



SOME WEEP, SOME LAUGH

MEMOIRS OF AN AMERICAN FAMILY IN DACCA 1960-1967

MARY FRANCES DUNHAM

~~~~~ II ~~~~~

OUR DAYS

আমাদের দিনগুলি

SOME WEEP, SOME LAUGH

MEMOIRS OF AN AMERICAN FAMILY IN DACCA 1960-1967

MARY FRANCES DUNHAM

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FRONT PAGE TITLE AND PHOTO

The title of these memoirs comes from the lyrics of a Bengali folk song:  
“This world is a market place of pleasures. Some weep, some laugh.”  
You can find the full lyrics for this song on page 281 of my book:  
*Jarigan, Muslim Epic Songs of Bangladesh.*

The title photo on the previous page was taken of my husband and me in 1960 soon after we first arrived in Dacca. We are posed in front of a Moghul style painted backdrop provided by the photography studio.

Editing and layout by Katherine Dunham

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**To all my friends with whom I shared  
the adventures of these years in  
Dacca and especially to my husband,  
Daniel C. Dunham, who made this  
time so meaningful and memorable  
with his humor and common sense.**

## SPECIAL THANKS

There are a number of people I want to especially thank for helping me to transform my eight Dacca scrapbooks of letters, photos and souvenirs into this set of printed volumes which are now much easier to share with family, friends and the public. Daisy Aziz, our long time family friend and descendant of our Dacca landlord, devoted many hours helping on a variety of tasks including scanning the original scrapbooks and being on call to transliterate Bengali words. Our friend, Ellen Lohe, spent a good portion of her summer with us patiently proof reading the first drafts and gave valuable editing comments and advice. To Fatima Terin and Adnan Morshed, I am gratefull for their appreciation of my family’s Bengali patois as they helped with the Bangla translations for this latest 2019 edition. I’m also indebted to my daughter, Katherine Dunham, for her work with the organization and layout of the contents and her perseverance in getting this project done over the years that we have worked on this together.

## HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

Like a stroll through someone’s house, feel free to browse through this book and read any section here or there that catches your eye. There is no need to read the book from one end to the other because I have organized the stories by topics rather than by chronology. By reading bits and pieces of my stories, I hope to provide a glimpse of our daily life and our practical and creative responses to the everyday life challenges we faced.

These memoirs are organized into five volumes. Volume 1 describes how we settled into our life in Dacca and how we set up our house and servants. Volume 2 includes a chapter on each member of the family and what our primary occupations were. Volume 3 talks about our Social and cultural life outside our primary activities and the many projects we did. Volume 4 describes our travels including our outings, our vacations and our home leaves. Volume 5, addresses the large-scale hazards we faced during the 1960’s including cyclones, diseases and wars.

### BENGALI WORDS

Much of my use of Bengali words throughout these texts may seem incorrect to a native Bengali speaker. However, this is intentional. I am attempting to represent the playful way Dan and I transformed the language into our own family patois. For example, to express pluralization of a noun we would simply add an ‘s’ or ‘es’ to the end of it as is done in English eventhough this is incorrect in Bengali. Hence, when we wanted to say the plural of cat we said ‘birals’ instead of ‘biral gulo,’ and for ‘things’ we said ‘jinishes’ instead of ‘jinish gulo’. Throughout the texts I have noted with an asterix whenever I use our family patois instead of the correct Bengali form. Furthermore, my transliteration of the Bengali vowel sounds may also seem atypical because I seek to approximate how the vowels sound in English. I omit indicating the nasalization of vowels when this occurs, and the retroflexive quality of certain dental consonants. The “h” following a consonant indicates a concurrent breath sound, as in “bhari” (b-hah-ree).

### PLACE NAMES & SPELLINGS

Names of some cities in India or their spelling changed after Indian Independence in 1947; e.g. Bombay to Mumbai, Madras to Chennai, Calcutta to Kolkata and Dacca to Dhaka. In the latter two examples the changes represent a more correct transliteration. Although the British “raj” included outstanding linguists, government practice was more casual. I generally have chosen to use the names and spellings that were used during the time (1960s) that we were living in Dacca.

### PEOPLE & ABBREVIATIONS

Throughout these pages you will see many names referring to friends, colleagues, and acquaintances some of which will come up again and again. To learn more about these people, who played a significant role in our Dacca life, you can refer to the Cast of Characters in the Appendix.

To facilitate the writing I have often used initials in place of our family names:

- DCD is Dan Dunham (my husband)
- MFD is Mary Frances Dunham (myself)
- KDD is Katherine Dunham (our daughter)
- CGR is Charles Raphael (my father)

### TEXTS, PHOTOS & IMAGE CREDITS

Most of the photos from the 1960s shown in these volumes are taken by my husband, Dan. The sketches sprinkled throughout the volumes were either done by Dan or me. The black ink sketches of Dacca scenes were all done by Dan for the guide book I co-wrote called Living in Dacca. The images of letters, news clippings and other memorabilia were scanned from my archives of documents collected between 1960 and 1968. I have also included in these volumes a number of texts from friends such as Pat Hill, Bob Mayers and Peggy Azbill.

~~~~~ **II** ~~~~~

OUR DAYS
আমাদের দিনগুলি

(AMADER DINGULI)

- 4. SAH'B IN THE OFFICE
- 5. MEMSAH'B AT SCHOOL
- 6. CHILD IN THE GARDEN

SOME WEEP, SOME LAUGH
MEMOIRS OF AN AMERICAN FAMILY IN DACCA 1960-1967

MARY FRANCES DUNHAM

SAH'B IN THE OFFICE

সাহেব অফিসে *
(SAH'B OFISE)

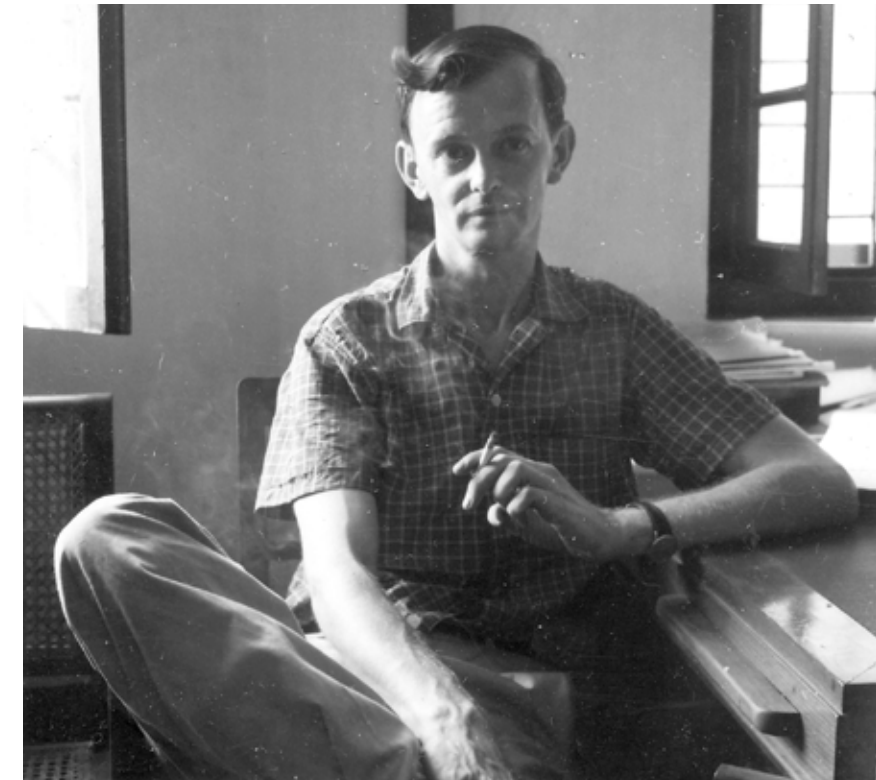
- 4.1 DAN AT BERGER
- 4.2 DAN AT EPUET



The planner, Patrick Geddes (1854-1932)
in India talking with a client



* This Bengali wording is from our personal family patois



4.1 DAN AT BERGER

DCD STARTS AT BERGER

When we arrived in Dacca, Dan was surprised to find out that he might be the only practicing architect in the country. There was one other foreign architect, a Scotsman designer working for the government, but he was more likely to be found enjoying a drink at the Dacca Club than at the office. There was also a highly respected Bengali architect, Nazrul Islam, but he was living abroad. Generally, all design work in the country was done by engineers. Hence, the field of architecture was open to Dan; a freshly graduated architect, with little experience of working in an office, let alone heading one of his own. During his first weeks, Dan was faced with the triple task of creating an architectural studio, while taking over several projects that were already underway, and starting up several new ones.

Dan had to create his architecture studio from scratch: no staff, no supplies, no equipment and no furniture. To start with, he was given a large empty room in the four story building on Jinnah Avenue where Berger had their offices. All the desks, drafting space, etc. would have to be bought or made. In time he was able to get the room furnished with whatever he could get locally: namely some drafting tables with stools and a lot of ashtrays and paper weights (both essential accessories for any Dacca office).

For much of his time working at Berger, Dan was a one man team with only a peon or two to sharpen pencils, run errands and ply him with coffee and cigarettes. Occasionally Louis Berger would send a foreign architect to help Dan out for short stints, but for the most part, Dan was running the only architecture office in the country single handedly. He must have been quite successful because by the time his 18-month contract was up there was enough business in his office to justify hiring a number of foreign architects to take over. Bob Boughey was the first to replace Dan and was later joined by the duo of Bob Mayers and John Schiff from New York.

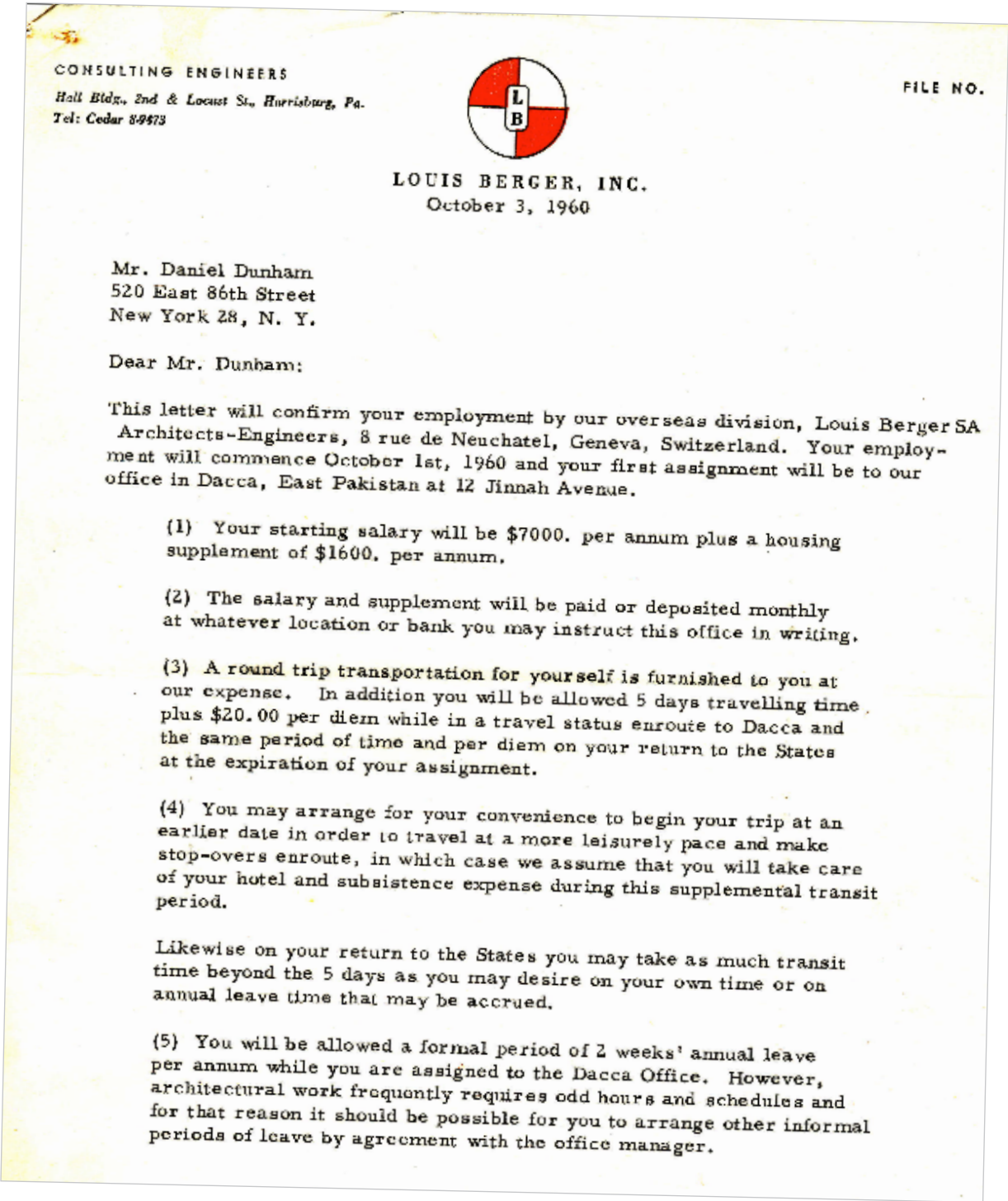


Berger Office on Jinnah Avenue, Dacca 1960



Berger brochure with Dan's design for Rajshahi University on the cover

Dan's Berger employment summarizing the conditions of his contract. His official start date was Oct. 1, 1960.



DAN’S FIRST DAYS AT WORK

“Dan can not keep up with the Pakistan time limits and tastes (extravagant) and so is still working a 7 day week ...”

“The air conditioners arrived after sitting in customs for six months, and after the two weeks it will take to instal them, things will be better.”

[MFD letter to CGR, 09/01/1961]

Dan's office has increased from two or three desks to about ten with work going from 8 AM - 10 PM (shifts), with a mimeograph machine, a printing (photo) machine, a Swiss draftsman, and a Burmese junior architect. However he can not keep up with Pakistani time limits and tastes (extravagant) and so is still working a 7 day week and is tired most of the time. Sometimes I can help a little typing, filing, cleaning (perpetual dirt) when I see what a struggle it is with the fans blowing drawings all over and the dust & dirt filtering continuously into everything. Three air conditioners arrived after sitting in customs for six months, and, after the two weeks it will take to instal them, things will be better.



The paperweights in Dacca were especially beautiful – made from blown glass with colorful flower patterns inside. I will always associate them with Dan’s office during the hot season when the fans were on full power and the paperweights were needed everywhere to keep drawings from blowing away.

CREATING A WORK SPACE

In these letters I described Dan’s challenging work conditions: the lack of skilled staff, equipment etc.

MFD letter to Hugh Jones, Fall 1961

Meanwhile, at the office, Dan struggles heroically setting up an an architects office alone and single handed in a strange country. Berger is an engineering firm with branches all over the world, including Geneva and Frankfort, and under-developed countries. The Pakistani associates in Dacca thought if they opened an architect's office they could get contracts since the government is intending to build a great deal as part of the second Five Year plan. Berger had promised to wend another architect with Dan but we soon realized he wouldn't until he felt he had enough contracts to make it worth it. Setting up an office meant hiring darftsman in a country where there was no architectural

training, hence no qualified draftsman, no proper equipment, no properly informed persons to help him get anything together. After an anxious period of trying to secure contracts from a bureaucratic government proverbially slow at decisions, and of playin at being a big business when he really felt he couldn't possibly do all he had to say he could, he finally got some good contracts, too big of course, and he has had to do the work it would take a fully staffed and well-equipped New York office to do in six months in two. He moans and gronas with all the drawings he hands in, full of mistakes he hasn't had tiem to supervise, but the Pakistani seem very pleased so far. He designe a hostel and professors quarters for a University in a far off town where a Fulbright student is said to have gone mad. He thinks he will be desing the whole new University there. Now he is working on a new railroad station for Dacca and a surrounding "city" for 5,000. The contractors dreams of what they want and what they rea actually able to pay are ludicrously far apart and Dan spends mmch time explaing how they can't afford to be lavish when there are so many essential they don't have.

Sometimes we have been discouraged by it all, but we still are enjoying it really. We have an excellent cook and his son does the cleaning, not unsupervised of course. The cook is really the only skilled labor we have found and he is devoted. Our garden even without the wall is pleasant and we eat most of our meals on the back veranda or

[MFD letter to Brearley friends 1961]

Our first two months we were put up in The hotel (Shabagh) while we looked for a house and Dan was setting up an architectural office, to be an extension to the services already offered by a Pakistani engineering firm in partenership with Berger of N.J. USA. Dan had expected starting an office to be difficult but he hadh't counted on finding himself in a seemingly modern city destitute of draftsmen, trained personel, the simplest drawing equipment, and clients with any architectural understanding beyond their wishes for prominent modern buildings costing nothing. Now he has an office which looks like it should be operating smoothly with seemingly equipped drafting desks and two shifts of seemingly qualified draftsmen, two shifts within the hours of 8 AM to 10 PM, a few machines painfully wrenched from customs, and "bearers" not only sharpening pencils neatly but learning English letters when they have nothing to do. Beneath all this exists the same struggles he has had since the beginning with explainin to the unimaginative, teaching the untrained, and correcting over and over again the supposedly trained help. Until Christmas Dan had to make his office known to the Pakistani government, the only people building, and had to advertise services only a large well-equipped N.Y. office could perform. After Christmas the government finally began making up its mind and contracts too thick and fast began to come in. In order to get the money allotted for building under the new Five Year Plan dornier stones had to be in by March . Dan designed University buildings, Colleges, Libraries in two months. Now he has the new railroad station and a surrounding colony for 5,000 to do by November. He must hand in drawings he hasn't had time to check, and accept limitations he hasn't had time to change (toilets must not face Mecca) and his only consolation is that whatever he does will be better than what has been doen already.

CREATING A WORK SPACE cont.



A typical 19th century office space in South Asia



Berger Office, Dacca 1965 (Bob Mayers in the center)

The challenges of setting up a new architectural practice
(perhaps the first in the country)

[MFD letter to Elizabeth, 04/18/1961]

"... However, Berger promised that another architect to help would be sent our shortly and he is still delaying consequently Dan is working seven days a week, long hours, to do the impossible -- set up an office where there are no skilled draftsmen, no native architects, no proper equipment, and where contract were difficult to secure as he was unknown and unqualified architects are making lower bids than Berger can compete with. But after two months of recruiting what there was in draftsmen, making his own desks and files, and getting known he now has about eight desks going twelve hours a day and contracts which a fully staffed and equipped modern office could never carry out in the deadlines set. The standards are lower here but Dan still doesn't want buildings to go up with too many mistakes incorporated. He has spent much time just training his help and much time correcting mistakes. He did a hostel and professor's quarters for a University in the back country where a Fulbright is said to have gone mad. This same university would now like him to do the rest of their new buildings on a government contract. He is currently designing a new railroad station for Dacca and surround "city" to house 5,000. ..."

DACCA BERGER OFFICE [Bob Mayers' Memoirs]

"Our office was on the second floor of a plain three story loft building on Motijheel, Dacca's main business street. The downtown had mostly low buildings but there were a few structures that went to five or six stories. Our building was approached by a few stones someone had laid in the mud to make a crude path to the entry. In the dry season the mud was replaced by billowing dust that covered everything.

When I climbed the office stairs I entered a huge bright white space with large wooden framed windows. The drafting tables were made of plywood covered with thin plastic, supported on wooden "horses". Fans hung from the concrete ceiling but had mostly been replaced by window air-conditioning units. Electrical wiring snaked along the wall surfaces. On this, my first day at the office I was looking forward to meeting my predecessor as Chief Architect, Bob Boughey who was to overlap with me for a few days and give me a thorough "orientation" on how architects functioned in East Pakistan.

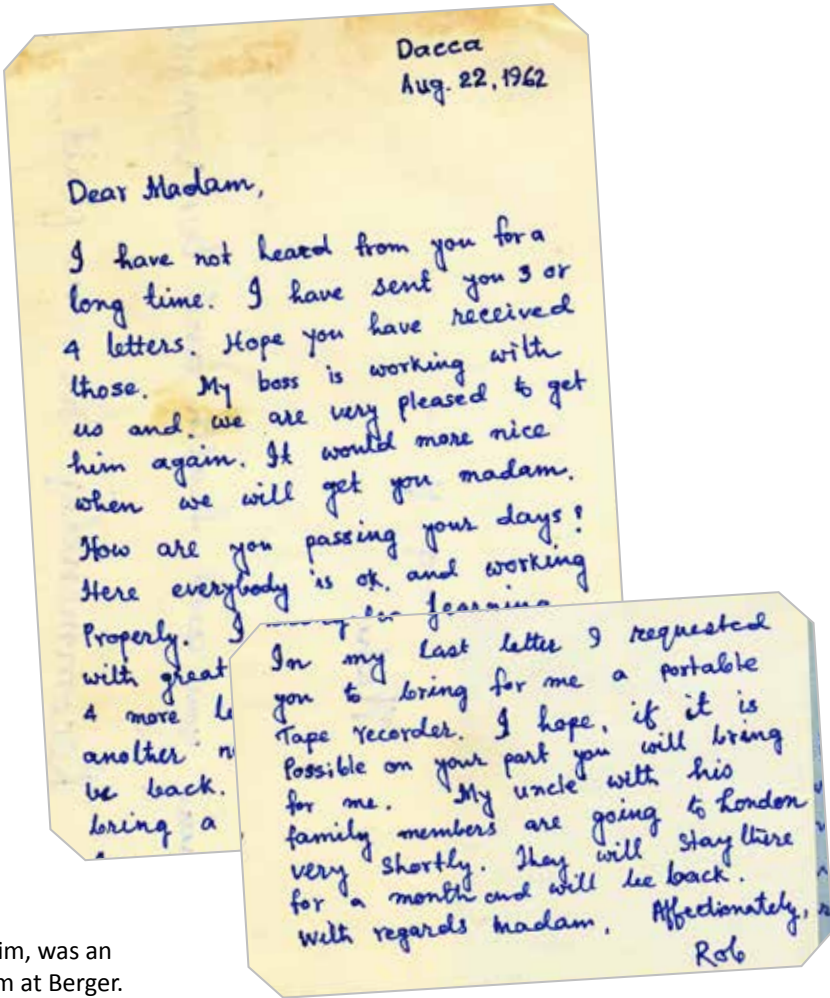
... His total store of advice consisted of these statements: "You're the boss; you can do anything you want. If the Pakistani partners object to any of your design work just say you must do it this way 'for architectonic reasons' and they'll say OK. Anything you don't understand just chalk it up to the "Mysterious East". And he left to pack his bags.

I met my male secretary, Golam Rob Khan who introduced me to the Pakistani architect assistant, to senior engineers and to our draftsmen, all of whom were dressed in clean white open-collar shirts; some were wearing jackets. These were to become our friends and I still remember many of their names and nicknames: Makbul Hussain; Farid Ahmed; "Baby", Khursid Alam ("Horseshit") and others. I learned that a couple of years ago each draftsman had had his own personal "bearer" who sat on a stool next to his drafting table and served him tea and sharpened his pencils. Now, the entire office had only a few bearers and our man was to be Shamshul Haq I noticed that the Pakistani engineers and draftsmen looked very well-fed while the bearers and sweepers were quite thin and shabbily dressed. I learned that everyone's salary included "lunch chits" which they could take to a local restaurant and exchange for a meal; that the lunches bought by engineers' chits included curried meats and rice; the bearers and sweepers got no meat. I soon realized that Muslim Pakistan had adopted and adapted the Indian caste system but that here it was not called "caste". You were born in a certain level of society and remained there for all your days, regardless.

In a short time John Schiff arrived and we settled into the office and got some really exciting projects to work on. The scale of these jobs was way beyond anything we would have encountered at this early stage of our careers back home. John and I ran the architectural office and only had to answer to Berger's Pakistani partner Makbular Rahman and his bother-in-law engineer Sanaullah Sheikh. In Dacca we designed universities, office buildings, schools, houses and market places. Our clients were private and governmental. We even had to travel across India to work on some jobs in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, West Pakistan. We came to love the freedom and responsibility, the work, the place and the people; but was it ever strange."

STAFFING THE OFFICE

Letter from Rob to me when I was on leave in New York. He asks me to bring back a tape recorder for him which was a common request among our Bengali friends.



ROB GOLAM KHAN

Golam Rob Khan, “Rob,” as we all knew him, was an outstanding Bengali member of Dan’s team at Berger. He came from a middle class family and with a “matric pass” education. I don’t know how he was hired to work in the Berger office, but he was a resourceful person who seemed to have been there since the beginning and was especially helpful to Dan in setting up the architectural studio.

Shortly after Dan joined the office, Rob started to attend a class at the Alliance Française in his free time. It wasn’t long after that he was practicing his French phrases on me. By the time we left Dacca in 1967, he was proficient enough to gain an office job at the French consulate and later at the French bank in Motijheel. Whenever he wrote to me, his letters were in French.



Rob Golam Khan



Zahiruddin & DCD



Ansanullah Sheikh

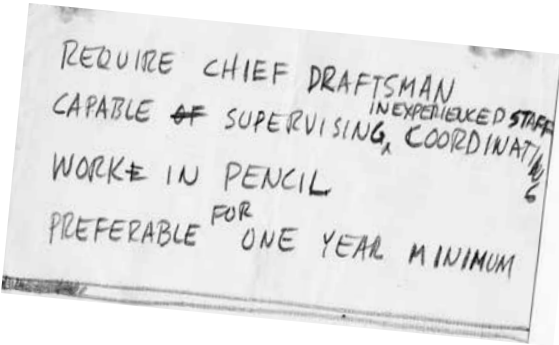


Motsudi

BOB’S INTERVIEW WITH DAN
[Bob Mayers’ Memoirs]

“One day we drove into the city to be “interviewed” by Dan Dunham, who had worked as Chief Architect for Berger in E. Pakistan years before. Dan took us to Larre’s French Restaurant for lunch. Dan asked us only one question: “In East Pakistan you’ll have 4 or 5 servants. What would you do if you were at a party to which each guest has brought his bearer to help serve and your bearer gets into an argument with another servant and comes running out of the kitchen on fire?” My answer, “I’d put him out”. Dan said, “You’ll do very well in Dacca.” End of interview. Later on, Dan ran the Ford Foundation’s work in Dacca and Calcutta and we became very friendly with him and his wife Mary Frances. Dan often met with Mother Theresa in Calcutta and said she was the toughest person he ever had to negotiate with.”

