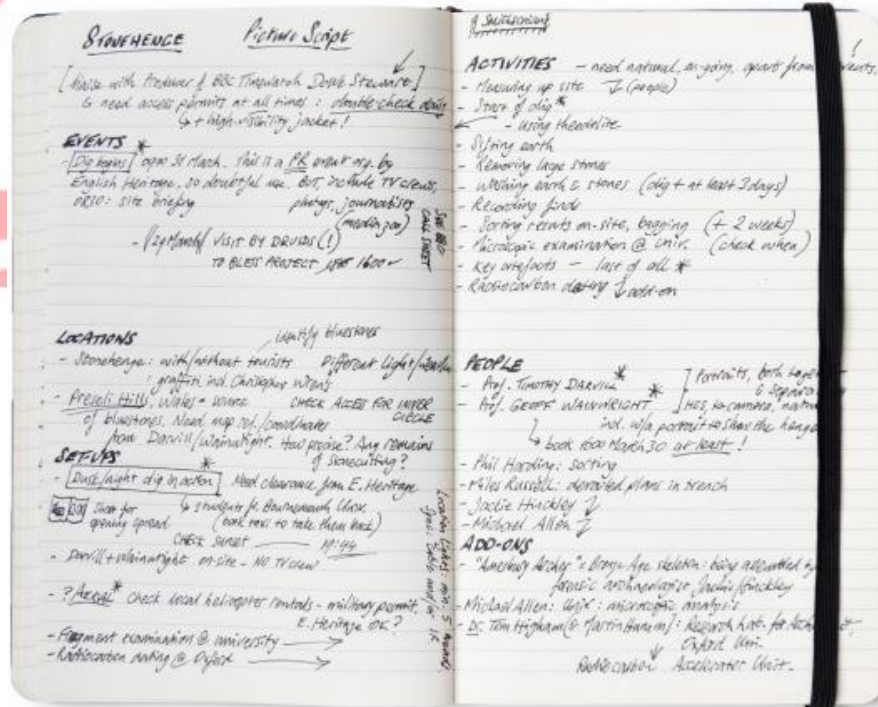
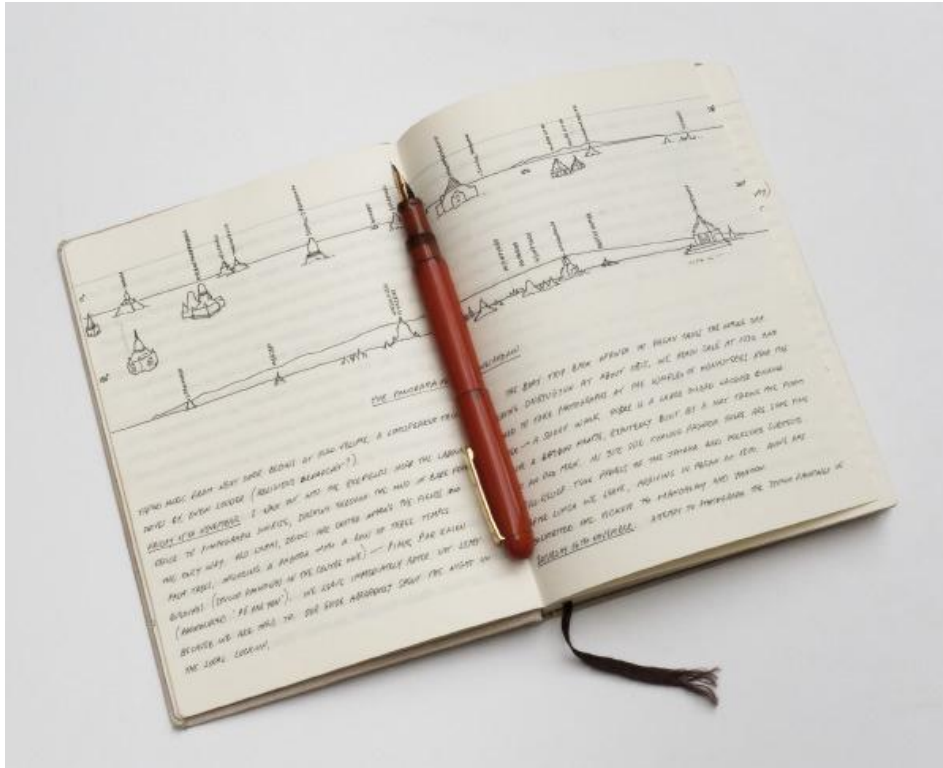




The checklist. Top of this list is always the list itself! The checklist for a trip, that is. I carry so much stuff these days (well, always), a lot of it quite small and all of it necessary, that the chances of forgetting to pack something are high.

The picture script. When you shoot magazine stories, particularly long ones, then the picture script *aka* shooting script is the plan for the job. It usually begins with a list of things that the picture editor would like, but you work it up yourself and keep refining it.





A notebook. I've always carried a notebook along on every trip, and write in it, not just names and addresses and details that will be useful for captioning and writing up the story once it's shot, but also anything interesting that came to mind, or conversations or experiences. When it came much later to writing, particular my books *Cambodia* and *Ricelands*, I had the material on the page that I had already forgotten over the years.



A comfortable shoulder bag. When you're shooting, it's part of you for hours at a time, so it needs to be right for you. I've been through a number in my career, but these days I use a Crumpler.

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Really, really good cabin baggage. A luxury, perhaps, but a good strong cabin baggage, with wheels, that takes up the absolute maximum permissible space, makes a big difference. If it's the right size (meaning to IATA specs), no-one ever seems to check the weight, and I can pack almost 15 kilos in mine. It's a Rimowa ribbed aluminum Cabin Trolley IATA - a classic.



A simple camera strap. This little quest almost turned into an obsession. Bit by bit, camera manufacturers stopped making simple, functional camera straps. A strap used to be just a strap, something you could grab the camera by and hang round your neck. Now they're part advertising and have got wider (the two probably go hand in hand) and for me are almost a nuisance. And why are they adjustable?



I don't want to adjust them, I want them one size. 33 inches (85 cm), please. I finally found simple tough webbing straps from a manufacturer in Korea, Arnuvo, had my local cobbler cut them to my length and restitch them, and replaced the dinky split rings with industrial strength ones made for big-game fishing from an angling shop. Why did I go to all this trouble, I wonder?





Quick release L-plate. Only Californians could come up with a name like *Really Right Stuff*, but it is (the right stuff), and the L-plate means zero delay on getting the camera onto the tripod head, either orientation. It also improves the grip generally.



Portable reflector. Surprisingly useful whenever you have time to work out a shot (obviously not street photography). I use a Lastolite Tri-grip.

Mr Goethe's suggestion. Lastly, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, the 18th-19th century German writer, philosopher, artist, politician and something of a genius, wrote, "One ought, every day at least, to hear a little song, read a good poem, see a fine picture, and, if it were possible, to speak a few reasonable words." I like that, especially the idea of a little schedule when I'm on a long-ish trip and traveling.

As for the actual items or equipment to fulfill this, to begin with there's an iPod and earphones (and a little speaker called a Jambox that's good for hotel rooms). The Audio-Technica headphones do double duty when I'm shooting video (fit into the D4 or the recorder), so that's a reasonable excuse. Then a book of poems, and one reason I have one of these is that I see a kind of correspondence between images and many poems. Not all poems, of course, but many are trying to condense an idea or an experience, and that's largely what we do in photography. As for seeing a fine picture, if I'm lucky I get to make one each day, and reasonable words are just commonsense.

