The Bandera Prophet

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Sublime Rambling #6

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The Bandera Prophet

English epistle #2
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We spent Christmas alone together and it was nice. Hubby got off early on Christmas Eve. He also got off the day after Christmas, which is a national holiday here called Boxing Day. He had to work the Saturday after Christmas though.
Christmas Day the weather wasn't great — rainy and very windy. But we got out and drove around. Found some interesting looking places we wanted to explore more when the weather improved. However, we did get some photos of a pre-historic tomb in a mound in the earth — someone very important to the people of that time must have been buried there.
Boxing Day, the weather improved a great deal. No rain, in fact it was sunny. Very high wind but not bitterly cold. So we took off in the car. We went back to Merry Maidens, a pre-historic stone circle — like Stonehenge but smaller and close by. I'm taller than the stones outside the circle, which had fallen over and were mostly covered by earth. I wish I knew why the circles were built, what purpose they served, what the people were thinking of when they built them.
Then we went to the Minack Theatre. The entire theatre is made of stone, carved in the side of the granite cliff overlooking the bay near the town of Porthcurno at Land's End. A wealthy woman had it built there in the early 30s, I believe. In the stone seat backs on the lower seats are carved the names of the plays performed there, and the years they were performed. The plays are done only during the summer tourist season.

The entire backdrop is the view of the Atlantic ocean. The whole thing is very impressive.

Then we lunched at the pub in the small town of Sennen, at Sennen Cove, at the tip of Land's End — near the cable station where Hubby is working. This is one of the pubs where he and the other men eat lunch each day. While we were there the place was crowded. Whole families came in, one with a darling infant in a carrier. A couple of people brought their dogs in with them. This is a dog-loving country. The dogs go everywhere with their masters and, for the most part, are very well behaved. Most of the dogs are working type dogs, sheepdogs and border collies. However, we have seen a Doberman, a Rottweiler and a few mutts.

If you want to picture an English pub, remember what you saw in the TV sit-com Cheers. Very close. Except in England, the pubs are family places where people go to eat as well as drink and to visit. They are very sociable and warm and friendly. Every Sunday after church, we walk directly across the street to Turk's Head Pub for lunch. Turk's Head was built in the 13th century — I only recently learned that.

As for drinking — well, everyone here drinks and takes their drinking very seriously. Religion has nothing to do with it — it's a culture thing. In fact, we find their seriousness about it rather amusing. When it was discovered that not all pub and bar (there's a difference) owners were selling the full amount, there was a big stink and there are now laws. Beer is sold here by the pint, and some "pints" were a few ounces shy of that amount. So now all beer, wine and liquor glasses are actually marked and pubs and bars are required to fill the glasses to that mark. I don't remember the full amounts for liquor and wine.

I've also learned that no one here wears a sweater — a "sweater" is one who sweats! However, most people do wear "jumpers" — mostly made of fine wool.

They really do say "Cheers" when they part each other's company.

You "hire" equipment and cars and you "let" rooms — you don't rent much of anything. Most trucks are "lorries," but not all. Tall rubber mud boots are "Wellies" and Hubby keeps his stowed the "boot" (trunk) of

his car. And don't bother looking up anything to do with cars in the Yellow Pages under "automobile" — you won't find such a listing as they are only "cars" here.

Even though we're all speaking English here, I sometimes need an interpreter! In fact, one English woman told me I wasn't speaking English, I was speaking "American!"