Bob was entertained by his interview with Dan when he applied for the position in Berger’s Dacca office.



BOB MAYERS & JOHN SCHIFF

Within a year moving to Dacca, Lou Berger hired two more American architects, Bob and John to join Dan. They were already design partners and had been working in New York. From his initial meetings with them both Dan appreciated that they clearly had the sense of humor and wider outlook on life that were essential to coping with the daily challenges of working in Dacca. They both lived up to his expectations and stayed with Berger in Dacca until they were compelled to make an abrupt departure with the start of the 1965 Indo-Pak War.

BOB BOUGHEY

Lou Berger hired Bob Boughey to take over Dan’s projects when Dan decided to leave the firm to teach. Among other projects Bob oversaw the completion of Dan’s concept for the Kamalapur Railway station one of Dacca’s landmarks to this day. During his time in Dacca, Bob married Farida Masjid, who later during the Bangladesh war of Liberation lobbied with me in Washington DC in support of Bangladesh’s independence.



Bob Mayers



John Schiff



Bob Boughey



Kaiser

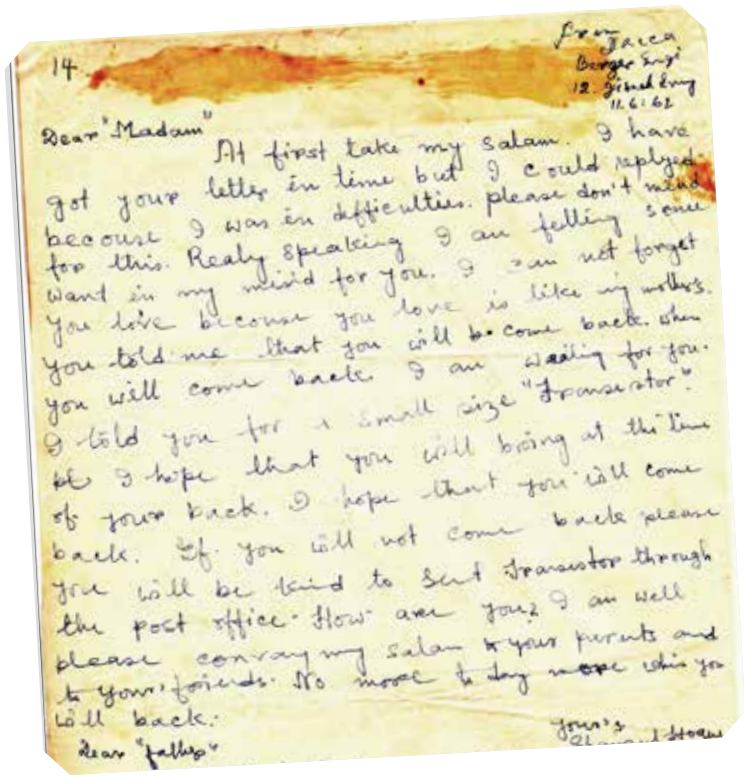
STAFFING THE OFFICE cont.

SHAMSUL HAQ
(Everyone’s favorite peon)

Dan had something that architects at home would envy. He had a peon, a clerk to address his every need. The one assigned to him, Shamsul Haq, turned out to be a godsend. He was a young man, with little or no formal education, but bright and eager to please. One of Shamsul’s main tasks was to keep Dan’s pencils sharp. This he did faithfully by using a razor blade and sand paper. Perhaps best of all, Shamsul knew how to keep Dan supplied with ‘Captain’ cigarettes and instant Nescafe coffee.

Shamsul had a special place in my heart too, because he loved to show off to me his English. He would always greet me by reciting a verse that went something like: “Forward ! Forward! And not a step backward!,” perhaps the line from a Victorian poem taught in good British fashion at his primary school.

A letter from Shamsul to me asking for a transistor radio (a common request among Bengalis of foreigners)



THE STORY OF HOW SHAMSUL HOQ GOT PROMOTE TO DRAFTSMAN FROM PEON
[Bob Mayers’ Memoirs p.1]

“The young man who served as “bearer” for our architectural office was Shamshul Haq, whose only goal was to please everybody in the office. Shamshul was a “gofer”, in charge of getting things, fixing things, serving tea and generally doing what nobody else wanted to do. He also worked part time as night watchman. His social class was below that of the draftsmen but perhaps slightly above that of the sweeper (who also cleaned the toilets). Shamshul was a very pleasant man. He spoke enough poor English for us to realize that he also had a good sense of humor. Everyone in the office liked Shamshul.

One night, John and I went to the office to pick up something. We noticed a light on in the drafting room and when we entered we found Shamshul bent over a drafting table. As soon as we entered, Shamshul jumped off the stool and began nervously arranging things in the office. We realized that Shamshul was there every night, that he actually slept in the drafting room under one of the tables.

We asked Shamshul what he was doing and in a very meek embarrassed tone he said, “Sahibs, please excuse, I try drawing.” John and I were touched by this and made out a plan which we hoped would teach Shamshul how to do a little architectural drafting. We started with his first assignment: to draw a plan, sections and elevations of a matchbox and we left.

THE STORY OF HOW SHAMSUL HOQ GOT PROMOTE TO DRAFTSMAN FROM PEON
[Bob Mayers’ Memoirs p.2]

Berger’s Dacca office was divided in two sections: Architecture and Engineering, which had little to do with each other. The Engineering department mostly had large internationally funded work: roads, dams, bridges and river projects and was paid in dollars. Our Architectural department did mostly local projects and was paid in rupees. The head of the Engineering department had left several; weeks ago and a new man was due to arrive from the States in a few days.

The day of Chief Engineer Stanley Kowalski’s arrival dawned and we were invited to a welcoming party for him. He introduced himself to me and John and said, “I’ll be re-organizing the engineering office for a large river project and will need some help from you guys. Specifically, I’ll need your best draftsman to get us properly started.” I replied, “But, we’re very busy right now and we don’t have anyone to spare.” Stanley Kowalski wouldn’t take no for an answer and said, “Well, you’ll just have to; we earn dollars and you earn rupees and which do you think is more important to the firm?”

A few days later I met Kowalski on the office steps. He said, “I’ll need that draftsman in a few days; get your best man ready for me”. I went up to the drafting room and had a chat with Shamshul Haq. His drawing lessons had progressed to the point where he could actually make a fairly decent drawing of a matchbox and I figured that would just have to satisfy the professional needs of the Chief Engineer. At first, Shamshul was terribly frightened of my proposal. “But, Sahib, other draftsmen not understand; Shamshul is bearer, not draftsman; not same thing”. “Shamshul”, I explained, “There is a big shortage of draftsmen in Dacca now; none available to hire; Mr. Kowalski needs you; not to worry. Schiff Sahib and I will take care of everything”.

John and I were afraid the draftsmen would object on the grounds of social class but Shamshul was their favorite and when we explained the conspiracy to them they thought it was quite risky but very humorous and agreed to go along with our plan. We cleared off a drafting table and installed Shamshul Haq at it. Days passed as Shamshul sat at the table moving the pencil around, drawing endless versions of his matchbox. The draftsmen kept up their work but were frequently seen giggling and whispering with each other.

Monday morning arrived and with it Mr Stanley Kowalski, Chief Engineer burst into our office, announcing, “Where is he? I need your top draftsman now.” I pleaded, “But, Stan, we’re up against a deadline and can’t spare him right now.” He replied, “Sorry, about that but there’s a real crunch on this river project and I cleared it with the home office.” So, reluctantly we had to let Shamshul go up to Engineering. As he got off his stool and collected his T-square, triangles and pencils, I noticed the draftsmen bent over their tables, hiding their faces in their hands. Stanley Kowalski said to Shamshul, “Let’s go,” and turning to me added, “I’ll need two more of your guys in a week or two” and then walked out the door with our prize worker. ... More days passed as we waited for Kowalski to come down to pick up the other draftsmen. But he didn’t show. Then, a week or two later we met him at another lawn party. “Stanley”, I said, “When are you coming to get the other draftsmen?” “Are you kidding”, he replied, “If that’s your BEST draftsman thank you very much but I’ll train my own”...

THE CHALLENGES OF THE JOB

LACK OF SUPPLIES

There was a government ban on all imported goods, from refrigerators down to radios and pencil sharpeners. So Dan soon found he had to rely on a peon’s labor as a substitute for unavailable equipment. Instead of a pencil sharpener, a peon would sharpen the pencil with a razor blade. Making copies of plans required a peon to make trips back and forth to the cyclostyle shop (usually accompanied by Dan to make sure the prints weren’t upside down or reversed). Without an intercom system, peons ran messages back and forth whenever Dan needed to communicate with Berger staff on other floors.

Dan learned where to find the best paper available and to make do with the local drafting tools that the engineers used. He often asked if a scale, or T-square was “paowa jai?” (available) at the market. Instead of using staplers, Dan learned to use the local system of holding papers together with straight pins. Even quality paper was unavailable locally until the dam at Karnaphuli was completed two years later and a paper mill installed. It was no wonder why Dan worked so many long hours at the office, given the harsh project deadlines and his severe lack of resources and help.

INTERRUPTIONS FOR PRAYER

One day, early on in Dan’s office life, he was surprised when Shamsul, his peon, vanished just when Dan needed a sharp pencil, but Shamsul was not far off. He was saying his prayers on his small prayer rug beside Dan’s desk. Friday mornings, Dan learned to expect most of the office staff to be out because that was their time for Jummah, the special Friday Prayer at a mosque. In time, Dan became accustomed to these religious interruptions as part of the general work routine.



Dan’s office peons kept him supplied with local cigarettes.

DIFFICULTIES OF WORK TRAVEL

Traveling to work sites around East Pakistan always proved a challenge and often an adventure because of the constantly changing deltaic geography of the country. The entire region of East Bengal is dominated by the Ganges delta as it spreads out into the Bay of Bengal. Thus the country is riddled with an infinite number of ever-changing tributaries, crisscrossing its landscape. The numerous ferry crossings combined with the bad conditions of the roadway always made travel difficult.

Train travel in general was arduous and time consuming. Bridges were few because concrete was expensive and rivers kept changing course. Often ferries were used instead of bridges to traverse the rivers. This meant that at every river crossing, train passengers would be disembarked and ferried to the other side to board another train for continuing on. Even cars and trucks would be ferried on jerry-rigged floating platforms held up precariously on steel barrels.

The first time Dan went to Rajshahi for his University project was a harrowing experience by sea plane. It was during our first week in the country, in the height of monsoon season. The river was high and turbulent causing Dan’s pilot a hairy landing in the rapid river currents. The pilot had trouble stabilizing the plane while Dan disembarked with his fragile architecture model in hand. In spite of the risks of that first trip, Dan still preferred traveling to Rajshahi by plane (rather than by road or rail) as the faster more reliable option.

The closest airport to Rajshahi was a former military air base at Ishurdi, consisting of a one room office shack next to a runway. The runway was made of metal strips, a vestige of its days as a World War II landing field for the Indian air force warding off Japanese invasions from Burma. From Ishurdi, Dan and the other passengers would still have another half day’s journey by train to Rajshahi. Getting to the train from the plane often proved an adventure in itself, as there was no actual train station near the airport. Passengers would have to make their way through paddy fields to the rail line where they would wave down the train to stop.



Dan boarding the plane at Ishurdi

DRAWING THE SNAKE ON THE BOX

Typically Dan would make the trip to Rajshahi with an architectural model and rolls of drawings. The first time he traveled by plane, an inspector damaged his model when he insisted on opening the box it was carried in. Ever since that experience, Dan would sketch a picture of a snake on the box cover, which worked successfully to prevent curious inspectors from looking inside.



A typical propeller airplane at Ishurdi runway



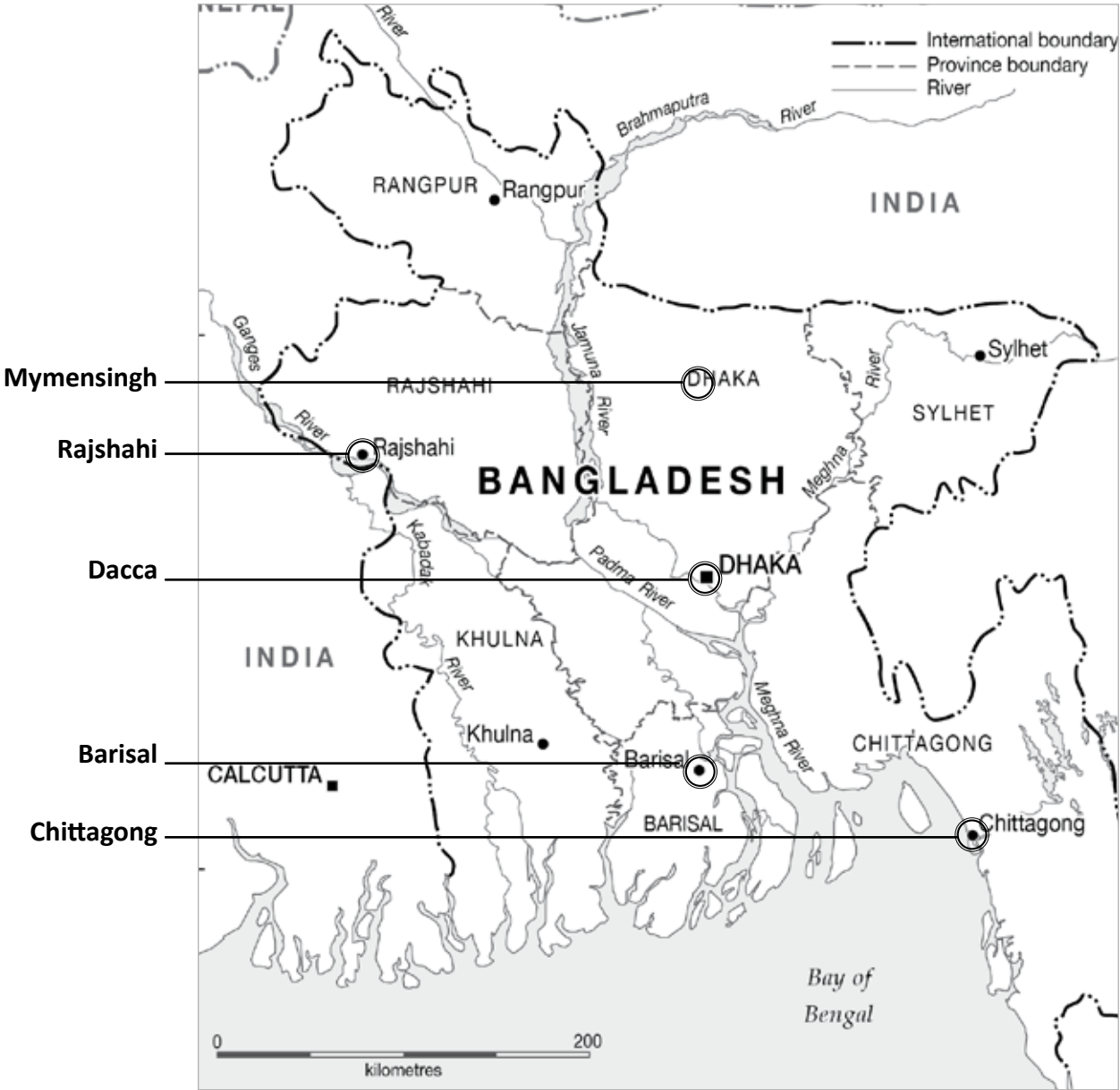
THE STORY OF THE ILL-FITTING PANTS

Once during one of my father’s visits, I accidentally packed a pair of my father’s pants in Dan’s suitcase when he was getting ready for a work trip to Rajshahi. My father was short and stout and Dan was tall and thin, so the mistake must have been quite obvious when Dan put the pants on for his journey home. Nevertheless, having no other clean pants to wear and time being short, Dan had no choice but to wear the ill-fitting pants. Unfortunately, Dan’s train was late. He had to make a mad dash from the Ishurdi train stop to catch his plane as he saw it preparing for take off. He must have made quite a spectacle holding my father’s loose pants up with one hand while desperately waving his brief case with the other to catch the pilot’s attention.

DAN’S BERGER PROJECTS

The time that Dan worked at Berger was hectic and all-consuming. Under the best of conditions, any one of his large-scale projects would have been enough to occupy a full team of designers, yet Dan faced these challenges almost single handedly working around the clock.

During that year he worked on a number of government projects, which were part of a political agenda to bring equal attention to both “wings” of Pakistan. So, if West Pakistan got a new university then East Pakistan would get one too. And if West Pakistan got a new capital, Islamabad, designed by the Greek architect, Doxiades, then East Pakistan would get a new one too, called “The Second Capital,” and to be designed by the American architect, Louis Kahn. Three of the projects that Dan inherited were for new universities and academic institutions: Rajshahi University master plan and buildings, Mymensingh Agricultural College buildings, and a Barisal Medical College building.



Locations of Dan’s Berger projects

DANIEL C. DUNHAM
Bengal Work
1960 - 1971

Chief Architect, Berger Engineers Ltd.
Dacca, East Pakistan

1960 - 1961 - 1962

The buildings illustrated in this section were designed in the office I established for a private American architectural-engineering firm in cooperation with a local engineering company. Throughout the period I was assisted by locally trained engineers, in the final year by expatriot draftsmen and an architectural assistant.

Construction was for the most part done by government executing agencies. Architectural and engineering supervision were provided by the office staff. Major projects are listed below.

Rajshahi University
Master Plan
Library
Student Center
Faculty and Student Housing
Hospital

Mymensingh University
Master Plan
Vice-Chancellor's House
Guest House
Faculty and Student Housing

East Bengal Railways
Railway Office Building
Layout for Railway Workers Colony
Railway Station

Three Colleges
Master Plans
Adim. and Classroom Buildings
Faculty and Student Housing

Cooperative Department
Cooperative Bank Building

Dan’s Dacca projects as listed in his port folio

During the early 1960's the government of Pakistan embarked on an ambitious program of university building. Four new campuses were created in widely separated regions of the province.

Large rural sites were chosen and space and building standards laid down by the education department. In spite of these regulations the individual vice-chancellors had considerable authority over the construction of their institutions. They in turn gave considerable leeway to the architects who were chosen to design them.

Housing was required for 2500 students on each campus as well as for the entire faculty, staff and their dependents. They were housed in adjacent but strictly segregated areas, in quarters whose size and cost was determined by the Govt.

The projects illustrated in this volume are in rough chronological order. They are divided into sections corresponding to employers. Each section is prefaced by a general note. Short descriptions of the projects are included.

DAN’S BERGER PROJECTS cont.

MYMENSINGH AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE



College Dormitories
Before Dan started work on the Mymensingh project, there were a number of buildings already standing designed by the prestigious American architect, Tigerman, including a dormitory which displayed handsome exposed brick façades rather than the usual white-washed stucco. Dan’s job was to design additional buildings for the college including a dormitory, a house for the Vice Chancellor, faculty housing and a guest house.



The Vice-Chancellor’s House
Designing a house for the Vice-Chancellor (VC) of the college proved a trying experience for Dan. The VC kept demanding “something a little larger” at each meeting. Gradually, Dan met his demands concerning size and the final building proved comfortable and elegant. Dan situated the building to take advantage of the views to the large river that flowed nearby. Years later in 2003, when I returned to Bangladesh to photograph Dan’s buildings, I was pleased to hear from the current VC how much he enjoyed and appreciated the house.



The Guest House
Instead of lining up guest rooms along a veranda as was traditionally done in guest houses in that area, Dan used a courtyard format instead. He grouped the bedrooms around an open atrium with a pool in the middle, Pompeian style. He also introduced a unique roof design, which allowed each room to catch the prevailing breezes. His design for the kitchen was also unique. Instead of placing it apart from the house, as was usually done (so as to keep the smoke and cooking smells away from the house), he placed it adjacent to the dining room where it was most convenient. He designed a special roof for the kitchen that exhausted the smoke and smells upward and out, so that they didn’t drift into the house.



“Doesn’t the sun set in the east?”
One day, the Berger office received a frantic telegram from the contractor in charge of the building of a dormitory designed by Dan during his first week in the country. The contractor intimated that if the building continued in its construction, it would soon enter the river that flowed along one edge of the college land. Dan was dispatched by car for the long day’s drive to Mymensingh, carrying copies of the design drawings. When he reached the construction site and compared what was built to what was on paper, he realized that the contractor had been referring to the drawings upside down! West was east and north was south. No wonder the building was heading into the river. Construction was halted and Dan had to improvise a redesign on the spot to solve the problem. Later on, when traveling in India, Dan and I were pleased to find out that a similar mistake was made when the Taj Hotel was constructed in Bombay. Hence, to this day, the windows intended to face the ocean are on the opposite side of the hotel where they face the city instead.



Unique roof design by DCD



Mess hall kitchen



VC house entrance



VC house verandah



DAN'S BERGER PROJECTS cont.

RAJSHAHI UNIVERISTY



University Main Library

Master Plan & Buildings
One of Dan's first assignments was to re-design the master plan for Rajshahi University. It was to be one of the largest universities for East Pakistan. In addition to the over all planning, he was also put in charge of the design of a number of significant buildings, including the university library, medical center, canteen and a dormitory.



BARISAL COLLEGE



KAMALAPUR RAILWAY STATION, DACCA



Dan's last project at Berger
Perhaps Dan's favorite project was his design for the Dacca Kamalapur Railway Station. He continued to advise on this project even after he left Berger's office. Because the design was still on-going, he wanted to help see it through. Like so many of his other projects at Berger, he introduced a new concept for the design of the station, one that was based on conditions and needs rather than on referring to past railway station designs. So, instead of the usual enclosed structure, such as Victoria Station in Bombay, or Calcutta's Howrah Station, he created a completely open design with no exterior walls. His concept was to create a vast canopied structure held up by a grid of tall columns. This type of construction using thin concrete shells was a technique that Dan had specialized in while studying architecture at Harvard. The railway station was an ideal project on which to introduce this technique to Dacca. The design worked very well because it allowed for maximum natural ventilation to keep the station area cool during the hottest months, while also providing protection from the heavy rains during the monsoon season. All the offices and ticketing functions were accommodated in two-story enclosed spaces that were placed like boxes freely among the columns. Dan enjoyed bragging that the Kamalapur station was one of the largest railway stations in Asia. If one counted the length of its long platforms and adjoining railway staff quarters, the station structures stretched out over a mile.



SANGSHAD BHABAN, DACCA



Dan's frustrations with the design of the Mymensingh VC's house were not new, as can be seen in this cartoon from 100 years earlier.

