

# DIARY OF EVENTS, May-July 1948

## Christ Church, Jerusalem

Rev. Hugh Jones

### *PART ONE*

#### May 1948, Christ Church, Jerusalem DIARY OF EVENTS from Wednesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, Onwards

Before giving a day-to-day account of our experiences in Christ Church after the end of the Mandate, the following general observations will be helpful as a background.

Christ Church Compound, in which stands the Church, Hostel, Parsonage, School Hall and classrooms, adjoins the Citadel which, together with the Jaffa Gate, forms a fortress at the southwest corner of the City wall and commands one of the two road entrances into the Old City. A short distance outside the Jaffa Gate lies the Jewish quarter of Montefiore, from which several attacks were launched on the Jaffa Gate and the Citadel in an attempt to break through to relieve the Jewish Quarter in the Old City, which lies immediately behind Christ Church. This meant that in the Compound we were situated between two fires and a number of shells, mortars, grenades burst on the premises, both from the direction of the Jewish Quarter of the Old City and from the Montefiore Quarter from where mortars and shells aimed at the Citadel sometimes overshot their mark and fell in the Compound.

The Armenian Quarter, which stretches from Christ Church to the Zion Gate, forms the other wedge between the Jewish Quarter of the Old City and the City wall which runs roughly in a southeasterly direction from the Jaffa Gate to the Zion Gate. The Armenian Patriarch collected all his flock living in the Quarter and brought them inside the Convent walls, where 3,000-4,000 Armenians were collected together, many of them living in tents erected in the grounds.

With the occupation of Katamon, an Arab residential area on the outskirts of Jerusalem by the Jews over the weekend of April 30<sup>th</sup> and May 2<sup>nd</sup>, a number of Arab refugees came to seek shelter in Christ Church inside the Old City walls. These, together with some Arab Christians from Talbia and other parts of Jerusalem, brought the total number of people in the Compound to nearly 50, several Moslem families being accommodated in the classroom block at one end of the Compound and in the Kindergarten across the Lane. Occupants of the Hostel and Parsonage and one classroom adjoining the school hall included six members of C.M.J. staff, a Christ Church school teacher and her old parents, a former Christ Church teacher and her husband (a Czech refugee), two Hebrew Christian members of Christ Church (mother and daughter), four Arab Christian members of Christ Church and two children and eight members of the Arab Anglican Church, including four members of their Church Council, making a total of 31 persons including four servants.

## DIARY

MAY 12<sup>th</sup> Went to the King David hotel which houses the offices of the Secretariat and left letters with a Government official who was leaving by plane for England the next day.

MAY 13<sup>th</sup> British troops were withdrawn from their positions protecting the Jewish Quarter in the Old City in the evening. Haganah forces in the Old City occupied the positions vacated by the army. Intermittent firing and sniping began in the Old City at 7 p.m.

MAY 14<sup>th</sup> The High Commissioner left Jerusalem in the early morning for Kalandia aerodrome, ten kilometers north of Jerusalem en route for Haifa. Heavy firing developed in Jerusalem later in the day.

MAY 15<sup>th</sup> Heavy firing in Jerusalem all day. Considerable activity in the Citadel and the Jaffa Gate and heavy firing in this vicinity. For the first few days the Arabs were very disorganized with no leader and were rushing about in small parties hither and thither, quite uncoordinated.

We kept the Compound gate locked with the object of trying to keep the Compound free of armed men of either party, as we knew that if once armed men took up their positions in the Compound they would draw fire on us from the opposite side. However, a party of armed Arabs, finding the gate locked, swarmed over the top and broke into the Hostel, climbing up the outside steps leading to the bedrooms overlooking the Jewish Quarter of the Old City. We protested against this invasion in vain and one of them fired a burst from a tommy-gun from one of the windows. They were extremely nervous of Jews trying to break into Christ Church from the Old City and make for the Citadel, but we eventually persuaded them to leave. A short time later another armed party headed by an Englishman came in, but these were persuaded to leave without firing.

Fire was also directed at the Jewish Quarter in the Old City from the Moslem Compound adjoining the Hostel. This fire attracted mortars from the Jewish Quarter and one exploded in their Compound, killing a lad of 16 who was later buried in the Compound the same day. Another missile fell into their Compound right up against two of my office windows which face their Compound. Clouds of smoke seeped through the windows and filled the office. We were afraid of an explosion but fortunately the missile, whatever it was, fizzled out without doing any damage.

Reports of developments during the day outside the Compound included the occupation of Allenby Square and the German Colony by the Jews, the shelling of the Power Station in Tel Aviv by Egyptian aircraft and the shelling of the Jewish Quarters in new Jerusalem by heavy guns, and the fall of Jewish colonies near Hebron.

MAY 16<sup>th</sup> Another day of heavy firing. Several panes of glass in the south transept of the Church and in the Hostel were blown in from explosions of mines laid by Arabs in buildings on the edge of the Jewish Quarter of the Old City.

One heavy explosion occurred during the early Celebration and scattered glass and dust in the Sanctuary and damaged one of the plain glass windows there. It proved to be so noisy in Church that it was decided to hold the 10 a.m. Service and the evening Service in the School Hall. The entire Compound (excluding the Moslem families) turned up to both these Services.

During the morning a mortar fell in the Compound at the feet of two people but mercifully failed to explode.

In the evening at 10 p.m., some very heavy explosions occurred nearby and Mr. and Mrs. Hadawi and their two children who were sleeping upstairs in the Parsonage, came down and spent the night with me on the floor in my sitting room. A very noisy night was brought to an end by the explosion of a mortar in the Compound at 5:30 a.m.

One of the eight cars in the Compound was caught broadside on and the bodywork peppered by pieces from the exploded mortar which also broke two windows of the car, but fortunately the tires and engine were not hit.

