

Sipping tea on the Thames beats beer on the Platte

By Joe Starita

"No, Sir, when a man is tired of London, he is tired of life: for there is in London all that life can afford."

—Samuel Johnson

Sure, you say, who wouldn't prefer a summer of sipping tea on the River Thames to chugging Bud on the Platte. But how can I afford to get to London, much less to stay there, for three months?

Getting to London cheaply starts with Freddie Laker in New York, the World Travel Agency at 2900 O St., or the Overseas Opportunity Center in the Nebraska Union.

Laker, fast becoming the godfather of the transatlantic airways, is making an offer many find hard to refuse—New York to London roundtrip for \$240.

His no-frills Skytrain service departs several times daily from Kennedy International Airport. Passengers arrive five hours before departure and book flights strictly on a first come-first serve basis.

Under Laker's system, there are no reserved seats. If you prefer the security of a reserved seat, the World Travel Agency currently is booking Chicago to London roundtrip flights for \$369.

A \$100 deposit is required to hold the reservation with full payment due 60 days in advance of flight departure.

To keep up on the latest charter flights and travel tours, stop in at the OOC in the Union. Christa Joy can answer questions on which flights look the best and how to go about booking them.

Once you've booked a Flight to London, consider what you want to bring.

Consider the temperature. Steak and kidney pies have not been known to burst into flame if dropped on London pavement in July. Summers in London are cooler than summers in Nebraska.

An ideal summer flight bag would include a light jacket, sweaters, a pair of comfortable walking shoes and a good notebook.

Some money usually helps too. Lloyds and Barclays, open from 9:30 to 3:30 Monday through Friday, are scattered throughout London. You get a better exchange rate at the banks and can avoid the service charge of the 24-hour places.

That exchange rate in January 1978 was \$1.90 for one English pound.

One of the best buys in London can be found at any large newsstand or subway stop. *Timeout Magazine*, published weekly, gives the entire cultural readout for what's happening in the city.

On the same rack a black-and yellow A-Z map guide provides travellers with a London street atlas. Coordinating *Timeouts* "where to go" with the A-Z's "how to go" is made easier when you consider about anyplace in London is a good place to start.

You can start with a traditional tour at Westminster Abbey, where the Poet's Corner commemorates T.S. Eliot, Tennyson, Milton, Chaucer, Shakespeare and Spencer.