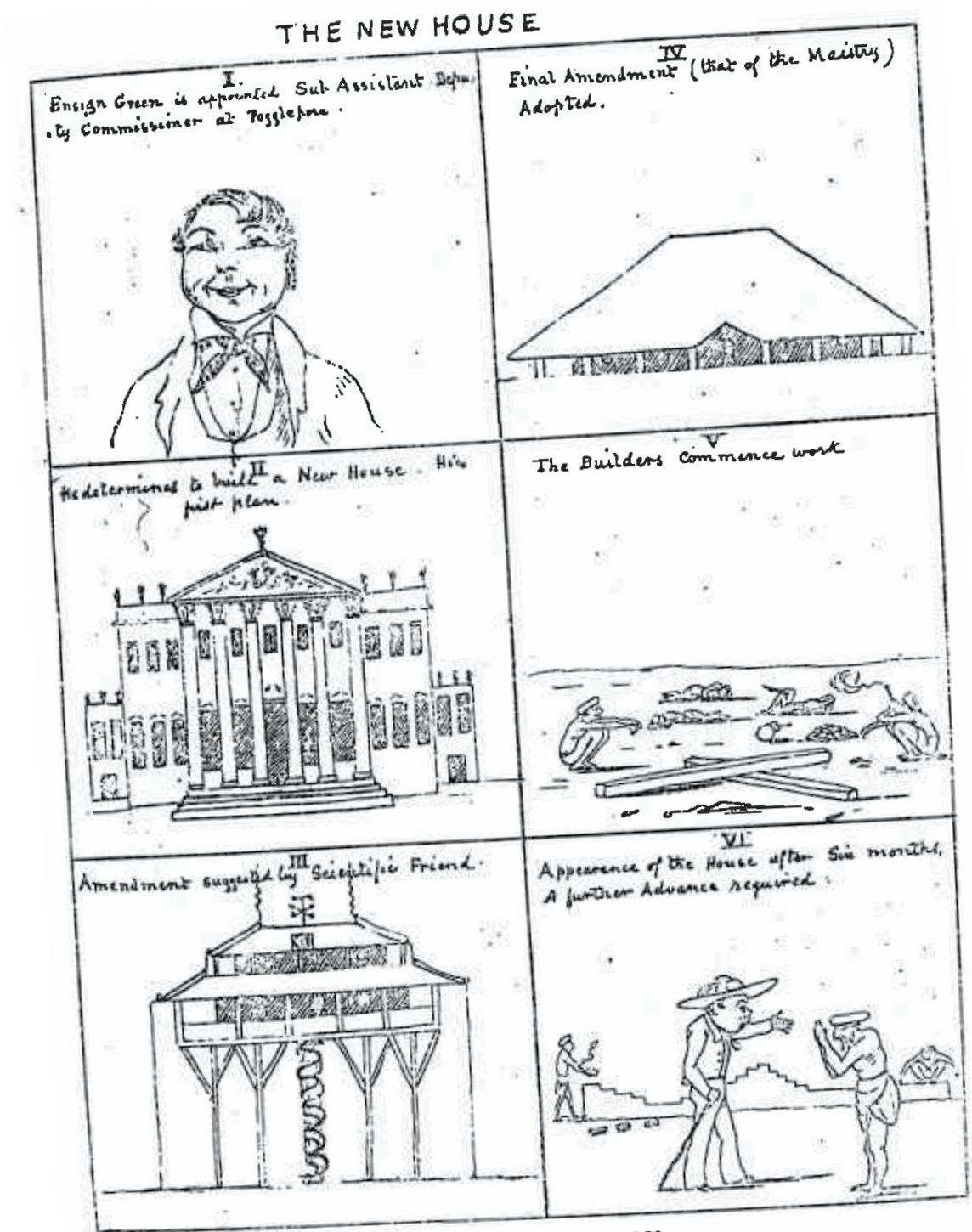
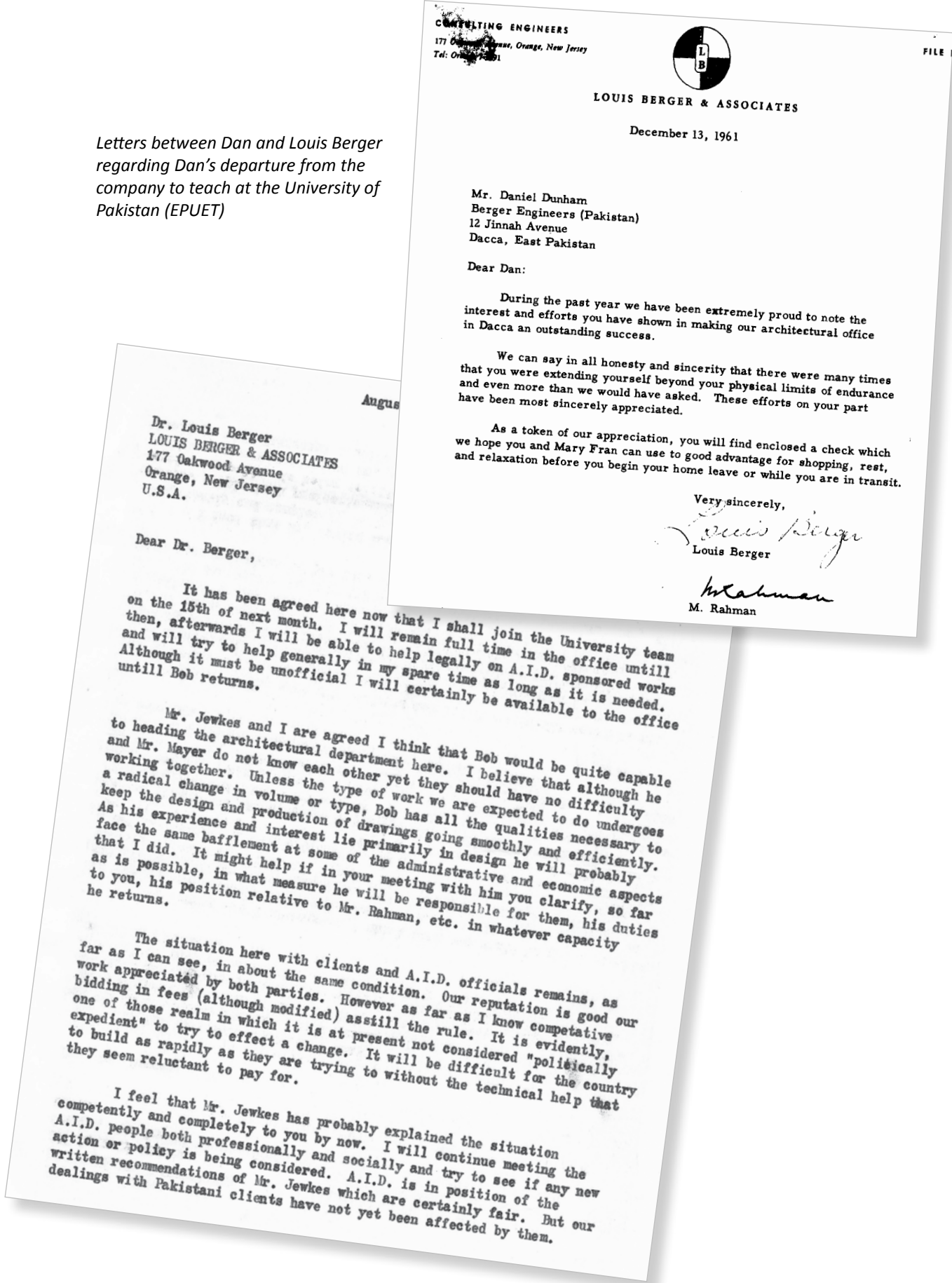


Figure 1.7 The bungalow as a political and cultural product, 1853
Apart from the joke and indifferent quality of reproduction, this cartoon also demonstrates the cultural division of labour responsible for the production of the Anglo-Indian bungalow. The patron (Ensign Green) is the representative of European colonialism whose own idea of a dwelling is determined by models of a land-owning aristocracy in an emergent industrial-capitalist state. Alternative models of the 'scientific friend' embody the concern with health

DAN'S DEPARTURE FROM BERGER

Letters between Dan and Louis Berger regarding Dan's departure from the company to teach at the University of Pakistan (EPUET)



DAN’S DEPARTURE FROM BERGER cont.

CONSULTING ENGINEERS
Oakwood Avenue, Orange, New Jersey
Orange 7-3691



LOUIS BERGER & ASSOCIATES

December 14, 1962

Dear Mary Frances and Dan:

Thank you most sincerely for your kindness to me during my recent stay in Dacca. I was deeply grateful for the pleasure of having lunch with you and only regret that the "command performance" at WAPDA was impossible for me to join you at the time when your luncheon was served and gave me so little time to visit with both of you as I would have liked to do during my stay.

I regret, as I know you do, that Mrs. Josephson was unable to adapt herself to life in Dacca, but I assure you that this is one of the calculated risks and I was not as shaken as I'm afraid Mary Frances was with the results.

I am sure you are both aware of the deep affection and regard I have for you and for your wonderful devotion to our company, and what we are trying to achieve. I hope that you will both be happy during the coming year in your work at the University, and I am sure that you know that if the day comes when you want to come back in the fold, the welcome mat is always ready for you either in Dacca, or in any of the other offices where our services can be utilized.

May I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and I look forward with great anticipation to the pleasure of visiting with you again next Spring as I have enjoyed visiting with you in my previous stays in Dacca.

Sincerely,

Louis Berger

Dr. Louis Berger
August 25, 1962

Page - 2

I will prepare this weekend a list of materials that this office will need this year. My wife will probably be able to bring them as part of her baggage if you can have one of your staff collect them. She should be leaving about the second week in September. Bob can bring them if you fail to make contact with her. If there is anything else she can bring I am sure she will be willing to include it in her luggage.

While teaching here I will be interested in the progress of this office and will I hope always see you on your trips through Dacca. I want to tell you again how much I have enjoyed knowing you and working for your organization. Your personal generosity, fairness and enthusiasm have made a lasting impression on Mary Frances and myself. I hope we will continue to be in touch in the future. I will write to Mr. Peters at the end of this month and include information to the dates of actual service here.

I have done for me in the past.

Yours very truly,

Daniel C. Dunham

to meet
Dr. Louis Berger
and
Mr. & Mrs. E. O. Larson

Mr. & Mrs. Mahbubul Rahman
request the pleasure of the company of
Mr. & Mrs. D. C. Dunham
at a cocktail and dinner at Hotel Shallogh
on January 22, 1962 at 7 p. m.

R. S. V. P.
(Regrets only)
Phone : 6985

INFORMAL



4.2 DAN AT EPUET

STARTING AN ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL



Original architecture school before Vrooman designed the new building

DAN JOINS TEXAS A&M TEAM TO FOUND BANGLADESH’S FIRST ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL

During the summer of 1962, Dan accepted a job to join a team of four architecture professors from Texas A&M to start the first architecture school for East Pakistan. They were on a five year contract with USAID to establish what was to be called The Faculty of Architecture at the East Pakistan University of Engineering and Technology (EPUET). Having seen how much the country needed architects, it probably didn’t take much to convince Dan to be a part of this pioneering effort to establish an architecture program. Over the next six years, Dan worked closely with the other teachers to set up a curriculum and get the school off the ground. Although they worked very hard as a team, their work schedule was much better than what he had experienced running his architecture office at Berger. At Berger, he worked seven days a week, often into the late nights to meet crazy deadlines, whereas at EPUET the five-day work week was the norm.

By 1967, when their contracts were up, the school was thriving and ready to run independently without USAID support. Fifty years later when I was invited back in 2012 to participate in the anniversary celebrations, I was pleased to see how much the school had grown in size and reputation. I was genuinely impressed by the intelligence of the students I met and the quality of work I saw displayed.



THE 5 FOUNDING TEACHERS

Of the five American architecture professors hired to start the architecture school, Dan was the only one who was brought on locally. Although he may not have had prior experience teaching, he was an obvious candidate for the job because of his knowledge of the country, the people, the culture, and the existing design and construction practices. The other four teachers included Dick Vrooman as director, Jack Yardley, James Walden, and Sam Lanford.



Jack Yardley & Dan teaching



Jim Walden teaching



Dick Vrooman at his desk



Sam Lanford teaching

TEACHING STAFF

teachers & foreign advisors under Texas A & M Pakistan U. S. A. I. D. Program :

Richard E. Vrooman
A. I. A., I. A. P., B. A., B. Arch., M. Arch.
Dean, Faculty of Architecture & Planning
E. P. U. E. T.
(Professor of Architecture, Texas A & M University, on deputation)

James C. Walden, Jr.
A. I. A., I. A. P., B. Arch.
(Asst. Prof. of Architecture, Texas A & M University, on deputation)

Daniel C. Dunham
I. A. P., B. Sc., M. Arch.
(formerly Chief Architect, Berger Engineers/Pakistan)

Samuel T. Lanford
I. A. P., B. Arch., M. Arch.
(Prof. of Architecture, Texas A & M University, on deputation)

teachers-in-training for Architecture, U. S. A. I. D. Participant Program :

at School of Architecture, Texas A & M University

Ajmal Hayat Ahmad, B. Sc., Engrg.
Ahsanur Rahman, B. Sc., Engrg.
Kh. Shahidur Rab

at School of Architecture, University of Florida

Shah Alam Zahiruddin, B. Sc., Engrg.
Meer Mobashsher Ali, B. Sc., Engrg.
Md. Abdul Muktadir, B. Sc., Engrg.

at School of Architecture Harvard University

K. A. F. Zahedul Hasan, B. Sc., Engrg.

teachers in training for Planning under foreign scholarships :

East-West Center (U. of Hawaii)
Sponsorship (arranged by Texas A & M).

at Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Qazi M. A. Akef, B. A. (Hons.), M. A.

at University of Oklahoma

Md. Golam Rahman, B. A., M. A.

Govt. of Pakistan Scholarship (U. K.) :
at University of Liverpool
Rahmatullah, B. Sc., Engrg.

Part-time teachers :
in Architecture

Muzharul Islam
I. A. P., B. Sc., B. E., B. Arch., M. Arch.

in Basic Design

(Mrs.) Joan C. Walden
B. A. (Art Ed.)

in History of Art :
(Miss) Mary K. Donaldson
B. A., M. A., Fulbright Lecturer
(Honorary Teacher)

in Art :
Aminul Islam, Certif. in Art.
Rashid Hossain Choudhury
Certificate in Art.
Govt. College of Art.
Scholarship, Govt. of Spain 1956-57
Scholarship, Govt. of France 1960-64

in Humanities, Sciences and Engineering subjects : about 15 various teachers

visiting Lecturers and Advisors :

Louis I. Kahn, F. A. I. A.
Designer of Pakistan's Second Capital, Dacca

Minoo P. Mistri, I. A. P.
President, Institute of Architects, Pakistan

Taj-ud-Din M. Bhamani, I. A. P.
Hon. Secretary, Institute of Architects, Pakistan

Paul Rudolph
Chairman
School of Art & Architecture
Yale, Univ.
U. S. A.

THE FIRST STUDENTS

ACCEPTING THE FIRST STUDENTS

While establishing the curricular and administrative routines, Dan and the other teachers were faced with the challenge of selecting candidates from the many applicants for the first year. Without any pre-existing models to refer to, they formulated their own test questions to determine which applicants might be best suited for a design career. They devised a new kind of exam. Instead of the typical format that tested for memorized answers, they created open-ended questions to determine creative potential and abilities. James Walden remembers that the last question on the exam “asked candidates to fold a blank piece of paper into an interesting shape and leave it on their desk.”



Dan’s article in the daily Dacca newspaper, 1966

Some Problems Of Architecture In Dacca

It must be obvious, even to our visitors, how much building activity is going on in the city of Dacca currently as well as throughout the Province. For building can be considered a prerequisite of development. Many of the national objectives entail both planning and without professional designers' talents and it hard to reach their development goals. Designers' talents are needed for many branches of development. As an example let us assume that educators wish to build or enlarge a school system, or that a commission wishes to establish an industry or industrial community. Although the primary object of these officials is to increase education or production before they start, some physical structure is usually necessary whether a building or a layout of space on the ground. Many times the future success of a project depends on the skill with which these designs are made. It has been found that growth without plans often entails a large amount of waste, waste of money and materials, land and time. Developing countries can seldom really afford to waste any one of these.

To understand the problems of architecture in the developing countries...

By D. C. DUNHAM
Prof. of Architecture East
University of Engi-

SHAH ALAM ZAHIRUDDIN

Dan was impressed by Zahiruddin when he first met him as a young engineer at Berger’s office. He consequently helped Zahiruddin get a USAID scholarship to study architecture in Florida. Six years later, Zahiruddin was back in Dacca as one of Dan’s teaching colleagues at EPUET.



When Zahiruddin and the other selected students completed their Texas A&M architecture scholarships in the USA, they came back to Dacca to join the architecture teaching faculty with Dan and the other foreign teachers.



[MFD letter to Aunt Anna, 12/02/1966]

Dan is not supposed to be doing as much actual teaching as last year since the Pakistani boys who were sent to Texas A&M for five years study have returned to teach. However, they need alot of supervision and there is still a lot of planning and curriculum writing to get the school ready for complete take over by Pakistanis. Texas will stay for two more years gradually dropping US staff. It is quite thrilling to have watched the beginning of the project and to have been here long enough to see it grow and succeed to the point it has. One of the boys who went to Florida University was appointed dean. He had worked in Dan's old office before and we had helped him get his scholarship so we are particularly thrilled to see him in this position and he is doing very well. Other friends in other institutions (one a musician , one an education student) have also returned this year and are in good positions and still have a bit of enthusiasm for the country. (I guess you can imagine what usually happens to students from here who go to the States. Either they stay or they are misfits here.)



Dan giving Wajeda a desk-crit

THE FIRST WOMEN STUDENTS

WAJEDA J. RAB, NAJMA HABIB & SHAHEEN CHOWDHURY (DOLLY)

What was perhaps most remarkable about the first batch of students to be accepted was the inclusion of three young women. In those days, it was rare for women, especially in a Muslim culture, to attend any Bengali academic institution beyond 'matric'. Women were expected to marry young and not enter the work force. Few jobs were available to women who wanted to work. That these three women numbered among the first class of 22 architecture graduates was impressive and reflects their courage and the unusual support they must have received from their families, not to mention the vision of the founding teachers to open up the school to women in the first place.



Najma, Dolly and Wajeda



EPUET women students at Wajeda's wedding



Najma & Dolly talking to me and Katherine

DAN GETS A DRIVER

RUPLAL DURIA - Dan's favorite driver

Ruplal was Dan's favorite driver from the USAID choices. Ruplal was a good driver and spoke more English than the others. When we left Dacca we helped Ruplal and his family emigrate to the USA and to this day they have been a part of our lives.

*In this letter I describe how Dan and I rebelled against the foreigner privileges that came with Dan's US government contract to teach at EPUET.
[MFD letter to Stephen, 05/25/1963]*

I assume Daddy has not told you where or why we are here. We are in our same house which we did so much work on when we first took it. Dan has changed jobs, however, although the architectural office he set up still exists and is flourishing. Before we went on home leave he was offered a teaching job in the new architectural school, part of an Engineering and Technological University here, also new. His department is sponsored and staffed by the Texas Agricultural and Mechanical University project crew in Pakistan under AID (formerly called ICA), which all means that we have become "official" Americans with all the privileges of U.S. Gov. employees, such as the commissary store where I can buy all the canned goods I used to buy at the local "luxury" shops and all kinds of American frozen and boxed goodies, a furnished house in the American ghetto (which we refused), A.P.O. mail services, far less difficulty with customs, and a certain aura of privilege about all those who can give the Consulate for their address. Having lived for two years quite happily without all this yet these were not the prime attractions and in fact we didn't look forward to the social obligations which belonging to the Texas group involves, but Dan wanted to teach and I enjoy not having him under the terrific pressure and responsibility he had the past two years. Berger considers Dan on leave of absence and will be glad to have him back. The new contract is a two year one which means he will be deciding what to do again in about another year.



Most of the other people in the Texas group are on agricultural projects and since AID has cut down on all other projects in order to concentrate on agriculture, they will all be living in Mymensingh. There are four others in architecture at Dan's university, or were, until the city planner left because his department was to be cut out. There are 30 students in the whole architecture school and six in Dan's class which is second year. Since AID plans to discontinue its project with this school as soon as this first year gets their degrees, they found it would be cheaper to send the seven from the first year to America for a year than to teach them here three more years.

We had to fight to stay in our old house which was considered under-privileged by the US authorities but Dan pointed out that the contract said a house "would be provided" but not that we should have to take that house, and as our rent is comparatively cheap he said he would be glad to pay it for the privilege of staying in it. Their way out of the dilemma was to let us stay and give us a living allowance equal to the expenses of an average American family living here. This is quite a sum for us and we have been able to do a lot of further modelling, including replumbing for pipes to carry hot water from a solar heater of Dan's design (not yet made), rewiring attractively behind angle irons, according to Dan's plan, so they are not seen and yet are not hidden inside the walls where all kinds of things happen to them, the kitchen made lighter and bigger by the addition of windows and a back door (the

SETTING UP A CURRICULUM

There being no precedents for a design school in the country, Dan with the other teachers worked hard to define what would be the core curriculum for educating the first class of architecture students. After much discussion the teachers decided to build a program that would expose the students to a global field of architecture in addition to developing a base of inspiration from their own culture and historic traditions. To clearly distinguish the architecture school from the engineering program that was already in place, they believed the students should also have an introduction to humanities and art. To this end, Dan pulled in outside people whenever he could, including myself as well as a number of other foreign scholars to help round out the curriculum with courses in art history and music appreciation.

EPUET Curriculum Brochure 1964

CURRICULUM for Bachelor of Architecture degree :

5 years

FIRST YEAR :

Basic Design
Architectural Graphics
English Composition & Literature
Bengali (or Urdu) Literature
Logic
Carpentry & Metal Work
World History
Mathematics & Structural Principles

SECOND YEAR :

Design II
Graphic Art
Art & Civilization
Basic Planning
Building Materials
Physics for Architects
Geography & Climatology

THIRD YEAR :

Design III
Sculpture
Art & Music Appreciation
History of Architecture
Finish Materials & Working Drawings
Structural Design
Plane Surveying
Sociology
Psychology
Government

FOURTH YEAR :

Design IV
History of Architecture
Details & Specifications
Cost Estimating
Landscape Design
Physical Planning
Structural Design
Mechanical & Electrical Equipment

FIFTH YEAR :

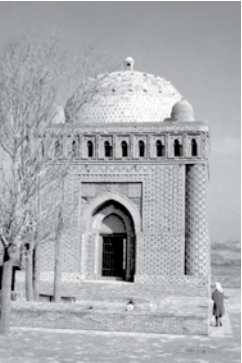
Design V
Graphic Reproduction
Art Expression
Professional Practice
Philosophy
Speaking
Structural Systems
Economics & Accounting

practice : office & field work during vacations

travel : architectural tour during fifth year



Ajanta caves



Samarkand tomb

ARCHITECTURE HISTORY FROM DAN

As well as basic lessons in design, Dan gave courses on Islamic architecture illustrated with his own collection of slides. To document the evolution of Islamic architecture, he made an epic pilgrimage to see historic sites in Samarkand, Afghanistan, Pakistan and North India. Dan also made a point of exposing the students to the unique architectural heritage of Bengal by taking them on field trips to see ancient Buddhist, Hindu and Moslem monuments. (More on this in Chapter 12).



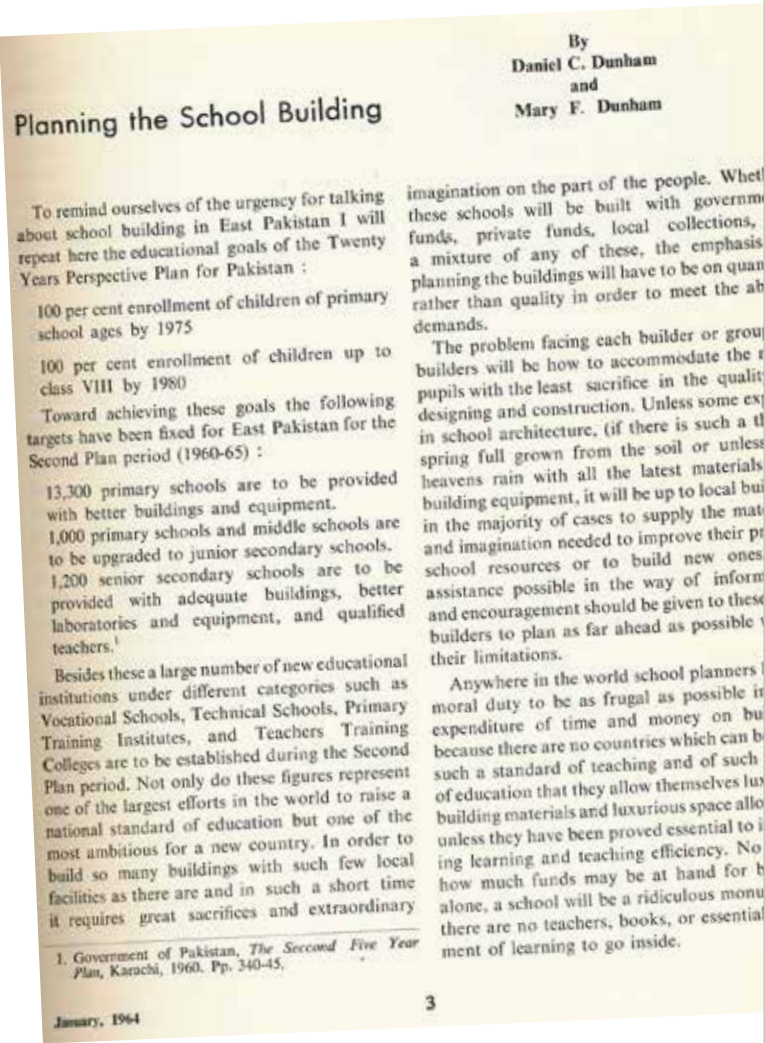
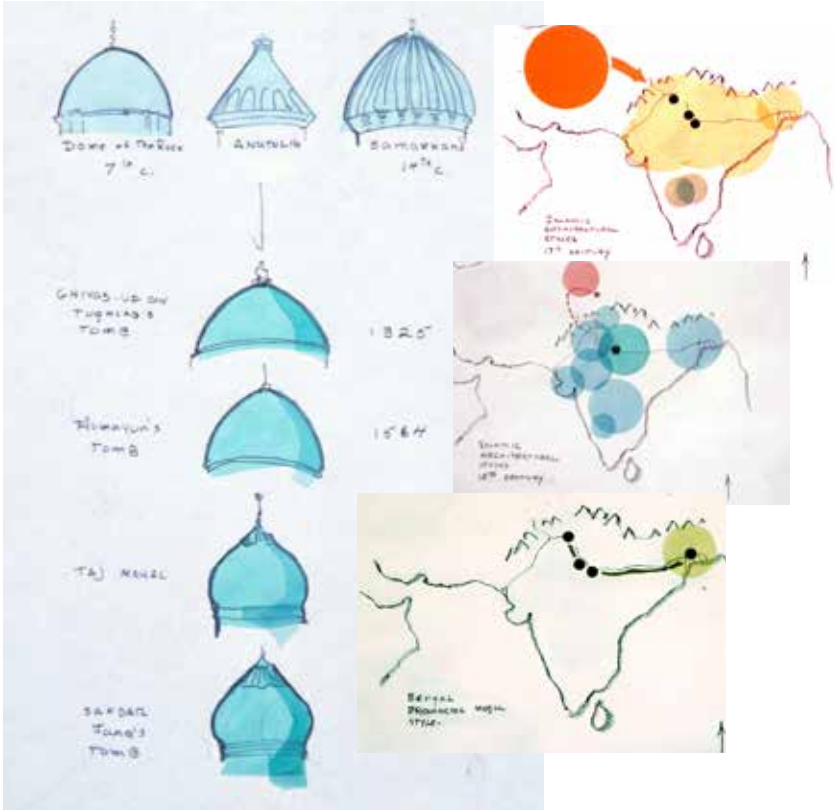
Bengali Char-chala style temple



Humayun's Tomb



The Taj Mahal



DCD & MFD article, Planning the School Building

SETTING UP A CURRICULUM cont.

INDIAN ART HISTORY FROM KAY

Dan found Kay Donaldson, an art historian from Boston, to teach Art History. She was on a Fulbright grant to study and teach at the Dacca Art Institute, but thanks to the student strikes that were happening daily, she had plenty of free time on her hands. When Dan met her at a reception and heard that she had nothing to do while the institute was shut down, he asked her if she would give her lectures to his architecture students. She turned out to be an inspiring lecturer, introducing ancient Buddhist and Hindu sculpture to students who for the most part were Muslim and had not traveled outside of Bengal. Her enthusiasm for the *stupas*, temples and cave frescoes opened a world of art forms to the students. I had a chance to attend some of her lectures and like the students, I too, became inspired to learn more about Indian art.