The Moslem Compound adjoining the Hostel was evacuated about this time.

MAY 17<sup>th</sup> Eight persons were present at the Whit-Monday Celebration in Church.

Another day of continuous heavy firing with heavy explosions in the Old City as Arabs continued to mine buildings in the vicinity of the Jewish Quarter. Another mortar from Montefiore over-shot the Citadel and fell in the Compound where it exploded, catching another car with a broadside, again, fortunately doing no serious damage. Several efforts were made by Jews to reach the Jaffa Gate to link up with the Haganah in the Old City, many of whom were reported to have taken refuge in the big Synagogue. There were several fatal casualties besides a number of wounded in the Armenian Compound from mortars.

Arabs were reported to have recaptured Barclays Bank and the Jews were reported to be in Tannous Building just below the Jaffa Gate. Almost the whole of the city of Jerusalem outside the walls reported to be in the hands of the Jews.

I rang up the British Embassy during the day to ask them to inform our Headquarters in London, through the Foreign Office, that all C.M.J. staff in Jerusalem were well. I also 'phoned our staff in the Superintendent's house who reported that all was well.

At midnight the Jews launched their most determined attack on the Jaffa Gate. The attack lasted for about three hours, but they were unable to make any headway against withering fire which hundreds of Arab irregulars kept up without a break from the Citadel and Jaffa Gate. The acrid smoke from all this intensive firing was wafted across into the Compound and into my house where the smell was so thick that it was quite unpleasant to have to breathe.

MAY 18<sup>th</sup> A mortar burst in the playground at 10 a.m. Flying fragments struck the doors leading from the Compound into the playground, snapped one of the broadcasting wires leading to the Church, chipped bits out of the Church wall and blew in a few more windows in the south transept.

A building in the Armenian Compound was struck by a heavy shell and partly demolished, causing a number of casualties in killed and wounded. One Armenian came over and begged me to get in touch by 'phone (none of their 'phones were working) with a Red Cross delegate and ask if representations could be made to Jews and Arabs to avoid shelling the crowded Armenian Compound. I 'phoned one of the Red Cross delegates' secretaries and also passed a message on to the Bishop through the British Embassy (the Cathedral 'phones were also out of order) to contact members of the Truce Commission.

On discovering jagged pieces of shell in the Compound we decided to sandbag the windows of the Hostel lounge where most of the members of the Compound had taken to passing the night.

Considerable Arab reinforcements of regular troops, including Arab Legion, came into the Old City during the day.

I spoke to Ronald Adeney over the 'phone and he reported that all was well apart from a shell striking Cadbury Ward and causing superficial damage.

During the day the Jews extended their hold over the whole of Mt. Zion outside the City Wall by occupying Bishop Gobat School and also the buildings outside the Zion Gate, from where they launched their second determined attack upon the Old City. They were reported to have reached the Zion Gate but to have then been thrown back.

MAY 19<sup>th</sup> Arab Legion replaced Arab irregulars in the Citadel and in the Old City.

A mortar exploded at the top of David Street.

I was taken into the Citadel and saw a large home-made "shell" about 2'6" which fell but failed to explode in the Kishleh barracks next to the Citadel.

'Phoned the British Embassy and asked them if they could again kindly transmit a message to our Headquarters through the Foreign Office that all C.M.J. staff in Jerusalem were safe and well. I was also informed by the Embassy that several shells had crashed on St. George's, one through the nave of the Cathedral, one into the bedroom and a third on a garage and partially destroyed the Bishop's car.

'Phoned Ronald Adeney, also Clark Kerr at the Scottish Hospice, was alone except for a couple of Arab servants and in a very exposed position. He had had a lot of stuff falling around him and many bullets striking the premises but so far he had been unmolested by either party.

'Phoned Mr. and Mrs. Loebel and read out to them a letter from their son who had left with the evacuated party of Hebrew Christians on the "Georgie". The letter, posted in Malta, had come to us via Amman and St. George's Cathedral from where it had been brought by devious routes through the Old City by the Bishop's gardener.

Picked up more pieces of shell and bullets in the Compound.

MAY 20<sup>th</sup> A very heavy "missile" exploded in the air and remains of the "drum" (home-made) fell on the Kindergarten roof in the early morning. Bits of the drum were also picked up in the Parsonage garden. A two-pounder was picked up in the morning in the Church garden.

A somewhat quieter day with the Arab Legion gradually edging into the Jewish Quarter in the Old City.

Went down to the Austrian Hospice near the Damascus Gate, now the main Arab Hospital in Jerusalem, with Messrs. S. and E. Hadawi. Found the Hospital over-crowded with wounded and short of doctors and equipment.

Another very heavy explosion in the evening in the neighbourhood of the Citadel.

Put clocks on one hour in order to save burning oil lamps as much as possible in the evening.

Heavy firing and explosions started about midnight and went on for some considerable time, mainly from the Jewish Quarter in the Old City.

MAY 21<sup>st</sup> A small party of Syrian troops came into Christ Church in the early morning and wanted to search the premises. They said that they believed that somebody was firing signals from this area. They seemed very suspicious and wanted to station some men on the premises to watch. We were most anxious not to allow any armed men on the premises and suggested that they should station a couple of unarmed men. They said that they could not do this and as they were very insistent we reluctantly gave way and urged that if they did come they would not fire from the premises. This seemed to allay their suspicions somewhat and they went away saying that they would let us know later what they decided to do, but they never returned.

Later in the morning a Swedish correspondent from St. George's turned up. He said they were getting a very noisy time in that area and a good deal of firing between Jewish and Arab armoured cars in the vicinity. I gave them a little description of our experiences up to date and showed him an array of various missiles picked up on the premises residing on my mantle-piece. He seemed quite impressed and said, "That is a better collection than the Cathedral has!"

