

Sunday 1st May 1921

Last Sunday morning the Holy Communion Service was taken by Bishop Linton, the Bishop of Persia (and wonderfully he did it too) this week he was one of the congregation. Pickard and I after 11 o'clock went down for a walk to G.H.Q. in an endeavour to get our letters, but they hadn't arrived. So we walked on to the bank of the river as far as the alwiyah, stopping at South Gate to watch the water buffaloes lying in the river with just their heads showing. I must more adequately describe these another day. From alwiyah we came back by boat having found an Arab there who had just discharged a load of Chatai, or reed matting. Very agreeable and cool it was though hot for the Arab rowing as he had to go against stream, which is still running strong, even near the banks. One Rupee we paid!

This afternoon I wrote and in the evening went to Church, where Evensong was combined with the Confirmation Service and the Bishop of Persia confirmed 15 men and 1 girl. He made a very impressive service out of it, one they will remember, I am afraid I can hardly remember my confirmation.

Monday 2nd May 1921

Yesterday was the first day of the official hot season, which continues until 15th October. I suppose it is now about as hot as in England when we have a sweltering summer, in August, and people are already getting "a touch of the sun" sometimes and have to have medical attention. The secret is a good topee, plenty to drink, and a thick pad worn over the spine from the head to the waist.

Today Padre Webb and about 10 others, including the Bishop of Persia, went to Babylon. I was invited but had to sorrowfully decline, not liking to ask the Chief seeing that I went last Monday. They started at noon, get to Babylon at 3.30, then tea, examine the ruins from 4 to 7, then wash, and dine at 8 at the Rest House where they sleep the night. Up at 5 the next morning. Round the ruins until 8, breakfast and start for home about 10am.

This afternoon an Arab Jew whom I know as Jacob, who had called to see Townsend, came to me finding T. out, and I invited him into my room, handed him a cigarette and entered into conversation. He proved a most entertaining old man and squatting down on the floor in my room (I forgot to offer him a chair - and an Arab will never sit on a chair, unless you ask him to) told me about himself and his family. He said he had a fine wife, a good, honest woman, just like a European, quite fair, very nice woman (nodding his head). He had very nice daughters, two of whom he had "married" and two sons, schoolboys. He said he would be very happy to do anything for me (or do me, I expect) at the very lowest prices in Baghdad. I offered to buy a piece of silk from him, if it was very cheap.

Tuesday 3rd May 1921

Jacob called this afternoon (it being a holiday) and I bought a piece of silk for 31 Rupees, too much I think. Tussore silk it is, about 20 inches wide, and works out about 2|- English money per yard. That is an English yard: the Baghdad yard of the Bazaars is only 25 inches. Pickard also bargained with him for some Tussore cloth for a suit, and got it for 16 Rupees. Jacob wanted 18 Rupees.

My man has taken up all the coconut matting from my room and had the tiled floor washed over by the sweeper, and put the matting away for the Summer. I have now only carpets on the floor, just like a proper Arab.

I have also bought a Primus Stove for 8 Rupees from Townsend, who is going home, this will enable me to have a hot bath whenever I want it thro' the Summer. Oil is only 7 Annas a Gallon (from the Army) here: it only has to come up the river from Abavan, the great oil port of the Anglo Persian Oil Company. Oil is gradually ousting coal and wood as fuel, being so cheap. Fuel oil is even cheaper and can be used for all purposes where coal and wood were formally used. The Army are gradually discarding ordinary fuel and using fuel-oil for cooking.

Tonight Townsend was giving a show at the Central Cinema, in New Street, as a turn in the programme of the R.A.P.C. Concert Party, who were performing there for one night. So after dinner we went with him and had free seats among an audience composed of Army officers, NCO's and men, Arabs, Jews, Indians and goodness knows who. Townsend gave a good show and was greatly applauded.

When we got home about 11pm we found that Padre Webb had only been back about an hour. His trolley had broken down, just as before, and he had to come home by train. A railway journey in this country is no joke!

Wednesday 4th May 1921

Last week was the Jewish Passover and quite an important week in view of the big Jewish community here. It is said that many of the Baghdad Jews are the decendents of Jews who were carried into captivity to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. They are the traders and money changers and consequently one finds that most of the shops are closed on Saturday and the money changers who squat around Exchange Square (quite near our Billet) are absent on that day. Last Saturday was the last day of the Passover and to celebrate it, Jewry came out in force in its brightest and best. The Jewish girls, many of whom are extremely pretty, paraded up and down New Street, dressed in the most gorgeous abahs of white, pink, blue, salmon, green etc. They don't wear hats, but the abah is drawn over the head, and frames the face, falling in graceful folds to the ankles. It is generally held in at the waist by a girdle. This is a much more pleasing dress than that of the Mohammedan woman, who wears black from head to foot and covers her face, like a black corpse. More and more natives, especially the better classes, are adopting European dress, although it looks far less picturesque.

Thursday 5th May 1921

The animal which has been biting me during the past two or three weeks is not the mosquito, I am told, but the sand-fly. I am getting better of them now, but I have over 20 places on my right arm which are either dead, quiescent, getting better or active spots. When

newly bitten the irritation is too horrible and I have woke up in the middle of the night to find myself scratching. The only thing to do is to rub Citronella oil or some other strong smelling oil over one's arms before going to bed. While the spots are active I continually treat them with Iodine. Last year about this time many of our fellows were in hospital with Sand-fly fever, but we have no-one in hospital this year (touch wood). However, I am perhaps getting nicely inoculated and shan't be bothered by the sand-flies at all presently; I hope so, at all events. They are tiny things like white gnats, and don't trouble Arabs or Indians. I am told the mosquitoes come out later on - so that is something to look forward to. But new arrivals are always bitten: that is one of the unavoidable things of the country. However, my arms (these flies only bite the forearms and ankles) are not so irritating tonight, whereat much joy.