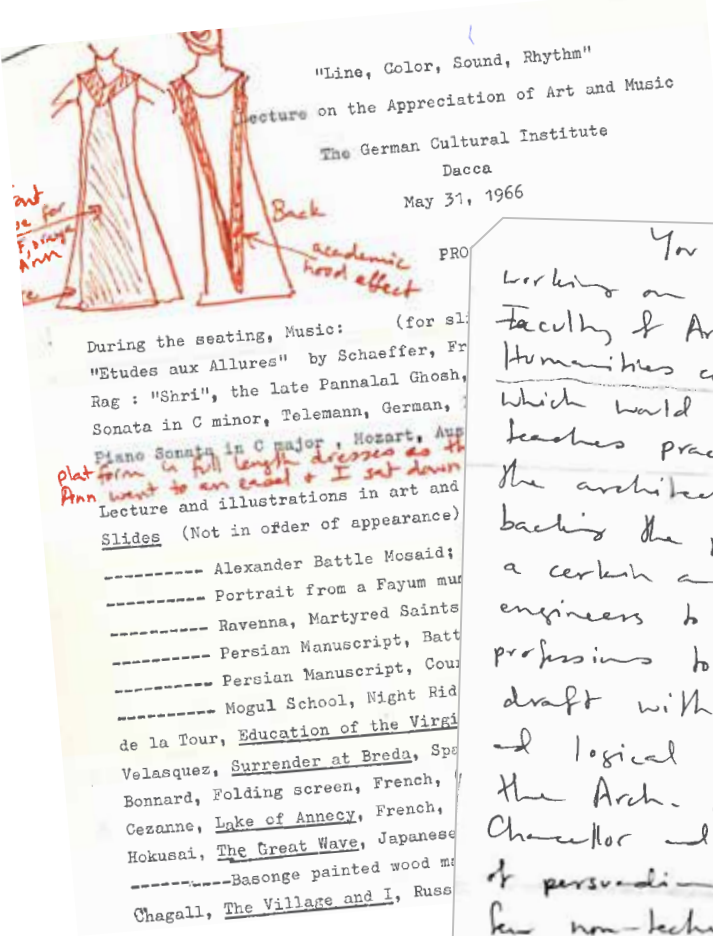


Kay Donaldson teaching for Dan at EPUET

WESTERN MUSIC & ART APPRECIATION FROM ANN & ME

I had suggested to Dan early on to include some courses on western art and music appreciation. In addition to me, Dan enlisted Ann Werkheiser for this topic. Ann was the wife of the newly arrived vicar at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in the old city. As with Kay, Dan met her at a party during her first weeks in Dacca. When he heard from her husband, Dick, that Ann had a Master's degree in art history, he said: "Let me have her!"

Ann and I gave a joint presentation on western art and music of the 19th century with a live demonstration of "Les Sylphides," which we had the audacity to perform ourselves. Shonah Miah, our master tailor, (see chapter 09) made our outfits according to our design. With his usual disapproval of such foreign whimsies, he muttered "Ami jani na!" ("I don't understand") as he sewed white mosquito netting into tutus. We danced a few measures from the dance of the swans, turning our heads right and left in bird-like motions. We may never know what the students really thought of our performance or how much it actually taught them about western culture, but at least it was entertaining and memorable.



The notes I made with Ann for our lecture titled "LINE COLOR SOUND"

My efforts to teach humanities at EPUET [MFD letter to CGR, 8/25/1966]

Dan writing to Kay about preparing lectures for EPUET on architecture history [DCD letter to Kay Donaldson, 1965]

Dear Kay

I am fighting my way through 42 lectures on the Arch. and art of the sub continent, using mostly Rowland with help from a book by Goetz, and Percy Brown's incomprehensible but complete volumes. Anyway when the course is over I should know something about it all even if the students don't. I will, if conditions ever improve, make one last trip to India photographing, twisting Hindu monuments, and museum art. Is Rowland friendly? I was thinking of writing him and asking him if there is anything he would especially like photographed, in payment for the way his book saved my teaching life this semester. Maybe Harvard has all the slides they need. Anyway you will be entitled to a complete set if I accomplish it. I hate now to make any promises that in any way hinge on the capricious act of God that occur in the sub-continent.

I wish we could leave any mention about the J. family out of our correspondence. He is still plugging Mary Frances to compose poetry for him under the guise of translation. We have countless hours of tape of some tone deaf village minstrel which she reluctantly transposes to ink and paper music western notation. He has called again twice this week but we are both hiding.

Thank you again for Katherine's (I assume M.F. has already done it) little dog. She has fewer toys than any foreign child on the delta. We have trained her to play with bricks and cow dung patties, and as long as she seems happy with them we count. My two favorite lines this year from exams are on neighbors:

- Pakistan is an underdeveloping country
- a Greek temple is a building with an impediment on top.

I have one hundred or so sitting on my desk now to be corrected and can count on one gem per batch.

You would have been amazed to see me working on the latest project which was to help the Faculty of Architecture improve their proportion of Humanities courses. Dan suggested I write a proposal which would include the Engineering Faculty which teaches practically no Humanities, for joining with the architecture students to have more courses, backing the proposal with arguments for the necessity of a certain amount of Humanities for architects or engineers to be efficient and productive in their professions today. I wrote up quite a lengthy draft with chapters and appendix in a legalistic and logical way as I could, which pleased the Arch. Faculty, but one talk with the Vice-Chancellor and I had a glimpse of the hopelessness of persuading engineers that they need to study a few non-technical subjects — not for years to come. The total economic and educational level of the country is so low. I will do a little more writing with emphasis on the economy of teaching humanities to engineers so that they have the judgment to be economical in their professional life, but as far as persuading the value of Sciences, St. Thomas Aquinas, and William James for the present engineering students, I admit myself incapable, both polemically and physically. I need your good speeches the next time I see the Vice-Chancellor.

DAN'S TEACHING METHODS cont.

Dolly Chowdhury's description of Dan's teaching at EPUET which she wrote for the BUET 50th Anniversary publication in 2012.

1. The Legacy

It was the end of 1963. We had just finished our first year at the Architecture Department in Dhaka. In Professor Dik Vrooman's Architectural Graphics class we had learned how to draw plans and perspectives but had very little idea about the human scale, function and design. A new teacher was going to join the Architecture Department and it was none other than Architect Daniel Dunham from Berger Consultants.

Professor Daniel Dunham was to be our design teacher in the next class. We had seen the tall, slim, young, good looking man in the Department but we knew very little about him. We soon discovered that he was very down to earth and always started from the basics. The first exercise we did for him was to design a Game Shelter. It was to be a simple structure in an open space where people could get together for a game of carom, card, board games or table tennis. The project was simple but it taught us about space, function, form and environment.

I remember designing a simple structure with a wavy roof. Prof. Dunham said "Why don't you add a pergola? Make something different and interesting." I did not know what a pergola was but it got me thinking. The next exercise was to design a students' hostel. We had a look at our new university hostels that had been designed by an American architect and built along the railway tracks in Nilkhet recently. They were quite different from the traditional hostel buildings and we all wanted our designs to be just as exciting.

He introduced the task to us by asking us to work out the space we needed in our everyday life for living-sleeping, studying, storing our possessions, washing, recreation etc. We had to start by designing a student's room and then a hostel.

Once again, he made some comments about...



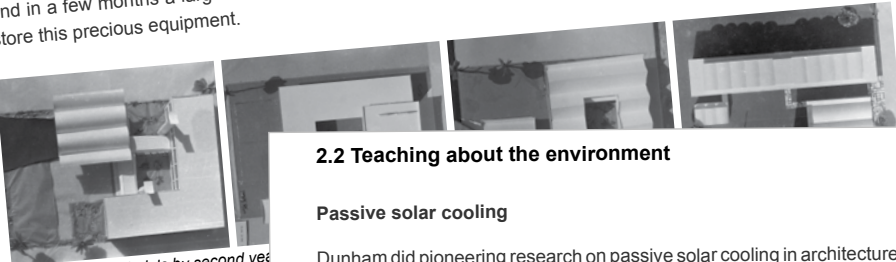
1. Campus hostel

2.1 Teaching to make models:

In early 1960s there were not much drawing or model making supplies available in Dhaka; we did not know what to do, but our professors were concerned too. Dunham took many active initiatives to equip the new studios. In the absence of standard canary tracing paper he taught us to use butter paper for rough sketches; he actually bought a big package of butter paper for our studio.

Model making boards were unknown in Dhaka; Dunham went to the old Dhaka (Islampur-Chawkbazar area), bought regular thin cardboard sheets and got three or four sheets glued together by local bookbinders with boiled flour glue. The right thickness of the board is essential to show the thickness of the walls in architectural models. These boards were somewhat warped, but they were far better than rag-boards of Chawkbazar. Still the problem of mat knife had to be resolved. Dunham went to the local black smith (Tataribazar) got several knives made; we had to sharpen these blades all the time and use very hard pressure to cut through.

In the meantime, Dean Vrooman has ordered studio supplies for the new Architecture Department from USA, and in a few months a large amount of excellent quality materials arrived and a store room was arranged to store this precious equipment.



2.2 Teaching about the environment

Passive solar cooling

Dunham did pioneering research on passive solar cooling in architecture. He studied the vernacular architecture of Morocco while he was there. Many later authors cited him as their resource. He published several research papers on this subject. 1) "The Courtyard House as a Temperature regulator" 2) "The Modern Courtyard House," AA paper 9 for detail discussion of the passive cooling features of courtyard house, Architectural Association, London. He brought up and discussed energy conservation, building orientation, and natural ventilation quite thoroughly in his teaching us design and, of course, in his professional works.

The Solar Cooker

Dunham not only took care of us the architecture students, he helped students from other departments as well. Fazle Hussain from Mechanical Engineering department had questions about solar energy for his project; Dunham took great care to teach him all about solar energy. Over several days, he showed him his solar cooker; he took him on the roof of the University building and demonstrated how to boil a kettle of water by sun rays. Fazle Hussain was so impressed with Dunham; he told me that he was flabbergasted. Dr. Fazle Hussain is a nationally eminent professor of Fluid Mechanics in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at University of Houston.



Dan writing about his teaching routines [DCD letter to MFD, 06/06/1961]

you got my letter saying you got my letters today. Now that I have moved out of Fraus & into the Adamjee Court Building for the afternoons I may get more done. My students work from 7: to 12:00 A.M. then I go to the other office 12:00 to 5:00. They have a tiny tiffin bar at the AD. Ct. building where I get fried eggs and pastry for lunch. My war with the bed bugs continues there is no pooka powder in town but



aw.jpg



Louis Kahn giving guest lectures and student crits at EPUET on his work trips to Dacca to oversee the construction of "Sher-e-Bangla Nagar"

Photo by Anwar Hossein

LOUIS KAHN AT EPUET

I don't think many people know the important role Dan played in the selection of Louis Kahn to be the "prestigious" foreign architect to design a world class government complex for Dacca. Since West Pakistan had the famous Greek architect Doxiades plan its new government center, Islamabad, then East Pakistan should also have a foreign designed new government center. It was to be named "the Second Capital" (later to be called "Sher-e-Bangla Nagar" after independence).

The process of coming up with a list of famous architect candidates for this project may have taken some time before our arrival in Dacca, but when it came time for the selection committee to make a final decision, they consulted with Dan, the only foreign architect in Dacca at the time, to learn more about each of the candidates. During this discussion Dan had a significant influence in their final choice of Louis Kahn. However, Dan liked to joke that the only reason Louis Kahn's name had been included on the list in the first place was because it sounded Islamic (Kahn and Khan). Dan also liked to say that Louis was the only architect among the final invitees to actually accept the job. Who knows if that was true, but the end result was indeed a world-class monument that has given Dacca international recognition ever since.

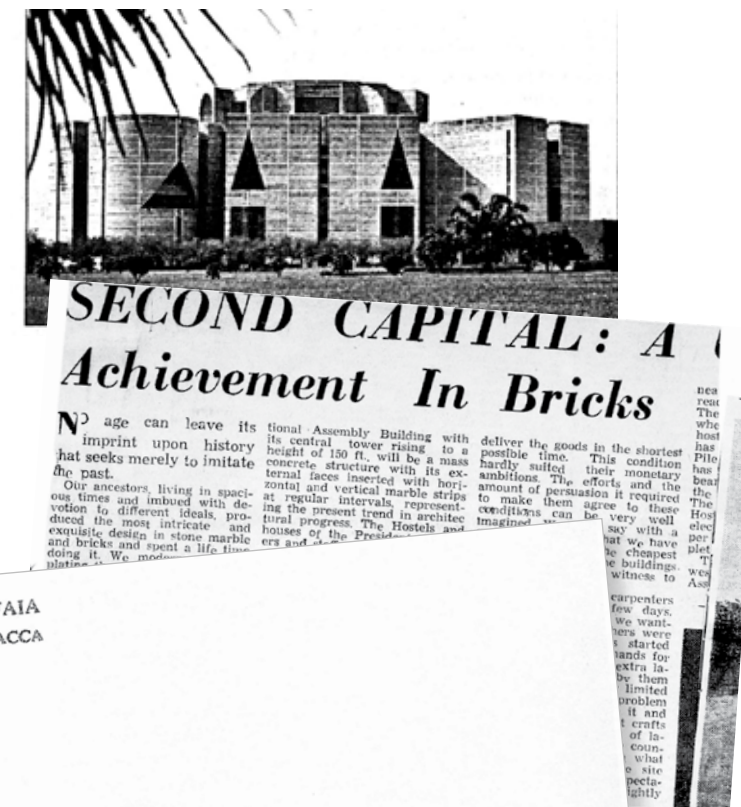
While Louis Kahn was in Dacca to oversee the design and construction of The Second Capital, he was able to spend some time at EPUET to meet with students and faculty. His presence at EPUET had a large influence on the students. He delighted the students with his cultural knowledge, his sense of humor, and positive support of their work. To this day one can see Kahn-style buildings (houses as well as institutional buildings), which were designed by graduates of that time.



Photos by Richard Vrooman of Louis Kahn with EPUET class of 1967

LOUIS KAHN AT HAFIZ VILLA

Dan and I also got to spend personal time with Louis Kahn during one of his visits, when we he came to our house for dinner. I remember how much he “felt at home” in our living room with its simple furnishings, shelves full of books, our harpsichord in the corner, our barefoot servants and the attentions of our one-year old Katherine (who was the same age as his son, Nathaniel). He was especially appreciative of our selection of books and he was pleased to be able to borrow my copy of Colette to read during his stay in Dacca.



*Louis Kahn's letter
to me about his
visit with us at
Hafiz Villa
06/06/1961.*

"Dear Mary Frances:
Am returning your [TC?] book
and thank you. ... recently
since knowing Dan and you I
delight in the anticipation
of being with you.
I expect to be back in about
a month - so long
Lou K

Regards to the nice people at your last party and at Gus and Maris's party. I feel sad about the terrible Russian story I told. A story has its place too ... is flat in one place and round in another."

Dear Mary Frances:

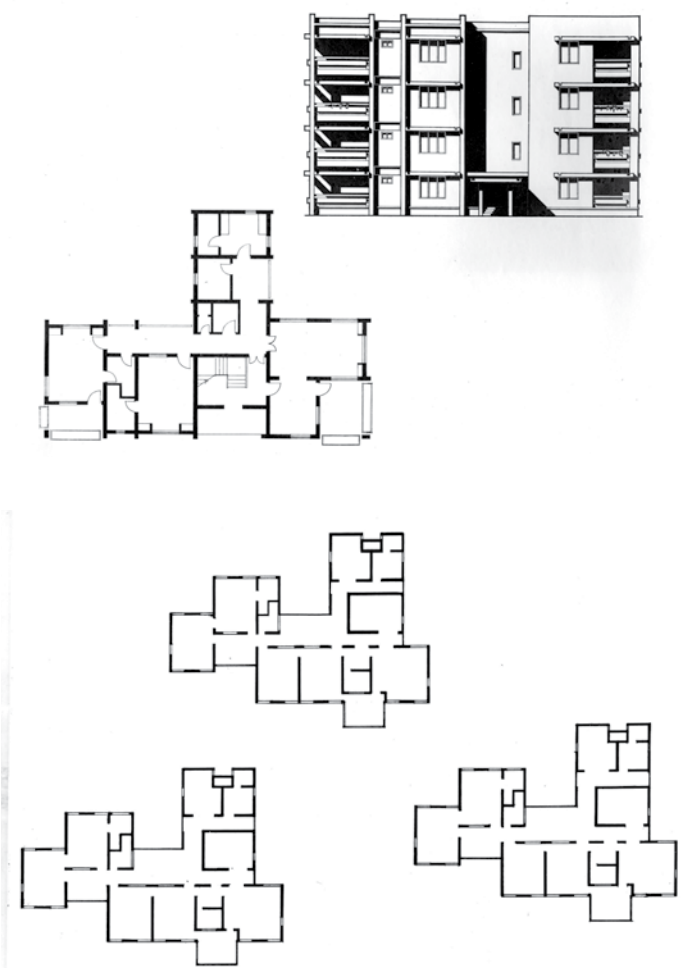
on returning your
The book and thank you.
When I come recently
since knowing Dan and you
I delight in the anticipation
of seeing with you
I expect to be back in about
a month - eatong
Lou K

Regard to all the nice people at your last
 party at Gus and Haris's party.
 I feel sad about the terrible Russian story
 I told. A story has its place too is that
 in the place we lived in another.

DAN’S EPUET PROJECTS

EPUET FACULTY HOUSING

In time, the EPUET faculty grew to include local teachers, some of whom were recent graduates sponsored by the program. It was tradition for universities to supply housing for their teachers, so Dan was asked to design apartment blocks for the local architecture staff. He cleverly designed an apartment layout that was flexible enough to provide separate areas for women and servants, while also working well as a unified apartment. For the project, he learned as much as he could about the expected household needs of the future tenants. In addition to asking questions, he also visited different homes to observe directly typical household routines. For example, he noticed that saris were often hung from balconies and windows to dry. He had always liked the colorful patterns of the local saris, so he decided to take them into account in the design of the building facades. He spaced the balconies vertically according to the dimension of a standard sari, so that each sari would hang in its own space without overlapping the saris from the floors above or below.



RURAL THANA HOUSING

While teaching, Dan took on a project with the government to help design Thana training centers that were going to be built throughout the countryside as part of a government effort to raise rural living standards. Dan’s role in this project was to design the prototype staff living quarters for the more than 1600 units, which would be built as part of this project. His main challenge was to build the housing to high enough standards to attract urban teachers to live in the countryside while keeping construction and maintenance costs to a minimum. As part of the project, Dan was able to convince the government to set up a lab at EPUET in charge of overseeing the design and construction of the training centers. This enabled Dan to invite his students to be involved in this real-life project.

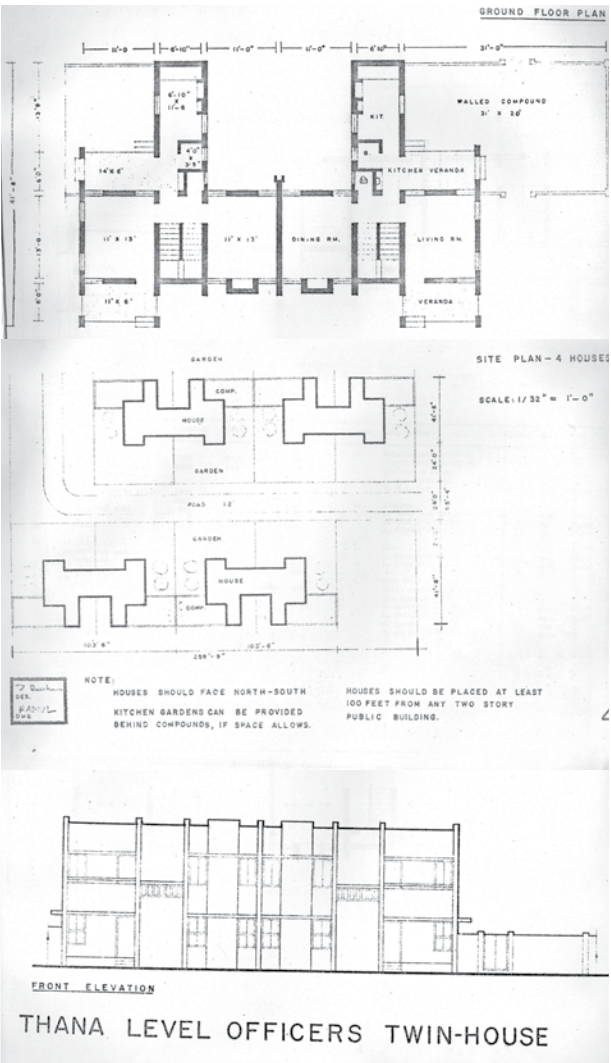
Dan’s port folio description of the Thana Houses project

In an effort to raise the economic level of the rural areas the Government of Pakistan, through the Dept. of Local Government, authorized in 1962, the building of 411 "Thana Training and Development Centers". They were to be situated in rural areas throughout the province. Each complex was to contain class rooms, offices, rural storage and banking facilities, and a small demonstration farm. Construction work on these centers was to be carried out under the Rural Public Works Program with locally available labor.

As technical consultant with this organization I designed and supervised the production of drawings for these necessarily simple structures. In the absence of land surveys and because the proposed sites were virtually inaccessible, a system was devised to assist local people in preparing site drawings which would be adequate for use by the Dacca office. Working drawings mimeograph stencils for circular numbers. Mimeographed manuals and construction details were a

University students were involved in stages of this project. I was in convincing the Govt. to set up a technical cell within the Dept. to

The sample shown is the design for housing. Elegant by rural standards as an inducement to Govt. office assignments. Goal: 1600 units,



My description of Dan’s design for the Thana Houses [MFD to CGR, 08/25/1966]

when they struggle for artistic things. So the University has been closed all month. But during this time the Arch. Soc. has met almost daily discussing the syllabus for the next year. Dan took it too heart and that is how I got on the Humanities and. Also Dan has been working hard designing and promoting house for district officers in E. Pakistan of which 6,000 will be built according to his plan. He also took a trip down to the off shore islands to help with the better design of cyclone shelters. He took a similar trip last year just before Kachikar I came to N.Y.

DAN’S EPUET PROJECTS cont.

CYCLONE RELIEF CONSULTATION

After experiencing first hand a number of devastating Dacca cyclones, Dan became involved in cyclone relief efforts. He consulted on a number of projects to design community shelters for the farmers living on the low lands bordering the Bay of Bengal. They were most vulnerable to losing their farms and their lives with the yearly storms. I remember Dan had made estimates of how many Bengalis were lost by calculating the number of trees people would have clung to during the storm and how many people could cling to one tree. Only the young and strong survived, being the only ones able to cling to the trees for the duration of the storm. The death tolls from the cyclones were inevitably high, leading Dan to grimly surmise that cyclones were Mother Nature’s cruel form of birth control.

Dan’s employment letter for the cyclone chelter work, 06/1965

TO: NAME OR TITLE
1. Mr. R. Vrooman, Road 31, Dhanmondi

ORGANIZATION
2. DAN - (WU) 1965

ROOM No.

BLDG.

INITIALS

DATE

APPROVAL
COMMENT
NECESSARY ACTION
INVESTIGATE
NOTE AND RETURN
INITIAL FOR CLEARANCE

PREPARE REPLY
SIGNATURE
SEE ME
AS REQUESTED
FOR YOUR INFORMATION
PER CONVERSATION

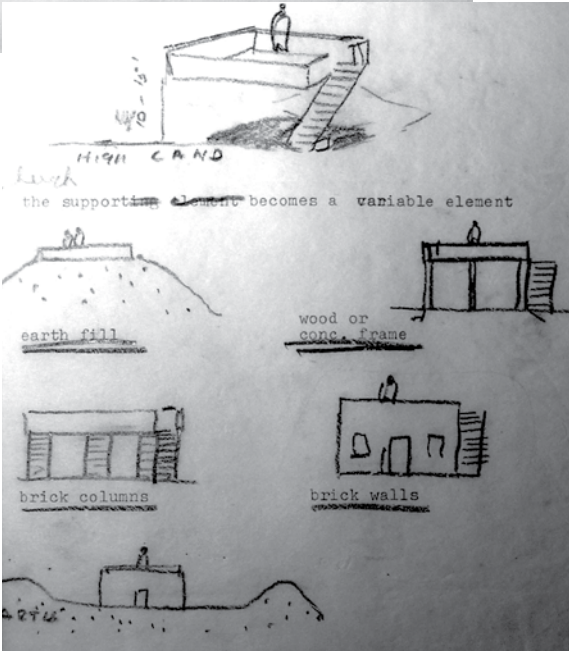
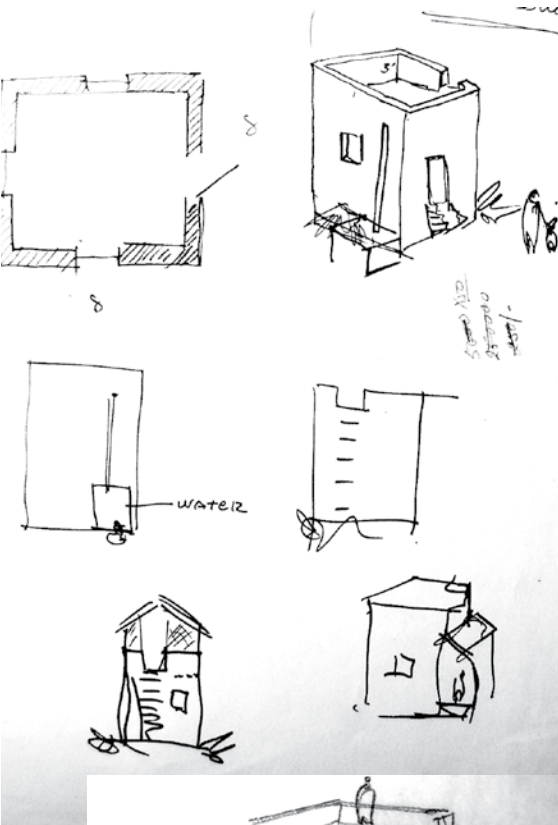
REMARKS OR ADDITIONAL ROUTING

Dik:
We would like to have Dan Dunham accompany Secretary, Basic Democracies Musa Ahmed and Secretary Relief, Habibur Rahman on a trip to south Bakerganj(south of Barisal) to look into a reconstruction program involving houses, or community centers, schools, etc, which might be of pukka construction suitable to withstand cyclones and similar affairs. They plan to leave Wednesday evening by the Mail Boat and return on Sunday by Rocket from Barisal. (They will travel south of Barisal by Government launch to Kapebara and Golachipa and neighboring points). Reservations have been laid on for Dan(or someone else) by Musa Ahmed on the Mail Steamer and the Rocket.
Question: Can Dan be spared to go? If so have him get in touch with me soonest. If not, alternative suggestions?