Fearing possible fires (there have been several in the vicinity) we took up all carpets and cushions from the Church and placed buckets of earth at convenient places in the Compound.

In the afternoon we had another visit from armed men, this time including an Arab Legionary who said that a couple of Jews had been reported to be seen escaping towards Christ Church and he wanted to have a look inside the premises. He seemed very suspicious and entered several rooms but we satisfied his curiosity by showing him round everywhere and finally he departed, apparently satisfied that we were not harbouring armed Jews.

Another very noisy night with the Arab Legion continuing mopping-up operations in the Old City. Considerable damage was done to the large Synagogue, the dome of which was practically demolished.

MAY 22<sup>nd</sup> According to the Arab broadcast, the Jews sent out a relief column of armoured cars etc. from Tel Aviv for Jerusalem, which was attacked and destroyed by the Arab Legion at Bab-el-Wad. The Jewish settlements of Talpioth, Mikor Haim and Ramat Rachel, lying to the south of Jerusalem, reported to be besieged. A severe shortage of water, fuel, and food reported to be developing in the Jewish area of new Jerusalem.

'Phoned Ronald Adeney who said that all was well and that the British Consul had told him that he had protested to the Arab Legion against the shelling of the Hospital premises.

More pieces of shell and several bullets picked up in the Compound. A quieter day as far as the Compound was concerned.

Arab Legion reported to be trying to smoke out the Haganah who had entered underground channels in the Old City.

A barber came to Christ Church in the afternoon and did a number of haircuts.

The American Consul, a member of the Truce Commission, was severely wounded after leaving the French Consulate where he had held a meeting with other members of the Truce Commission. He was taken, together with another member of the Consulate who was also severely wounded, to our Hospital, which is now being staffed and run by the Hadassah.

MAY 23<sup>rd</sup> The American Consul and his companion both died of their wounds and were buried in a convent next door to the Consulate on Monday by Ronald Adeney. It was not possible for the American Chaplain, Dr. Klein, to get from the Cathedral into the Jewish area to perform the ceremony. Quite a number of people who have been killed in Jerusalem have had to be buried at the nearest convenient spot, since, with incessant and widespread shooting all over the town, it has been impossible to bring the bodies to the appropriate burial places. Some Christian Arabs, for instance, killed by a mortar near Herod's gate, were buried in a Moslem cemetery nearby.

Picked up a piece of a shell from the Parsonage roof which had burst and perforated two water tanks on the roof.

Another unsuccessful attempt was made by the Haganah to storm the Jaffa Gate and relieve the Jews in the Old City. A terrific battle was

fought between the Haganah and the Arab Legion for the possession of the Notre Dame building which is outside the City wall near the New Gate.

A high-tension cable which was cut near the Jaffa Gate more than a week ago was repaired and electricity restored to the Old City on Sunday evening.

MAY 24<sup>th</sup> Fighting again flared up in the Old City after a quiet night. Several heavy explosions after midnight were reported next day to have been shells bursting on the Armenian Convent and the Greek Quarter, resulting in many casualties.

MAY 25<sup>th</sup> Visited the Armenian Patriarch. Explosions of previous night were shells falling on the Armenian Compound. Two struck the Cathedral, one demolished a small house, wounding the dozen occupants, bringing total casualties to date to 130 including seven dead. Considerable damage has been caused by shells, which have driven the 3,000-4,000 people into underground caves. The condition under which these people are living beggars description. Crowded into stuffy, airless, underground passages; filling the churches to overflowing, short of water, fearing epidemics, their future is black indeed unless a big change in the situation takes place, or unless at least 1,000 or more can be removed to some safer place to relieve the congestion. 'Phoned Mr. Miller and asked him to contact the Red Cross delegates to see if accommodation in the King David or elsewhere can be found.

One feature of the fighting, which is really a war of nerves, has been the presence of one or more persons, who appear to be in several places at once, who fire bullets with a particularly high-pitched and penetrating sound, which is most difficult to locate. At one moment it seems a few yards away and the next minute the echoes are heard away in the distance. The bullets explode twice and scatter into small, jagged pieces. The bullet is said to be of Russian make.

We are by no means "out of the woods" yet and unless some agreement for a truce, at least in Jerusalem, is found, there may be weeks and perhaps months of bitter fighting ahead. As, however, many will be wanting to know what has been happening in Jerusalem during the past 12 days, and as a postal service between the Old City and the outside world via Amman, Trans-Jordan, is about to be started, this seems an opportune moment to dispatch this diary together with certain comments and observations appended below.

### *COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS*

Of the many blessings which we can count during these memorable ten days so far, two especially should be mentioned.

First, that although the Hostel telephone wires were cut by flying fragments in the early stages of the fighting, the office telephone has continued to function without a break, in spite of a shell bursting on the Parsonage roof close to the wires and several mortars exploding nearby. When so many, including St. George's Cathedral and the Armenian

Patriarchate next door to Christ church were without telephones, we can thank God that we were able to keep in touch with our staff in the Superintendent's house, the British Embassy, through whom we were able to get messages to our Headquarters in London, and other friends in different parts of the town.

Secondly, we have been wonderfully preserved from danger and injury. If the Jews had managed to storm the Citadel and Jaffa Gate we would have been immediately involved in fierce house to house fighting. The moon, which was in the second quarter, was a serious handicap to the Jews who needed the cover of darkness if they were to have much chance of success in their night attacks.

