

Jerusalem, July 21, 1939

Conditions have become somewhat quieter recently in Palestine, in fact so much so that the government has permitted a battalion of soldiers to leave the country and go to Egypt. However, it is the intention of the government, I believe, to retain a permanent army in Palestine, not so much for local Palestinian needs as for general Imperial defence. The country is dotted with permanent and substantial army encampments sufficient, I believe, to house about 20,000 men. The lull in the disturbances which obtains at the present, however, is more apparent than real. If wholesale attacks have been considerably restrained it is hardly because there has been a lessening of tension, but rather a suppression of tension.

Recently it has been thought that with reliable Arab guides one could begin to permit tourists and students to go to such places as Solomon's pools and Bethlehem on donkey-back. Just a few days ago, I permitted two recent visitors of the School, the Rev. Dr. Kenneth M. Monroe, and the Rev. C. Sandy, of the Bible Institute, Los Angeles, to go to Solomon's pools on donkey-back, accompanied by a local guide, Farid Salman. Everything went well, and they returned quite happily and satisfied by the trip. Yesterday, two ministers of the Church of the Disciples of Christ, who have been staying at the Y.M.C.A., the Rev. Dr. Jacob H. Goldmer of Cleveland, Ohio, and his son, the Rev. Gerald R. Goldmer of Mogador, Ohio, accompanied by an ~~unreliable~~ Arab guide, left for Mar Saba on a donkey-back trip. They arrived there quite safely, were entertained to lunch, and then left in the early afternoon. On the way back they were held up by a party of armed men, and detained. The guide tried to tell the bandits that they were Germans, because Nazi Germans are thought of well by the bands; the ~~other~~ minister, however, sort of understood what the guide was saying, and insisted that he and his son were Americans. It made no special impression upon the bandits, who replied that they liked neither English nor Americans. Next morning the bandits and the ministers started out again, and after a long parley it was decided to retain the son and send the father back to Jerusalem with the guide, there to obtain a \$1000 ransom for the son. Before the two started off another armed band came by, and an altercation ensued between the two bands, until finally agreement between them was reached, probably a decision to divide the ransom whenever it was received. The father and guide finally arrived near Bethlehem, whence they were brought to Jerusalem. The American Consul General, Mr. George Wadsworth, and others are setting wheels in motion to effect the release of the son, Rev. Gerald R. Goldmer. As a result, I shall no longer permit residents at the School to go out donkey-back riding in the future. This will be hard on the members of the Summer School party from Wheaton College, Ill. which arrives today to stay at the School for a week. There are 15 in the party. I shall add a note later on in this letter, when I find out what has happened to the kidnapped minister.

We have been packing the Khirbet et-Tannur antiquities. A separate strong case has been made to order for almost everyone of the stones, and thus far about 45 cases have been packed, and there will be about 10 more. It seems to be doubtful whether there will be war this summer, but nevertheless, I want to get our share of the Khirbet et-Tannur antiquities to America before anything happens. The Palestine ~~is set up~~

Archaeological Museum has set up its share of the Khirbet et-Tannur antiquities in a special room, and it makes a very nice display indeed. At the very entrance to the Museum they have set up the huge Atargatis relief with the side-pieces on which foliage and fruits are depicted. Our share will be no less attractive when it is finally set up. I shall ship the cases on the American Export Line, and they ought to arrive safely in America.

There has been a considerable number of people calling at the School recently, many of whom the Director has entertained to tea. Among them are: Fr. Sylvester Saller, O.F.M., Fr. Eustace J. Smith, O.F.M., Fr. Stephen J. Hartdegen, O.F.M., P. Pancratius Keilbach, O.F.M., all of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Jerusalem, Mr. Edward Keith-Roach, the District Commissioner, Mrs. Alice Mead Cleland, Amherst, Mass., Miss Karin Johnsson, Stockholm, Mr. and Mrs. William M. Green, University of California, Berkeley, Calif., Mr. Norvin Hein and Mr. William M. Ahrich, of Ewing Christian College, Allahabad, India, Mrs. Flora G. Richardson, Chicago, Mr. George W. Sadler, Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va., Esther E. Johnson, American Junior College, Beirut, Miss Mary L. Wicher, Tripoli Girls' School, Tripoli, Syria, Dr. Kenneth M. Monroe, Biola, Los Angeles, Calif. Mr. Conard Sandy, Western Bible College, Los Angeles, Calif., Mr. and Mrs. George Keough, Advent House, Jerusalem, Mr. Pierre Crabitès, American Judge of the Mixed Tribunals of Egypt (Retired); Special Lecturer, Law School, Louisiana State University; Dr. G. Meisler; Rev. H. Vinant; Rev. R. de Vaux; Dr. Leo Picard

Dr. VanEss and his wife, American missionaries at Basrah on the Persian Gulf, have taken the Stewarts' house next door to us. It is a pleasure again to have some American neighbours. They are remaining till the middle of September. Up to the time of their advent, the only other foreigners besides ourselves living in this quarter were Mr. and Mrs. Harold Minor. Mr. Minor is one of the consuls at the American Consulate General. All the British residents living in this quarter back of our property have been compelled by the government to move out, following the shooting of Mr. Iliffe. Mr. Iliffe, by the way, has recovered to such a degree, that he and his family were able to leave last Saturday for a long leave of absence in England.

