



GOING TO JERUSALEM

JERUSALEM.
HAD I NOT been in alien fields, the other Sunday morning, I might well have been snug and subconscious in the quilts of home. But Sunday is no Sabbath for sight-seers or Moslems, and I found myself instead barreling over the Lebanese mountains with a party of loaded matrons detached from the Grand Mediterranean Cruise of the *Independence*, a barque nestled at the moment against the wharf at Beirut.

After two hours of olive trees burgeoning with white popcorn blossoms, of hairpin turns over icy roads, and of gasps from the girls, we crossed the border into Syria and rolled into Damascus. Both my guide and the National Geographic Society, and they form a tandem of unusual reliability, insist that Damascus is the world's oldest city still inhabited. The walls of Damascus were said to have been built shortly after Noah's Ark came to rest. Although the Geographic people would perhaps not tip-toe quite so far, my guide ventures that it was in Damascus that Cain slew Abel. In the ancient Aramaic tongue Damascus was known as Sam, which meant the City of Death. I hope this intelligence will not prove distressing to Sam Goldwyn, Sam Rayburn, or Sam my tailor.

The Street Called Straight, where Saul of Tarsus—later St. Paul—regained his sight and began his Christian career, still exists in Damascus, covered in the manner of an Italian gallery and stretching straight and long for almost a quarter of a mile. The bazaars that line its sides sell bolts of textiles, hotwater bottles, straw mats, and silver Arab drums. Moslem women in Western dress with black hoods over their heads pick over the merchandise, and Arab merchants beguile the tourists in English. The cry of the lottery peddlers caroms across the narrow alley, Bedouin women nurse their infants on the curbstone, and black carriages charge up and down driven by wild-eyed drivers who wear boots on their feet and the traditional Arab *keffiyeh ighal* on their heads.

It was at the New Omayyad Hotel—100 rooms, 100 baths, 100 telephones, 100 radios—that I arranged for a car to push on into the Bible Belt. It arrived, an aging Plymouth, complete with a driver named Arabi who had learned English at Haifa during the years of the British

mandate. Arabi is—to be sure—one of the nattiest Arabs in Damascus, for he wore a tweed jacket, gray flannel slacks, and white shoes, and would have passed for a *seigneur* from Greenwich were it not for the white Arab towel that he wore on his head. With the goods of the Dahdah Brothers of the Street Called Straight stowed in the back of the Plymouth, Arabi and I rolled south into Jordan.

At the border the guards wore Western dress and black-and-white checked *keffiyehs* on the head. Jordanian soldiers wear British battle dress and cover their heads with red-checked *keffiyehs*. As for Jordanian police, they eschew the Arab headgear in favor of a helmet draped in back like a desert *kepi*, and a spike growing out of the top after the mode of Kaiser Wilhelm.

We crossed over into Jordan, past dusty buses coming from Baghdad, past the pipeline that brings oil up from Saudi Arabia, past incredible Bedouin villages slapped together with mud, past the squat brown tents of Bedouins who live miserably on the brown earth, past the dwarfed crops suffering this year's drought.