Friday 6th May 1921

Today my bites are better still and no new ones have arrived. It may be due to the precautions I have taken the past 3 or 4 nights to treat my forearms and hands with Citronella. It is a very strong smelling oil, and none too cheap, but prevention is better than bites at any price. So I am feeling cheerier today. The irritation when the bites are a day or two old and the knowledge that you mustn't touch them is very depressing after a time.

I have mentioned before about the trouble there is always in dealing with one's servants. They are all Indians and drawn from all over India. Some are Punjabis, from the North, they are mostly Mohammedans ; others Pathans, fighting men from the Afghanistan Border, having a strange religion of their own. Some are from Goa, or Madras in the South, Roman Catholics perhaps, some Christians of other rites from other parts. Others are Hindus and worship Vishnu, and are idolates. There is continual friction among them, ending in fierce arguments and quarrels. And to keep the peace and things running smoothly is no light job. I will take a picture of them in a group one day and describe them and then you will have some idea of our difficulties here. I have started on this, because today we have engaged a new cook. Our present cook is a rotten cook and a

fuggle-waller (that explains itself) and we are very glad to get rid of him. He was always warring with the others, and often the cause of some trouble or other. He was a Christian (supposed) and it is strange how a Mohammedan Indian looks down on the Christian Indian. Rightly too, in most cases, for the Christian is frequently a thief and generally a liar, whereas the Mohammedan is neither. Christianity is not always an unmixed blessing to the low-caste Indian. He too often looks on it as giving him freedom to do what the white Sahib does; in any case, he has no education and very little understanding. The heathen rites and barbarism of idolatry he can understand, but not so the wonderful beauty of Christianity. So that many officers in India say that they won't have Christians as servants at any price. Nor will they have servants who speak English, as then they could not speak so freely in mess as all the servants, in white suits, stand around and wait.

Saturday 7th May 1921

Last night for the first time I slept on the roof ("upar soky") My servant had made up my camp bed with mattress and my mosquito curtain over all on poles. It had been a very sticky day and one's bedroom was very stuffy with a temperature of over 80 degrees. This isn't actually too hot, although it would be unbearable in England at night, but if there are cooler conditions at hand one would be foolish not to take them. It was certainly much cooler but after a time the breeze developed into a wind and about 2 o'clock blew my mosquito curtain and poles clean over. Crawling out of the wreck, I unfastened the arrangement and got back into bed, with the stars for curtain. I was awakened at about 4 a.m. by spots of rain on my face so I took up my bed clothes and returned to my bedroom where I finished my nights rest. This was my first night on the roof - not very fortunate, but I should have been more sensible not to have started it on Friday. However, I'm nothing daunted and shall sleep "upar" again tonight.

I had arranged for a car to call at 2.30, so at that hour punctually Webb and I went up to the Sporting Club. It was dull and windy, and wind in this country is a nuisance as it always carries so much

dust about. It was a handicap but we enjoyed our golf and I won 3 holes up. I played badly, nevertheless, and sometimes fear I shall never be a good golfer. A course here is nothing like one at home. At home it is a big grass park. Here it is a piece of desert almost, very little grass and no trees. There is, however, an English garden attached which is a delight, and I believe I say every Saturday that that alone is worth the trip. After tea a few more holes and then as our car hadn't arrived we started to walk home. When we got to the wire defences we found out why our car was delayed - the road was blocked and the barbed wire drawn across. We found our car the other side. I suppose the authorities had some information that some troublesome Arabs intended to come into Baghdad and were searching all inward cars. All is well again however today (Sunday).

Sunday 8 May 1921

This morning after breakfast, to which my friend Capt. Mackenzie, came (we were at Holy Communion together), I sat and wrote for two hours while Mackenzie sat in my room reading. Afterwards we both went for a walk in the Bazaars, and I bought a gorgeous silk scarf. The merchant asked Rupees 30 for it, but after about half an hour's argument I got it for Rupees 18 which is a quite low price. It is a great art, this bargaining, and I am getting fairly expert at it.

Afterwards we walked through the gold and silversmiths bazaar, and sat down in several shops watching them at their work. They like to be noticed and place little stools for you and give you salaams. You do the same and when you go, say "Feim-i-Allah" "God be with you". In this bazaar, we saw what I should say is the smallest shop in the world, about 18 inches square. I will take a photo of it soon and send it home for proof.

We had two interesting officers to dinner tonight - one of whom was a Doctor from Salimania in Kurdistan, in the North of Mesopotamia, by Persia. This is a district where the accomplished robber is a respected citizen, and I should regard it as a place it is more healthy to keep out of!

Monday 9th May 1921

I have been sleeping up on the roof since Friday (when the wind blew my mosquito curtain structure over) Saturday and Sunday have been very good nights. Saturday night I had to come down about 3 a.m. for another blanket, it turned so cold. Sunday night was the night of the new moon, the moon which heralds the great Mohammedan feast of Ramadan (or Ramazan). The minarets of the Mosques round about were decorated with lamps and the priests were waiting up at the tops for the first sign of the new moon and as soon as it appeared, a signal was given and a gun was fired. Ramadan had begun. It lasts for 30 days and during this time nothing is eaten or drunk by the good Mohammedan between sunrise and sunset. The day should be given to devotion but between sunset and sunrise next morning, the time is man's own. He has his first meal at 7 p.m. and his second about 3 a.m. in the morning, for sunrise is about 4.30. My man, being a strict follower of Islam, will fast all day for the next month and be as miserable as a boiled owl until after 7 when he has had his dinner. How they manage without water I don't know in this boiling sun. But they do it, and willingly, and this devotion rather puts our Lenten pretendings into the shade.

