

Four Boys, Six Months, 15,000 Miles: The Family Who Drove from Australia to England Through Afghanistan in 1977

New memoir captures the golden age of overland travel through territories now closed to tourists

28 November 2025 – What would possess a young couple to pack four sons – aged seven, six, two, and six months – into a Toyota camper van and drive 15,000 miles from Australia to England? For Julian and Becky Little in 1977, the answer was simple: because they could. *Six Littles Go A Long Way: How one family joined the 1970s overlanders on a 15,000-mile journey halfway across the globe* (Arena Books, 24 November 2025) tells the extraordinary true story of a six-month adventure through territories that today's travelers can only dream about. Written by James Little, who was seven when his parents embarked on this journey, the book draws from original family diaries to capture a pivotal moment in travel history – the golden age of the 'overlanders.'

A Window into a Lost Era

In the 1970s, thousands of intrepid adventurers drove what's now called the 'hippie trail' – an overland route stretching from Europe through Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. It was travel at its most authentic: no GPS, no smartphones, just hand-drawn maps and boundless optimism. Borders opened with a smile and a handshake. Travelers gathered around campfires in Kabul. A young family could traverse the legendary Khyber Pass and drive halfway across the globe simply because they dreamed of doing it. Geopolitical realities have since closed these routes – perhaps forever. The Little family's journey stands as a poignant testament to what was once possible.

More Than Just an Adventure Story

From navigating the treacherous Nullarbor Desert to surviving India's chaotic Holi festival, from hashish brownies in Goa's hippie colonies to elephant rides at India's Amber Fort, *Six Littles Go A Long Way* delivers genuine adventure alongside deeply human moments. Young Andy vomits during a border crossing. Peter sees snow for the first time in Pakistan's mountains. The family's Toyota springs break repeatedly under the strain. Through it all, the bonds between parents and children are tested and strengthened in extraordinary circumstances.

Written with humor, honesty, and remarkable detail, the book includes 160 color photographs and original diary entries not just from Julian and Becky, but also from family friend Dianne, who joined them for part of the journey. Each page breathes life into a more innocent age of travel.

A Message for Modern Nomads

While *Six Littles Go A Long Way* chronicles a historical journey, its resonance reaches far beyond nostalgia. Author James Little reflects on what drew him to write the book 45 years later, now living in Singapore where the family stopped during their journey:

‘In a hotel room during a flight delay, I watched 500 stranded passengers come alive through forced human connection. We talked, laughed, and shared stories – nourished by conversation that smartphones and AI can never deliver. That’s what this book captures: the irreplaceable richness of human connection during travel.’

For today’s van lifers, digital nomads, and adventure seekers building #VanLife followings on Instagram, this book reveals what travel looked like when the world was both bigger and smaller than it is today. It’s a reminder that the most meaningful journeys aren’t about the destination or the perfect photo – they’re about the connections forged along the way.

About the Author

James Little is a father of two who runs a sustainable energy consultancy in Singapore. Born in London in 1970, he has been fascinated by travel ever since his parents brought him and his three younger brothers on the road trip of a lifetime in 1977. After working in the travel industry for 15 years following his master’s degree in Tourism Management, it was his 2022 move to Singapore – 45 years after his epic journey – that gave him the motivation to finally tell this story. His weekly Facebook blog documenting the journey drew contributions from family and friends across the globe, rekindling memories and connections that enriched the book’s narrative.

Publication Details

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By James Little

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Media Contact

For review copies, interview requests, high-resolution images, Pull Quotes doc (from the Book), Story Angles doc, Title Info Sheet, high res book cover images, images from the book (available upon request), please contact:

Isabel Corfe

info@arenabooks.co.uk

01284 658979

www.arenabooks.co.uk

Editor’s Note: This is a story journalists and readers need to discover – not just as a historical document of 1970s overland travel, but as a compelling family adventure that speaks to our current moment of disconnection. In an age when we’re more ‘connected’ than ever yet feel increasingly isolated, the Little family’s journey reminds us of travel’s transformative power to forge genuine human bonds across cultures and continents.