

To be sent to Prof. Burrows (H.G.)
April 5, 1939.

News-Letter no. 7.

We left Jerusalem at 11:30 A.M. this morning in two cars, the Dodge Station Wagon, and the new fourth-hand Willys, that I purchased for my wife several weeks ago, and am christening by taking to Aqabah. The passengers included, in addition to myself, Dr. and Mrs. H. Glidden, Dr. Albert K. Henschel, Mr. Jacob Pinkerfeld, Khalil Yusuf Khuri, and Ylias Tutundjian. We joined the Potash Company convoy that leaves Jerusalem every morning between 11 and 12 for the Potash works at the north end of the Dead, and left the convoy at the fork of the roads leading respectively to the Dead Sea and to Allenby bridge. The Wilderness of Judah is still green, but in a few weeks will return to its usual burnt out state. The stops on both sides of the new Allenby bridge were rather lengthy, but after completing all the formalities, we were, by fast driving, still able to get to Amman by 3:30 P.M. I called up Kirkbride, the new British Resident, and Glubb, the new Officer Commanding the Arab Legion, to let them know that we had arrived, and were expecting to be on our way tomorrow, with the intention of spending the night in Maan. Glubb is to send me some letters this evening, - at least I hope they get here in time, - which will give us the proper introductions to the police officers in charge of the Maan and the Aqabah police posts. We are putting up for the night at the Hotel Philadelphia.

April 3, There is a long and rather weary, and, in one particular instance, heart-breaking story to tell, ~~xxxxxx~~ in order to recount the events that preceded our arrival here this afternoon. To tell the worst first. Late ~~Tuesday~~ ^{Monday} afternoon, Marjorie Iliffe called on my wife at the American School of Oriental Research. My wife is still confined to bed, recuperating from the results of giving birth to a son, ~~through an operation~~. Harry Iliffe, was supposed to call for his wife at our place at about 6:30 P.M., but delayed in coming. I offered to take Mrs. Iliffe home, and we were about to go, when Mr. Iliffe came in. We sat about talking for a while, and then at 7:15 P.M. they left. I accompanied them downstairs to the driveway in our grounds, where Iliffe's car was parked, and said goodnight to them. ~~Theyxxxx~~ The Iliffes live about three blocks from us, in a house, almost directly above the Wadi Joz, which during the past months has frequently served as an excellent place for assassins to escape after attempting or completing their dirty work. About three minutes after they left, two shots rang out. I paid no attention to them, because somebody always seems to be shooting in our neighborhood. Up till now, however, it has mostly been directed, at least in our neighborhood, by Arabs against Arabs. A few seconds later, the phone rang, and the agonized cry of an English woman came over the phone, "....., my God, my husband has been shot. Help!". I missed the first words, but heard something with an "r" sound in it. I did not associate the sound with Iliffe, but thought it might have been Reynolds. I rushed to the drawer, got my revolver. - yes, I've had one for some time now, as most of the remaining foreigners in this neighborhood have now, - told one of my students to phone for the police, got the car out of the garage, and rushed to Reynolds house, which is in our quarter, and also only a short distance from our house. I fired two shots in the air to attract the police. It did! Mr. Reynolds was all right. Then I drove around the block, picked up two policemen who had come running after hearing my shots, and we raced to Iliffes, the only other house where I thought anything might have happened. All of this took only a few minutes. Arriving at Iliffe's house, which is down a small, narrow, dark alley of a street, I came to a hard stop, ran passed his car, the motor of which was still running, and burst into the house, into which meanwhile some immediate neighbors had already come. There was poor Harry Iliffe, ~~xxxxxx~~ lying on a couch, and bleeding from his upper right lung. Somebody had been lying in wait for him. His habits are known. He usually comes home about 7:15 or 7:30 in the evening. It was an excellent night for a murder, the moon was out, and the would-be murderer was hiding behind a stone wall on the side of the street opposite the entrance to his house.

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Mrs. Iliffe had gotten ~~in~~ out of the bar, and reached the end of the short passageway through the garden to the entrance of the house, and Iliffe had also gotten out, and was about to cross over the narrow street to open the garage, which opens on to the street, when the gunman opened fire. The first bullet missed. Iliffe started to draw his revolver, but meanwhile the second bullet hit him in the back, piercing his upper right lung, and coming out on the front side. Iliffe managed to get to the entrance of the house, without apparently being able to see the assailant, who made good his escape. Iliffe's comings and goings must have been watched carefully for many nights, for the attack to have been planned and carried out so successfully. Soon after I entered the house, the physician, Dr. Thompson, who had treated Eleanor Graham, when she was so seriously ill at our School, came in. The ambulance also arrived, and then a whole drove of police-cars and military trucks, and soldiers. Iliffe was conscious, as Dr. Thompson examined him, turning his body slightly onto the side with my help to see whether or not the bullet was still in the body or had gone clean through, - which it had, fortunately. He will recover, it is thought. Yesterday morning, he had a hemorrhage, but *lobular* no septisemia has set in, nor any ~~lumber~~ *lobular* pneumonia. I was at the hospital again this morning, when Dr. Thompson saw the previous night's chart, and he expressed himself as being satisfied with the progress made. - This has been the culminating blow of a terrific series of recent crushing events.