Further, although about a dozen mortars burst on the premises, besides several shells and hand-grenades, no one received a scratch. As one of our number put it very aptly: "God's protecting hands were over us, so that no one was in the vicinity when shells burst, and on the occasion when two people were in the Compound when a mortar landed at their feet, it didn't explode." The only damage we have suffered so far was a number of broken windows, two cars superficially damaged by mortars and two water tanks perforated by shell fragments on the Parsonage roof. When we compare our immunity from injury with the casualties suffered, for instance, in the Armenian Patriarchate adjoining us, where scores have been injured, a number fatally, or in the Citadel opposite us, or in the streets outside where many were killed and wounded, we can say truly that God has answered in a wonderful way the many prayers that have gone up on our behalf and on behalf of our three fellow-workers in the Superintendent's house in the Hospital Compound, where again no one has so far been injured.

Besides being subject to physical danger, we have been the object of malicious tales spread by an "ill-wisher" for reasons best known to himself. Whether because some months back we had given shelter to a Hebrew Christian who fled wounded into the Compound from an Arab mob, or whether because we are a mission to Jews, and have in the past had many Hebrew Christians living in the Compound, or for some other reason, this fellow has spread tales around that we were harbouring a number of armed Haganah men. This accounted for the number of visits we received from various suspicious armed Arabs who came into the Compound from time to time and wanted to search the premises. Eventually this aforesaid "ill-wisher" met in the Old City an Arab Christian who had taken refuge with us and started to repeat his accusations to him. The Arab said to angrily, "Do you realize that in accusing Christ Church you are accusing us who are living on the premises, as we would undoubtedly know if armed Haganah men were in hiding there?" The man began to bluster and make excuses as a crowd began to gather. He was warned that if he were caught again spreading such false rumours it would go ill with him.

Finally, I think that it is true to say that there is not one person in Christ Church who has been through these testing times, but who would not affirm that he or she has been brought nearer to God and received a proof of His Love and Goodness and protection which a life time will not obliterate.



The hymn appended below, which has been sung on several occasions at our gatherings for evening prayers in the Hostel lounge, probably best sums up the feelings of everyone.

Saviour, breathe an evening blessing,  
Ere repose our spirits seal;  
Sin and want we come confessing,  
Thou canst save, and Thou canst heal.

Though destruction walk around us,  
Though the arrow past us fly,  
Angel-guards from Thee surround us;  
We are safe, if Thou art nigh.

Though the night be dark and dreary,  
Darkness cannot hide from Thee;  
Thou art He Who, never weary,  
Watchest where Thy people be.

Should swift death this night o'ertake us,  
And our couch become our tomb,  
May the morn in Heaven awake us,  
Glad in light and deathless bloom.

Father, to Thy holy keeping  
Humbly we ourselves resign,  
Saviour, Who hast slept our sleeping,  
Make our slumbers pure as Thine;

Blessed Spirit, brooding o'er us,  
Chase the darkness of our night,  
Till the perfect Day before us  
Breaks in everlasting light.

## PART TWO

### Christ Church, Jerusalem

#### Continuation of DIARY OF EVENTS after the End of the Mandate

MAY 26<sup>th</sup> Electricity again failed; fault reported to be in the neighbourhood of the railway station. Heavy explosion about 7 p.m. a Jewish plane flew over the Old City. Several bags of supplies of food and ammunition were picked up later near Silwan in the Kedron valley.

MAY 27<sup>th</sup> A shell exploded in the vicinity of Christ Church and pieces were picked up later in the Compound.

A very heavy explosion in the evening marked the end of the big Synagogue in the Old City, which completely disappeared. The sound of distant heavy artillery was heard for many hours during the night.

With the beginning of postal communications via Amman I sent off copies of the Diary, Part One, to C.M.J. Headquarters and elsewhere.

King Abdullah visited Jerusalem today; entered the Tomb of Christ in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, knelt inside and offered up the following prayer: "Lord Jesus, in the Name of all your prophets, Abraham, Isaac, . . . give us the victory over the Jews, who have forsaken their religion."

MAY 28<sup>th</sup> Visited sick in the Austrian Hospice, which is the main Arab Hospital in the Old City in the morning. Called at Muristan, (German Protestant Church) on the way back to Christ Church, and climbed the tower and viewed the wreckage and scene of devastation in the Jewish Quarter.

The Jews in the Old City, including between 1,000-2,000 civilians and about 600 armed men (Haganah and I.Z.L.) finally surrendered in the afternoon. We saw two batches of 115 each of the civilian population, including many old Orthodox Jews, filing into the Kishleh barracks adjoining the Citadel.

A very heavy and concentrated attack was made by the Jews on the Old City from the Damascus and Zion Gates. The attack began about 9 p.m. and lasted for about two hours.

A number of Jewish dead were reported lying outside the Jaffa Gate and in various other parts of no-man's-land for periods of anything up to a week.

As fighting becomes more bitter and drawn out, an oppressive atmosphere of evil and hate seems to be creeping over Jerusalem. Are we hastening towards the doom of this once beautiful city?

With the surrender of the Jews in the Old City it has been possible to go into the playground at the back of the Compound, where a number of shells, mortars and bullets were picked up. Had a game of tennis with Edward Hadawi in the evening.

MAY 30<sup>th</sup> Held all Services in the Church for the first time since the end of the Mandate. A quiet day on the whole, though there was a lot of firing from the Citadel in the afternoon.

Had a look at the scene of devastation and destruction amongst the Armenian houses at the bottom of the playground which consist of one or two rooms and are a narrow wedge between us and the Jewish Quarter. These houses were occupied in turn by Jewish and Arab forces and each carried out a certain amount of destruction with the result that not a single house was left intact. Some were completely destroyed, others burnt and furniture wrecked; not a single house remains fit for habitation. It made us realize all the more how much we had to be thankful for when we saw this scene of destruction on our doorstep.

