

Well, then there was the Saga of our 'Morris Minor' family car

The story starts when I got orders at West Point in 1959 to be assigned to the 25th 'Tropic Lighting' Infantry Division, stationed at Schofield Barracks, on the island of Oahu, Hawaii.

I would have to get there with all my family, and decide what to take or not for at least a 3 year tour.

Including the question of our aging and pretty large station wagon car. Have it shipped, get rid of it and buy a new one in costly Hawaii, or something else.

Since my orders permitted my family - me, Patsy, David, and young Rebecca, to travel by ship from Camp Stoneman, the California fort with wharves that had been the embarking place to the Pacific for the US Military - throughout WWII. It was near San Fransisco. But as long as we were going to drive to California, had a good month getting to Hawaii, and since Patsy's older brother, Vernon Simpson lived in (or near) Los Angeles, she had not seen him for years, we decided to visit him before we reported to Stoneman during our authorized 30 days of leave as well as 'travel time' to our new station. He owned a restaurant.

In telephone conversations with him, planning our trip, we

learned he was acquainted with many several dealers there. Vernon was a wheeler-dealer. Since we knew that the Army was willing to ship our car to Hawaii and back, we considered the idea of driving to see Vernon, have him line us up with a car dealer who could take our aging car off our hands and sell us a new one, which we would take with us.

So we packed our household things in an Army contracted Moving Van, and consigned the heavy furniture to a storage service in Denver, bid West Point audue took what we would need to travel to Hawaii with in our car, and drove to Los Angeles by a southern route.

We stopped in a motel close to Vernon's nice restaraunt, visited with him, and then he accompanied us to a couple of dealerships.

Now we knew Oahu was a pretty small island, we certainly on a Captain's pay could not buy a fancy car, would not need another station wagon, but since the Army would ship the car if we got it to Stoneman, we looked at some smaller, sporty looking ones. The Hippies were into Volkswagons. We laid eyes on a new, blue and convertible-roof English Morris Minor 1000. THAT hit the mark. Small,

cheap, convertible-top in the Hawaii sunshine, seating for the four of us, had some rear trunk space, with an engine in front, and was new.

I can't remember what it cost, but it couldn't have been much. Maybe \$1,500 with our trade in. No need for financing.

We bought it. I called USAA got it immediately insured, put a temporary CA plate on it, and we were soon off for San Fransisco - 500 miles further north - as happy campers.

We also visited Dorothy, my older sister whom I think lived in Oakland then, across from San Fran.

We tootled around, and as I recall, drove into one of the very first McDonald's in the US.

Then came the time to turn the car into Camp Stoneman, so they could, on their schedule, ship it after we had sailed on the passenger-type ship. Dorothy chauffeured us around. And with her following me I drove to Stoneman to turn it in, with my orders as documentation. It was NOT clear when we would see it again. It would show up in Honolulu, eventually. Maybe from a later supply ship.

But the day we showed up to board the Military passenger liner, I was thrilled to learn, that our small Morris Minor has already been tucked into the same ship, with a few other cars! What good luck!

Dorothy, with I think her youngest son, Eric, saw us off at the Dock at Stoneman.

So we sailed for Hawaii with other relocating military families, knowing our little blue new Morris Minor convertible was on the same ship as we were!

I hardly remember the 7-10 day's ocean trip on a less-than fancy Ocean Liner.

We arrived, got into some temporary place via taxi, overnight, and then, next morning I was able to go to the dock area and take custody of our little blue Morris Minor!

Here is a photo of Patsy, young David and younger Rebecca in our new Morris in Hawaii.

Married Life (10A) Saga of Our Morris Minor

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