

# The Gertrude Bell's trip in Tur Abdin in 1909

## Gertrude Bell (1868-1926)

14/05/1909

Friday May 15. [i.e. 14 May 1909] Off at 5.35. I sent my camp direct to Jezireh [Cizre] which they reached in 6 hours. Kas M. brought me roses, figs and a pomegranate. Shim'un came with me and we rode along the hill side. Oak woods of 2 kinds large and small leaved. Lovely orchises and onion things - alliums I suppose. At 7.25 we got to Evler a Moslem village in a big valley. Wonderful profusion of fruit trees - pomegranate, walnut, fig, almond, mulberry and the vine ramping over all. The corn growing beneath and oleanders in full flower. At 8.30 we reached Shakh. Just before it there is a ruined castle, a great wall climbing the hill as at Za'feran. The two valleys leading down to it are both walled across - the ruins remain. Went to Kas Sergis the Nestorian priest who accompanied us some of the way up the hill, but I sent him back because he was so much exhausted. His nephew, Shim'un came with me. We reached the first stele in 3/4 of an hour, a good deal defaced. 1/2 an hour's very steep hot climb brought us to the second which is in very good condition. Then under the crag to the third which we reached in about 1/4 of an hour. The inscrip here is almost gone. All appear to be of exactly the same type as the one above Hassana. We climbed to the summit of the crag and looked for the fourth which is somewhere on a steep face, but did not find it. Very delicious up in these rocks. Rested and eat chocolate and drank water and so back to Shakh. We left at 12; at 12.30 got down to the stream where I sat and lunched for 1/2 an hour. Then we rode over rolling ground to Jezireh which we reached at 4. The only village we passed was Zaghmur at 3. The camp was pitched on a fine high bank above the Tigris. There is a ruin on this side opposite where the bridge was that led from the castle; it was so full of fleas that I hurried away from it. It consisted of 3 barrel vaulted chambers. Very tired.

15/05/1909

Sat May 16. [i.e. 15 May 1909] Went over to Jezireh [Cizre] at 6.15. Saw the castle which appears to be Seljuk or something of the kind. Striped black and white masonry and a little E gate with a blazon of lions. So down across the moat to the ruined bridge which is of the same style as the castle. A panel of very curious reliefs on the E side; on the W the water buttress is ornamented with a key pattern in black and white. So back to the town E gate opposite the ruined bridge over the moat. It is of the same fine masonry with a straight arch. So to the big mosque. The main doorway has a fine bronze door with lovely knockers made each one of a dragon. The inscription says [line of Arabic] no doubt An al manlana as Sultan al malih ed dunya wa ed din Abu alKasim Mahmud shahinshah. There was also a stone inscrip over the door which I cd not read but the work was not old - Persian flower patterns like those of Zakho. I looked inside but did not go in which I ought to have done for I remembered after that there was a dome and therefore a turbeh. So rode back through the horrid squalid little town and ferried over. Got off at 10.15. Parted company with the caravan at 10.55 and rode over a spur into the valley of the Risur Chai. We reached the river at 11.45 and at 12 came to the Parthian sculpture, a horseman. The horse's hind leg much extended, the rider faces round, the whole thing very pseudo classical. Just above are castle ruins on both sides of the stream - half a mile above that, or less - a bridge with a ruin by it. Lovely valley leading up to the snows[?]. Full of women going up on a two day's pilgrimage to see a famous Sheikh Talib from C'ple [Istanbul (Constantinople)], so they said. We left Kasr Ghelli at 1, rode over the spurs and down to the Tigris. Thence by a very bad path to Finik. Oleanders magnificent. There is a ruined midway castle and below it rice fields and a ruin on a point by the water. Then we crossed a deep gorge full of rock cut tombs or houses (very bad road) and came to another smallish ruin on the side of the hill. A small valley followed and then another ruin a little higher up. Got into camp by the Tigris at 4. The crag castle just opposite between the two last mentioned ruins. We are camped in deep white sweet smelling clover. Made great enquiries as to

Parthian sculptures. At first everyone swore there were none. At last a woman appeared from the ferry who had seen them and then everybody knew.