We heard the whistle and later the explosion of a dozen mortars as they came over about 9 p.m. and exploded in the vicinity of Christian Street and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

MAY 31<sup>st</sup> The Bishop and Dr. Klein and Canon Witton-Davies looked in for five minutes on their way to the Armenian Patriarch. They brought some mail which had come in via Amman.

Moved most of the cars in the Compound into a shed in the playground which we hoped would be less exposed should another mortar attack develop. Mortars exploded at intervals in the Old City about 10 p.m.

JUNE 1<sup>st</sup> Report of a two-hour ceasefire in the afternoon to enable dead to be collected from the streets. As many as 40 Jewish dead reported to be lying outside the New Gate after the attack on Friday last.

Another very noisy night, apparently an attack by Jews on the Old City, which began at midnight, mainly directed on the Zion Gate, where 60 to 80 Jewish dead were reported to have been left in the vicinity. A plane flew over several times during this attack.

JUNE 2<sup>nd</sup> Several letters from abroad arrived via St. George's, two of which were for Ronald Adeney from his father which I read to him over the phone, and one for Ruth Clark from Archdeacon Maxwell, also read to her over the phone.

JUNE 3<sup>rd</sup> A much quieter day with practically no firing in the vicinity until the evening when there was sporadic firing from the Citadel.

The Bishop and Canon Witton-Davies called in the morning.

Mr. S. Hadawi went to Amman for a few days to see his wife, accompanied by Mr. Khadder.

35 Arab women prisoners who had been rounded up in their homes where they had remained in Arab areas overrun by the Jews were released. Three of them, sisters, belonging to St. Paul's Church, were taken into Christ Church.

JUNE 4<sup>th</sup> More mortars fell in the Old City, one near the Prison of Christ and another in the Via Dolorosa. There were no casualties. Another attack was launched in the early morning by Jews on the New Gate. There was also some firing from the Citadel.

JUNE 5<sup>th</sup> Some more mortars fell in the Christian Quarter of the Old City, including one in the Greek Orthodox Compound.

More Arab women prisoners were released, including the mother of the three sisters who came to Christ Church two days ago, some old men were also released, including Mr. Boutagy's porter.

Food stores, furniture and water from cisterns have been reported to have been taken from Arab houses in Arab Quarters of Jerusalem occupied by the Jews.

From Jaffa it is reported that many big buildings, including cinemas, etc., have been blown up as a reprisal for the bombing of Tel Aviv. The total Arab population of Jaffa is now only about 4,000, the bulk of Arab population of Jaffa, which was originally 70,000, having fled by land and sea just previous to the end of the Mandate.

A lot of heavy firing from about 2 a.m. onwards.

JUNE 6<sup>th</sup> Another noisy day with distracting bursts of firing during morning and evening Services.

Mr. Brice from the British Legation came to the morning Service and brought some mail from abroad. He operates the transmitting set at the Embassy and therefore had quite a lot of information to give. He said that the Cathedral had had two more shells; one entered the nave and demolished the pulpit and a second demolished a room in the Hostel. There were no casualties. He also said that the Shelleys on Doir Abu Tor were safe in their home and the Rev. Clark Kerr at the Scottish Hospice, but that his two Arab men servants, the only other people on the premises, were removed by Haganah. Amongst other bits of information was the following gruesome story, which gives some idea of the grim side of things that are going on in Jerusalem these days.

A certain madman, a familiar landmark in the streets of Jerusalem, a tall, gaunt figure who strides about in a sack cloth, used to walk up and down Suliman Road, between the Notre Dame and the Damascus Gate. This is a stretch of no-man's-land with the Arab Legion entrenched in the neighbourhood of the Damascus Gate and the Haganah in the Notre Dame building. For several days this madman strode up and down this road unmolested, then one day he was shot in the leg and immediately afterwards received a bullet in the other leg. He fell to the ground but was not fatally injured. He was struck by other bullets but still lived, and at the end of two days was still lifting and dropping one of his legs. A mortar was dropped near him to try and put him out of his agony but without effect. Finally the poor fellow expired, but being a madman no one would touch him and he was left to decompose in the street.

JUNE 7<sup>th</sup> A lot of firing in the morning from shelling and automatic weapons. Several mortars fell in the vicinity of the Compound, one near St. Mark's (Syrian) Church and another outside in the road by the Citadel. Mrs. Hornstone and Miss Abramson, who were out shopping, narrowly missed a couple of mortars, which are falling pretty regularly in the Old City since Jews occupied two strategic sites, the Notre Dame outside the New Gate and the Church of the Dormition, where they have made an opening in the tower, outside the Zion Gate.

JUNE 8<sup>th</sup> Had a conversation in the morning with Ronald Adeney over the phone. He reported that ten mortars had fallen in the Hospital Compound; one had put the x-ray apparatus out of action and another had killed an ex-employee of the Hospital who had come to do some pumping and was caught by a mortar which exploded in the garden of the Superintendent's house. Ronald Adeney had been on the spot just previously and hearing the explosion, ran back to find a fatal casualty.

Read a letter over the phone to Ronald from Irving Oko.

Dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre reported to have been damaged by a mortar. A very noisy night with continuous and heavy firing; another attack by Jews on the Old City, launched this time from Musrara on the Damascus Gate. The attack failed.

JUNE 9<sup>th</sup> Left for Amman with Mr. E. Hadawi and his two children. Mr. Hadawi took his car down in the early morning, before the crowds were in the streets, by devious ways through the Old City to the Austrian Hospice. He constructed sloping wooden blocks for the purpose of negotiating steps which were encountered on various parts of the route. With a pass from an Arab Legion official in Jerusalem we had no difficulty en route or in crossing the Allenby Bridge. Mr. Hadawi stayed with his sister in Amman and I spent the night with the Rev. and Mrs. Du Haume. We stopped at the C.M.S. Hospital in Salt on the way, where we had lunch with Dr. and Mrs. Hargreaves and where I returned on the following day and was put up for a couple of nights. One reason for this journey was to find if any accommodation could be found in Salt or Amman where people from the Hostel could go and get a break from the strain of Jerusalem. We found that both towns were overcrowded, but the Matron of the C.M.S. Hospital in Salt kindly said she could accommodate one or two persons in the Hospital if necessary.

