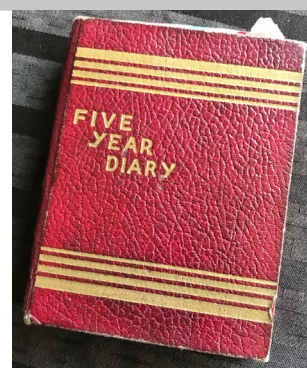


## THREE IN NEW YORK CITY, LONG DAYS, LATE NIGHTS, COCKTAILS & CONFESSION



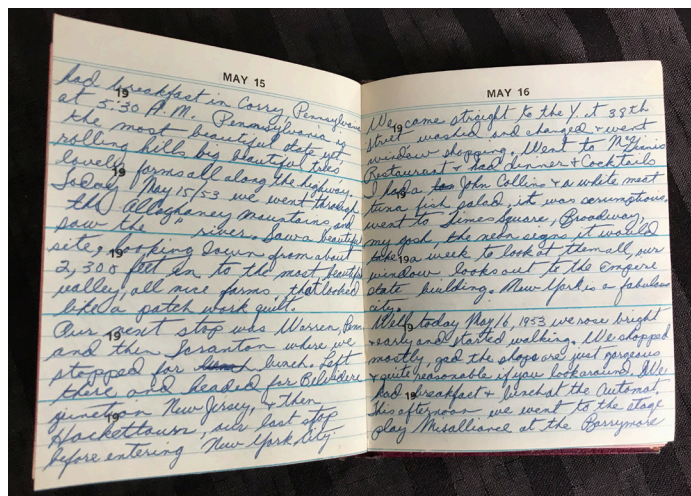
May 15, 1953

We came straight to the Y. at 38th Street, washed and changed & went window shopping. Went to McGinnis Restaurant & had dinner and cocktails. I had a John Collins & a white meat tuna fish salad, it was scrumptious. Went to Times Square, Broadway, my gosh, the neon signs — it would take a week to look at them all. We shopped mostly, god the shops are just gorgeous & quite reasonable if you look around. We had breakfast & lunch at the Automat. This afternoon we went to the stage play *Misalliance* at the Barrymore, it was a riot. Ah I almost forgot we also went and saw Saint Patricks Cathedral. It really is beautiful, so many altars. We went to confession there. Well it's 2:30 A.M. and I can't keep my eyes open anymore.

She writes more about the four days she and her friends spend in New York City before setting sail for Europe. Much more.

About window shopping on 5th Avenue — “the prices were terrific” — and a stage production of *Shane* starring the actor Alan Ladd at the Radio City Music Hall — “It was marvelous” — about visiting the 102nd floor of the Empire State Building — “boy, what a view.”

But it is her visit to Rockefeller Center — “a city within a city” — that seems to grab her attention most: how many people work there (32,000), how many visit every day (100,000), how many telephones there are (25,000), how long it took to build (nine years) and how much it cost (\$100,000,000). It covers 40 acres, she writes, and “it has every conceivable convenience right down to a hospital. A person could go there, work, shop, have dinner & go to a



show without ever going out of the centre.

“We have seen so much it is hard to remember it all to write it down,” she writes late at night in their room at the Y., although the thousands of words she commits to paper makes that statement, if not a lie, at least overly modest. She demonstrates a profound curiosity, an exacting attention to detail and a prodigious memory she will pass down to her boys, whose recitations of old phone numbers, their recollections of the minutiae of others’ lives, their remembrances of meals long passed.\*

She will also foreshadow her offspring’s love of travel, of exploring cities.

And after an eye-opening visit to the grandest city of all — “New York is just monstrous” — she and her friends will board a ship bound for Europe, and the family of strangers that awaits her.

(\* In 1971, during my family’s one and only visit together to Italy, in a restaurant in Spilimbergo, in the province of Pordenone, my brother and I ate trippa while our parents had my father’s favourite: polenta and baccala.)