## 16/05/1909

Sunday May {17} 16. [16 May 1909] Heavy dew and quite cold in the night. I got up soon after 4 and was ready to set out at 5 but my mare needed shoeing. Finally at 5.25 I rode up to the village which lies in the rocky valley and is mostly to this day troglodyte. Extraordinarily beautiful. We got a Kurd to guide us and my soldier Hajji and I went up to the high castle, a most attractive place, much of it rock cut. The entrance gate is rock cut with ditto chambers on either side. All up the slope there are rock cut chambers and even on the summit citadel the rooms are {partly} vaulted but the walls rock cut and the stairs. I saw the remains of a rough squinch in one place. I do not think any of it is very old but some of the walls of the citadel seemed to be of finer masonry than others and there may be 2 periods. One big rock cut chamber had a niche to the S. which may have been a mihrab. So down again and across the valley to the Parthian stele. There is no water channel here (vide Ainsworth's notes to Xenophon) and no possible water conduit. He must have confused it with Kasr Ghelli where there is a rock cut conduit. I asked for Iran and my guide hurried forward and while I eat white mulberries in the village prepared me an omelet which he brought with bread and Iran. So down to the ferry at about 8 and found only one boat load had gone over. We had 2 boat loads more. The stream was very swift and when they turned the gamiyyeh into the opposite bank it as near as anything capsized - the animals all fell over. Left the ferry at 9.25. And climbed up. At 9.45 we passed the little Xian village of Handak[?]. At 10.40 Thelaila (Moslem) on the top of the plateau. The whole country smelt sweet of clover. At 12.15 we saw Kodach a little to the SE. I sat down and lunched for about half an hour. We got to Azakh (the accent is on the last syllable) at 2.15 and camped under a tree. The village is nearly all Xian. After I had visited came to see me the Khawaja Hanna and the Syrian priest (they are all Syrians here) and gave me very extraordinary news from Adana [(Seyhan, Ataniya)] and Diarbekr [Diyarbakir (Amida)]. Apparently Abd ul Hamid made a great conspiracy all over the country. The Xians are very fanatical here. They won't sell us so much as an egg because it is Sunday.

## 17/05/1909

Monday May {18} 17. [17 May 1909] Off at 5.30 with Jusef and Reshid leaving the caravan to follow. We rode over wide uplands, in great part entirely uncultivated and covered with small oaks. It reminded me rather of the slopes leading out of the Belka towards the desert - from Gilead to Road[?]. Very little water. No streams but occasionally deep rain water pools in the valleys. At 6.30 we passed a ruined site marked in K [Kiepert]. At 7.5 the small village of Salakün (Moslem). At 8 Middeh (K. Middo) Xian, on the further side of a deep dry gorge. Then we got into the oak woods. At 9 we saw Irmez about a mile to the S. and at 9.25 'Arba also about a mile to the S. It is Xian. At 9.45 we came to the ruined Der Mar Shim'un in a valley below Ba Sabrin [Basbirin]. I stayed here till 10.35, examined it and lunched. It has no architectural interest. The church is a chapel without aisles, 2 engaged piers on either side of the nave, very high walls and a vault. The half caps of the piers are built and plastered - no decoration. To the S. of it lies a kind of vaulted narthex separating it from the central court of the monastery in which is a vaulted cistern or spring. The monastic buildings are vaulted chambers on the N., W. and S. of the court. So we rode on to Der Barsanma[?] which we reached at 11.20. Stayed there till 11.45. It is inhabited by one young priest and distinguished by its high rather tapering rectangular tower. There is the usual central court with the cistern, rooms to the N, the tower to the E, then you enter the monastic buildings a single chamber which leads into the church which lies to the S of it. The church is again an aisleless chapel with one engaged pier on either side. Vaulted and very rudely built. (All these buildings are of rough feld steine.) Through the monastic chamber to the E you pass into other vaulted rooms, totally dark and with pools of water on the floor. So we rode up to the village of Ba Sabrin [Basbirin] and went to the small monastery of Miriam el 'Adda. A tiny chapel to the N of the court with one engaged pier on either side, very rude, remains of rude fresco - angels; monastic chambers to the W of the court. Curious stone built book rests in the court on which the priest lays the holy books when he celebrates the feast of the monastery. So on to the principal monastery Mar Dodo. It is very large, surrounded by a high wall. The church lies to the N of the court with a narthex along the S side of it. The single nave has 4 engaged piers on either side. The whole building is very rude and unskilful. For instance the apse is not covered with a semi dome but with a barrel vault and the corners of the walls are roughly built in to simulate the half circle [sketch]. There is a porch over the narthex door and a stair to the left leads up to the top of it where there is an inscrip