JUNE 10<sup>th</sup> Very heavy firing in the afternoon and during the night preceded the truce which had been announced to begin at 8 a.m. on Friday.

An old woman of 75, a survivor of the small Karaite community in Jerusalem, came in the morning. She had been taken up injured in the street about a fortnight ago and taken to the Austrian Hospice where they kept her until they needed her bed for wounded. Having nowhere to go as her home had been destroyed, she came and sought refuge with us.

JUNE 11<sup>th</sup> A four weeks' truce for Palestine began at 8 a.m.

JUNE 12<sup>th</sup> Returned to Jerusalem by taxi from Salt, Mr. Hadawi having returned with his children the day before.

JUNE 15<sup>th</sup> The Bishop preached at the morning Service to a congregation of nearly 40, and afterwards he and Mrs. Stewart stayed to lunch. Col. Gresham, General Manager of the Jerusalem Electric Corporation, arrived in the afternoon from Beirut and found accommodation in the Parsonage.

### *PART THREE*

#### Christ Church, Jerusalem

#### Continuation of DIARY OF EVENTS after the End of the Mandate

JUNE 14<sup>th</sup> Egyptians reported to have set up a civil administration in Bethlehem, Beit Jala, and Hebron.

JUNE 15<sup>th</sup> Went to British Consulate outside City wall opposite Damascus Gate in morning – had to go via Herod's Gate, as Damascus Gate was closed. Met Christopher Angel, press photographer at Consulate. Went and lunched with him at St. George's School and returned with him later to Christ Church where he took some photographs of the Old City from the Church roof. We then went to look at the ruins of the Armenian houses at the bottom of the playground which Angel photographed. Next we climbed over the ruins and soon found ourselves amidst the wreckage of the Jewish Quarter where again Angel took a number of photographs including some of the great Synagogue, the interior of which was open to the skies.

JUNE 16<sup>th</sup> Mr. Irani, Superintendent of the Boys' Reformatory in Bethlehem, came in in the afternoon, having made a long and tiring journey of 35 kilometres by car by a circuitous and hilly route through the wide detour being necessary, because the Jews hold part of the Jerusalem-Bethlehem road. Mr. Irani brought news of the Blind School, who were all well, but badly in need of funds, being cut off from their main source of supply from Mr. Siraganian in Jerusalem.

JUNE 18<sup>th</sup> Office telephone removed. The policy being to remove all telephones in the Old City in order to prevent any telephonic conversation with the Jewish held part of Jerusalem. Needless to say, we were very sorry to see such a useful link with the outside world being severed. It had meant a great deal to us to have been able to remain in contact with the Consulate during the month's fighting after the end of the Mandate and to be able to send messages to England through them.

JUNE 22<sup>nd</sup> Went with Mr. and Mrs. Hornstone and Miss Abramson to St. George's Cathedral, where Mrs. Hornstone left by car for a fortnight's holiday at the C.M.S. Hospital in Es Salt.

JUNE 27<sup>th</sup> Dr. Klein, the American Chaplain from St. George's, preached at the morning Service in Christ Church.

JUNE 29-30<sup>th</sup> Visit to Bethlehem. The main purpose of this visit was to look up Miss Brown, who was living all alone after the departure of the two other English ladies who had been living with her up to the end of the Mandate, and to take some money to the Blind School.

I left at 5:30 a.m., and as the main road was closed had to take a track going out of St. Stephens Gate through Silwan (the site of the ancient Siloam) and then along a track which skirts Government House and leads through the large Arab village of Sur Bahir and to Bethlehem, a distance of probably about 18-20 kilometres.

Normally I should have gone dressed in shorts and an open shirt, but under the present circumstances decided it was better to go dressed in clerical garb. I therefore reluctantly and literally "stuck" to a clerical collar, trousers and coat. Besides a donkey, on which I took an occasional "lift", I was accompanied en route by an Arab employee of the Jerusalem Electric Corporation who was quite invaluable and indispensable in explaining my identity to literally hundreds of Arabs coming and going between Jerusalem and Bethlehem along this route. Some evacuating their goods from Jerusalem on camels and donkeys, others coming in with produce

for sale and others coming in to their work. Many of them eyed me suspiciously and when I encountered four or five Egyptian soldiers just beyond Sur Bahir, they pounced on me quite excitedly and demanded to see my pass or identity card. Fortunately, I had an Arab identity card with me which they scrutinized intently to see whether my features matched those of the photograph. The rest of the outward journey was uneventful. I visited Miss Brown, with whom I stayed the night, and the Blind School and Reformatory.

The Blind School was delighted at being looked up. They were well, but badly in need of funds, and so were very glad of the 50 Pounds which I brought out, having previously learnt from Mr. Siraganian that they would need about this amount to balance their monthly budget.

I found an Englishman there receiving massage treatment from one of the blind women who is a masseuse. He had been wounded several months previously in the head, fighting with the Arab forces, and slight paralysis had been setting in one of his arms. Whilst massaging his arm, this blind masseuse had spoken to him of Christ and it is believed that as a result this young fellow had come to believe on Christ as his Saviour. In what strange and wonderful ways God works and draws people to Himself.