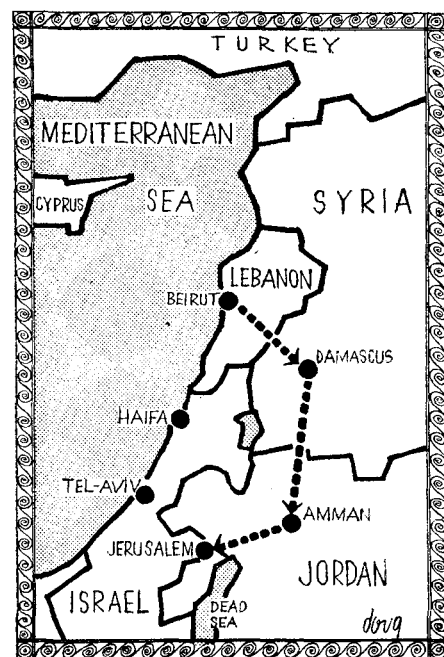
As we drove Arabi told me he was a refugee from Palestine. He had owned a garage in Haifa. Besides English and Arabic he could speak Hebrew "pretty good." "The Jewish have no chance if the British and Americans not tie our hands," he told me. "Not last twenty-four hours. Arab good soldiers. March all day. No eat. No sleep. Fight good. Jewish not last twenty-four hours." Later he told me the legend of the Samaritans who live in Nablus, just forty people on a mountain top. If a new baby is born an old man must die. When I asked him how that arrangement was possible he said, "Because Allah wants him to die." He told me that if you love a girl and she doesn't love you the Samaritans prepare a mystic paper. They throw it in front of her house or put it in her pocket. I asked him if it works, and he looked at me with indulgence. "But yes," he said.

Night fell across the desert and the amber eyes of a jackal glowed from the shoulder of the road. Troops in khaki with their red *keffiyehs* crowded the highway as we passed the headquarters of the Arab Legion. And then we were in Amman, mountain capital of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Known as Philadelphia in ancient days, Amman is the home of

young King Hussein, whose new palace sits high on a ridge. A Roman theatre, nearly intact, with seats for 5,000, rises steeply in front of the Hotel Philadelphia, the city's best. Here we put in for the night, and when morning came, truth to tell, I wasn't quite sure which was in better shape, the Roman amphitheatre or the hotel. If I had been His Highness, Hussein the Hashemite, I think I would have traded the Hotel Philadelphia to Kansas City along with the Philadelphia Athletics.

NEXT morning Arabi, the Plymouth, and I rolled westward towards Jerusalem, past the village known as Salt, past the brown tents of Bedouins, past the winter palace of Hussein near the Dead Sea, past mud huts with their blue doors, black veiled women with water cans on heads, past untethered burros wandering aimlessly, past an informal Bedouin school—a blackboard set up by the side of the road. The earth became strange and white and then suddenly there was an oasis of palms. Round a turn was the Allenby Bridge crossing the Jordan, a strip of muddy green in the beige earth. Customs officers sucked on limes and kids peddled Jordan water in tiny bottles for five piastres. There were white sand dunes on the far side of the Jordan, and then the oasis again, orchards full of banana trees, orange trees, date palms, and cypresses. This was modern Jericho on the plain of Jordan, twenty-four miles from Jerusalem and 853 feet below the level of the sea.

Arabi and I had a coffee at the scrubby little roadside stand at the edge of the Dead Sea, 1,286 feet below the level of the Mediterranean. The luxurious seaside Kafia Hotel, built by Jews, has been blown up by Arabs.



and there is little to lure the visitor now beyond the weatherbeaten tables, the sun-bleached umbrellas, and the rocky beach.

We rolled up the heights from sub-sea level to a half mile above it, and entered the partitioned city of Jerusalem, held partly by Jordanian Arabs and partly by Israelis. In the cease-fire arranged by the U.N. the Arabs came away with the bulk of the Holy Land sites, among them the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, traditional locale of the Crucifixion, Burial, and Resurrection; the Dome of the Rock, also called the Mosque of Omar, built by the Ommayyad Caliph Abdul Malik Ibn Marwan in the seventh century, enclosing the huge rock from which, Moslems believe, Mohammed ascended to heaven and Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac.

The Arabs hold the Garden of Gethsemane and the Mount of Olives, whence, according to Christian belief, Jesus ascended into Heaven. Bethlehem, once eight minutes from Jerusalem via the main road, is now a half-hour away. The old route crosses no-man's-land and lies partly in Israel, so a new road had to be built. Even so, it winds so perilously close to the border that my Arab escorts the other night refused to take the trip in the darkness. We went in the early morning instead, and watched a huge Armenian priest in a reddish robe conduct the mass while Greeks in black robes waited in the wings. Roman Catholics pray later, but Protestants come as sightseers or confine their worship to Christmas Eve. Bibles in olive-wood covers and silver crosses are sold in the Holy Land Store in Manger Square, across the street from the Nativity Church, a bazaar operated by M. Carravati, a Christian of Crusader origin who wears a fez.