FROM (NAME OR ORGANIZATION)

ROOM No.

DATE
14 June 1965



NOVEMBER 1970 CYCLONE

Based on his cyclone relief work in East Bengal during the 1960s, Dan was asked back to Dacca after the 1970 cyclone to advise on rehabilitation efforts. That turned out to be a memorable occasion for Dan, because it placed him in Dacca at the time of the March 26,1971 Declaration of Independence. It was an extraordinary time for Dan to have been in Dacca to witness first hand this historic moment before he was evacuated home.

SUMMARY OF DANIEL C. DUNHAM’S 1993 C.V.
RELEVANT TO BANGLADESH
(prepared by Mary Frances Dunham for the DAILY STAR)

ARCHITECT AND CITY PLANNER (Feb.1, 1929-Dec.19, 2000)

During his professional career, Daniel Dunham was primarily an architect specializing in tropical architecture and a city planner specializing in the cities of developing nations. He was also an inventor, an artist, and an expert advisor on matters ranging from household devices to financial managing. He delighted all who knew him for his down-to-earth perspective, his ingenious solutions to many problems, his lucid and lively lectures, and his gift for humorous story-telling.

I. EDUCATION BACKGROUND: (Harvard U., London Architectural Association, Columbia U.)

II. BUILDINGS IN BANGLADESH AND CALCUTTA:
Rajshahi University (1960-62):
Master plan for the campus.
Library.
Student Center.
Faculty and Student Housing.
Hospital.
Mymensingh University (1960-62)
Master Plan for the campus.
Vice-Chancellor’s house.
Guest House.
Faculty and Student Housing.
East Bengal Railways (Dhaka)
Layout for railway workers’ colony (1960-62).
Railway Office Building (1960-62).
Kamalapur Railway Station: layout and design.
Cooperative Department (Dhaka)
Cooperative bank building (Jinnah Avenue, Dhaka)
Bishop Ganguly Bhavan for Notre Dame College
Consultant for Katherine Dunham’s design.
Coastal areas: designs for hurricane shelters.
Calcutta (Ford Foundation/Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization)
Note: 2,000 of these units were built and installed in Calcutta. The immediate need arose with the Bangladeshi refugee situation.
Clinics and family planning complexes.
Low-Middle Class Housing (Salt Lake area).

III. RELIEF AND REHABILITATION WORK IN BANGLADESH AND CALCUTTA
Slum redevelopment schemes.
Barisal, Chittagong and Noakhali Districts
Technical assistance on construction of 85 community shelter buildings (Peace Corps/USAID, Chittagong and Barisal, 1960).
Evaluation of construction and performance of shelter buildings (USAID, Chittagong, 1964).
Reconnaissance & recommendations on reconstruction and relief, drawings for 200 shelters, for cyclone affected areas (USAID, Barisal, Noakhali and islands, 1965).
Mymensingh District:
Reconnaissance and recommendations on relief for housing after floods (USAID, 1962).
Calcutta (1969-1971)
- Assistance to Indian Government on refugee sanitation and shelter (Ford Foundation, 1971).
- Design of precast latrines (Ford Foundation/Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization 1971)
D. CONSULTANCIES IN BANGLADESH:
Berger Engineers; USAID; Ford Foundation; Save the Children Foundation; CARE; UNDP; etc.
E. TEACHING IN BANGLADESH (6 years):
The Architecture Department of BUET (USAID - Texas A & M, for the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, 1961-67).
F. INVENTIONS:
Solar cooker (U.S. Patent #181713), at the University of Wisconsin energy research laboratory, 1955. This cooker was tried and used in a leper colony in Chittagong for boiling bandages and purifying water (1960s).
(Other solar devices used for cooking and distillation by Dunham were used in Mauritania.)

DAN’S DEPARTURE FROM EPUET

Letter of appreciation from the Texas A&M director to Dan and me about our articles regarding architecture in E. Pakistan

THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS

Office of
INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

March 5, 1964

Mr. Daniel C. Dunham
East Pakistan University for
Engineering and Technology
C/O American Consulate General
Dacca, East Pakistan

Dear Dan:

I have enjoyed the two articles you prepared on planning school buildings and architecture in East Pakistan. I notice that Mrs. Dunham collaborated with you on the one dealing with school buildings. Let me congratulate you both for a fine job. We are proud to claim you as members of the Texas A&M University team there.

With kindest personal regards,

Sincerely yours,
Jack D. Gray
Jack D. Gray, Director
International Programs

Vrooman's farewell letter to Dan

Prof. Daniel C. Dunham
Mrs. Mary Frances Dunham

This is to express our great appreciation to both of you for a magnificent contribution to the program in Architectural Education here in Dacca, involving Texas A&M University and USAID working with East Pakistan University of Engineering & Technology. To Dan, employed specifically for this work; you have not only done the job in an excellent manner but have gone beyond the requirements to help establish a professional school of architecture, working with the students both in and out of class. To Mary Frances, contributing services without being employed; thanks for your excellent help in the cultural areas related to architectural education. Because of the Dunhams, our Pakistani students have had first-rate courses in Design, History, Climatology, Music & Art Appreciation, etc.. We know that your students and fellow teachers (both Pakistani and American) will be forever grateful for your fine work here.

Richard E. Vrooman
Richard E. Vrooman
Chief Advisor, Architectural Education
Texas A&M/Pakistan/USAID

To meet Mr. D.C. Dunham on the eve of his departure from this university

The Vice-Chancellor
on behalf of the Syndicate of the
EAST PAKISTAN UNIVERSITY OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY, DACCA
requests the pleasure of the company of
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel C. Dunham
at a Tea on 21-5-67 at 5-15 P.M.
to be held at the University Lounge.

S.V.P.
Requests only
Tel. 44401

The official invitation to EPUET's goodbye party for Dan

And this is Mrs. Mary Francis Dunham

You just cannot miss her cycling along Balu Road with her little daughter seated in front. A charming lady, forever smiling and always ready to help anyone. She is an excellent dancer, and for sometime tried to learn Oriental dance and music. A linguist, musician, writer, and a possessor of numerous other talents is she. People knowing her will always agree that she is a very good hostess too. Her Christmas parties and the tempting food served, proves this. In this faculty she taught "Music Appreciation" and "English" for sometime.

And this is Miss. Kathy Dunham.

Who most of you know will speak to go bare-foot in New York as

And we promise them all a happy

Farewell letters to Dan and me from Dan's students.

LEST WE FORGET

Professor Daniel C. Dunham is unmistakable. "The Shaheb wearing a shirt made out of a lungi". He gets the unique pleasure if he is called upon to talk. To him topics of discussion never run short. Restless he is too, you won't find him in one place for long. Even when he is walking down a corridor you would find him on one side swinging his long arm out at the side wall and hitting it at a rhythm, except of course when it comes to an open door. Conscious he is of this restlessness and would say for the benefit of those possessing unproductive restlessness that he used to tie himself to the table when sincerely required to work.

Sometimes he makes people of this place uneasy, for he knew more about this place than them, He likes "polao" and can easily recognise the tune of "Rupban".

Professor Dunham started his package of experience when he was twelve, for he went to work then. His non-professional jobs ranged from baby - sitting to sea - man in the merchant marine. His many qualifications includes High School work in Florida and Wisconsin. Wisconsin is the original place from where he hails, Bachelor of Science degree from University of Wisconsin; certificate in architectural decoration from Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris; Master of Architecture from Harvard; diploma from the school of Tropical Architecture, London, and many more which just primarily say, he tried to gain anything about architecture that came in his way.

He is also the proud holder of many student award in art and literature, and believe it or not a right to U.S. Patent No. 181713 for solar cookers.

One thing is sure that he loves reading and writing. An article on the "Development of Architecture in Dacca" which appeared in Pakistan Engineer in Oct. 1963 would be an interesting reading.

Professor Dunham is in his mid-thirties and so don't believe him when he says he is very old. He says this not because maturity in architecture is achieved when you are old. It is just his way of apologizing for the amount of talking he does which he feels are old man's hobby.

This is Mr. Daniel C. Dunham.



EPUET students performing music

MEMSAH'B AT SCHOOL

মেমসাহেব স্কুলে *
(MEMSAH'B SKULE)

5.1 TEACHING

5.2 LEARNING

“As soon as the sahib left the house in the morning the new
memsahib was on her own.
Servants came for instructions....”

[Allen, *Plain Tales from the Raj*, paperback, p.81]



* This Bengali wording is from our personal family patois



5.1 TEACHING

TEACHING JOBS

TEACHING FRENCH

Early on during our life in Dacca, I began to do some volunteer language teaching, at first, paradoxically in French. For me, this was an opportunity to get engaged with local people and activities. As a result, I tutored French to some of Dan's Bengali friends, I helped teach a class at Dacca University and I helped start the first French classes at the Alliance Française.

When our neighbors, the Matzakis were leaving Dacca, I had hoped to take over Mrs. Matzakis French classes at Dacca University, but the Department of International Affairs had already hired someone to replace her, a Mr. Maurice Rouch from the Alliance Française in Paris (where, coincidentally, both my parents had studied French). However, Maurice was able to hire me as his assistant for one semester after which, I followed him to his next job as the founder and director of Dacca's first Alliance Française – a task he was assigned to accomplish with his wife, Danielle Rouch.

I tutored two Pakistani business men in French to prepare them for their upcoming. trip to France [MFD letter to Hugh-Jones 1961]

I give French lessons to two Pakistani gentlemen who will be going to France and when I typed out a few sheets of lessons I noticed that I had memorized Kennedy almost word for word. I can almost hear myself asking what pag in Kennedy "are you on". You sent me news about some of the older girls. How is Katherine Hall lately. The architect who introduced us to the Halls originally is now living in London very near where we used to live so in many ways we feel

*During our first years, in addition to teaching French, I also tutored English to our staff at home and in Dan's office.
[MFD letter to Elizabeth 04/18/1961]*

At first I wanted to get started right away teaching in a Pakistani school but when we got the house it was impossible to hope I could keep in any regular appointments. During the two months we were at the hotel I took Bengali lessons quite intensively until I could read and write but I have had to give up further progress with the house. I found out quickly that there would be more than ample opportunity to teach so I can really pick and choose, maybe have some classes of my own here. At present I have two private French pupils. I spare moments Dan and I try to teach the cook's son who is also our sweeper and helper to read and write and speak English. He's not as bright as his father and we are getting more fun out of it than he is learning anything. Dan is doing the same with his office "boys" when they are sitting around with nothing to do. I have never imagined what illiteracy does for people until you find they can not see the difference between a straight and a crooked line much less paint a door or keep anything neat. We feel like Kennedy's Peace Corps.

On the board: Je m'appelle Madame Lounan

Go around with

- 1) 30 je
- 2) 30 m'appelle
- 3) 30 m'appelle
- 4) 30 m'appelle Ali Hossain.
- 5) Bonjour Madame. Je m'appelle Ali Ho

On the board: Monsieur

- 1) -a - ~~5~~ - a
- 2) Ma - ~~SW~~ - a
- 3) Bonjour Madame. Je m

On the board: Un monsieur.
Une dame
Un chapitre

On the board: LE, LA,

- 1) Le monsieur, Les m
- 2) La dame, Les
- 3) L'étudiant, Le
- 4) L'étudiante,


Go around class giving

Geography -- La Géographie

| | |
|------------|-------------------|
| L'Algérie | Régions of France |
| La Tunisie | La Côte |
| Le Maroc | La Pr |
| Le Congo | Le |

Point out distances

Letter asking me to
oversee the French
exams at Dacca
University.

 DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
UNIVERSITY OF DACCA

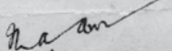
Dacca, the2...4...1963...196

No

Dear Mrs. Dunham:

The Viva Voce Test of the candidates appearing at the Junior Certificate Course Examination in French will be held in the Room of the Head of the Department of International Relations, Dacca University, on Monday and Tuesday, April 8 and 9 respectively between 8 A.M.-1 P.M. on both the days. I shall feel obliged if you would please make time to come to the Department and help us in conducting the said examination.

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR,
UNIVERSITY OF DACCA.
DACCA-2.
The...20th July, 1961.

Yours faithfully,

(Dr. M.A. Aziz)
Chairman.

Letter accepting my application to teach French at Dacca University.

TEACHING JOBS cont.

ESTABLISHING THE ALLIANCE FRANCAISE

For several weeks I helped Maurice and Danielle Rouch to find a home that would serve for both the Alliance functions as well as serve as a home for themselves and their two sons. The Rouch's felt pressure to get the Alliance off to a strong start with an attractive building in a central location. Assuming that most of the Alliance potential members would be living in Dhanmandi, we limited our search to that area. Although the Rouchs had brought their deux chevaux Citroen with them to Dacca, we couldn't use it for our house hunt because Maurice did not know how to drive it. Instead, Maurice and I rode about by rickshaw up and down the lanes of Dhanmandi, stopping at every house that seemed suitable to ask if they would rent space.

Maurice felt pressure to establish an institute for French culture that would be competitive with the other foreign cultural institutions. The British Council was known for its well-stocked library and the Goethe Institute was impressive for its state-of-the-art equipment and its grand piano (the only one in the country at that time). By luck, we eventually found the perfect house on Mirpur Road at the edge of Dhanmandi. Although the landlord would remain on the ground floor, there was enough space on the upper floors for the Alliance to have two classrooms, a library and an office. In addition, there was a roof terrace large enough for an outdoor café as well as a small apartment for their family. Within a month or so the Rouchs had a comfortable library and three class rooms ready to go, and they hired me to start teaching some of their first French classes.



MFD, DCD and the Rouchs, Alliance party 1965



This is the building I helped to find for the location of Dacca's first Alliance Francaise.

ALLIANCE FRANCAISE DE DACCA
MIRPUR ROAD No. 26 (CORNER ROAD No. 3)
DHANMANDI-DACCA.
(East Pakistan).

POST BOX No. 405
Phone No. 81672

Nil

Dacca, 9th June 1965

Mrs. D. Dunham,

Dear Madam,

We beg to confirm officially that, following the General Assembly of the members of the Alliance Francaise de Dacca, which took place on the 4th June 1965, you have been re-elected member of the Executive Committee.

We take this opportunity to congratulate you and to thank you for all the help and co-operation you have given us in the past, and which we feel sure you will continue to give.

EDUCATION

Alliance Francaise resumes French classes beginners, elementary, intermediate, advanced; practical—also Bengali and Art classes from November 18. Special morning ladies class also possible.

Persons interested may apply to

ALLIANCE FRANCAISE,
26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmandi, Dacca.

TEACHING ENGLISH

While teaching at the Alliance, I also volunteered to teach English classes at the Ford Foundation funded College of Home Economics. I worked closely with three other American women who were on the staff – Peggy Azbill, Fran Larkin and Mary Kefgen – with whom I became close friends. Our students were all women who needed extra English training to help them with their studies.



Dacca Home Economics College where I briefly taught English.

Some of the materials I designed for teaching English

tele-
telepathy
telescope

phon-
phonetic
megaphone
cacophonous

graph-
cartographer
paragraph
photograph

geo-
George
geometry
geocentric
geology
geocentric

television
telephone
phonograph
geography
geology

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TEACHING JOBS cont.

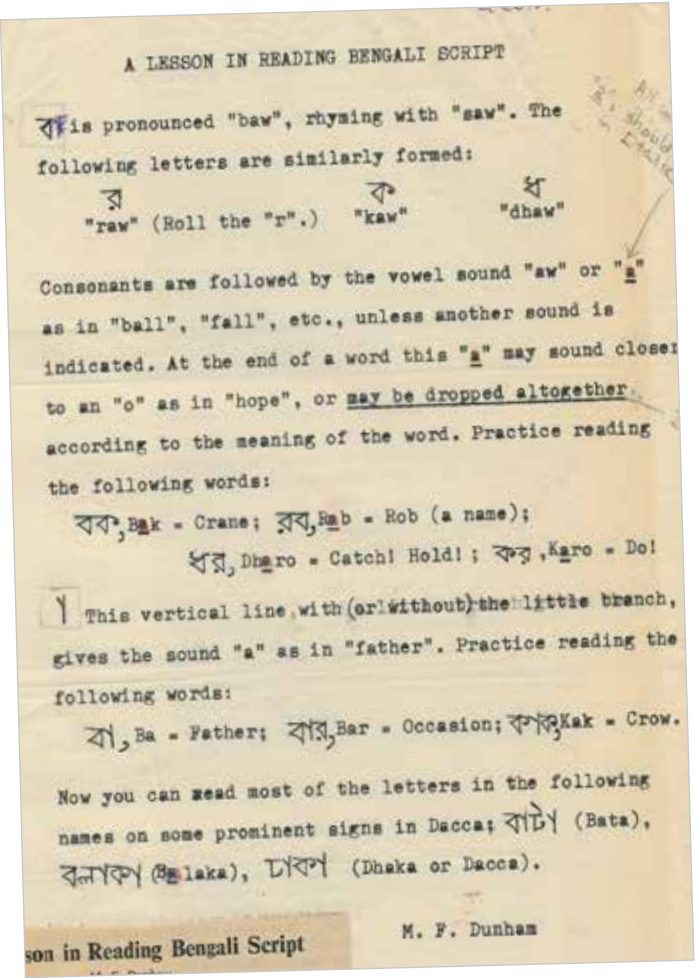
TEACHING BENGALI

I set up a beginner Bengali language class for the American Cholera Research doctors, who wished to learn some Bengali in order to communicate with their patients. Cholera was endemic to Bengal, so it wasn't surprising that Dacca was chosen to be the second location for a SEATO Cholera facility where these American doctors worked. Soon after it was established in the early 1960s, it became one of the best cholera research facilities in the world and today is now called the International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research.

I conducted my classes at one or another of the doctors' homes. I brought Manzoor Ahmed, an unusually bright and ambitious student from Dacca University, as my assistant. Our lessons usually consisted of me teaching vocabulary and grammar on paper, while Manzoor demonstrated how to speak the words. These sessions were delightful for me because the doctors were keen on learning and because, as it turned out, they were more interested in Tagore poems than grammar. In addition, I appreciated that the doctors let me visit the lab and let me help them communicate with their Bengali patients. Over time, Dan and I became quite close with the Cholera Lab doctors. One of them even came to our aid when our bearer's son fell ill with cholera (chapter 14). Ten years later, after we returned to the US, we reunited with some of them in Washington DC, where we gathered to lobby senators for the cause of Bangladesh's War of Liberation (chapter 15).



My Hermes typewriter was one of my most valued possessions.



My Bengali lesson plan for the cholera doctors

“GRASS WIDOWS” – NO, NOT ME

Foreign wives in Dacca were often called “grass widows” meaning they stayed in Dacca while their husbands were traveling -- working in “the field” -- as they called it. While, most other foreign housewives were busy enough just dealing with the challenges of running a household in Dacca, I was out exploring, having adventures and seeking any chance I could to learn something new about Bengali culture.

My Hermes typewriter, so sturdy and portable, enabled me to do so many things: to teach, to study, to prepare lectures, to keep a diary and to write the many many letters that have become my inspiration for this current memoir.

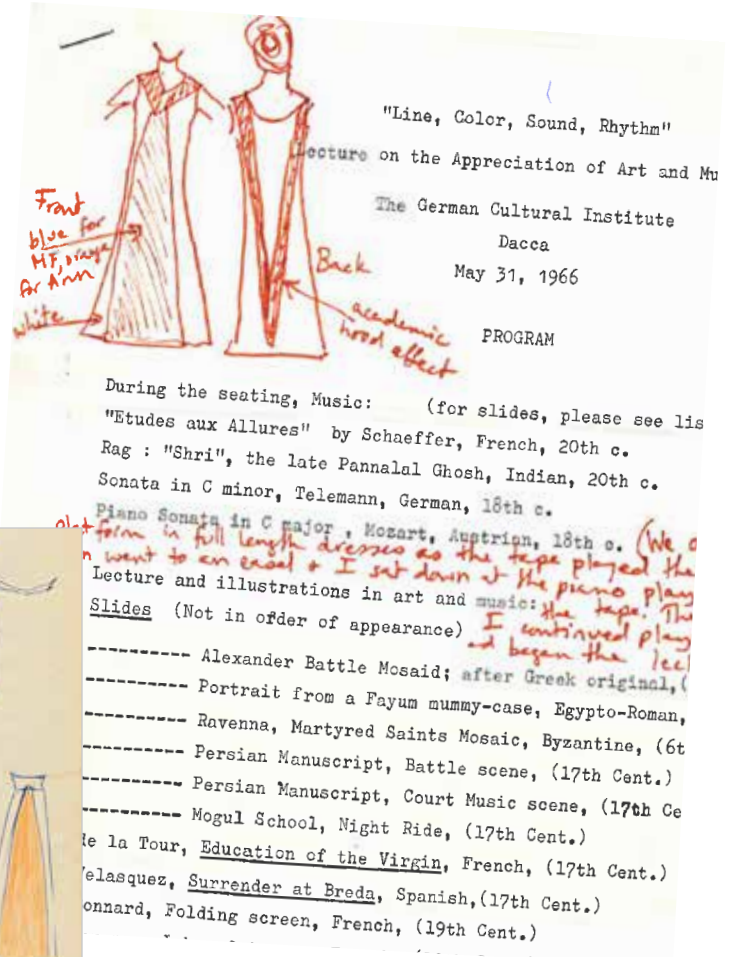
TEACHING WESTERN MUSIC APPRECIATION

Of all my various teaching jobs, the most enjoyable was lecturing for Dan's architecture students on western music appreciation. I designed a curriculum to give them a broad introduction to some of the hit tunes of western classical music from Bach to Stravinsky.

Together, with Ann Werkheiser, whom Dan had hired to teach European art history, we devised a joint lecture in which we would present examples of music and art simultaneously. For example, Ann would show a slide of a cathedral and I would play a recording of Bach.

We performed our duo not only for the architecture students, but also at the Alliance and Goethe Institutes. We wore academic style gowns, which Ann designed specifically for our lecture. Shona Miah, our aged but expert tailor, sewed the gowns skillfully including concealed zippers in back. Dan master-minded a way to project the slides so that he and the projector were hidden behind the screen rather than in front.

On both occasions when we “performed,” we had some glitches. At the first presentation, Ann's zipper snagged (as zippers often did in those days), so that she had to do the entire lecture facing forward to hide the safety pins holding her dress together in back. At the Alliance we gave the audience a good laugh when I accidentally put on a recording out of order for Ann's accompanying art slide.



These are from the notes I wrote with Ann Workheiser in preparation for our lecture, “Line, Color, Sound & Rhythm” [05/31/1965]

TEACHING JOBS cont.

TEACHING MUSIC AT HOLY CROSS GIRLS' SCHOOL

I taught music for a semester to sixth graders at the Holy Cross Girls' School in Tejgaon. The culmination of this class was a production of a musical play called, 'The Enchanted Island' based on the life of Chopin. While I coached them, I learned how difficult it was for them to follow the western system of beats and measures.

*Because I could play the piano I had a number of requests to accompany performances and to teach music (see chapter 07 for more about the foreign cultural performances)
[MFD letter to CGR 03/16/1963]*

Holy Cross Girls' School at last gave their three performances of The Enchanted Island, a fiction about Chopin on Majorca, a cast of 60 under the ages of 13 with Mr. Dunham at the piano. We missed a lot of rehearsals towards the end due to Ramadan, Eid festivities, student strikes etc. but I don't think we could have rehearsed much more than we did without getting sick of it. Sister Francis, headmistress, was also directing two other performances which were given by the orphanage and by the college at about the same time. All the dramatic activity was in honour of the visiting directors and Mother Superior. Dan and I were invited to a private showing in her honour of a Hindu "candle dance" done by one of the college girls, the ^{grand} daughter of the ^{grand} daughter of the college girls. I did some of the singing that was working with them. Now I have to fend off all the requests for piano lessons. If the Alliance Fr. had a piano I would start a music class, but I don't want people coming home for lessons all the time and I could keep it down to one class a week.

SUBSTITUTE AT THE AMERICAN SCHOOL

At times, I substituted for teachers at the American School when they were on leave. If I felt unprepared to teach about muskrats (as prescribed in the curriculum), I often reverted to giving them a French lesson instead by teaching them to sing "Frère Jacques". I had one embarrassing incident when word got around the school that the substitute teacher (me) was "bottomless". A student had misunderstood my French when I explained that a "bouton" (button) of my dress was missing and translated it as the "bottom" of my dress was missing.



I accompanied on piano this performance of the Enchanted Isles at Holy Cross Girls' School



5.2 LEARNING

LEARNING MUSIC & DANCE

TRANSCRIBING JARIGAN FOR JASIMUDDIN

The most rewarding and long lasting among my volunteer occupations evolved when the country's poet laureate, Jasimuddin, came by our house one day to talk to me. He said that he was writing a book about a type of folk song called *Jarigan* (Lamentation Songs), and that he would like to include some western staff notations. He had heard that I played the piano, so he thought I could notate the melodies. Would I be willing?

I was intrigued enough to say that I could give it a try. First he would bring a master singer from his hometown, Faridpur, to sing the songs for us to record and document. He would supply me with the Bengali texts and his wife would do her best to give me English translations. For my part, I would borrow a tape recorder from my friend Peggy Azbill to make the recordings. I would have my new harpsichord (recently imported from Germany) to work out the musical transcriptions. Although I had no prior experience with Asian music, I was confident that I could use my solfège training from Nadia Boulanger (a former teacher of mine at Fontainebleau 1951) to transcribe the music into western notation. So, with Peggy's recording machine, the written texts, and my harpsichord I felt I was qualified enough to work on Jasimuddin's project.