On the following morning we held a Communion Service in Miss Brown's sitting room. There were 15 Communicants including ten who had walked a considerable distance from the Blind School. It was one of the most memorable Communion Services I can recall. There we were, 15 people, ten of whom were blind, meeting under outwardly such strange and difficult conditions within a short distance of the traditional site of our Lord's birthplace and yet I have never been more conscious of the sense of real fellowship with the Risen Christ. How often God chooses the weak things of this world to confound the mighty. What a parable of the blind (physically) beholding and feasting upon spiritual riches in Christ which are hidden from so many of those who say "we see" and yet who are all too often spiritually blind.

I set out on the return journey to Jerusalem at 3 p.m. accompanied by the same Arab and another donkey which was fitted with one of the most uncomfortable saddles it has ever been my lot to try and sit on. Ribs of iron stuck into you, no matter how you "adjusted" yourself to the saddle and after having endured the agony as long as I could, I decided to continue the rest of the way on foot!

The return journey was uneventful, apart from the usual queries as to who I was, which were fewer this time as there were far fewer people travelling at such an hour. I again had to show my Arab pass, this time to a truckload of Egyptian troops just outside Bethlehem. Bethlehem itself was surprisingly empty of troops, only an odd one or two being visible. Troops were evidently being kept outside the town which was pretty crowded with refugees, but other wise quite normal and quiet. We re-entered the Old City in just over three hours after having left Bethlehem.

JULY 1<sup>st</sup> Visited Consulate every three or four days during the truce, from where I was able to keep in contact with Ronald Adeney, Miss Clark and Miss Hurnard.

JULY 3<sup>rd</sup> Three of the Consular staff turned up for tennis. We had some mixed and men's doubles. It was quite like old times, but the evening was unfortunately marred by an outbreak of fairly heavy firing, seeming to

come mostly from the Notre Dame vicinity. Reports that two U.N. members had been killed near the Notre Dame may have been the cause of the flare up.

JULY 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday. Mr. Gordon Boutagy preached at the evening Service at Christ Church.

JULY 5<sup>th</sup> Heard that Rev. Blum, a Christian Jew of Dutch origin, had accompanied the Dutch Consul, himself a keen Christian, to Tel-Aviv, where Mr. Blum had met some Jewish authorities in an effort to get some indication of their policy and attitude towards Christian Jews.

JULY 6<sup>th</sup> About ten persons left Christ Church for Trans-Jordan and further afield during the few days preceding the end of the truce. Numbers in the Compound during the second period of fighting were however not far short of the total number of people who were here during the first months fighting, as several had come in from outside during the truce.

JULY 9<sup>th</sup> Hostilities recommenced at 10 a.m., the truce having been extended two hours to enable members of the U.N. Truce Commission to beat it to safety. The U.N. flag which had flown over the King David Hotel during the four weeks' truce was hauled down, though the building did not return to the Red Cross, whose flag had been over the building before it was handed to the U.N.

There was some heavy sporadic firing throughout the day and night. A very heavy explosion in the morning was reported to be from the detonation of a mine laid in the block of buildings against the City wall just outside the Jaffa Gate. Pieces of metal fell in the Compound.

JULY 10<sup>th</sup> Sporadic firing throughout the day, with the sound of distant heavy shelling. Fires could be seen in the Jaffa road somewhere opposite Louisidis shop. They appeared to be from shops which were ablaze just outside the City wall. 150 mortars reported to have been fired on the Old City during the day. Very heavy firing started up in the evening about 8 p.m., apparently in the neighbourhood of the Zion and New Gates. Heavy firing at intervals during the night.

JULY 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday. Four or five mortars fell on and around the Compound in the afternoon. One fell on the cistern behind the Hostel and a second which fell just outside the Compound gates in the road splattered the end of the school building facing the Citadel and broke some window panes. Owing to the heavy firing during the afternoon, the evening Service was held in the Hostel lounge.

An oil bomb reported to have been dropped on the Notre Dame.

JULY 12<sup>th</sup> Very heavy firing from the Citadel from 6-7 a.m. Several mortars fell nearby in the morning, one outside the Kishleh barracks adjoining the Citadel causing several casualties. Some mortars came over after supper, one scraped the roof of the Hostel and another, a large 6'' mortar, struck the ground up against the evacuated Old Age Home at the bottom of the playground.



JULY 13<sup>th</sup> A very heavy explosion in the early hours of the morning shook the vicinity. At midday quite a number of mortars could be heard going overhead and exploding in the heart of the Old City.

Intermittent firing all day, increasing towards evening, more mortars could be heard falling on the Old City and sounds of distant heavy firing were also audible.

Mr. Brice came in in the afternoon, reported very heavy firing in the vicinity of the Consulate and the Dominican building nearby had had several direct hits. Several cars had been damaged by mortars in the Consular grounds and three Consular guards injured.

JULY 14<sup>th</sup> Sounds of a lot of heavy firing in the distance. Sometimes the distant "crump", "crump" of the firing of a heavy shell could be heard, followed a few seconds later by the swish and then the noise of the explosion of the shell. Further mortars could also be heard exploding on the Old City. A plane was heard during the night, which dropped some bombs, one in the courtyard outside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and another nearby, killing several persons, including at least one priest.

At about 11 p.m. a mortar fell in the Compound between the oleander bush and the Hostel, spattering the Hostel and Church and blowing in a number of Hostel and Church windows.

JULY 15<sup>th</sup> A bomb fell in the house of the brother of Ramadan, our Moslem, gatekeeper and general factotum killing the former's wife and one of his sons. The father and his six surviving children came and joined Ramadan in the basement from of the Parsonage whilst making preparations to go to relatives in Hebron.

A mortar reported to have struck a taxi near the Church of the Virgin in the Kedron valley and whipped out the entire family sitting in the taxi which was just about to leave for Hebron.

Numerous mortars fell on the Old City during the course of the day, including several in the vicinity of the Compound.