The old standby hotel on the Arab side of Jerusalem is the American Colony, which has forty-three rooms, ten of them with baths. Its court is an Arabian garden planted with cypresses and palms, roaming geraniums which grow up the walls, and honeysuckle to perfume the air. Ceramic tiles made in Jerusalem and blue hands to ward off the evil eye decorate the walls. The new fifty-two-room Ambassador Hotel opened a few weeks ago. Over an air-conditioned lunch tourists can look through the picture windows to a stunning view of the Holy Land. The American Colony charges \$7.70 a day for room, bath and full board, the Ambassador slightly less.

TO CROSS from one part of Jerusalem to another requires a Jordanian visa and an Israeli visa, which may not be stamped in the traveler's passport;



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the traveler will also need a military crossing permit from both sides obtained through the American consul in Jerusalem through a travel agent, or in the case of a pilgrim by the respective religious headquarters in Jerusalem. The Israelis ask three days time, not including from sundown Friday through sundown Saturday. The Jordanians ask forty-eight hours, not including Friday, a Moslem holiday. Since the American consulate is closed Sundays, anybody arriving Thursday can plan to spend the week-end.

The Jordanians insist on an exit visa, which is stamped in the passport on leaving, and travelers may only cross once and then only in one direction except at Easter and Christmas, when the rules are somewhat relaxed. Since most countries don't admit to the actual partition of Jerusalem, vice-consuls work on both sides of the lines. The British consul and the U.N. team have phones linking the sectors, but our diplomats must rely on relayed messages.

The Jaffa Gate, the Damascus Gate, the Golden Gate were all famous portals in the old days of Jerusalem, but the only passage way through which trans-sector visitors may filter nowadays is the Mandelbaum Gate. A mandelbaum is an almond tree, but this portal grafted its name from one ill-starred Mr. Mandelbaum, whose house on the border is now a customs hut.

On the Arab side the Mandelbaum Gate is barred with a cement barricade slit with peepholes. Arab Legionnaires with their red scarves and unsheathed bayonets lurk in the ruins. Travel posters advertising the Dome of the Rock decorate the walls of the Jordanian customs house, but the road outside is decorated with concertinas of barbed wire and the granite teeth of tank traps.

A drooping pepper tree and a eucalyptus heavy with yellow berries cast a shadow over an upended tank. While tourists in berets wait to be cleared, a stateless lizard scurries unhampered over the sandbags. An American Express agent shepherds a group tour across the lines. They come from the Grand Mediterranean Cruise of the *Independence*. Huddled in no-man's-land, they are refugees in mink. As I walked across the other morning a young Jordanian porter carried my bag to the halfway point, and an Israeli came out from the other side to pick it up. No-man's-land was deathly quiet, and no man stirred in the soulless house that sits in the ruins. From its portico hung a sign in Hebrew and in English. It said, "Welcome Within Thy Gates. O, Jerusalem." —HORACE SUTTON.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fact and Fiction