A few days after our initial meeting, Jasimuddin returned to our house with an aged village bard in tow and we began our recording sessions. Jasimuddin chose representative samples of the bardic repertory performed at Muharram events and sung at village Jarigan competitions. The stories of the songs were based on the battle of Karbala and the Sunni massacre of Shias. All this and more I learned gradually.

This if from the definition of Jarigan I wrote for the South Asian Folklore Encyclopedia



Jasimuddin in Kamalapur 1960s

JĀRĪ GĀN
The term "jārī gān" comes from the Persian word "zārī," meaning lamentation, and from the Bengali word "gān," meaning song or song recital. *Jārī gān* signifies an important class of Bengali narrative songs that are closely associated with the elegies of the festival of Muharram (first month of the Islamic lunar calendar), a time when Shī'a Muslims commemorate the deaths of their martyrs. The repertory of jārī gān also includes a wide range of other themes from Islamic lore. The underlying themes are so universal that, in Bengal, Sunni Muslims and even Hindus, Buddhists, and Christians enjoy the recitals.
The central themes of jārī songs concern the battle of Karbalā that occurred near the Euphrates River in 680 C.E. during the first ten days of the month of Muharram. The tragic incidents of this battle constitute the thematic material of sermons, chants, and pageantry during the Muharram festival worldwide. In the Bengali celebrations, poet-singers trained in the jārī gān style of extempore singing relate the Karbala episodes, telling how Husayn, a grandson of the Prophet Mohammed and the leader of a small band of Shī'a Muslims, was besieged in the desert by the army of a jealous Caliph and how they all perished. The women were taken captive,

TRANSCRIBING JARIGAN FOR JASIMUDDIN

Although we recorded only short samples of these songs over only two recording sessions, the transcribing work afterwards took many more hours of concentrated effort than I had expected. The work entailed first tuning the harpsichord, then listening to the tapes over and over again before writing and re-writing the notations and finally polishing the rough English translations provided by Jasimuddin's wife. I remember always feeling guilty when Dan's eighty year old mother was visiting us and I was too pre-occupied with the Jarigan project to give her the attention she deserved. Jasimuddin always justified my long hours on his book by saying that I would be "glad of it some day". Indeed, I later turned his project into the topic of my Master's thesis at Columbia University and eventually wrote a book about the tradition (*Jarigan., Muslim Epic Songs of Bangladesh*).



"I am hiding or putting off another project - translating a book for Mr. Jasimuddin For the folk ballad book he got a village "bard" from 100 miles away to come to Dacca so we could tape him singing sample snatches which we did after borrowing a good tape recorder from friends. We had two sessions. I have heard better singers on Radio Pakistan but it was interesting to watch Mr. Jasimuddin asking for certain snatches from the epic and the old bard shutting his eyes and setting to with his croaky voice. I don't know whether I'll be able to catch the melodies to set down in music. I haven't dared try yet."

My early impressions of working with Jasimuddin [MFD letter to CGR 2/2/1965]

"I wish we could leave any mention about the J. family out of correspondence. He is still plaguing Mary Frances to compose poetry for him under the guise of translator. We have countless hours of tape of some tone deaf village minstrel which she reluctantly transposes to ink and paper music western notation. He has called again twice this week but we are both hiding."

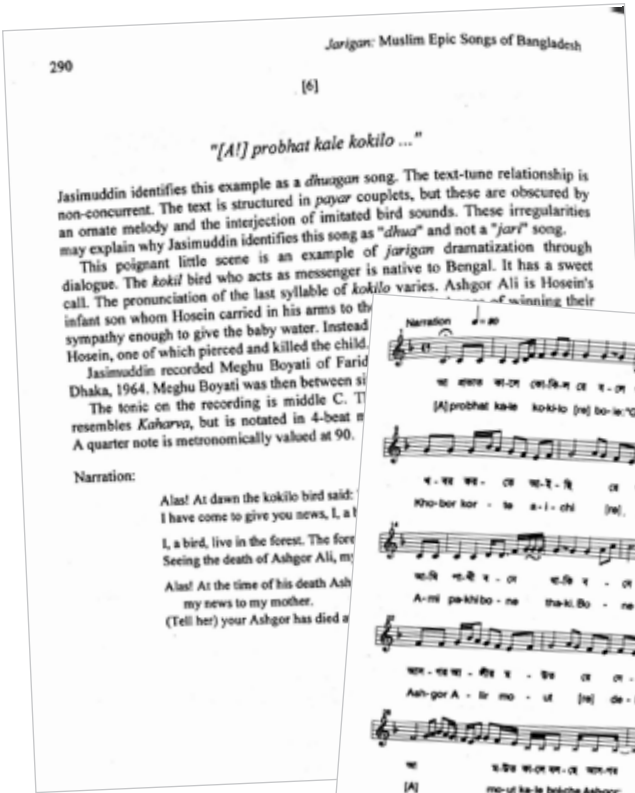
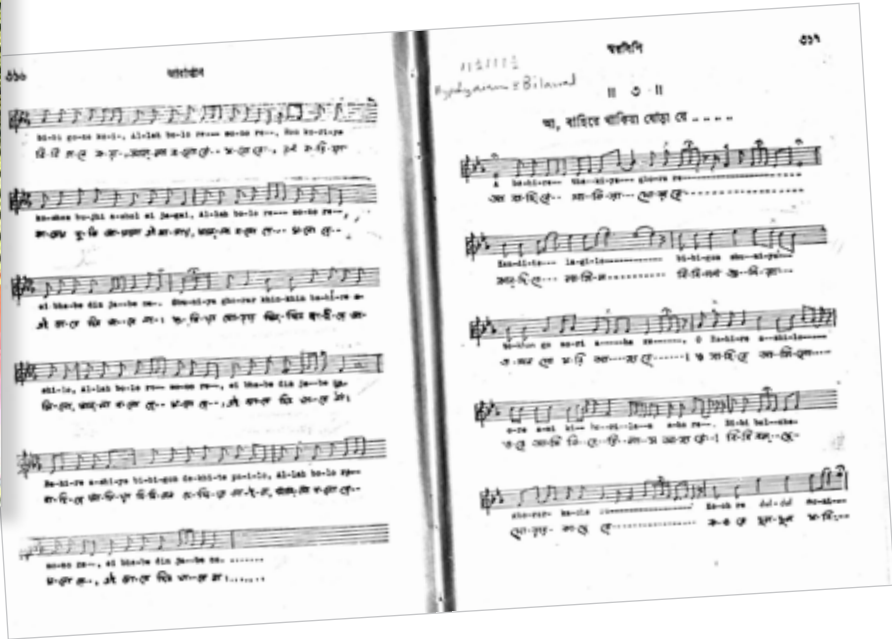
"I gather little Jasimuddin is now with you. I will not enumerate the sins of that family. They had driven the Scargouroughs, Lanfords and other harmless people around the bed, I took the opportunity of the absence of my wife to throw them bodily of of my house. My wife spent almost the entire year transposing musica and translating for him."

Dan never liked Jasimuddin because he felt I was being exploited by him. He disliked Mrs. Jasimuddin even more because of her frequent visits to peruse our commissary stock of imported goods and help herself to whatever she liked. [DCD letter to Kay Donaldson, 8/20/1965]

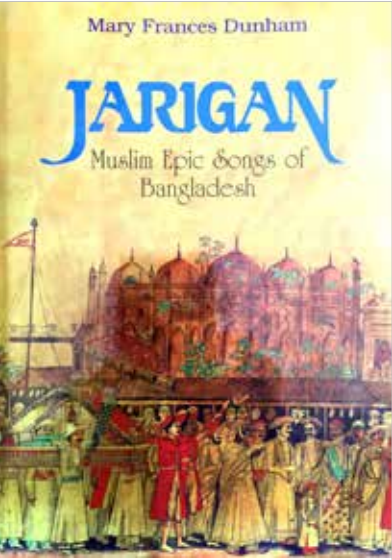
LEARNING MUSIC & DANCE cont.



My transcriptions of the Jarigan songs were all included in Jasimuddin's book published in Bengali titled Jarigan (1968).



In the 1990's, when my daughter was on a Fulbright grant in Dhaka, I took up my Jarigan research again and turned it into a book of mine own on the subject. The book, titled "Jarigan, Muslim Epic Songs of Bangladesh," was funded by the Ford Foundation and published in 1997.



HOW I GOT MY HARPSICHORD

During our second home leave to New York, we stopped in Munich to order a harpsichord, a small version of a harpsichord, with removable legs so that the instrument could be carried in a fitted canvas bag. We had found out that the Neupert Company could make "tropicalized" harpsichords – which meant the tops of the keys were screwed down instead of glued, and the glues used in the frame were special for humid climates. The plan was for Dan to pick up the instrument on his return flight to Dacca.

Getting the harpsichord through customs at the Dacca airport proved more challenging than having the harpsichord made in the first place. When Dan reached Dacca with the harpsichord in tow, the customs officer was pleased to inform him that "pianos were 100% duty chargeable." Dan explained that the instrument was not a piano, but was in fact a harpsichord – which is more like a large guitar than a piano. To prove this he removed the three legs and pranced about the office with the body of the harpsichord under his arms to show how "portable" it was. "Ah, but instruments of any kind being brought in for someone else are 100% duty chargeable." To prove the harpsichord was for his own use, Dan reassembled it and played a few bars of "Chop-sticks" to their great delight. Although the agents never got any fees out of Dan for the harpsichord, they did get a good afternoon's worth of entertainment from him instead.

Once I had the spinet, I received a number of requests to accompany performances of American musicals that were being put on by the foreign community. [MFD letter to Stephen 05/25/1963]

One reason why I had so many jobs this year was the result of bringing back a small harpsichord with us. For a while I was the only known musician in town and had to play the accompaniment for a musical, "Down in the Valley" at the USIS in November and a musical "The Enchanted Isle" in March for a Catholic girls' school. I also helped out at the organ of the Episcopal Church while my friend had hepatitis and when she was over-worked or away. It is only now that I am beginning to have time to practice my own pieces.

HOW I GOT MY HARPSICHORD

In this letter Dan writes in detail about his adventures getting the spinet past Bangladesh customs into Dacca for me.
[DCD letter to MFD 08/19/1962]

will stay where we are as there seems to be a housing shortage. And Parsons Co is returning and needs 50 houses. I have been to a couple of parties with the Texas "Crows" and they should be tired of me by the time you arrive. The part of the "Crows" one is discouraged from taking Rickshaws.

As difficult days go the entrance of a harpsichord into South Asia produced a winner. I actually got the thing home, through customs, and was just sitting down to play Heart and Soul when there was an enormous pounding on the door. Pleasant but firm customs men dragged me and the instrument back to the airport where I was told it would have to go into a warehouse to be cleared as freight and not as baggage. I maintained that I would not be parted from it and if it went into a warehouse so would I. We compromised on leaving it in the director's office. He having sworn ~~to~~ to give his life in its protection in necessary. Clearing it consisted of my giving a brief history of string keyboard instruments to prove it was not "a small piano". Carrying the thing around the office to prove it was "portable" and playing "chopsticks" and

"portable" and playing "chopsticks" and "I love coffee, I love tea" to prove I had brought it for myself alone. (I had earlier made the mistake of saying it was yours)

Anyway it is safe in my office now and I have been playing it almost daily. It is now getting quite seriously out of tune, but I suppose that is normal and all the little brass fittings are getting tarnished. Other than that it seems to be weathering well.

Jack Copeland is delaying the performance of his musical drama until he hears whether you will be the pianist. I have told him it is not your kind of music but he has no one else.

The peace corps is talking about your doing a Bengali text book.

All the students are on week

The Ranches will (as will) have little social before you get there and want him here. They sit house. The French couple with them. Su Non is and would like to be. We need new tone

The peace corps thinks Florence 50 new ones are coming but she must wait until she is here.

If you have the space many and



LEARNING MUSIC & DANCE cont.

LEARNING DANCE AT BAFA

I originally was introduced to BAFA through Professor Ahmed Sharif, my first Bengali teacher from Dacca University. When he heard that I was interested in learning Bengali music and dance, he was delighted to introduce me to Nurul Huda, his relative who ran “BAFA” (Bengali Academy of Fine Arts). I was equally eager to start. I remember taking my bike and going on my own to find the BAFA building on the north bank of the Buriganga River, deep in the heart of the Old City.

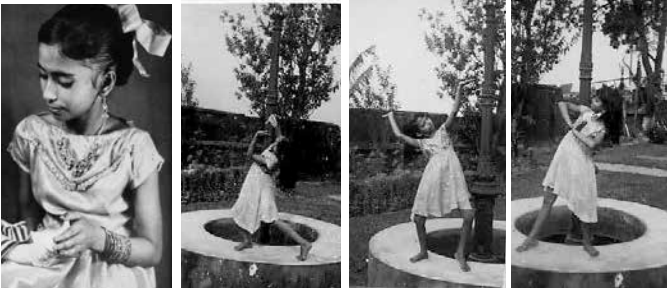
I found my way to the school’s office, passing spacious rooms where dance classes were in session. Sitting behind a large desk, a middle aged, portly man dressed in impeccable Nehru style, was giving dictation to a young woman in a white sari. This was Nurul Huda, the secretary general, and his niece Selina, with whom I became good friends. He immediately stood up and extended a warm greeting. By the end of that first meeting I was ready to enroll in my first class of Bengali traditional dance.



Nurul Huda, Director of BAFA with me.



BAFA dancers en route to Moscow, 1964.



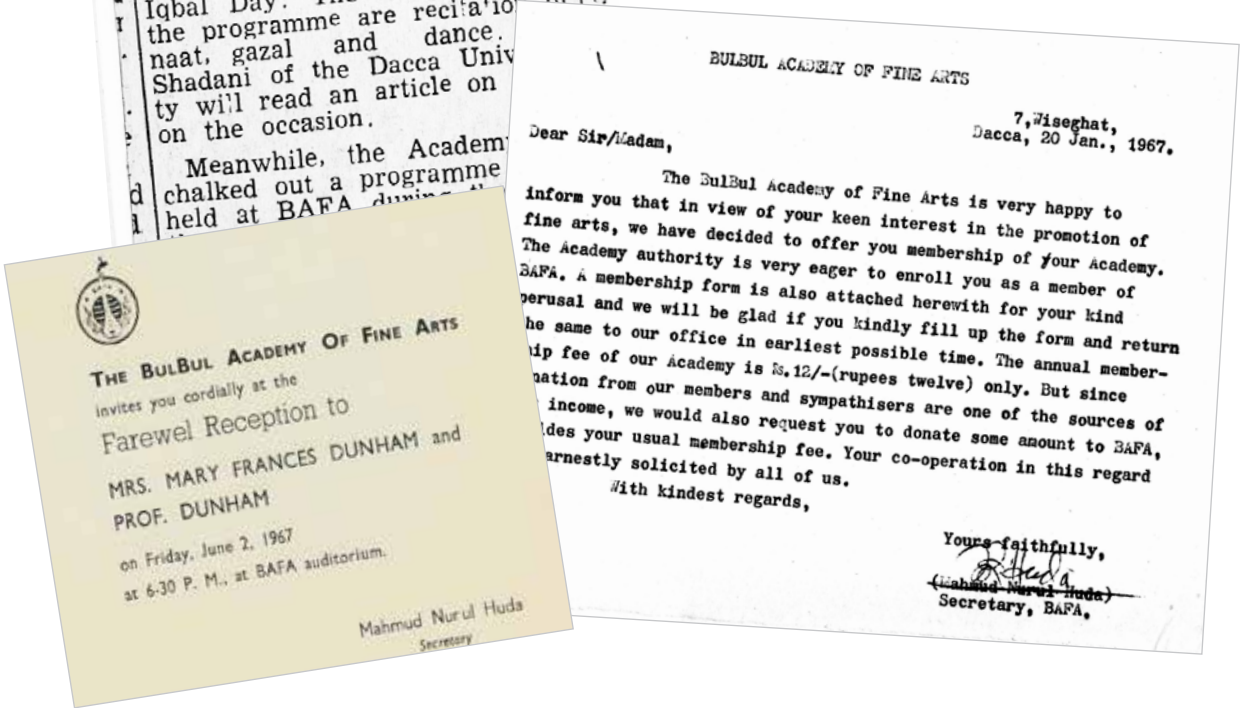
Precocious young dancer at BAFA 1960-61 dancing with her teacher who had been a student of Uday Shankar.

“ELEPHANTS IMITATING SWANS”

When, Danielle Rouch of the Alliance Française and her friend Sunanta, the Thai consort of the French Consul, heard about my decision to take dance classes at BAFA, they asked if they could join me. Mr. Huda had no hesitation in adding them to the beginners’ class with me early on Sunday mornings.

On our first day of class, the three of us got on our bikes early in the morning to make the long ride through Ramna and the Old City to get to BAFA. It’s surprising how little attention we drew as we rode through the city in our miniskirts, considering how few women in general were ever seen out on the streets and those that were out in public were concealed behind their *burkas*.

At BAFA we were shown into a large room where we were introduced to a young lady teacher clad in a sari with its loose end wound tightly around her waist. There were two or three rows of young girls, some in *salwar-kamiz*, some in saris. We were placed behind the last row as the class began. Like elephants imitating swans we clumsily tried to follow our classmates as they gracefully carried out the complex body movements of the dances. The lessons turned out to be too challenging for us and we did not last more than five lessons.



BAFA’S MANSION

BAFA was housed in a fine colonial style mansion on the north riverbank of the Old City. It had a portico in front of the entrance where I could imagine carriages drawing up to discharge guests, like a scene from the film “Passage to India.” The ground floor rooms were spacious, and dark. A broad stairway made of teak with an intricately carved banister lead up to the second floor veranda, where one could enjoy a panoramic view of the busy waterfront of the Buriganga River.



BAFA was housed in a historic mansion much like this one.

LEARNING MUSIC & DANCE cont.

BULBUL ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS

NEW ADMISSIONS ON THE FOLLOWING
SUBJECTS FOR THE SESSION 1963-64
ARE GOING ON .

DANCE

VOCAL MUSIC

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

DRAMA

ARTS & CRAFTS

LAST DATE OF ADMISSION
30th JUNE

Selina Choudhury
Asstt. Secy, BAFA

7, WISE GHAT, Dacca-1

BULBUL ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS
(Registered under Act XXI of 1860)

7, Wiseghat, Dacca
(East Pakistan)
Date.....18.....1961.



BAFA CODE OF DISCIPLINE FOR STUDENTS.

1. Students must be punctual in attendance. Late attendance will be marked as absence.
2. Students must have atleast 75% of the attendance to their credit both in practical and theoretical separately. Failure to do so with sufficient reason will debar them from the next examination.
3. Students must behave themselves decently both in class and outside. They shall not smoke, chew pan, create noise or disturbance or use objectionable language within the BAFA premises.
4. Students must be clean in dress and body and decently dressed inside the BAFA premises.
5. Paying students must pay their fees and other dues in time and must stop attending classes if they three months in default.
6. Female students must not attend classes besmeared with powder rouge, or lip sticks.
7. Students are not permitted to make any demonstration in or outside the BAFA premises. They may however make representation in respect of any grievances through their class teacher to the Principal or through the Principal as well to the Secretary. Students shall not also participate in any propaganda against the BAFA before the public or any Government officer.
8. Students may not approach the Secretary or any member of the committee direct, but may do so through the class teacher and the Principal. If, however, there is any serious grievance against a class teacher they may approach the Principal or the Secretary through the Principal.
9. Students may not participate in any Radio Programme or in Films or cultural function other than that of BAFA without the previous written permission of the Secretary through the class teacher and the Principal. The BAFA expects the full co-operation of the students, guardians in this respect.
10. Students may not take any musical instrument of the BAFA outside the class room.
11. Students may not use BAFA musical instruments outside class without the written permission of the Principal through their teacher.
12. Students must not send any matter or correspondence in BAFA for publication in the press.
13. Students shall not refuse to participate in any of BAFA's functions when called on to do so by its authorities with sufficient excuse.

Twelfth Foundation Day
Anniversary
of
BulBul Academy of Fine Arts

Institute of Engineers
Sunday, April 28, 1968

On the invitation of the Government of Iraq and Iran the Pakistan Government arranged a visit to the two countries by the members of BAFA. The cultural delegation sent by BAFA staged the dance-drama "Nakshi Kanthar Math" in Baghdad and Tehran. The Prime Minister of Iraq was present at a show by BAFA. The Shahin Shah of Iran, the Queen and members of the Royal family witnessed the dance drama with obvious delight.



LEARNING DANCE AT HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL

After our failure with the BAFA classes I did not give up. A year or so later, I was able to resume them at Holy Family Hospital. Somehow I persuaded the hospital to host private dance classes on their grounds. With some other foreign women I organized a teacher and musician to come from BAFA to teach a group of us in their garden. In spite of all my ballet classes in childhood, I was disappointed that I could never master the proper foot slapping sound that is so essential to Indian dancing.



Nachte na janle, uthan baka.
“If the dancer can’t dance the floor
is uneven.”
[A Bengali proverb]

*This excerpt describes my effort to
assemble a group of foreign ladies to learn
traditional Bengali dancing with me.
[MFD letter to Peggy 11/09/1966]*

I got a group of memsabs into a Bengali dancing class after my tabla teacher expressed a desire also to teach dance. We are myself, Mary Ann Hirschorn, Maggie Isenman, Quincy Northrup (new cholera). Foremerly we had Ann W. and Lee too but they dropped out. (In disgust?) Nothing will ever equal the grace of our duet, you and I. We are like a herd of elephants. When we wear ankle bells Mary Ann Says she feels like a reindeer. Our teacher is very patient. He has had dreams of presenting us on television since he began and somehow sticks to it in spite of the reality of what he sees. Sister Rachel (Holy F.) who plays tabla well (she is the other person in my tabla class) accompaniess us out of shere good will and now we have taken over one of the rooms on the second floor in Holy Family for our rehearsals.



LEARNING MUSIC & DANCE cont.

PLAYING THE ORGAN AT ST. THOMAS CHURCH

On several Sunday mornings, I cycled to the depths of the Old City to play the venerable organ at St. Thomas Church. The organ was quite tricky for me to play because I had to use the foot pedals to continuously pump the bellows while playing the keyboard. The instrument was in such poor shape due to termites, dust, humidity, etc. that Bach preludes and chorales sounded more like Stravinsky.



St. Thomas Church, in the Old City, where I had a chance to play the only organ in the city at a few Sunday services.

LEARNING MUSIC AT BARISAL SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL MUSIC

After a trip to Calcutta where I first was exposed to Indian classical music I was eager to learn more about it. I heard about a music school in Barisal, run by a Canadian nun, I was intrigued. This might be a chance to learn about Indian classical music as it is traditionally imbibed at the foot of a master. Her name was Rita Boucher, and she held a masters degree in sitar playing from Delhi. I enrolled for the six week winter session starting in January, 1967. I am pretty sure I was the first American housewife to attend. Most of the students were nuns and other catholic practitioners like Rita Boucher herself.

Life at the school was perhaps the closest experience to living in an ashram that I would ever have. We lived in modest cabins, ate simple meals of rice and *dhal*, and followed a regular schedule of vocal, instrumental and theory classes. The living accommodations of the school were austere, barrack-style dormitories, quite cold and bleak. Perhaps because I was the only foreigner, I got to have a private room, which I shared with a delightful nun, Sister Patricia Mary. Like me, she was American, but she had lived much of her life in Bengal and could speak Bengali fluently. Everyone liked her for her cheery sense of humor and energy: among the boys, she was especially appreciated for her volleyball skills.

Mornings were cold. I always looked forward to the hot sugary milk tea that Rita served before going to the hymn singing class. In that class we sang Bengali Christian hymns set to Tagore style music. At first, these songs seemed rather strange to me, but in time I saw how these songs introduced me to the basic “*thats*” (modes) and rhythms of Indian classical music. Besides the required course in Indian music theory, we were asked to select a specialty course: *tabla*, sitar or vocal. Not having a sitar or *tablas* of my own, I thought vocal would be my best option. I did, however, make a point of auditing the *tabla* lessons as well, so that I could learn a bit about rhythms.

Towards the end of the six week session, when I was beginning to feel a bit home sick, Dan and Katherine paid me a surprise visit. I woke up one morning to hear Katherine’s familiar little voice outside my window. The visit was short, but it reinvigorated me to stay and finish the course. I was able to pass the final exam. Although my vocal scores were low, I did learn a lot about the music theory and I did learn some *raga thats*.