A big battle reported to be in progress in the Ramleh and Lydda area.

JULY 16<sup>th</sup> Heavy fighting took pace all day in the Musrara Quarter which stretches northwards from the north wall of the Old City. I could get a view of busting shells from the belfry over the Parsonage. St. George's Cathedral, which was close to the scene of the battle, was wreathed in smoke for some considerable time. Intense fire from automatic weapons could be heard from time to time. Whilst I was watching through the belfry, a mortar whistled low overhead and disappeared with a loud bang and clouds of smoke into a building about 50 yards away. On hearing a second following it, I decided it was getting too unhealthy and beat a hasty retreat to a lower level!

With the announcement that cease fire had been demanded by the Security Council at Lake Success, to take effect from Saturday morning, a blitz of mortars in the Old City began at 9 p.m., and continued with only a short break of half an hour in the middle of the night until 4 a.m.

It is estimated that at least 750 mortars were fired on the Old City during the night which was more like a nightmare than anything else. Of about 20 mortars which fell in the Compound and playground behind the Hostel, the majority fortunately fell behind the Hostel. One struck the boundary wall to the south and hurled heavy stones half way across the tennis court. Another fell on the tennis courts and about a dozen just beyond the tennis court. One mortar struck the Church, doing little damage.

The only mortar which did any considerable damage was a 6'' one which struck the large wooden Carpenter's Shop close to the Vestry. The force of the explosion hurled the zinc sheets on the roof considerable distances in all directions. One sheet landed on top of the nearby fir tree, about 60' high.

Soon after the explosion I heard from the cubbyhole on the ground floor of the Parsonage where I had gone for safety, the sound of the fierce crackling of flames. I hurried upstairs, from where I could get a view through a large window of one wall of the Church and Vestry. My heart sank as I saw it all lit up and felt sure that the Vestry or Church must have been hit and was on fire. Providentially, just at this moment the lull in the mortar attack occurred, so I hurried out along the back passage leading to the Vestry and to my intense relief saw that it was the Carpenter's Shop which was ablaze and not the Church.

The building, which was largely wooden and was full of wooden chairs, tables, etc., was blazing furiously, the flames leaping up to such a height that people outside the Old City said that they saw the fire. The fire soon caught the adjoining buildings, including a room used for school purposes, a cement shed and a chicken house. The chickens escaped being roasted alive by getting out through a small aperture, but some pigeons in an adjoining shed were less fortunate and must have had a very warm death.

Serious enough as the fire was, it might have been considerably worse; a garage housing two cars next the Carpenter's Shop did not catch and the large fir laden with dry cones, although set alight, did not catch firmly. With the help of Ramadan and his bother and another friend who was staying with them, we were able to throw buckets of water on some burning beams which had been thrown only a few feet from the Vestry.

Soon afterwards mortars started coming over again, and what with the noise from the mortars, the shelling of the Jewish Quarter, the firing of automatic weapons and the piercing din of the explosive dum dum bullets, the accumulative crescendo was good enough for Dante's inferno. In order to leave no doubt about this and to make the effect complete during the rare brief lulls in the firing I distinct heard the shrill screech of a couple of cats as they shrieked invective at each other on a nearby wall.

The cost of damage from the fire, including the loss of a useful set of carpentry tools belonging to Mr. Rawson, is estimated at 300 Pounds. We thank God it was no worse. It was one of those nights which one long remembers and hopes never to have again.

Considerable damage was done to roofs in the Old City. In a tour round the near neighbourhood a day or two later, I noticed that the roof of the Muristan (Lutheran) Church close to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, had suffered very badly.

The net result of this further week's fighting seems to have been the capture of the towns of Nazareth, Ramleh and Lydda by the Jews.

### COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Apart from actual physical danger; the loss of their homes, work, present inactivity and uncertainty of the future combine to exert a considerable strain upon the majority of the people who have sought temporary shelter at Christ Church, as of course upon many thousands of others.

It is at such a time that a living faith can just make all the difference. If we humbly commit ourselves to God and His service, this time of testing can be a time of refining and purifying for more effective service. It has been very noticeable that the faith of the community here as a whole has been strengthened rather than weakened as a result of the pressed time of testing and that in spite of much suffering and loss we have been able to praise God for the many signs of His care and protection and strength throughout these past trying months.

The following hymn, which has been sung upon several occasions at evening prayers at Christ Church, expresses what many are feeling at this time.

When upon life's billows you are tempest-tost,  
When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,  
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,  
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.

Count ... your blessings, name them one by one,  
Count ... your blessings, see what God hath done,  
Count ... your blessings, name them one by one,  
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.

Are you ever burdened with a load of care?  
Does the cross seem heavy you are called to bear?  
Count your many blessings, every doubt will fly,  
And you will be singing as the days go by.

When you look at others with their lands and gold,  
Think that Christ has promised you His wealth untold;  
Count your many blessings; wealth can never buy  
Your reward in heaven, nor you home on high.

So, amid the conflict, whether great or small,  
Do not be discouraged, God is over all;  
Count your many blessings, angels will attend,  
Help and comfort give you to you journey's end.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of tender mercies and the God of all comfort, Who comforts me in all my distress, so that I am able to comfort people who are in any distress by the comfort with which I myself am comforted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ are abundant in my case, so my comfort is also abundant through Christ (2 Cor. 1:3-5).

Now I would like you to know about the distress which befell me in Asia, brothers. I was crushed, crushed far more than I could stand, so much so that I despaired even of life; in fact I told myself it was the sentence of death. But that was to make me rely not on myself but on the God who raises the dead; He rescued me from so terrible a death, He rescues still, and I rely upon Him for the hope that He will continue to rescue me. Let me have your cooperation in prayer (2 Cor. 1:8-11).