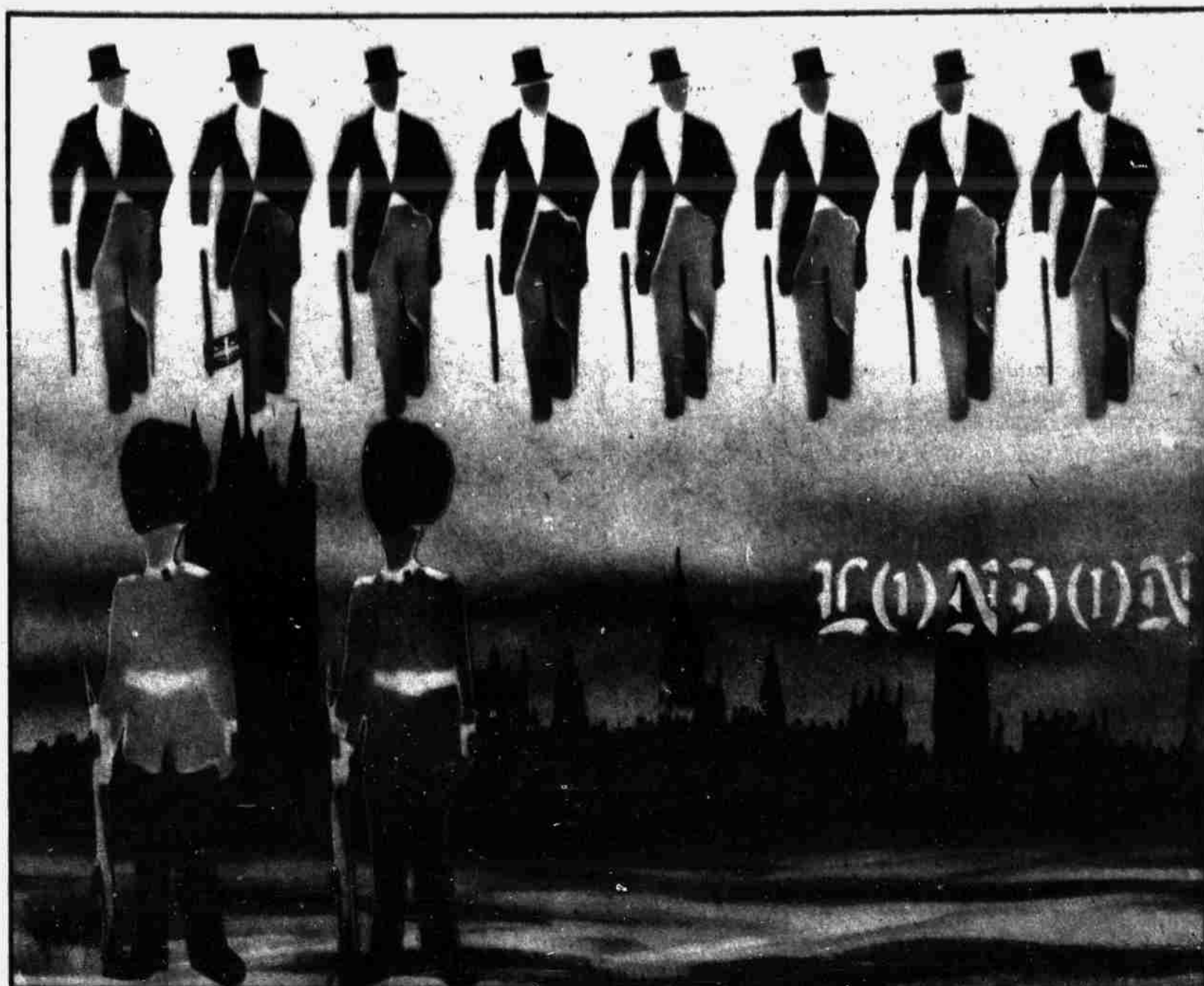
Beyond Westminster, Britain's modern political poets issue the word from the Houses of Parliament. At a corner of the House of Lords, Big Ben gives you the time of day.

Several times each day, boats float from the Embankment up the Thames past old villages, quaint homes and London's industrial area before docking at Kew Gardens.

The Royal Botanical Society at Kew Gardens gets every new species of plant found in the world and keeps a few of the old boys around in magnificent splendor.

The Gardens abound with an exotic array of plants, manicured lawns, winding paths, flower beds, trees and duck ponds all layed out in precise order.

If you want to avoid the precise order of playing tourist day-after-day, Soho and Chelsea are good areas to knock about in.



The heart of London's swinging 60s, Chelsea still offers the best pub action in town. Punk rockers, street artists and the cool/hip crowd jostle through the streets of Chelsea, elbow-to-elbow with the terribly tweedy and the bon vivants of the 70s.

Continuing along to Soho, one finds a shooting gallery of clubs, discos, movies, pinball palaces, head shops and record stores.

One thing to keep in mind about London's night life is the rather rude practice of closing the pubs at midnight.

If you're cock-eyed at midnight but unable to sleep, there's a sure-fire way to put a straight line in your walk.

First weave to the subway and get off at the Billingsgate Fish Market in the old city of London.

Housed in an ancient brick-and-iron Victorian building, Billingsgate is the only open fish market in London.

Unchanged since Dicken's time, you then can dodge artfully the market's open stalls loaded to the gills with fresh eel, crab, snail, flounder and shrimp.

The market is cleared out by 6 a.m. each day and your head should be by then, too.

A trip to London's West End offers a dramatic contrast to the night life of Chelsea and Soho.

The West End is where you can see some of the legendary London theater productions at legendary prices. Prices begin at \$2. Tickets can be purchased at the theater or any of the numerous agencies in the area.

You might want to stop at the Aldwych Theater, just off Strand Street, where the Royal Shakespeare Co. performs.

Regardless of your selection, the West End theaters offer top flight British actors and actresses in a variety of productions at incredibly low prices.

Regardless of how you decide to get to London, or where you decide to go once you arrive, it's always best to remember that many things will be different than at home.

There is really no point in travelling if you continually compare standards at home to those abroad.

More than one trip has gone down the drain because a visitor to London couldn't overlook not having their own private toilet to flush.

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