Tuesday 10 May 1921

Today I had arranged to go to the big Ordnance Depot, just outside Baghdad, to start Sheehy, one of my men, on current audit of the a/c. Sheehy called for me in the car at 8.30, our road taking us over Khota Bridge, past the big R.A.F. Park where about 40 aeroplanes are housed and so to the river side, where in a pleasant position the Ordnance Office is situated. The stores in this Depot are worth millions of pounds, all stacked out in the open (under tarpaulin generally) clothing and all: but they keep fairly well stacked in that way as there is very little rain and when there is, the warm sun dries everything quickly. Wooden articles are the worst to keep, as they shrink so in the sun and fall to pieces.

I have given a lot of time in the office trying to help straighten out the affairs of this Depot and was consequently very disappointed to

find things going very slackly. I can see that I shall have to make myself very disagreeable, but that is what the Audit is for, anyway.

In the afternoon Webb and I went up to Golf, and played execrably. There was however a high wind and a little rain, which made golf almost impossible. The dust got so bad about 5 p.m. that we could hardly see our balls, so we gave up after 15 holes and went and had tea. The wind died down suddenly about 6, so we went out and completed our course. I judged it best to sleep in my room tonight, and good judgment it turned out to be, for in the early morning it began to rain heavily and kept up until 10 next morning.

This fast of Ramadan affects young and old alike. Our caddies were Mohammedan Arabs, and like their elders they must not touch food or drink, between sunrise and sunset. When the gun denoting sunset was fired and they heard the report, it was amusing to see all their faces light up at once with a smile. As soon as we were in, both rushed off to get their dinner.

The Arab Coffee Shops are shut all day of course, and open at sunset, and keep open nearly all night. Consequently during Ramadan there is a good deal of night life in Baghdad, groups of Arabs parading the streets and driving about. But not every Arab keeps the fast I think, for I saw one purchase a 2a loaf of bread this morning as I was driving to the Ordnance Depot. I don't suppose he kept it carefully all day until 7p.m.!

Wednesday 11 May 1921

This morning was so wet and muddy that I gave up my first idea of going again to Ordnance Depot, and went to the office instead. Here I found plenty to do, having been away yesterday and among other things, a letter stating that Major Frankland of the I.W.T., whom I had accused of falsification of accounts, had left the country. I at once went to the discipline branch, "A", and asked that he should be bought back. This was agreed to, so Frankland will have an unpleasant surprise at Suez, when someone walks on to the ship and breaks the news.

It cleared up during the afternoon, so my man informed me that I was to sleep on the roof. Webb's man hadn't got his bed ready so I slept alone. We had two guests to dinner, Thacker and Newman, two Padres, and after dinner some very jolly games of ping-pong, Newman being very good. I defeated Newman, but Webb couldn't although he could beat me.

At bed time I went up on to the roof and after a stroll round looking at the lights (all the minarets of the city are lighted up and look very pretty) I tucked myself in bed. But I think it was a bit damp and it would have been wiser to sleep downstairs.

Thursday 12 May 1921

Today I went again to the Advanced Base Ordnance Depot and completed my inspection. But I shall have to go again in order to talk over the various points that have arisen, with the Chief Ordnance Officer. I expect also that my desk is piled high with work and goodness knows when I shall be able to pull it up, especially as I shall be all morning on the Campbell trial.

In the afternoon Horton and Wayman of the Supply Directorate called for Webb and me and we went down to the Sporting Club. I played Wayman and doing better than usual, except in driving, I beat Wayman 2 up. Webb was very annoyed that he had to play with Horton, whom he beat 8 up. All the beauty and fashion of Baghdad (British) was there as Lady Cox was giving a garden party there. Sir Percy Cox, the Governor, and the G.O.C. (General Haldane) were there and the guests were dancing to the tunes of the Jazz Band. It was quite nice seeing a crowd of English women - folk again - but they were not a particularly beautiful crowd. The "great" Mrs. Stanbury was there, in a pink silk dress just reaching to the knee. Tea was really very nice, and we enjoyed the afternoon and returned home in great style in our Vauxhall, cheerful and contented.

Friday 13th May 1921

Yesterday evening we just got home in time. As we sat in the Club veranda after tea we could see the rain falling in sheets in the distance. Suddenly the wind began to blow hard, and sweeping along the ground, raised the dust in clouds. Many said "That means rain soon" others "No, the wind is in the wrong quarter". The first were right. We got home about 7 p.m. and just after 7.30 we heard the first drops on the zinc roof over our courtyard. For the first half an hour it was pretty heavy, but after 8, while we were at dinner it came down in buckets. The most brilliant lightning flared up, thunder crashed, the rain beat on our Billet like a battering ram. The streets emptied, shops and houses shut and everyone retreated indoors. A thick stream of water dropped into our courtyard from our roof, and another poured into our passageway from the roof somewhere. This continued till 10 when it got a bit lighter. By this time the streets of Baghdad were flooded and the water poured down the narrow side streets off New Street and swamped many of the poorer houses. In New Street, Bank Street and Budgi Street, wherever there was a depression, water filled the road from side to side. There is very little, if any, curve in the roads, and no drainage, and as they are all made of mud, their state, as the morning wore on, can be better imagined than described. In places there was creamy mud several inches thick, and to walk on the footpath meant to get splashed from head to foot. This will take days to dry up. Oh, Mesopotamia, what a country! Outside in the desert, the tracks will be impassable for days, and except where the British have made roads traffic is stopped. But this rain will do a lot of good, people say, as it will lie in the pools everywhere for a long time, replenish the wells, and give the barley and other crops a badly needed drink. I forgot to mention that it quite spoiled the later half of our dinner. Our kitchen has no chimney - but a narrow well reaches from the fireplace right up to the roof. Up this the smoke goes. It is sheltered by a reed roof on top - but this was no shelter against the weight of this rain, which simply fell down the shaft and put out the fire and spoilt our pudding and savoury. Our poor cook couldn't get near his fire and as the water came into his kitchen also from outside, he had to give it up.