built into the wall saying that the church was built in 1510 Seleucid. But the inscrip. is modern. To the right of the porch on the E side of the court there is a big niche with a semidome. Engaged caps on either side rough Corinthian and a cross in relief carved over the semidome. The monastic chambers lie to the N, W and S. So we rode down the hill and lay under a tree waiting for the caravan, I slept. Ba Sabrin was almost destroyed 2 years ago by Kurds from Midyat way and many of the inhabitants killed. The caravan came up and we went on 3/4 of an hour through vineyards to Sare. After tea went into the village to see the Parthian(?) stele. It is a square column, perhaps an altar(?) with an inscrip. on one side and the figure of a man on another. The other 2 sides much ruined. Found the Agha of the village, who is the chief Agha of all these parts, [space left blank], entertaining friends. Went into the church but was driven out by the fleas. It seemed however interesting. Two piers in nave with 2 barrel vaults running N and S. Then the sanctuary. The priest declared that the fleas were swept out every Sunday.

## 18/05/1909

Tuesday May {19} 18. [18 May 1909] Off at 5.30, but it was 6 before I left the village with a guide, Reshid and Jusef. We rode through endless oakwood without seeing a soul. My guide said there was a ruined church at one point on the hills. At 8.10 we came to a ruined village called Gernashasur and here we left the path and plunged down a deep valley which brought us at 9.15 to the jibb[?] below the castle of Hatem Tai. I climbed up with my guide. There are two lines of wall, the lower with small round buttresses in it. In the centre of all is the citadel with a very large bir which has been vaulted. In the citadel is a chamber with an apse to the E and a niche in it that looks uncommonly like a chapel. The apse is very finely built. The place has been rebuilt several times and the masonry is of all kinds. I guess it was Byz. and then Yezidi. There is a fragment of Arab inscrip. (Yezidi?) built into one gateway and bits of moulding set face downwards. I noticed too a vault partly of bricks laid slanting against the mur de tete. Lots of small rock cut cisterns for water or corn more likely. So down to the little troglodyte village of Gelieh Kalaki (in Arabic Mugharat Kala'ah) partly Islam and partly Yezid. One of the latter gave us milk and bread and wanted to kill a sheep for us. We left at 10.30 and rode down the valley. Among the oak woods was a Yezidi ziarah. Our Yezidi host kissed a specially big oak which we passed on the way to it and explained that they cd not take the honey out of another oak because it belonged to the shrine. Down the endless bare valley to the plain where the peasants were harvesting. At 12.30 we passed Keui Ilka on the left and at 12.50 came to Kinnik where I lunched under some trees till 1.20. We tried to find someone to shoe Jusef's horse but they said the baitar was dead and there was not a nail in the village. The priest's wife, a nice woman looking like an English parson's wife mutatis mutandis came down and made me welcome. The whole plain strewn over with mound villages and bounded by the Jebel Sinjar [Sinjar, Jabal]. So we went on through some corn and at last I insisted on leaving the path and we climbed up the stony lower slopes seamed with many valleys, Kal'at Jedid standing up ahead in its deep gorge. We met some people who told us that Usedere was still very far off which made me suspect I must be wrong in thinking that it lay at the head of the valley. So up at last into the shadow and under Kal'at Jedid most splendidly placed on crags with a double wall. We stopped to drink and eat an egg (all that was left of our food) at the big deep cistern below it and went off at 5.30. Walked up the gorge through oak woods and came out at 6.40 at the village of Badibbe. I mounted our poor guide and walked on myself through the darkening oakwoods by a shallow solitary valley. Got into Usedere at 7.30 and found the camp.