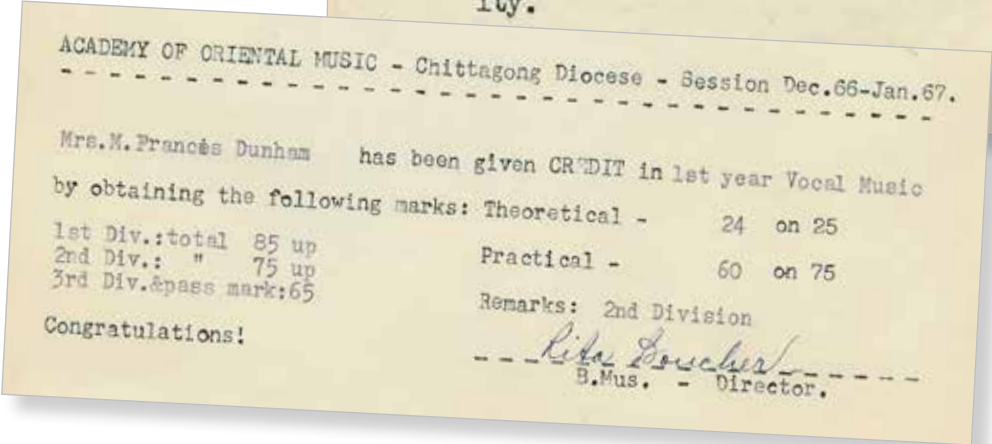
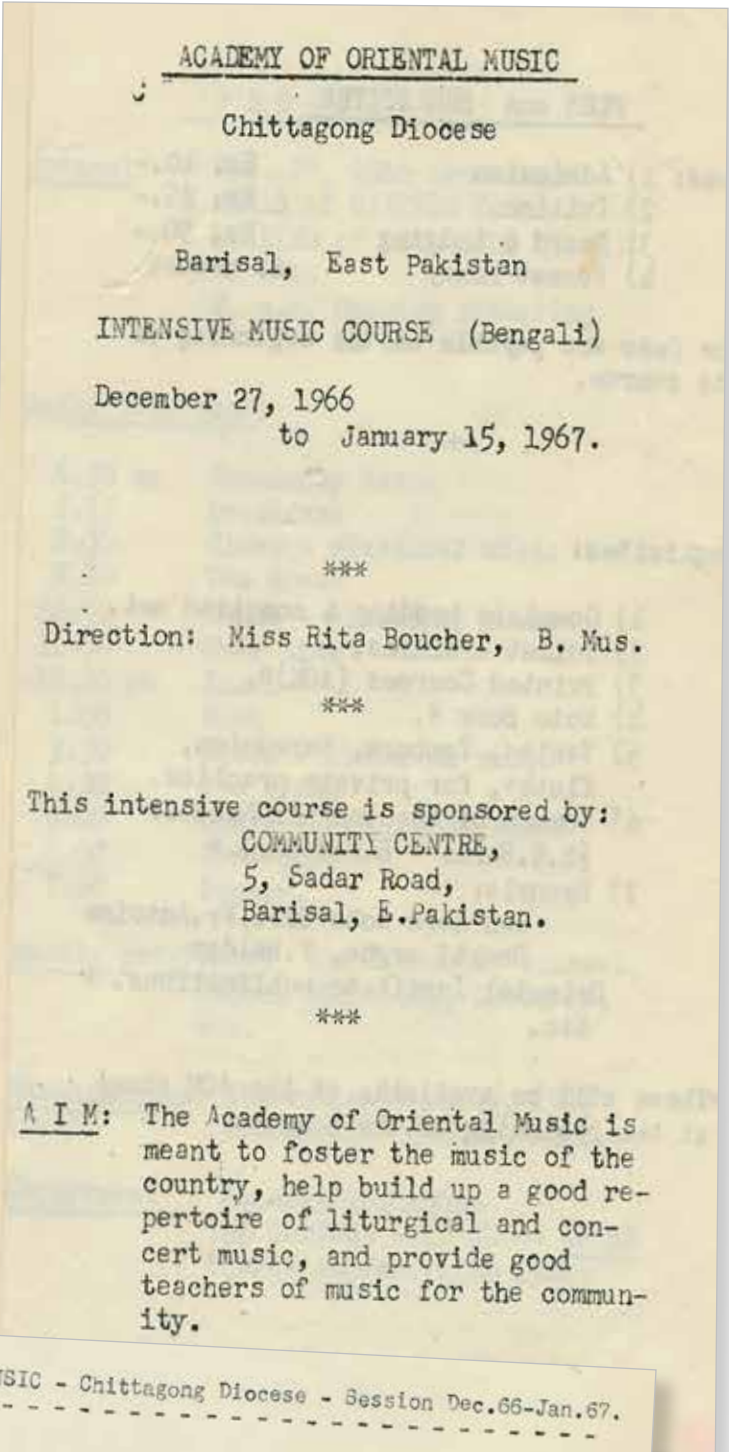
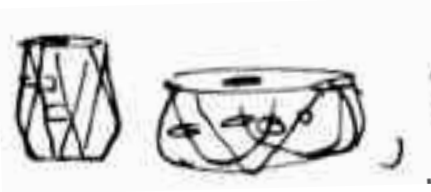
The Barisal course had been an excellent introduction to the basics of Indian classical music and gave me a strong foundation for my future scholarly work on *Jarigan*. I am always grateful to Rita and the doors she opened for me to studying Indian classical music.

“Ah, thou hast made my heart captive in the endless meshes of their music, my master!”

[Tagore, Gitanjali]



This is a page from my Thans textbook and shows the raga formulaic chant for Bhupali rag which I remember to this day.



LEARNING MUSIC & DANCE cont.

This is one of a number of long letters I wrote describing in detail my time at the Barisol School of Music
[MFD diary to CGR 12/29/1966]

Description of
Bengali rural
theatrical
performances

Dec. 29th

I can see where it will be difficult to tell one day from the next. There was a real "jatra" (country style) play last night in the theatre-in-the-road which had been going up since we arrived to the left of the church with some of the cloth ceiling ropes tied to the small spires going around the church roof. Sr. Rachel said the play was very good. Maybe I will see some of the next one to-night. They went on until after 1:00 AM.

The way our classes are progressing is most interesting in comparison with Western methods. If a Westerner entered the class, however, never having heard a rāg, he would find the exercises we are learning abstruse. We are studying one rāg through an acquaintance with its different aspects - scale, parent song, basic patterns of melody, etc. as if a Western student were to learn music by learning a symphony first thing, broken down of course. It took a day to learn the parent song. Yesterday and to-day we have been learning substitutions which can be made half way or wholly through one taal. We have composed substitutions. First we sight read the given

Description of
learning about how
Indian classical
music involves
learning a brief tune
that establishes a
mode and how it is
to be developed in
performance

a given substitution - singing sha-ré-ga, but singing the words of the song when we return to it. Then Rita directs us to sing "a-kar" (ah—) instead sha-ré-ga. It was a first glimpse of what a final performance involves. Once we start singing the tannura is kept going. The singing is kept going and Rita directs us to a new Than (development) as we go. No time is lost.

I have a harder time in the evening class of religious song. The melody and words are learned simultaneously which is more than I can do at once since I do not understand most of the words and can not sight read sha-ré that easily.

If I have never benefitted from the solfège classes at Fontainebleau and in Paris before, I am grateful for them now. The sha-ré syllables are more singable than sol-fa and with previous practice in solfège I almost have relative pitch unconsciously. Some of the Thans we learned have repeated patterns which surpass the bar lines within a taal in a musical way that comes naturally and seems to be easier to learn than the bar by bar Western method.

How I'm grateful for
my solfège training
at Fontainebleau
as a basis to help
understand Indian
classical music

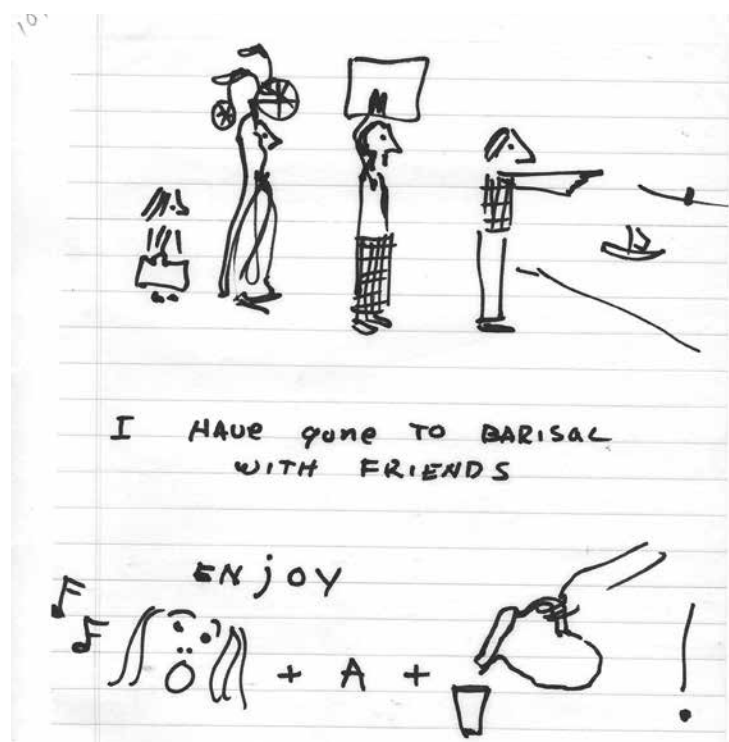
LEARNING MUSIC & DANCE cont.



Me playing my tanpura



Here are some of the instruments that I collected during our time in Dacca including: my tablas, brass finger symbols, ankle bells and a dotara.



Dan's note explaining to someone that he is taking Katherine to visit me in Barisol.

Another long letter describing in detail my experiences at the Barisol School of Music.
[MFD letter to CGR 01/04/1967, pp.1-2]

Cher Papagano,

Your letter has reached me in my "seclusion" in the depths of Bengal, namely at the School of Oriental Music, 90 The Catholic Education Center, Barisal. It takes five days for a letter to reach Dacca. But Dan brought me yours in person along with Katherine and ayah, an enormous undertaking. One time you surprised me at Ecole Champlain and this was the same. I had been here almost a week and was feeling a slight longing to see the home folk. There was a mid-night mass for New Year's (Mass everyday. I attend in order to sing the songs. All is in Bengali.) We didn't get to bed until about 2 AM. Around 6 AM we heard voices outside our window including a child's voice. Sometimes there are beggars around and we thought it must be that. Then I began to wonder and went to the window and there was Dan, Katherine and Theresa. The launch got in Barisal at 4 AM but they had stayed on. Everyone was asleep when they got to our compound and they couldn't locate me. They left that evening. The launch on the following day doesn't leave until the afternoon and that would have been too much for all of us. Dan had been trying to catch a boat since the morning of the day before so they had really been on the move for 24 hrs. Katherine was touching all day. Not like herself. Under my care she fell twice from different high places (she is a great climber). We were all exhausted. But it was fun and I really was happy to have them.

DCD brings Katherine and Theresa (her ayah) for a surprise visit to me in Barisal.

LEARNING MUSIC & DANCE cont.

[MFD letter to CGR 01/04/1967, pp.2-3]

Rita Boucher's
training

The school is the most interesting thing I have done since coming to E. Pakistan. We learn classical music which I have not been able to do in Dacca and in a concentrated fashion. Rita Boucher is a Canadian lady with a Bachelor's degree in Hindustani classical music and she is also a good teacher, a kind of counterpart of Nadia Boulanger. She runs this school during the Ramadan month every year when the classrooms are available which are used ordinarily for a mission school. At the end of four years one would have done an equivalent course such as given in India. You can take voice or tabla. (Tabla means a set of drums played with the hands. It is a complex art and takes years of training. I had started it in Dacca.) I chose voice so I would learn about the scales and melodies used in classical music. C'est passionnant and I have learned more in 10 days than I have in years. We have 4 classes a day - 3 in singing classical and 1 for learning the Bengali hymns which are being composed and promoted for the parishes. We also sing a hymn before breakfast and there is music of some kind going on all day. We have plenty of time to practice too. All the solfège (do re mi) singing I did at Fontainebleau and in Paris is now standing me in good stead. Also I am glad I know as much Bengali as I do. You need to be able to read it as well as speak it here.

Why I decided to
opt for learning
vocal Indian
music over tabla

[MFD letter to CGR 01/04/1967, pp.3-4]

We live in campus style and eat à la Bengali, on a mat on the ~~floor~~ and with our right hand. Rita warned me that the menu would be "frugal" but it is very good. We have no dessert, but I don't miss it. Only my ankles and legs get sore from so much sitting on the floor including the classes. Most of the students are in one room - boys in one, girls in another - for sleeping. About 6 students come from the convent on the compound. There are some Fathers from near and distant parishes staying on the compound. I was given a room with attached bathroom all to myself. Sister Rachel (the one on the record and who takes tabla with me in Dacca) was sent to the convent, but I knew she didn't want to be there so I got her to come to my room. There are a lot of young boys this year so the average age of the whole group (about 50 students altogether) must be from 14-18 yrs. I do a "motley group. One has to give special attention Sister to "les sœurs de l'église Catholique" as you put ~~it~~ it because there are so many in this country and they are doing the most basic things. The other groups (Anglicans, Baptists, etc.) got in later and are not so prominent. We are invited to have tea tomorrow (Ennepavels) at the Oxford Mission where we will also sing.

Daily routine at the
schoolThe students come
from a variety of
backgroundsMy room mate Sister
Rachel

CHILD IN THE GARDEN

বাচ্চা বাগানে *

(BACCHA BAGANE)



* This Bengali wording is from our personal family patois

KATHERINE’S BIRTH

“WHAT DO NUNS KNOW ABOUT BIRTHING BABIES?!”

“Keno baccha nai?” (“Why don’t you have any children yet?”). This is the question that inevitably came up in any conversation with a Bengali in the days before we had Katherine. Happily, we were soon able to put this question behind us. In November of 1963, just when the world was reeling from the news of President Kennedy’s assassination, I got the good news that I was pregnant.

Dan was away in Rajshahi for work, when I got the diagnosis from the chief nun-doctor at Holy Family Hospital that I was, indeed, expecting. When I saw Dan, I told him that “there was going to be a stranger “ in our house (a reference to a line we both knew well from the movie “How Green Is My Valley”). However, I couldn’t tell him when, because the nun-doctors weren’t very precise in their estimate of my due date. “What do nuns know about birthing babies,” Dan liked to say.

In the following weeks, when I was feeling my worst with morning sickness, we had a procession of drop-in guests to congratulate us. Some of whom, I suspect just wanted the excuse to relax in our home and be served foreign treats. One guest in particular, annoyed us because she used the pretense of bringing me yogurt for my health (“Best milk. Straight from my cows.”) to raid our storeroom and help herself to whatever items she liked. During those uncomfortable early months I came to appreciate how practical saris were for pregnancy (although I never wore them myself other than for formal parties). I truly admire the versatility of a sari which can expand or contract to fit any size and is elegant yet simple enough to suit any occasion.

“A portrait on a wall
And friends will come to call
To share with us
Our peaceful living
Later we will see
Maybe there’ll be three
In a bungalow for two.”

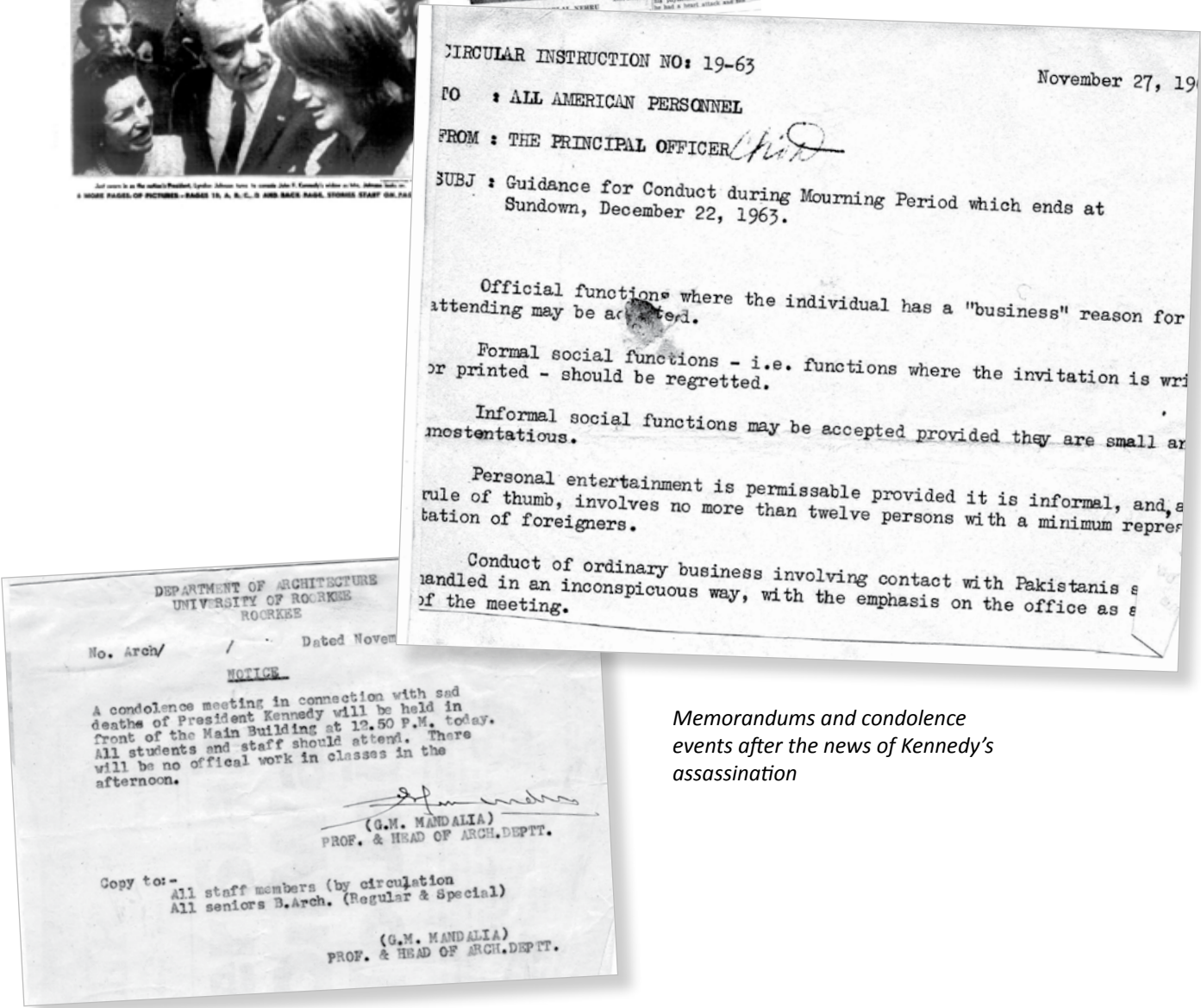
[From “A Bungalow For Two”
song lyrics. King, p269]

WITH EMMY’S HELP ...

Fortuitously, Emmy, my childhood care-taker, was scheduled to visit us in Dacca the winter of 1963. The timing of her visit coincided well with my early pregnancy when her professional –expertise came in handy. Being a graduate of the prestigious Norland Nurse Institute of London, she knew about pre-natal care and “birthing babies.” Like Dan, she, too, didn’t put much faith in “the nun-doctors,” and took over my daily care and health while she was with us. Even when I was feeling most woozy and lethargic in the mornings, Emmy would insist that I take a daily walk up and down Minto Road. Sadly, it wasn’t until almost the end of her stay that I felt well enough to host Emmy as she deserved.



Katherine was born the year both Nehru and Kennedy were assassinated.



Memorandums and condolence events after the news of Kennedy’s assassination

KATHERINE’S BIRTH cont.

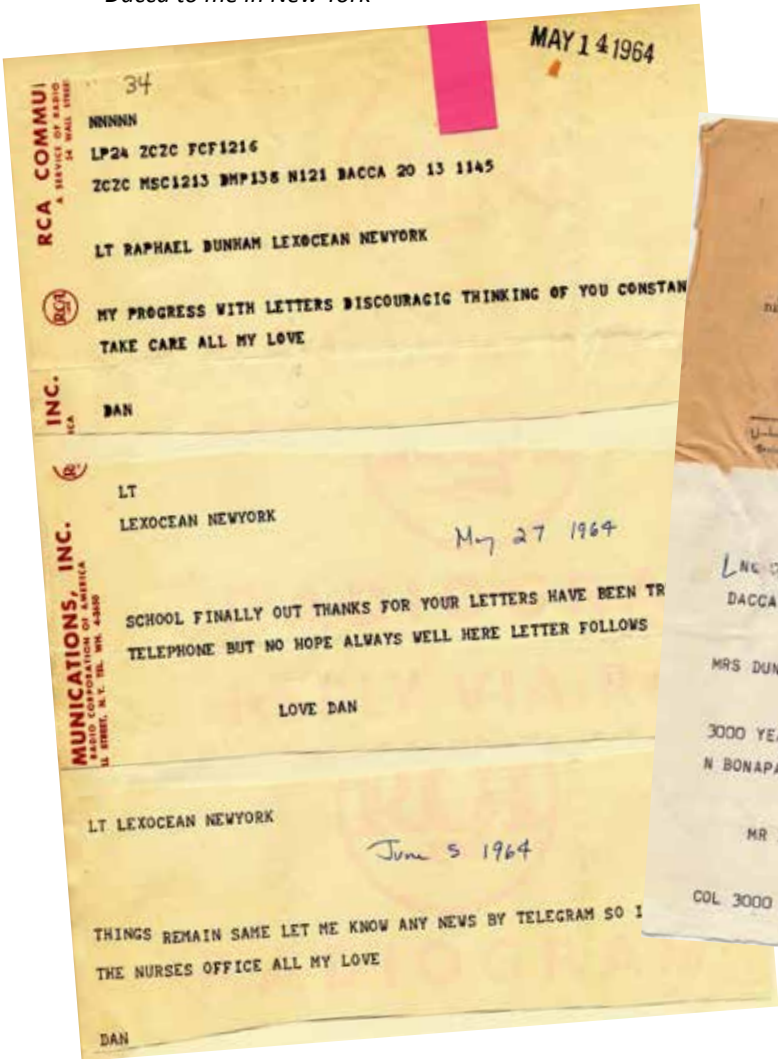


OFF TO NYC FOR THE BIRTH ...

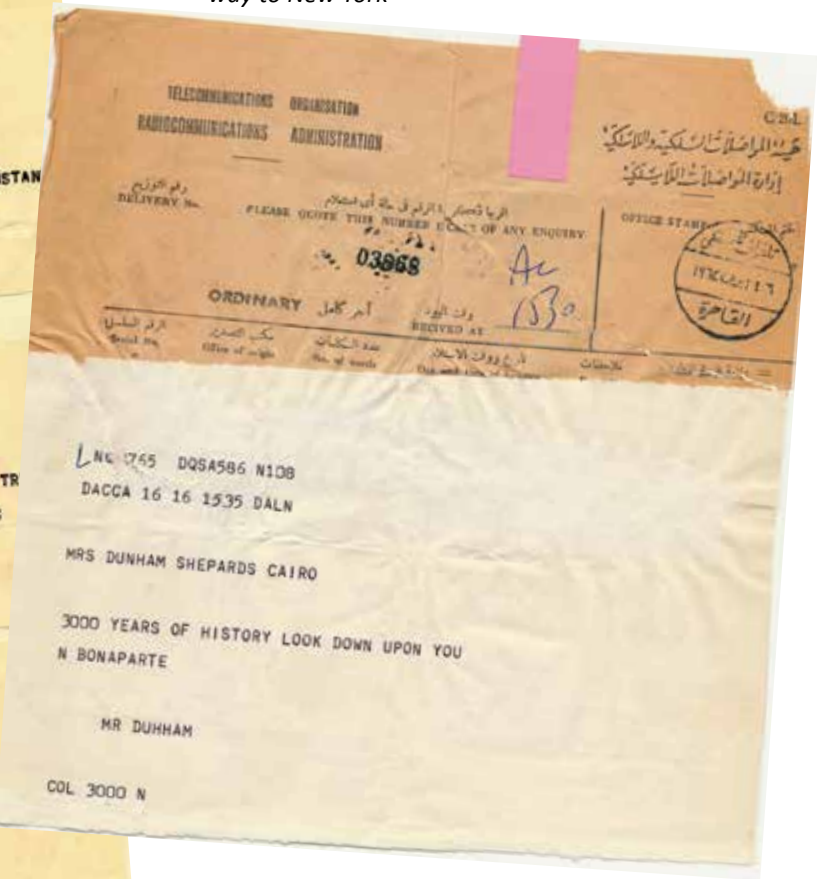
Dan and I decided early on to have the birth of our first child in New York so that my father could be there to enjoy it with us. Having immigrated to the USA as a young man under duress, we knew he would appreciate having his first grandchild to be born in the USA. Not knowing my exact due date, Dan booked my flight to New York for April in hopes that I would not be too pregnant by then to travel.

In his usual fashion, Dan planned my itinerary so that the long trip would be broken up by a layover in an interesting place. For this trip he arranged a stopover in Cairo, booking me at the legendary Shepherd’s Hotel and providing me with a detailed list of sites to visit. Sadly my Cairo stay was clouded by an incident at the Cairo Museum where a rude man couldn’t resist his temptation to take a poke at my large belly. I suppose, a burqua might have protected me from such unwanted attention.

Telegrams from Dan in
Dacca to me in New York

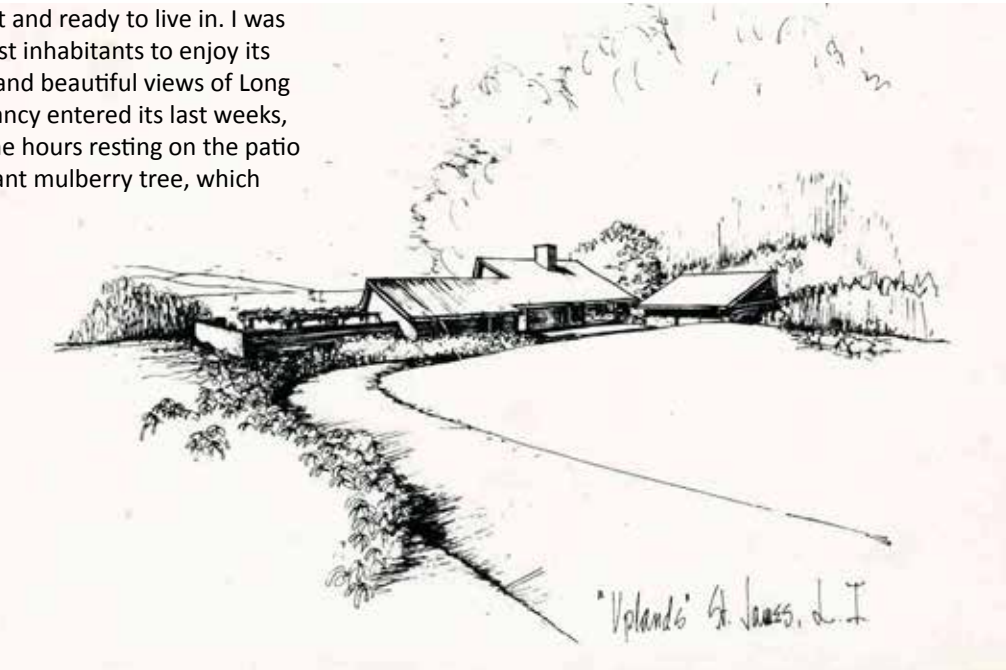


Dan’s telegram to me in
Cairo where I stayed on my
way to New York

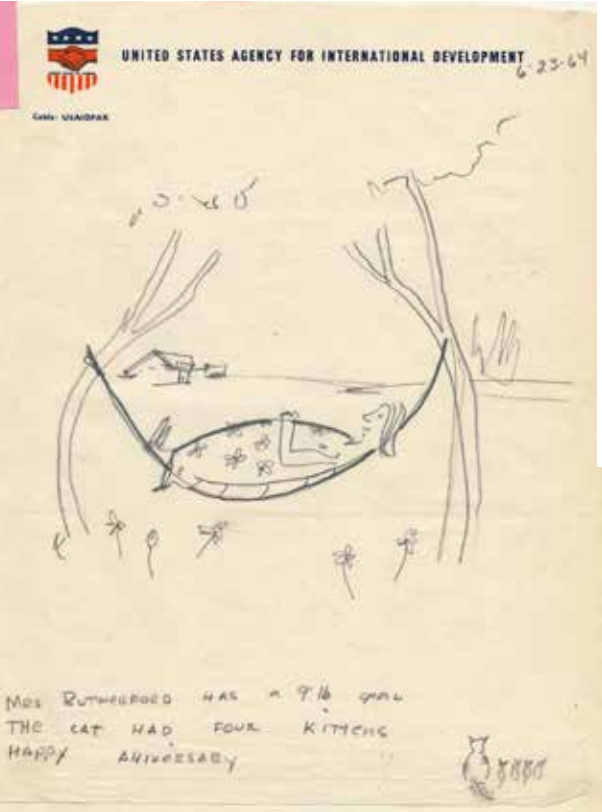


RELAXING AT “UPLANDS”

Once in New York, I busied myself supervising the furnishing of my father’s new house on Long Island, which he named “Uplands.” Dan had designed this house before we moved to Dacca, and now almost three years later, it was built and ready to live in. I was pleased to be among the first inhabitants to enjoy its comfortable breezy spaces and beautiful views of Long Island Sound. As my pregnancy entered its last weeks, I remember whiling away the hours resting on the patio and picnicking under the giant mulberry tree, which stood next to the house.