Saturday 14 May 1921

The mention, in a letter from home, of my kiddies hair being washed reminds me of the henna, which is extensively used by the natives of the place. It is prepared from the dried leaves of a shrub, which are ground into powder between two flat stones. An infusion is made with hot water and a reddish brown liquid obtained. If you watch a native woman squatting in a shop in the bazaar you will see that her finger nails are stained a chestnut red, and as she raises her hands in horror at the price the merchant suggests you see that her palms are stained as well. Her toenails (she has slipped her shoes off) are chestnut brown and ten to one the soles of her feet are too. Her hair is dyed with henna, probably, and a beautiful Titian red it is - and the old merchant who is vainly trying to cheat her has his finger nails and toenails dyed, too, and if he has a beard, that perhaps as well. His hair he shaves off so he can't dye that. Children are treated the same. Even the horses and donkeys, especially if they are white, have their ears, foreheads and tails dyed, and very often the owner smacks the animal on the rump afterwards, and leaves a light brown outstretched hand marked on either side. This is supposed to make the animal go faster, so long as the imprint remains, they think he can feel it. Nearly everything is carried here either by porters, or by pack-animals, and the latter never seem to tire as they jog along the streets and bazaars, with their bells a-jangling. If one comes in your way you whack him with the stick you always carry and perhaps he sways into an unfortunate pedestrian the other side. He won't complain, however, when he sees you are an Englishman. If a native is in your way on the path you prod him with your stick and he makes way for you. It is very necessary that he should be reminded of his place.

The roads were still very muddy in places and there was no golf, as the course was flooded. I strolled around the bazaar in the afternoon, but most of the shops were shut, it being the Jewish Sabbath. So for once I had a rest, and my tea, lying on my bed, with my faithful man to wait on me. Which again is as it should be.

Sunday 15 May 1921

It has been a dull close day and more rain threatens. However, the streets have dried fairly well, notwithstanding that we had some more rain on Friday night. Rain here is rare enough to be almost a phenomenon. After this month is over we shall have no more for months.

I went to Holy Communion, but after breakfast I occupied myself most of the morning reading up papers in connection with Lieut. Campbell's trial which I am on tomorrow morning. All the afternoon I wrote, went to Church at 6.30 came home, bathed, had dinner and here's another day ended. It only seems a few days ago I was writing home - and I rather fancy the days are beginning to speed up.

Pickard is in Padre Webb's room bathing Webb's foot, which he sprained last night hitting at a cat. There are two or three haunt our billet at night and fight for the scraps that get left about; their howls and shrieks are enough to wake the dead. These are not domestic pets, like our cats, but wretched things that hide and sleep all day, and prowl about at night for scraps of food. Beastly, mangy, dirty things they are: half wild and outcast, but I suppose they help to keep mice and rats away.

Monday 16 May 1921

Today was commenced the trial by General Court Marshal of Lieut Campbell of the I.W.T., on whose case I have spent so much time. All the witnesses, of whom I was one, had arrived at the office of the A.P.M. (Assistant Provost Marshal) at 9a.m. - near the Serai, and at 9.30 the Court, of which Colonel Commandant Dent, 57th Brigade, was President, commenced proceedings. Two Majors, 4 Captains and 1 Lieut. comprised the remainder of the Court. This is a very democratic affair, this trial of an officer by his brother officers, and the accused has very strong rights. He is not condemned on the strict letter of the law, as might happen in a Law Court, but only if his judges, after a full consideration of all the circumstances, agree that there was no excuse for his transgression. The court sat at a horse-shoe table facing the door of the room, with the President in the

centre, Capt. Emery (the prosecuting Officer) at one end of the horse-shoe, and the prisoner and "prisoners friend", (Capt. Pullar) at the other end.

First of all the Court was sworn in on the Bible, and then all the witnesses (17) were brought in to the room and the roll called. We all then trooped out again, to be called in one by one. I was the 4th witness called and my turn came after tiffin at about 2.10p.m.. I was in the room until 4.20 - two hours and ten minutes - but was perfectly at my ease the whole time. I was first sworn on the Bible and then taken over the whole of my previous evidence. All the documents relating to the case from the Auditors point of view I produced and described their significance to the court. After my evidence, which included an a/c of my visit on 21st March when I seized the a/cs, I was cross- examined, but I made points out of nearly all the questions asked, and one very telling one which I should think the Defending Officer wished he had never asked. The trial will last some days.

I bought 3 of the witnesses home to tea and we sat talking until after 6 p.m. Two were jolly Scots sailormen at one time officers in the Indian Mercantile Marine and not at all relishing their job as witnesses.

Padre Marsh came home from Mosul today, full of beans, and had the sauce to beat me at ping-pong. He also celebrated the occasion by holding a Court of Enquiry on one bearer, who accused the other of stealing his watch. The Court adjourned without being able to make up its mind!