Yesterday I lectured to the Summer School of the Newman School of Missions. Among the students is Miss Wicher, whose father was Annual Professor here during the year 1928-29. I shall give a series of lectures to the Summer School. Permission has not yet been received from the Transjordan government to continue the survey there.

July 28th, 1939.

The Rev. Goldmer was released on July 25th, arriving in Jerusalem about 8 p.m. that day. He was only a little the worse for wear, having been well treated by the bandits, who evidently felt that for the 10,000 two-shilling pieces which they were demanding for his ransom, they ought to give him a fair amount to eat, and make him as least as comfortable as they were. It seems that bandits both in the Far and the Near East have a penchant for pieces of silver. Our very capable American Consul General, Mr. George Wadsworth, was determined, however, to effect the release of Rev. Goldmer without paying the ransom. He mobilized Arab public opinion in Jerusalem, and set wheels within wheels in motion to have a message sent from the Mufti of Jerusalem, who is now in the Lebanon, to the bandits that it was not advisable to kidnap American

pastors, and that they should release the one they had in their hands. The message was delivered. A certain number of pounds of baksheesh was given to the intermediaries, and some of it probably got into the hands of the kidnapers, but it does not seem to have been any more than LP 100, and probably less.

On July 23rd, a battle took place on the Beersheba road between British troops and a well armed gang of bandits. It is not known what casualties the gang suffered, but several of the British soldiers were killed, and several wounded. Despite the comparative quiet which exists throughout the country now, it is obviously impossible to resume normal travel to such places as Hebron and Beersheba. The young Englishman who was shot while walking in the Musrara quarter several months ago, died recently. It was a merciful death; he died in his sleep. Had he lived, he would have been completely paralyzed all his life. He and his fiancée came on a goodwill mission to the Arabs from the Peace Pledge Union. She still lives in the Musrara quarter and carries on the work; more power to her.

The Summer School arrived on July 21st, and stayed only till July 26th. Their stay was curtailed by the fact that the trains running from Lydda to Egypt go only twice a week now, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and they had to leave on Wednesday in order to carry out a curtailed program in Egypt and catch their boat at Alexandria. However, they saw a great deal of Jerusalem while they were here, and also visited Bethlehem and the Dead Sea. There was only time for me to deliver one lecture to the Summer School. Dr. Free, the leader of the Institute and Mrs. Free are returning to the School at the beginning of October, to attend the regular sessions of the School throughout the coming academic year.

Transjordan is being given an added degree of independence. A visum for Palestine is no longer automatically good for Transjordan, it now being necessary to receive a special visum for it. Thus the natural flow of travel is being hampered more and more. The Sanjak region, including Antioch and Alexandretta, has been completely ceded to Turkey, which means now that when we want to visit Antioch, we shall have to get not only a French visum for Syria, but a Turkish one for this new section of Turkey. I am sure that Aleppo will sooner or later also be detached from Syria and given to Turkey, because geographically and commercially the Antioch and Aleppo districts go together. Thousands of Armenians and Arabs have fled the Sanjak, and this time Musa Dagh has been conquered by the stroke of a pen. I am hoping that we can finish our excavations at Tell el-Kheleifeh near Aqabah before the Aqabah district becomes detached from Transjordan and is given to Ibn Saud as a price for not exercising his nuisance value. However, I doubt whether even should the desert king attempt, so to speak, to fish in muddied waters, he would be given Aqabah, which has immense potential strategic and commercial importance. It is, I guess, a sign of the times, when archaeologists whose main energies should be devoted to extracting the history of ancient civilizations from the ruins in which most of them were buried by destructive wars, must make his plans with an eye upon the war which may soon break out and destroy our present world order. In this part of the world, particularly in Transjordan, history will probably repeat itself in a pattern familiar from the past. The Bedu will again pitch their tents where villages and towns flourished and fields were cultivated,

and will roam unhindered over the length and breadth of the land. And some future archaeologist will again record a break in the history of permanent sedentary occupation, lasting this time from about the end of the 20th to about the 26th century A.D. He will ascribe the break to the self-destructive strength and to the benighted stupidity of civilized man, but some other scholar will attribute it to a change in climatic factors.

A book by Hans Rhotert called "Transjordanien" appeared recently. It deals mainly with the prehistoric site of Kilwa, discovered in 1932 by a joint expedition of the American School of Oriental Research, Jerusalem, and the Transjordan Department of Antiquities. Unfortunately, the author has obtruded into it some vicious political propaganda, which detracts considerably from the mainly scientific character of the book. It is a very handsome publication, but it appears that handsome publications cannot appear in present-day Germany without sycophantic genuflections before the apotheosized tribal chieftain. A review of the book by the writer of this newsletter will appear probably in the September number of the quarterly called Antiquity published in England. Other articles dealing with the work of the Jerusalem School will appear in the September issues of Asia and the Palestine Exploration Quarterly, and in the October issue of the Bulletin.