Dan’s vision of me whiling away the
hours at Uplands, in Long Island while I
waited for Katherine’s birth



Dan’s sketch of the big Mulberry tree at Uplands



KATHERINE’S BIRTH con’t

BASTILLE DAY BIRTH IN NYC

My father and I were dining in New York with our family friend, Elizabeth Walker, when my labor began. Katherine was born soon after at New York Hospital on July 14, 1964. She had timed her birth well so as to coincide with Bastille Day in France, and to this day she looks for opportunities whenever she can to be in Paris or at least among the French on her birthday.



THE LAYETTE FROM DAN

Soon after Katherine was born, a cardboard box from Pakistan was delivered to me in my hospital room. It contained a “layette” of sorts, which Dan had assembled in local Bengali fashion and sent from Dacca. This Bengali style layette was nothing like what one would find at Macy’s. I was charmed by it’s *kacha* appearance and its contents which included: a small, red, sleeveless T-shirt (such as our neighborhood urchins wore), a net cover to keep flies off fruit (and off sleeping babies), a *sushni* (a Dacca-made pacifier) and a silver vessel for *khol* (the black powder traditionally applied around a baby’s eyes to protect against too much light). When I wanted to show off this layette to a friend, I was shocked to find out that a nurse, more concerned with hygiene than with it’s ethnic charm, had thrown it out.



“TWO HUSBANDS?”

The hospital policy only allowed husbands to visit, but since Dan was still in Dacca, my father pretended to be my husband so that he could see me. This meant that when Dan finally arrived, he was questioned as to how many husbands I had: one or two? I don’t know how in the end Dan convinced them that he was my one and only, but somehow he did.

“BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME”

In the month before Katherine was born, while Dan was still in Dacca, he had prepared two sets of cards announcing the birth: one for a girl and one for a boy. The ‘girl’ card, had a little pink bangle attached to it and the ‘boy’ card had something blue (which I can’t remember since we never had to use that card). When Dan received the news of Katherine’s birth, he started distributing his girl cards at the office and to our friends around Dacca. To his consternation, a number of Bengali friends replied with condolences suggesting that we might have better luck next time with a boy.



[MFD letter to Jock Copland, 11/06/1964]

I shall start to end this tedious letter. If it were not for Katherine life in Dacca for the next two years would look fairly grim without you and Fran and the prospect of Irma coming by occasionally and all the activities we used to do dependent on you which have now been cut off. Fortunately Katherine is quite a compensation and Dan is more and more sure she is the prettiest and most advanced child there ever was. I try not to say so but I can't help thinking she is extra-ordinary, so you see we have gone the way of all parents. I couldn't face the meat-safe type bed everyone has for their children so Dan has designed a Moghul bed which we have yet to get made. We have his mother's appartment to get remodelled and decorated and I have hardly got ourselves unpacked since I began this letter so you may not hear more for some time to come.

NAMING KATHERINE

By the time we left New York, we had decided on the name Katherine for our baby. We liked this name for two reasons. One, it honored my blind Greek grandmother who had escaped to the USA with the rest of my father’s family from Turkish persecution. Secondly, we liked the name Katherine in combination with Dunham in honor of the African-American dancer, Katherine Dunham, who was rising to fame in France at the time that Dan and I were studying there in 1951. To the French, Dan could always explain his last name by saying “Dunham, *comme* Katherine” (meaning “Dunham as in Katherine Dunham”).

“... If it were not for Katherine life in Dacca for the next two years would look fairly grim ...”

Deliberating about what to name Katherine - something exotic to please our Bengali friends or something else.
[MFD letter to Jock Copland 11/06/1964]

What did you name them all? Local names? When we finally announced that Katherine would be Katherine, Mrs. Dunham heaved a sigh of relief. She was sure after all the time it was taking us to fix a name that we were planning some exotic and impossible one. Well, we did run through some Pakistani names- "Junu", "Dolly", "Dahlia", etc. It was only because she needed a passport and for that a birth certificate that we were forced to get a name by the time we did.

KATHERINE BEGINS LIFE IN DACCA

THE TRIP BACK TO DACCA

Dan, Katherine and I spent the rest of July and August between Uplands and my father’s apartment in New York before returning to Dacca. My father booked us first class tickets on the SS Vulcania to Naples. Before leaving, Mrs. Garman, the housekeeper who was working for my father, insisted on tailoring me a formal gown for the evening dinners on the ship. So with my elegant gown, and a hefty supply of diapers and powdered formula milk, Dan and I boarded the ship to enjoy our first class cabin with a veranda that turned out to be useful for drying diapers.

The ship stopped at Lisbon where Dan tried the casino, then Genoa before letting us off in Naples. From Naples we rented a car and drove to Sicily, with Katherine’s washed diapers drying out the car window like white flags. From Sicily, we took a ferry to Athens and went by air from there back to Dacca.

To carry Katherine, we were using a duffel bag that she could fit in quite snugly. We were happy with this arrangement until we almost lost her on an airport conveyor belt. She was rescued by a surprised security clerk, who happened to notice something moving inside the bag just before “it” was about to pass through inspection. At the Dacca airport, we were relieved that “importing” our new baby into the country proved much easier than the arduous lengthy process we had experienced to import my spinet the year before.



Katherine in Theresa’s arms



“If ayahs had a fault it was that they spoiled their charges, that they never said no.”

[Allen, *Plain Tales from the Raj*, p.10]

KATHERINE’S AYAH

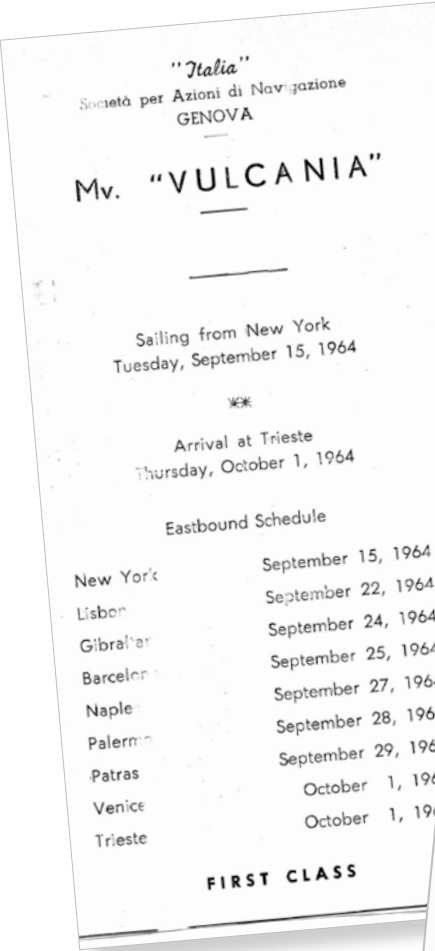
Katherine spent a large part of her early youth in the arms and care of her ayah (nanny) Theresa. Theresa came to us early on through our cook, who was her uncle. Considering all the stories we had heard from other foreigners about the difficulties of finding good child care, we were extremely lucky to get someone as reliable and loving as Theresa so easily. She stayed with our family, sleeping on the floor in Katherine’s room (as was customary for ayahs) until our departure three years later.

PAT’S DESCRIPTION OF THE “AYAH UNION RULES”
[P. Hill, *Moon Bazar*, p.65]

The ayahs had their own union rules which they operated among themselves, somewhat complicated by their rivalries and intrigues. (And there were Baptist and Catholic factions; almost all of them were Christian.) If an ayah had been out of work longer than the others, for example, she might have a priority on the next opening. Some households had a bad name among the ayahs, perhaps because the family had changed servants too often, or because their cook or bearer was a trouble-maker. Once, when Pat had placed three ayahs at various houses, she was incensed to find that the ayahs had privately reshuffled the jobs according to their own system, and each mansahib was baffled to find that the ayah who appeared at

is caphivating. I would spend the entire day with her if I could. Fortunately I don't or she would be even more spoiled. She has the ayah, the servants, and a grandmother as well in adoration. She only has to whimper and sixteen people come running from all sides. She is really pretty with her long hair, big eyes and smile, rosy cheeks too, at the moment. She has had her first expedition into the country. We went with Hugh to visit a mission about 10 miles out of Dacca. We had to walk along country lanes for about half an hour carrying her and she thoroughly enjoyed it.

Spoiling Katherine:
“... she only has to whimper and sixteen people come running from all sides ...”
[MFD letter to CGR, 12/29/1964]



We escaped the mainland by boat, the Mn Vulcania. When asked what that was Dan would answer the sister ship to the Lusitania, but when asked that we were going on the stock broker, he answered that we were going on the Lusitania and the man continued in the interview in a testy manner. If you have never heard of it, it is the oldest of the Italian line and due to be scrapped this Jan. In the brochure we saw that the dining room had an enormous chandelier (we planned to go first class), De la robias and mirrors with candelabra, our cabin with a private deck, and all the old world charm and service to make a pleasant two weeks voyage to Palermo with stops in Lisbon, Barcelona, Naples, The night before we got my first class wardrobe together from my scanty supply of old dresses that fit (I've gained ten pounds) and several Saris with stoles, jewelry, and a dress which my father's housekeeper sewed in a day from 99cent material got at Macy's. I was the best dressed, at night at least, of first class, and while several of the other ladies put on the same dress twice, I always had a new way to drape a sari or combine a stole and always got comments. We hid the fact that we had to start dressing an hour ahead of time while Dan excersized his art of draping lenghts of material in different ways. He wore his tuxedo for all the galas and we wished you could have seen us. Being the youngest couple also added to our popularity amongst the returning immigrant set which composed the majority of first class. Fortunately we had some friends in cabin class, a friend of Dans from Paris days with her three girls and another couple. At Lisbon we took on my father but while we were in port made for Estoril and the casino where Dan won \$60 while we dined and watched the

Description of our time traveling on the Mn Vulcania ocean liner which we took from New York to Naples when Katherine was two months old. [MFD letter to Jock Copland, 11/06/1964]

KATHERINE’S VISIT TO HOSNABAD

Within a few month’s of bringing Katherine back to Dacca we took her on a trip to Hosnabad to visit the families of Our Gang. We stayed with Wohab’s family and spent our days visiting families and distributing gifts. [MFD to CGR, 02/02/1965, pp.1-2]

Traveling to Hosnabad by bus, boat and walking

Countryside scenery

Arriving at Wohab’s house

The rice is green, the bright yellow mustard blossoms in bloom, and a bright blue oil plant blossom and the country is lovely from the raised road as you speed comparatively along, lurching and rocking with the dust pouring in the back windows. The buses are old wooden boxes, the seats are wooden benches. We had left at 6:30 from the house in the cold grey dawn bundled up, looking like refugees (except Dan in gentleman outfit for the village) As the day warmed up Katherine & I stripped more and more. The country boat ride is always so peaceful and you are so close the riverside activities - brass pots, dishes, & plates polishing, bathing, children playing, cattle being washed - tiny birds which flash with a deep turquoise blue as they flit off from the reeds, strange forests of dried husks stuck near the bank for catching fish, the glistening solid curve of a dolphin appearing now and then, other boats passing - always my favorite place to be here.

Dan left me in Wohab’s house after eating a full meal magnificently prepared and went back the old way - across the fields then

6. Then lunch. He got home by mid-night the same day, a long arduous day for him.

I stayed that night, the next day, the next night, the morning of the next day before reversing the journey back. Theresa, the ayah, and I arranged with the near by convent to store Katherine’s milk in their Kerosene run refrigerator. I cut down on the variety of things she has started eating during the trip to simplify the complicated preparations where there is no ^{helpful} equipment. The ayah spent the nights in her own house across the river near the cooks compound (the largest of all our servants houses with beautiful carved door posts & panels & window panels, 2 lovely grown daughters, one with a grandchild for her, and another to be soon married. She has six children in all. The others are in Karachi.)

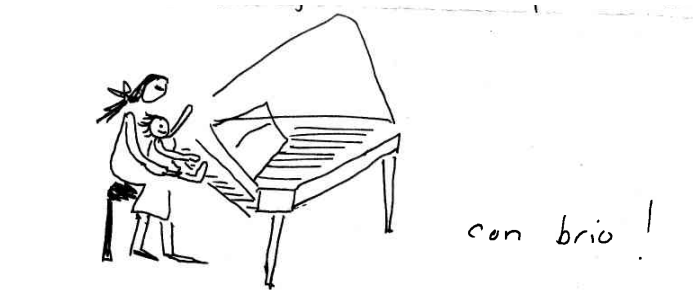
I slept with Wohab’s mother on the usual big table bed with I don’t know 3 or 4 others on the floor. Wohab & wife & baby were in the next room. It was refreshing to have cold nights for the first time. We usually go too late. Wohab had mattresses and a lovely warm eiderdown as well as sheets and the traditional inside shangana. I slept well but Katherine would

First night in Theresa’s house

Cook’s family compound across the river

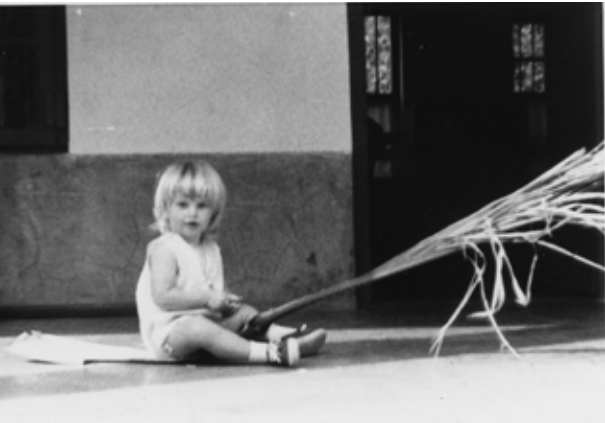
Second night sleeping with Wohab’s mother

KATHERINE GROWING UP AT HAFIZ VILLA



KATHERINE'S ACTIVITIES WITH OUR GANG

We gave Katherine the spare room in the kitchen wing where she slept in a sturdy bamboo crib that Dan had designed for her. During the days, much of Katherine's time was spent with our Gang: usually with Theresa, Wohab and/or Mali. She was often entertained by watching the daily household activities such as Cook chasing the ducks, Mali watering the plants with a scoop and bucket, Wohab hanging out the laundry etc. For lack of toys of her own, she loved to squeeze Biral's latest litter of kittens or play my set of tablas. Theresa often took Katherine to play with the local children at neighboring houses which gave Theresa a chance to chat with her neighbors.



KATHERINE AT PLAY



Tai, Tai, Tai, Mamar bari jai
Mamar bari khub moja, khil jor nai.

Tai, Tai, Tai, I go to uncle's house;
Uncle's house is great because there are
no beatings

[From a common Bengali nursery rhyme]



Dan describing Katherine's lack of toys especially
as compared to the other foreign children
[DCD letter to Kay Donaldson, 1965]

Thank you again for Katherine's (I assume M.F. has already
done it) little dog. She has fewer toys than any foreign child
on the delta. We have trained her to play with bricks and cow
dung patties, and as long as she seems happy with them we count
on neighbors for anything above that level. It is an economical

MFD's diary 1966

Katherine, 18-19 months

Activities: swinging at the school across the
road and down a lane. A passion. The moment she
starts tugging in that direction easy to see wa
what is on her mind. Inistent. And once there
hard to get away. Running up and down the see-
saw board. Her own swing at the house from her
little cane chair and ropes. Going for rides in
her bicycle seat. "Playing" ball with us or the
field children. Opening my costume jewelry case
taking all the contents out, putting some on,
examining and rearranging the others. Same with
desk supplies in the pottery spice bowls on my
table. Going to Ispahani clony where Theresa
has friends and she does and there are swings
and see-saws and jungle gyms. Car riding in
the jeep, Peggy's car, Roy's car. "Playing" the
hapsichord, recorder, bells, tabla. Playing
"I'll catch you". Bathing in her aluminum tub
on the verondah. Being with animals , cows and
calfs, biral, dogs, birds (notices their calls)
lizard, insects, ducks, "Mr. Bhutto", Peggy's
goose, and her duck, all and any. Eating,
especially spaghetti, beef.

Languages: Bengali- biral, ayah, hand gesture meaning
all gone. English- moon, o.k., please, no, also
Bengali na, Her own - noom, nasal and guttural
ramblings, Bengali- Baba, cha cha, ma-ma, ami
English- high-high, sit!,

Looks : sturdy blond, solid but limbs quite shapely,
round head, hair just long enough for a little
pony tail going straight back otherwise Beatle
like prince valiant hair style with shaggy blond
bangs all around little face. Deep blue eyes,
pink cheeks.

Character: cheerful but willfull. but tries
winsome ways first now that has learned please.
When knows has done wrong blinks her eyes and
smiles to win affection first. Succeeds. Likes
to share her food but this is a game. Looking
for activity all her waking hours. Not docile
nor particularly affectionate.

KATHERINE’S FIRSTS ...

FIRST STEPS

Before she was eight months old, Katherine started walking. I remember the evening Katherine entertained Louis Kahn with her shaky first steps. At that time, Kahn was our guest for dinner, during one of his visits to Dacca to oversee the construction of the “Second Capital.” Katherine became so accustomed to going barefoot that on her first home leave visit to New York she insisted on keeping her shoes off when walking outside on the city sidewalks.



FIRST WORDS : “KULE KULE” *

Since we continued to speak our kacha Bengali around the house, Katherine grew up during her first years without hearing much English. One of the first words that Katherine spoke was “Kule!” (a Bengali expression for “pick me up,” but which literally means “On the breast!”). When we were visiting my father in New York or he was visiting us in Dacca, he would often laugh to find that he could not communicate with her. We loved how Katherine from early on, naturally followed the Bengali custom to refer to our male friends as “Chacha” (uncle). Hence Roy became Roy-Chacha and Hugh became Hugh-Chacha etc. Another one of her early words was “hat” – her favorite toy being a brightly painted wooden elephant on wheels. Later she had a toy horse on wheels that she also liked.

Katherine first learned to speak Bengali before English.
[MFD letter to Aunt Antigone, 12/02/1966]

English. We keep saying we must start speaking English to her because she is not learning a good Bengali anyway, but we can't break ourselves of the habit of speaking our bad Bengali to her. The Pakistanis , of course, are exstatci when they hear she can only speak Bengali, but what will her grandparents think.

* This Bengali wording is from our personal family patois

FIRST SCHOOL

By the time Katherine was four years old, she attended the little nursery school down Baily Road run by an East Asian lady out of her house. The school had a small pool on a raised platform, which made it easy for her to handle the children when they were in the pool. Katherine loved this chance to be in the water. The best lesson Katherine learned at that school was how to fold her napkin neatly and place it on her lap.



Katherine has been going to a little “school” for the past two months: twice a week for an hour and a half. She loves it and has to be dragged away. The school is run by a Mrs. Smith, the young Korean (?) wife and a British Council man. She has a lot of equipment, hundreds of small articles and containers, blocks, and heavy out door equipment. She is good with the organizing and yet keeping things informal. She was a bit perplexed when she found out that Katherine speaks only Bengali (all the other children are English speaking but there is a Bengali spe king ayah and chowkidar who are delighted to be interpreters.) Katherine excels in sports. She can jump from the highest places.

[MFD letter to Peggy Azbill, 11/09/1966]



Katherine’s nursery school was run by a Korean woman who was “perplexed” that Katherine could only speak Bengali

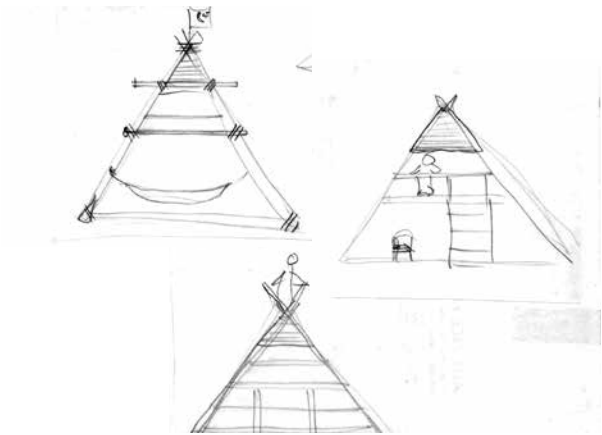
KATHERINE’S 2nd BIRTHDAY



the middle of the dining room. I put the big brass tray in the middle heaped with party favors all individually wrapped and worth about 3 cents each from Chawk Bazaar, and a brightly painted Bengali wooden elephant which Dan had brought back from Demra in the middle. There were pillows all around the table and each place had a white plate, pink napkin, plastic bowl with pink flowers painted on it, plastic spoon and frok, little plastic glass with pink flowers, and a little plastic pink ball on the top like a bubble. The walls were festooned with the Christmas paper flags and with balloons. In the front garden the servants carried a large jungle gym in the shape of a TP which Dan had made for the Katherine the week before. That too was draped in colored paper flags and looked very pret with the children in their party clothes all over it.

[MFD letter 07/1966]

Katherine’s second birthday was a grand event. For the indoor festivities, I arranged the dining room with a large, low table, surrounded by small *mora*’s for the kids to sit on. I had not counted on how crowded the room would get when each of the eighteen children was accompanied by their own personal ayah.



DAN’S BIRTHDAY JUNGLE GYM

For the outdoor recreation, Dan designed and constructed a pyramidal jungle gym of bamboo poles. He placed it in the vacant lot next to Hafiz Villa where neighborhood children could play on it too.



Mona standing behind Dhanish

GUESSING DHANISH’S AGE

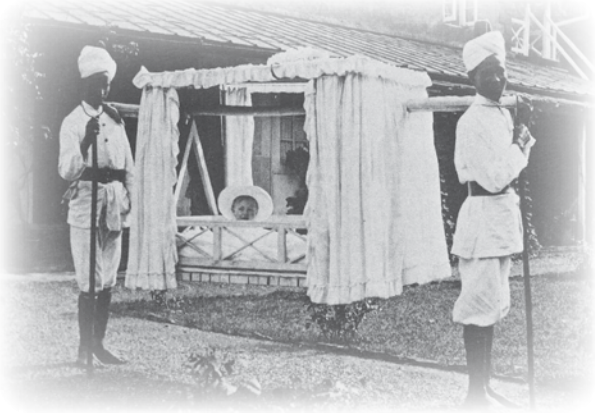
Dan’s office driver, Ruplal, brought his wife, Mona, and their firstborn son, Dhanishlal, to Katherine’s second birthday party. Later, when we helped Ruplal’s family immigrate to the USA, we used this photo of Dhanish to help us estimate his age for his immigration papers. Since most village Bengalis did not have birth certificates, Dan and I had to invent them for all of Ruplal’s family members. Using this photo we decided that since Dhanish looked about one year younger than Katherine we would give him her same July 14 birthday date, but with the following year.

KATHERINE’S TRANSPORT

As soon as Katherine could sit up for long stretches of time, I designed a seat for her on my bike. I had the frame built by a local welder and the seat woven in in the local style with colorful plastic strips. With her securely placed in the seat on my front handlebars, I could take Katherine with me everywhere on my usual rounds. Thinking back on it, I must have been quite a sight biking through the male-dominated cycle traffic of Dacca in those days. A foreigner on a bike, a woman on a bike, a woman wearing a mini-skirt, a baby being carried on a bike – any one of these aspects could have been perceived as an affront to local customs. But in combination – I was such a novel sight that perhaps I was perceived more as a harmless curiosity than a disturbance.



Katherine in the bike seat I had made for her



Katherine and me in the rickshaw

KATHERINE’S PLAYMATES



Katherine with Huru, who lived near by. He was very bright and used to come over every day for lessons with me. His father was a rickshaw driver.



AMARS*

DAN’S BOOK FOR KATHERINE’S BIRTHDAY

Dan made for Katherine a charming book, which he called in his own personalized form of Bengali: “Amars” (“My’s”). The pages were made of cardboard: each one with a drawing of some object or person in Katherine’s daily life and ending with a little mirror in which she could see herself.



* This Bengali wording is from our personal family patois

A mirror on the last page for Katherine to see herself



Our family as imagined by a rickshaw artist (see volume 3, chapter 9)