Tuesday 17 May 1921

After a preliminary visit to the trial I went to the office and, as I thought found much to do. Very busy indeed and got a good few things off - feeling more fit than I have done for some time. Since I have been sleeping under a mosquito curtain at night I haven't been bitten by mosquitoes and sand-flies and I think that is the reason I

feel fitter. There's no doubt that during the time I had all those bites I was feeling very slack and depressed.

After tiffin, again to the trial and found the I.W.T. Clerk, Velu M'dalian waiting, although he had given his evidence. In conversation with him I elicited several things which had not been brought out before and I left a message for Emery to call on me after Court. This he did and I furnished him with the new points which he is going to introduce. I have no doubt whatever in my mind of Campbell's guilt, but he is making a good fight of it on the ground that although appearances are, by an unfortunate combination of circumstances, against him, the whole transaction was an honest one conceived in the interests of the Government and that the apparently incriminating features are simply due to ignorance and slackness.

Our own Court of Enquiry ended in the watch being back to the accused bearer, much to his delight, but his smile disappeared when he was told that the next time he offered to fight all the other bearers he would get 7 days R.I. R.I. is Rigorous Imprisonment and the unfortunate victim is beaten every day for 7 days. Such is domestic life in Mesopotamia.

Domestic life! Today I found 5 of our table napkins in the cookhouse where they had been used as pot cleaners! Not for cleaning the pots inside - but outside! Two of them were jet black. Tomorrow, I must strafe the cook.

Wednesday 18 May 1921

Today has been warmer and sunnier and Webb and Marsh are again sleeping up on the roof. I must go up again in a day or two. The roads are drying up quickly and the water carriers are commencing to water the roads again. These men use either a pig-skin slung over the back and throw the water before them by swinging the neck of the skin quickly from left to right or else carry two 4 gallon petrol tins. They work very hard, these men, and (another of the old Biblical customs still practised in the ancient land) gird up their loins as they work. The Arab wears a long flowing robe reaching to his ankles and likely it is a dignified and cool dress for anyone who only

dawdles along, at the usual pace it would hopelessly hinder the watering-man, so he girds up his loins, i.e. pulls his clothes up around his waist or loins, and ties or girds them there. The porter carrying a heavy wad does the same.

I had a good hard day at the office and shall be glad when I can really get going on my work. I have made a start but I hope to do something worth recording before I come back, something towards getting store accounting out here on a proper honest basis.

Thursday 19 May 1921

Hotter still today : perhaps this heat seems greater coming so suddenly after the cool spell of last week. After tiffin I went round the Bazaar hunting for something for my mother's birthday and eventually hit on a Baghdad scarf which I thought she might like. The merchant started at 10 Rupees, so I commenced from my end at 7 Rupees. He came down first to 9 Rupees, then to 8, and I came up to 7 Rupees 8 Annas. Eventually after a fierce argument I got the scarf for that, plus 4 Annas Backsheesh - about 10/- in English money. In the Bazaars, no article is marked and every merchant tries to get the utmost for his goods. You cannot possibly get the proper price without this haggling, and then you must have some idea of the real value so as to be able to quote below, and so have a margin for working up. Very often, too, the only test is to walk away without buying, for sometimes the merchant will send a boy after you to say he will accept your offer. This method of marketing is quite in accordance with the tenets of the Mohammedan religion for Mahomet told his followers to bargain "until the sweat stood on their foreheads". If they will do this with one another, it may be easily guessed what they are prepared to do for the "infidel".

Friday 20 May 1921

This morning Capt. Emery came in to say that Lieut. Campbell had been acquitted by the court. This came as a great surprise and somewhat of a blow, for I am absolutely certain the man was guilty and I shall never have a better case against anybody. If a court will

not convict on that evidence it seems hopeless even attempting to bring any thief to justice. In my opinion, the evidence which finally decided the court on acquittal was the very evidence which proved his guilt.

After I had come home from the office this afternoon, Padre Webb and I went to tea with Dr. Cantine, the American Missionary, and his wife, in Abakhana Street. It was a beautiful clean little billet, nicely painted and very tastefully furnished - and it was really good to go to tea for once with a lady. For she was a charming lady and Dr. Cantine very nice, too. Both are still very American although they have been so long away from U.S.A. Nice tea served in sweet little china cups, everything so clean and nice, and DATE CAKE. I had two pieces ! The first I have had in Mesopot.

It is very stuffy tonight and I am sleeping on the roof. Today has been the hottest day I have experienced so far - but not really uncomfortably hot.

Saturday 21st May 1921

I slept on the roof again last night, or rather for part of the night. Webb and Marsh also had their beds up there and we went to bed about 11 o'clock. At about 3.30 in the morn I was awakened by hearing the Muezzins in the Minarets calling the faithful to prayer just before dawn, and a pretty fine din they make. Then the gun is fired (it can be heard all over the city by anyone on the roof) and this heralds in the day, during which while Ramadan lasts, no Mohammedan may eat or drink. After the moment of dawn is announced, the muezzin calls again, some different injunction, and the fast begins again. This is a weird idea this fast for 30 days - for the Moslem may eat and drink and make merry as much as he likes during the nights, and its result is to merely turn night into day while it lasts, for all the coffee shops and eating houses and native theatres are open all the night. However, to return to last night. Just after the gun had fired, a windstorm arose, and nearly swept our mosquito nets over. Clouds of dust came with it, and we all sat up and said "Down quickly, before the rain comes". Just as I got out, I saw Iman

Ali running up. Like the faithful man he is, he had rushed up to my assistance as soon as he heard the wind, and while the others had to carry their own beds down, I strolled down in ease, my servant carrying mine, mosquito curtain and all. I finished my sleep in my own room.

