in Washington D.C. Sometime after the US entered World War II, my dad was recruited by the Army as a civilian employee/advisor with the rank of colonel—during the fighting, he was part of the Strategic Bombing Survey, determining the foci for European bombing that would most impede the Axis' efforts. He was gone most of the time, but I remember the excitement of his arrival home in full uniform from a trip.

1. My mother had a best friend from pre-Washington days who had gone to medical school, and had a six-month position in Mexico, City. So, in fall, 1944, we took the train to Mexico City to spend six months with her. I had my 4<sup>th</sup> birthday there. I have almost no direct memories of this time, but I do remember the feeling of being on the roof of our apartment with the maid as she hung up the laundry. My mother says I ran up and down the aisles of the troop train we took home, entertaining everyone.
2. After the partition of Berlin, Germany, in 1945, my father became General Lucius Clay's economic advisor for the occupation of the American sector. My mother, new baby sister and I joined him in Berlin in spring, 1946. I do have memories of the first house we lived in, especially of the first Christmas there, when the servants (and high ranking officers had servants—all Germans) decorated the big Christmas tree with real lit candles! After a year, we moved to what could only be called an estate, a large house with extensive grounds, including a kitchen garden with gooseberries. I remember the cellars, which were cheerful and fun to run in, and the gardener who collected tin foil disks. The cook made cottage cheese, and I remember what it looked like as it drained from a cheesecloth bag. At Christmas, a Kris Kringle with his attendant black elf visited the house, and I had to perform for him—sing maybe?

I also remember driving through streets of rubble, attending a performance in the Opera House when its domed roof was still gone, visiting the nursemaid's apartment complex, which had enormous multi-storied buildings and every inch of surrounding ground taken up with personal vegetable/flower garden plots. I learned enough German to talk to our employees and attended the American school for the first grade.

In 1948, when the Russians closed off access to Berlin, my mother, sister and I were flown out during the Berlin Airlift in a military plane which had brought in coal. We returned to the states as we had left, in a troop ship.

When we reached our next home, in Durham, NC, I was paraded around all the classes of my small elementary school and asked to say something in German. There was still a lot

of anti-German sentiment, and I was teased. I told my mother I would never speak that language again.

3. I was completing my first year of college in 1959 when my father (then a professor at Duke University) was asked to join a Ford Foundation funded project to advise India with its five-year economic plans. The family were to live in New Delhi for about a year in housing provided by the project. We went by ocean liner from New York City to Venice, then spent a month touring Italy (Venice, Florence, Rome, Pompeii, Naples and Capri), and took a second liner from Naples to Bombay, through the Suez Canal. I joined a day-long tour of Cairo, including a camel ride and pyramids, while the ship worked its way through the Canal. From Bombay, a train took us to New Delhi.

I need to say that I was not happy about being pulled out of school and did all the acting out I had not done in high school. While there, I could not go to college, but did spend time at a nearby hotel pool with other young people, including Indians. I went out with both American and Indian young men, which my father was not pleased about. (He always thought I was younger than reality, which didn't help.) I attended various cultural classes and tutored a 5-year old Indian neighbor in English and arithmetic so she could apply to a private school. (She needed to read and write English and Hindi and do math at what I thought was about a second grade level.) Along with my mother and sister, I visited the Taj Mahal, Jaipur, sites in New and Old Delhi and an economic development village project, which provided the residents with power from a bullock-powered windlass. I decided to major in economics because of that specific experience.

After nine months, my mother, sister and I left India, touring the southern parts on the way to Cochin, where we caught another ocean liner to Genoa, Italy. We visited friends in Paris and spent a few days in Switzerland, before catching another liner from Genoa to New York City.

There was obviously much to be learned from these experiences, and I continue to be curious about other cultures and places. I thought about joining the Peace Corps after graduation, but I needed to support myself, so went to work for the Federal Reserve Board of Governors. A second generation of civil servants!