Title and Author	Crime, Place, and Sleuth	Summing Up	Verdict
THE BLACK WEEVER <i>Ronald Willis</i> (Roy: \$2.50)	British blackmail plot involves popular author: hero preserves scripts, contract.	Involved, but saved by brisk style and lively pace.	Pleasant.
A NEW HAND-BOOK ON HANGING <i>Charles Duff</i> (Regnery: \$3.50)	Reissue of 1928 bombshell (uptodated) is biting commentary on capital punishment and much else.	Swiftian in scope and treatment, and excellent reading (with laughs even).	Great stuff.
SOMEWHERE IN THIS CITY <i>Maurice Procter</i> (Harper: \$2.75)	Robbery-killing in large English center keeps good police force on toes.	Realistic handling, fine detail, authentic cast all present.	Fine chase job.
A TREASURY OF SHERLOCK HOLMES <i>A. Conan Doyle</i> (Hanover House: \$2.95)	"Study in Scarlet," "Hound of Baskervilles," and 27 shorts in this 700-page selection by author's son.	221B Baker St. is the address, and you'll feel right at home.	Pleased to re-meet you.
CUE FOR MURDER <i>Matt Bryant</i> (Vanguard: \$2.50)	Broadway biggie curtailed; innocent eye-witness works way out.	Theatre chatter good, but too much of it; some neat wisecracks.	On plus side.
HAMMER ME HOME <i>Richard R. Werry</i> (Dodd, Mead: \$2.75)	Denver accountant lams with 17Gs, tries to start life anew in Texas, but . . .	Best people and lurid lugs mix in this wages-of-sin job.	Fifty-fifty.
THE MAN IN THE GREEN HAT <i>Manning Coles</i> (Crime Club: \$2.75)	Agent Tommy Hambledon, flip as ever, trails vanished diplomat in Lake Como area.	Usual pleasant spoofery, with grand scenery, fast action.	Old formula still works.
DEAD AND GONE <i>Manly Wade Wellman</i> (U. of N. C. Press: \$3)	Ten "classic crimes of North Carolina" in this excellent factual roundup.	Yarns nicely documented; suspense, character factors well managed.	Choice collection.
TRAITOR'S PASS <i>David Duff</i> (Roy: \$2.50)	British agent trails stolen secret weapon across Channel to Pyrenees; lady present.	Much of action on (and under) water; usual props, but pace is heady.	Nice chase job.
MARACAIBO <i>Stirling Silliphant</i> (Farrar, Straus: \$2.75)	Blazing Venezuela oil well gives Pulitzer poetess something to write home about.	Love crosscurrents abound in yarn that thrills only in spots.	Too much writing.
CLEAN BREAK <i>Lionel White</i> (Dutton: \$2.75)	Ex-con's elaborate plan to rob N. Y. race-track is gimmick-proof—almost.	Characters real but, uniformly unpleasant; good build-up pace.	Tension all the way.
THE MEN WITH THREE EYES <i>Louisa Revell</i> (Macmillan: \$2.75)	Three die in D.C. slum area as ex-teacher Julia Tyler, 69, vacations at settlement house.	Former Latinist pert as ever in authentic, novel setting; cast unusual, good.	Funny and fast.
MURDER IN TRINIDAD <i>John W. Vandercook</i> (Macmillan: \$2.75)	Yank prof., sabbaticating in Caribbean, ties up with British agent on dope trail.	Civilized yarn saved from conventionality by nice background (reissue of '33 opus).	Leisurely thriller.
DON'T FEED THE ANIMALS <i>John Farr</i> (Abelard-Schuman: \$2.50)	Triple slaughter jolts San Diego zoo staff; other fauna also in dither.	Dames dull, pace medium; good natural history helps this one.	Pass mark.
THE MEAN STREETS <i>Thomas B. Dewey</i> (S&S: \$2.50)	Midwest op. poses as high-school coach to tail young delinquents.	Sex, dope, lowlifers abundant; denouement telegraphed.	Not too credible.
DEATH HAS THREE LIVES <i>Brett Halliday</i> (Dodd, Mead: \$2.75)	Miami eye Michael Shayne crossed up by own evidence-suppressing secretary.	Tender passion obtrudes; much brandy taken between corpses.	Formula toughie.
SO MANY STEPS TO DEATH <i>Agatha Christie</i> (Dodd, Mead: \$2.75)	British scientist lams; red-headed gal acts as decoy in North African chase.	Switcheroos numerous in this fantasia, but some of old magic remains.	Come back Poirot!

—SERGEANT CUFF.