Horton failed me for golf this afternoon, so I checked part of our Mess cookery ledger.

At 6.15 Mackenzie called for me and we went for a walk over Khota Bridge to Zobides Tomb, and back by Maude Bridge and I had a good grouse to him about the rottenness of things in Mesopotamia. Corruption, slackness and inefficiency, are I am afraid rampant. Perhaps it is because there are no women here (English women I mean) or so few that they make no difference; or perhaps it is the climate. This is the land of the "Forty Thieves" and most of the inhabitants are their descendents.

Tonight there was the most wonderful lightning storm I have ever seen. On all sides the lightning was flashing, so that not for one second was the sky dark, while the flashes overhead lit up the whole neighbourhood and the distant flashes showed up the houses and minarets on the horizon. Rivers of light struck across the sky, leaving their images in one's eyes for some seconds after, while claps of thunder rolled overhead. Then all of a sudden down came the rain and drove us down off the roof, where we had gone to witness the show. It is still thundering and lightning and raining as I write - 10.30. While this will cool the air, the roads and paths will be in a pretty state tomorrow morning.

Sunday 22nd May 1921

Last night was very hot in my room and I had to get up and change my pyjama coat. Up at 6.30 and to Holy Communion. The roads aren't so bad as I thought they would be: the sun is so strong now in the early morning that it dries up quickly. When Pickard came out from Church we hired an Arabana and drove out as far as the Sporting Club and walked home along the River bank. Many of the

fig trees are cram full of green figs, the mulberries are ripening and the apricots are already ripe. The strings of dates, with dates the size of peas, are now hanging down from the date palms, green and golden yellow. It is strange how few butterflies I have seen - those so far are the good old English kinds - Whites and red Admirals. Some of the birds are gorgeous, as I have already described, and the storks are very interesting. They flap about from one minaret to another, and I think are held in great veneration by the Moslems, as they never disturb their nests.

Monday 23rd May 1921

The thunderstorm hasn't cleared the air and today was very hot. I put in a good day at the office, did some good work, and got behind !

After tea Pickard and I went up to the Serai, to the Government book shop. Here are kept supplies of all kinds of books of fiction and fact, travel; manuals of science, language books, gift books and primers for children. A most astonishing assortment they have, all in their original paper wrappers and at all prices from pence to pounds. I wanted a book on Ctesiphon and a Hindustani Grammar but I was unfortunate. There was a brisk trade doing, however, and dozens of others were making purchases. It is a shop run on similar lines to W.H.Smiths at Kingston; strange that the Arab Government should be running it.

Outside the Serai is typically Eastern. Squatting and lying up against the wall are beggars holding out hands or plates or bowls for the Alms of the passer-by, one lean brown old scoundrel always amuses me. He lies down on his side, almost naked, one hand out-stretched, and jabbering just as if mad. Put a coin in his hand, however, and he has a glance at it and transfers it in quite a business like manner in the folds of his loin-cloth - and then immediately resumes his pose, stretches out his hand and starts to jabber again. It's a trade of course, here, and quite an honourable one.

Then there are the scribes. Very busy they were tonight, either reading letters to their recipients or in writing replies at their client's instructions. So few of the natives can read or write that these scribes earn a good living and there are dozens of them.

Another strange occupation is that of the story-teller. Sometimes a woman, but generally a man, the story-teller squats on his haunches by the wall, with his auditors in a half-circle around him and reading from a book, enlarges and expounds the story as he goes along. The audience squats, too, and listens rapt to the account. The fee is 3 pies - one farthing each.

Peep shows are another feature. One is always found at the Serai: a square box, on legs, with three round windows. Apparently the contents are pictures, which the showman describes in a sort of sing-song. This entertainment also costs the modest sum of 3 pies.

Tuesday 24th May 1921

Today commenced fairly warm and made me feel a bit doubtful about our journey to Ctesiphon, but it came over just a faint bit hazy and the temperature didn't seem too oppressive. We started at 2.0pm, Padre Webb, Pickard and I, taking our way out of Baghdad via Hinaidi and along a fine road until we came to the Bridge over the Diala River. Here we alighted and viewed the monument erected to the memory of the brave fellows of the Royal North Lancashire Regiment who lost their lives at the crossing of the Diala in 1917. The bridge was guarded by a company of Indian soldiers, who presented arms as we drove over. Our road up to now had been through a fertile country with many cucumber gardens and corn fields on the side between the road and the Tigris. The corn and barley is ripe and the natives were busy cutting it. 'Busy' is a wrong word - for the reapers squatted on their haunches and cut a few stalks at a time with a knife, gradually gathering a handful which they deposited on a heap nearby. This is the way that reaping has been done in this country and around from time immemorial and this throws a peculiar light on the artist who paints the bright coloured pictures of the Biblical reapers. But it wouldn't do to paint the actual

facts, even if he knew them. I have no doubt the Israelites reaped their corn in much the same manner, two thousand and more years ago.

The afternoon was now turning out much hotter, and the mirage, especially as we advanced into more desert country was very pronounced. The whole of the country ahead, near the horizon, seemingly 3 or 4 miles away, appeared to be under shimmering water, and objects on the shore or bank of the make-believe lake were actually reflected in this fraudulent water. One can quite understand how this mirage sometimes nearly drove our men, advancing across the desert here in 1917, nearly frantic. Every mile brought them nearer, they would think, to the blessed water; but it was either always ahead or disappeared into the desert sand as they advanced. A mirage in a fold of the desert would, however, effectually conceal a body of men if they were below the level of the 'mirage' water.

