
Christmas letter 2022

A citizen of Trier, Germany, writes a letter to family and friends, 300 years after the publication of Daniel Defoe's

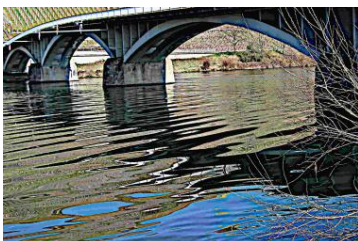
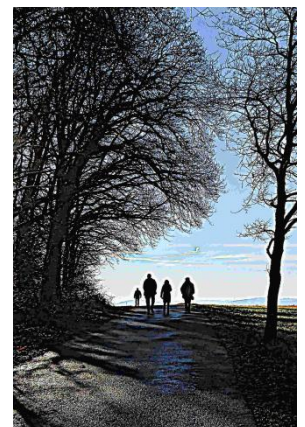
A
JOURNAL
OF THE
Plague Year:
London 1722

A Journal of the Third Plague Year: Being Observations or Memorials, of the most Remarkable Occurrences, as well Publick as Private, which happened in our Home Town of Trier during the third Great Visitation in 2022.

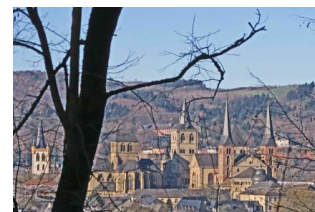
We scarce need tell the Reader that by the beginning of the year 2022, we, among the rest of our neighbours, heard that the Plague was returned for the third year in succession. It mattered not from whence it came, but all agreed it was come again. Reports reached the whole nation, albeit with false rumours spread by Astrologers, Oracles, Quacks and Sellers of Snake Oil, who prey on the poor of mind. In the preceding year the Chirurgeons had found out a new Medicine which much alleviated the Scourge, such that by the summer of 2022, people began to forget it, and had cast off Apprehensions, but that too fast given that many still died, and of the same Distemper.

Since Feasting and meeting in Tipling-Houses was the greatest occasion of dispersing the Feaver, this had for a time been wisely forboren under Orders and Allowances, and had led to bitter Lamentations amongst many who understood little of *correlation, cause and effect, elementary statistics* and *exponential curves*. These Restrictions on social meetings strove after a publick Good that justified the private Mischief. This simple Ethical Principle was not understood by Politicians, who, unperswaded by Reason, neglected to impose the new Medicines, by means of a simple Injection, on the entirety of the Populace.

January to December. Notwithstanding, it being known that the Disease spread most in enclos'd publick spaces, along with a distinguished band of Authors, Historians, Judges, Sculptors, Teachers and Translators we resolv'd accordingly to go regularly out of town, to walk, drink, eat, and trade gossip. We walk'd a great Way into the Fields, Woodlands and Hills, and along Rivers, and had many glorious Scenes before our Eyes, such as those illustrated. When fatigued, 'tis true, we forwent the exercise and supped in spacious Beer Gardens, returning to our own Dwelling very well satisfied with the day's Pleasures.

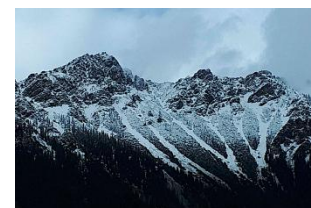


June. My wife, having four cousins descended from her father's sister and two siblings, she bade them all, along with their spouses, come from their bucolic homes in the remote Hills of Swabia to the Metropolis of Trier. Together, we did walk past Vineyards to a viewpoint on St Peter's Mount high above the Town from which can be spied many Churches. The Company reckon'd it a very brave and most magnificent Sight well worth visiting. Together with her mother, who lives in a Residence for the Senior Citizens of the Town, they took most especial pleasure in the Taverns and ice-cream Parlours, and in a journey in a horseless carriage, planning perchance to reserve Roman, Christian and Marxist monuments – for which the oldest City in Germany is principally renowned – for future cultural and educational Visits.



August. Judging the northern Flatlands far enough from the main centres of the Scourge, my wife and her mother travelled to the Lüneburg Heath, where they did stay in a most well appointed Inn, wandered in the heather amongst the exotically named Heidschnucken, and visited relatives in their various abodes. They returned well rested after their long journey.

September. Likewise, judging the thinly populated German-Austrian border to present little danger of Infection, my wife and I holidayed in a mountain Village, where we rented spacious Rooms in the house of the local Baker, and spent the days walking (and dining in rustic Guest Houses). Strangely the Paths and Ways had become longer and steeper and the Summits higher and more distant than in our youth. The snow was not yet in the Valley but on the Heights, and we were all too grateful that the cold nights were warmed by the constant fires of the Bakery in the cellar. Meanwhile our cat Laurence holidayed (and slep't) in a Pension in the nearby Eifel hills.



For to tell of our many other adventures and encounters we have no space. 'Twas indeed a strange year: a warring Tyrant in the East and a new King in the West. More than a few friends and family members fell briefly prey to the dreaded Lurgy, but all were protected with the new Medicines found out by the Chirurgeons and were thus thankfully spared serious Illness. And so we beg to wish you:

Happy Christmas 2022!
Happy Hogmanay!
Happy New Year 2023!

