

I could not possibly attempt on the following pages to summarise ten years of science reporting, and I shall not try. But I can select from the several thousand stories I wrote during that time, the most interesting travels, the anecdotes, and the occasional, rare, scoop. When essential, I kept a daily, even hourly record, as during the Apollo space flights. Some entries I wrote in longhand during an interview, some I typed on my small portable Hermes typewriter, and then transmitted them back to the *Daily Telegraph* in London by telephone, Telex, only much later by FAX, but most frequently by telegram.

Each item of work, whether published or not, was recorded by date, based on the Swedish National Insurance system which simply allocated as registration number to each person, a number none would ever forget, the date of his or her birth. This number was composed of year, followed by month, followed by day, as it would increase each day by the figure '1' and would repeat only after a century. So for example, 970319 signifies today, 19 March 1997. Such a six-figure number was written, or typed for 10 years by me on each of my standard 15 × 21 cm sheets, A 5, easily bought as blocks. The use of these numbers worked exceedingly well and when later bound together as a book, the consecutive numbers acted both as dates and as page number. I have recommended them to friends who were also pleased.

I started as the Science Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* on 10 December 1963 and did not have to wait long before on 4 January 1964 I was sent to the USA to report on the preparations for the forthcoming flight to the Moon. "Building spaceport USA" was the formal title of the gigantic operations at Merritt Island in Florida, just inland from the actual launch site.

In charge of all this was the US Army Corps of Engineers, famous for having built the Panama Canal, which Lesseps of Suez Canal fame, failed to achieve. The first step was to purchase 130 square miles of waste land in Florida, called Merritt Island, at a cost of US\$ 60 million. It was built up by dredging the Banana River, pumps sucking up the sand from the bottom of the river, and then it was hard-compacted. By the time I visited it for the first time, piles had been driven into the compacted sand, and the foundations had been laid at a cost of \$ 8 millions, as W.T. Clearman, the Chief of the *Saturn* Construction Office, informed me on my press visit on 27 January 1964.

I saw from my VIP one-hour-long helicopter tour in the brilliant Florida Sun a vast complex of white industrial buildings, radio and rotating radar antennae, block houses, a spaghetti of roads, rail tracks and canals, which alone were able to bring to Florida the giant rockets on special barges. The VAB, the Vertical Assembly Building, for final upright assembly of the Saturn rockets was beginning to be built. I was most impressed, became enthusiastic about the Apollo Moon Program, and sent voluminous reports and many photographs to London. A selection was published.