Once over the Diala Bridge our way ran along the desert more or less parallel with the railway line to Kut, but the road where there was one, or a track of any sorts, was execrable. It was in truth the roughest piece of ground I have ever driven over. Sometimes we climbed ridges or floundered through marshes of water, or bob-bob-bobbed over bump after bump of sun dried earth, or flop into dust ruts. It is a wonder that the car stood it.

At last we arrived at the village of Suleiman Pak, named after the Prophets Barber, whose Tomb with the attendant Mosque is near by. The village is almost under the shadow of the ruin of Ctesiphon, 200 yards or so ahead. We could see this huge ruin soon after we had passed the Diala Bridge and it got bigger and bigger as we approached and now we were after a 20 mile journey, under its shade.

It consists of the front or facade of the Palace and part of the roof and the back wall of the Banqueting Chamber. It was built about 1500 years ago by the great Khosroes II, King of Mesopotamia, at a time when Ctesiphon was a great and flourishing city and the city of

Seleucia was on the other side of the Tigris, as populous and important. Now only this magnificent ruin is all that is left of these two great cities, the countries of trade and learning when Mesopotamia teemed with peoples and was cultivated like one huge garden.

The great facade is nearly 100 ft high and about 15 ft thick at the base tapering to about 6 ft thick at the top. What a wonderful wall! The bricks of which the whole building was made are about 9 inches square and 3 inches thick and even now as hard as granite almost. Marvellous bricks! No wonder they have stood these years. The palace proper apparently consisted of a high ground floor and at least three stories above. No windows were in the outer walls, in order to keep the heat out. Probably there was a big centre court, shaded from the sun, from which light was obtained. To the right of the facade is the wonderful arch of the Banqueting Chamber "The Arch of Ctesiphon". It has an oval topped roof, and is built of brick like the rest.

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While only about 4 ft thick at the top it is 12 feet at the base of these walls, so as to carry safely the terrific weight of the roof. The hall under the Arch is 100 feet wide and 150 feet deep. What a gorgeous palace it must have been! Now only birds and bats roost in its ruined walls. But it is a testimony to the great minds of those old architects and a tribute to the way those old builders builded. It impressed me greatly. I am told that the Turks actually sold it for breaking up on account of the valuable bricks it contained, the like of which cannot now be made in Mesopotamia.

At about 5 o'clock we started again for home and after crossing the Diala came along the old road near the River Tigris, and an enjoyable ride it was through the market gardens of Baghdad.

We arrived home about 7 p.m. very tired and I rather fancy that something I had eaten had disagreed with me or I had a touch of the sun, for I came over feeling very sick after my bath and couldn't eat any dinner. I lay down instead and had a sleep and at 10.30 went

upstairs on the roof to my bed. It blew hard at one time and I had to get out and tie up my mosquito curtain. Oh dear me! Who would live in Mesopotamia!

Wednesday 25 May 1921

Not feeling frightfully bucked with life this morning. I hadn't quite recovered from my indisposition of last night, and in addition it has been the hottest day so far that I have experienced in Mesopotamia. One gets a "hot" day in England now and again, but not "hot" like this heat. One goes out of one's billet in the mid-day and the heat jumps out at you like a blast of flame and as you walk along you feel that you are in the path of a blow lamp flame. Everyone gets out of the sun who can, and during the afternoon, one can see the shady side of New Street crowded and not a soul on the sunny side. I can quite believe that it is going to be really warm later.

Tonight was hot and stuffy too. Just outside my room it was 90 degrees in the shade at 7.30 p.m. and 88 degrees at 9.30. This shows how little the temperature drops in the early night. In the early hours it is cooler but it is hot again at 7 a.m. Last night was quite nice on the roof, but the Muezzin cries incessantly from the Minaret, and although he sounds all right in "The Garden of Allah" he is a damned nuisance when one wants to get to sleep. Thank goodness he won't be so active once Ramadan is over.

Thursday 26 May 1921

Ramadan is not over until June 6 or 7. Till then I suppose the Muezzin will call out exhortations to the "Faithful", many of whom are engaged into turning night into day, as for instance some whom we can see (from our roof) on the roof of a cafe not far away dancing and otherwise making merry to the strains of a native band. The place is brilliantly lit up and they start at 7 p.m. and finish at 3 a.m. I have seen some of the dancing girls in the street and most extraordinarily pretty they are, almost as fair of face as a European girl. But they make up for their lack of colour by painting the cheeks,

blackening the eyelids with Kohl, and rouging the lips. According to their means or prosperity they adorn their necks with necklaces of gold coins, and many wear gold anklets, while they do not cover their faces like other women; their charms must be on show to obtain custom I suppose.

I went up to the sporting club this afternoon with Horton, but I did only very moderately and was all square with Horton at the 15th hole, when we stopped. We didn't go up until after 4 as it is too hot to play in the afternoon now and exercise is taken only in the evenings.

Friday 27 May 1921

Lieut. Campbell, of the I.W.T., has been arrested again, this time on a charge of perjury, and a further charge of misappropriation of Govt. Stores. The charges of perjury arise out of two statements which he made at his trial a week ago, when he was acquitted by the most important G.C.M. which ever sat, I should think. I shall be witness again on all three charges. If we can prove perjury I should think we could have him tried again on the original charge. I went with Emery to the I.W.T. Coal and Fuel offices at Right Bank. We went by command from G.H.Q. about 4 miles down river. I went through the Indents and didn't get back until nearly 1 o'clock. How nice and cool many of the billets look which face onto the River side and I wish we could move from our stuffy Billet. I must see what can be done. On the way back the whole of the Right Bank of the River as far as Karradah Bridge was occupied by Indians and Arabs washing and bathing and it made me feel very much inclined for a swim too. The Arab boys at Baghdad love the water and as they don't go to school, spend most of their time in it.