About two weeks ago, troubles broke out in Transjordan, and at the last moment the T.J. Government asked me to postpone the excavations. My equipment was already all in Amman, and the food supplies waiting for me at Spinney's store there. I made arrangements to have the perishable goods withdrawn, and the rest kept for me till I should turn up to claim ~~it~~ ^{them}, or make other provision for them. Meanwhile, I discussed our affairs with our American Consul General, Mr. George Wadsworth, who proved to be most helpful, and who has always taken a deep interest in the affairs of the School. As a result of his direct intervention, I received a telephone call from the new British Resident in Amman, Mr. AS. Kirkbride, asking me to come over and have lunch with him at the British Residency in Amman on Friday, March 31. Ylias and I drove over, accompanied by Dr. Glidden, whom I took along so that he could see Amman while I was having the conference with Kirkbride. Mr. Kirkbride has just been retransferred back to Transjordan, and all of us who are interested in the country are delighted that he has been elevated to the most important post in the country, with the exception of that of Emir Abdullah. ~~In addition~~, I have known Kirkbride for a long time, and he is much interested in archaeology and in the doings of our School. When I arrived for lunch on Friday, Mr. and Mrs. Kirkbride told me that I was their first guest at the Residency. After lunch, we talked business. The situation, Mr. Kirkbride explained to me, had so cleared up, that he considered it all right for me to go to Aqabah, if I fulfilled certain conditions. The first was that we should not live in tents on the site of Tell el-Kheleifeh, nor near it, but that we should take a house in Aqabah village which is about four kilometres away, and commute to and from the dig. That was a condition which was not too hard to agree to, although it complicates matters some, and increases the expenses. In some ways, it has its advantage. After being in the wind and sand all day long, it will be nice to be out of them in the afternoon and evening, - a matter one cannot be sure of when living immediately on or near the site. As I have explained in the field reports published in the Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, Tell el-Kheleifeh is situated at the end of what is for all ~~xxxxx~~ practical and impractical purposes a wind-funnel, - namely the Wadi el-Arabah. As a result, our camp last year, was subject to all too frequent windstorms.

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The other condition that Kirkbride made, was that I employ four watchmen. That seemed a little steep to me, but I accepted without demur. It was either continuing our work under these conditions, or not working at all. In as much as I am convinced that the immediate present is the best possible time that can be found, considering the state of public security in this part of the world, and the boiling point that seems rapidly to be about to be reached in Europe, I felt that it would be unwise to delay the expedition any longer, even if the costs were some pounds higher than I had figured on. When one has a comparatively small sum of money to work with, it is especially necessary to economize down to the last mil, but in this instance, the money that I shall have to pay the guards may be considered a justifiable expenditure. And, furthermore, I am willing to wager that I shall get ~~xxx~~ some work out of them, even if they think, as they undoubtedly will, that their job will be to sit around and act as if they were guards. Actually, as I understand, they are to be employed as a sort of insurance that the tribes to which they belong, and which circulate in the vicinity of Aqabah, are to understand that we are not fair game. After seeing the British Resident ~~xxx~~ I had tea with Major Glubb, who has succeeded Col. Peake as the Officer Commanding the Arab Legion. He repeated the same conditions that Kirkbride had made, and wired through to Aqabah to arrange for the house and the guards.

We returned to Jerusalem the next day, Saturday, April 1, thinking that now everything was arranged, and we could start ~~xxx~~ for T.J. on Monday, April 3. I found, however, a letter from my architect waiting for me, saying that he thought his services would no longer be necessary, and that he had arranged to go to Italy. He lives in Tel Aviv. I got him on the long-distance phone, but there seemed nothing to be done about the matter. No other competent architect seemed to be available, and I thought that this time I was at the end of my rope. Dr. Fisher could not come, because he was working on his Corpus of Palestinian Pottery. The long and short of it was that finally I got on to my architect again, and he agreed that if I could get him released from his commitments to go ^{immediately} to Italy, where he was to do some archaeological work, and get his trip there postponed, he would be happy to join me. That was not hard to arrange. And then on top of all these difficulties, came the attempt to murder Harry Iliffe, on the evening of Monday, April 3. I could not possibly leave Jerusalem until I knew that he was out of danger. Furthermore, I could not leave my family alone. The physicians were more than reluctant to come out to the School, curfew was reimposed on our quarter, and might last a long time, and my wife who needed medical attention might be left stranded if I were not present to fetch people from town and bring them back again. As much, therefore, as I hated to do so, I closed the Director's house, brought my family to a hotel in town, and left the School in charge of Dr. Fisher. In as much as I was taking the Gliddens with me, there would remain then in the School only Dr. Fisher, Miss Wambold, and the Petries, in addition to the servants, for whom also I have secured curfew passes. The two servants who are left, in as much as I am taking Khalil with me, and the gardener, will suffice to take care of the present residents at the School. Everything finally arranged to my satisfaction, we ~~finally~~ left Jerusalem Wednesday morning, April 5. Not, however, before another last minute difficulty! My architect called up from Tel Aviv to say that the military had closed the Jaffa-Jerusalem road, and his car could not get through. I phoned Captain Cuming of the Intelligence service, and he phoned back after a while, that the road would be cleared in time for the car to get to Jerusalem before the hour that we had fixed upon to leave and join up with the Potash Co. convoy.

April 8.

I am writing from Maan, and we are to leave tomorrow morning for Aqabah, inshallah.