Saturday 28 May 1921

We had a visit from the Sanitary Section R.A.M.E. today. Some of our members have been troubled with fleas, the little hard biting black fleas of Mesopotamia, and as these are particularly obnoxious and particularly dirty fleas we had to have our Billet sprayed with

disinfectant flea-killer. Every room had to be turned out and every corner and the walls, mattresses etc. had to undergo disinfection. A second dose ought to teach the fleas that this is a nasty Billet to live in and they will return to their proper quarters. Perhaps - we will see.

The sand flies have bitten my hands again - 10 places on the right hand and 2 on the left, at sleep last night I suppose one of my hands touched the mosquito net, and some of the tribe had a good feed off it.

I went up to golf with Horton and played 15 holes - finished all square and halved 9 holes. As he holed out once from the fairway, he had to pay for drinks. I had 3 Shandy ? , and including Tiffin I also drank up to bedtime 4 gingerbeers, 2 cups of tea, 1 cup of coffee, 1 whisky and soda and then I was thirsty. Four quarts - and when it gets hotter I shall want umpteen quarts.

Sunday 29 May 1921

Holy Communion before breakfast, but it was too hot after breakfast to go out so I stayed at home and read and wrote. It has been a real scorcher today and was 100 degrees outside my room this afternoon in the shade. This is rather a hot Billet I am afraid, and we must try for a move to a better one.

In the afternoon at 4.45 Mackenzie and I went out to see the Corpus Christi procession of the Latin Church, in honour of the Holy Eucharist (i.e. the Body of Christ). Most of the processionists were little children, first the girls and then the boys and very sweet the little mites looked, nearly all in white, carrying the banners and sacred figures belonging to the Church and chanting Hymns on the way. One little group consisted of angels, Kings, Bishops, Monks - all little kids of 5 or 6 or so. Half Baghdad had turned out to see them and it was most interesting watching the crowd ; there were many Mohammedan women in the crowd and if they don't show their faces they know well enough how to show their eyes - very saucy eyes they are, painted black round the lids and brightened with Kohl. Whew! It's hot tonight - 94 degrees.

Monday 30 May 1921

This morning I was pestered with officers who have come in to Baghdad on the evacuation of Persia, which is just completed. We have had to leave heaps of valuable stores behind, or hand them over to the Persian Government, because they were not wanted here, and it is no use bringing away valuable stores and incurring the cost of expensive transport if they are no use when you get them here. So we have sold what we can and burned the rest! Petrol, for instance, we can buy for 12 annas a gallon; we had stacks of it at Persia which would have cost more than 12 Annas a gallon to bring down. Wood, too, and other supplies, all went up in the bonfire!

This evening I was the guest of Colonel Davidson to dinner at "E" Mess G.H.Q. We were seven - 3 Colonels, 2 Majors, 1 Captain and me. They have a beautiful Billet, with a lovely balcony and rooms, on the river, and they do know how to live. We had a ripping dinner and while the other 4 played Bridge, Colonel Davidson, Major Cox and I sat out on the Balcony and talked, watching the lights opposite and the river and the stars. I walked home at 12 midnight!

Tuesday 31st May 1921

At 8.30 this morning a launch was at the River steps at G.H.Q. to take me to G.H.Q. Baghdad area, about 2 miles down River, where the summary of evidence is being taken on the three charges on which Leuit. Campbell has been re-arrested. It was a lovely morning, somewhat cooler than yesterday with a nice breeze blowing. Some of the women from the village had got their kiddies down by the River bank washing them. They wash their clothes in the River, get their drinking water from it, scour their pans in it, water their gardens with it and wash themselves and babies in it, though it is seldom more than a cat-lick. At one of the houses we passed two strolling Arab musicians who were singing each beating a sort of drum made of pottery with a skin stretched over it. All the family were looking down and leaning over from the balcony enjoying the row. The Tigris opposite the H.Q. buildings here is very wide and a really noble

river - but it narrows very strangely at the big bend just below, and a bridge of boats is slung across it - Karradah Bridge. Further below is a big island, opposite the I.W.T. Office covered with bush, which I am told is full of wild fowl, hares, wild pig and so on. The bush is so thick, however, that it is difficult to get them.

Campbell duly arrived and I was the 3rd witness called. The charges against him that he committed perjury at his trial by stating (1) that the Indent form or voucher on which he stated he issued the oil was made out on the 17th Feb. whereas it was actually made out on the 18th (2) that he showed 500 4 gallon tins of oil to me in his store-yard when I went there on 21st. March and (3) seeing that the tins were not there then what had he done with them. My evidence is very strong, I think, and I can make it even stronger if Campbell's counsel cross-examines me. C. was very fidgety while I was giving my evidence and apparently very despondent afterwards as Emery told me that he remarked to him "Well, I suppose you've got me this time."

I had lunch with the Officers on the H.Q. Staff and came home in the launch in the afternoon and worked hard at the office although it was a half holiday. I can do 4 times as much work when I'm alone and uninterrupted.

In the evening we had two Engineering Officers to dinner, and had an enjoyable time, ping-pong and so on. One was the officer in charge of the Engineering works at Baghdad and as soon as he found out I was in charge of the stores Audit was very anxious for me to inspect his a/cs, which he considers very good. But they are all like that and when you come to look at their a/cs they are very bad.