## 19/05/1909

Wed May {20} 19. [19 May 1909] Left at 6 and rode up through the oak woods to Der Mar Augen just over the lip of the hills. Iris Susiana in flower in the woods, most lovely. Mar Augen is the mother house of this district. We got to it after about 2 hours succeeding in pulling our horses down over the rocks. There are 10 monks; they live mostly in caves some of which have upper chambers. I do not doubt that this is the real primitive monasticism. The bp, an old man, has shut himself up in a cave, walled in and almost inaccessible above the monastery and intends to spend the rest of his days in silence. He eats once a day; the food is hoisted[?] up to him in a basket - burghul, bread, lentils and oil - none of the monks eat anything else. The rais entertained me and told me how they were oppressed by the Kurds. He took me up to Mar Augen's cell in the rocks above the monastery to the W. The kitchen is a half open cave with a big cave behind it as storehouse - skins of burghul in it. Several of the monks wd not look at a woman and were carefully sent into their caves. The rais made an exception in my favour. The monastery owns lands and vinyards [sic] but only so much of the produce

is assigned to it by the church at large as is necessary for the livelihood of the monks. Rather heated discussion as to whether all Moslems go to Hell, a propos of the Sultan! The Rais gave me lunch in his cell, omelet, burghul and raisins. He proposes, if allowed, to spend the rest of his days at Mar Augen. His native place is Mardin. We sent the horses up to the wine press which we had passed in the woods on our way (it was for dibs the Kas of Usedere said) and walked on over the hills to Mar Yuhanna about 1/2 an hour away. Less interesting but the same brick arches in the sanctuary and bricks used in the high vault. The door arch between ante chamber and nave set back, the arches over the niches in the anti chamber wall set forward. The anti chamber covered with a fine brick dome on squinches. There is a modern (I think) small chapel below the church. In the N wall of the church is the tomb of Mar Yuhanna and that of his mother in the S. wall. There are 4 monks here; also a bp. They live in a sort of tower and caves at the very top of all. We offended the old rais mortally by refusing to eat. So back to the dibs press. There are 2 caves and in front of one a number of rock cut cavities with rock cut channels for the dibs to run out of the cave into the cavities. So home and into camp at 4.

## 20/05/1909

Thurs May {21} 20. [20 May 1909] Off at 5.30. It was just an hour's ride to Mar Melko and we stayed till 7.45. It stands up square on its hill and has a very fortress like air. The bp here was very cordial but rather an old bore. He was not at all satisfied with my mejideh bakhshish. Impossible to plan the monastery as it goes up and down everywhere. Below the church[?] (you reach it by a door in the court, below and W of the church) is a crypt with graves. No architectural interest. The bp has 3 monks here. So we rode on but as Reshid did not know the way Heaven knows where we went. At 8.15 we reached a village called Kharabe 'Ale. There we went wrong. At 10.30 we passed a tiny village called Chevnos; there were some houses on the hill top above it. At last at 11.45 we got onto a hill and saw Der el Amer in the distance. I lunched for half an hour and we got into camp at 12.50. The baggage had arrived 1 1/2 hours before. Spent the rest of the day planning the monastery. The apse of the big church has a mosaic pavement - big roughly laid stones - and a mosaic roof, a cross in the centre with circles this way [sketch: figure of eight shape] apparently vine scrolls on a gold ground. Very dark and difficult to see. The bp was away. One monk and one nun were there. There are 4 monks altogether. The main altar of the big church stands under a painted wood canopy. At Mar Melko there was a picture of the saint with the devil near him just over his tomb in the nave. He cast the devil out of somebody - a king's son I think. In the further corner a chain and collar for mad people of all religions - [ag1]they all get well! Temp 90 when I got into camp though it was a cool day.

## 21/05/1909

Friday May {22} 21. [21 May 1909] Left Der el Amer at 5.50, got to Mezizakh at 8.15 and to Der Mar Ibrahim a little after 9. The monastery is built in fact[?] of the same very solid masonry as that of parts of Der el Amer. Flatly moulded caps outside and moulded jambs on the inner doors of Mar Hobei. I subsequently went back and planned it and saw the embroidered robe. Then planned Mar Philoxenos, a very interesting place. The old church appears to have been of the arcaded type. An open narthex was subsequently added to the S and still later its doors were closed up and a porch added. Horrible crowds. The Kaimakam came to see me and was very civil. He says all is quiet, but Fattuh brings rumours of alarms and excursions.

## 22/05/1909

Sat. May {23} 22. [22 May 1909] Had an awfully long day beginning with 1/2 an hour's work on the basilica of Mar Philoxenos which was I think a true basilica with the narthex to the W. Probably all vaulted; the old vault of the N aisle remains, of great stones, quite different from the new vaults. Rode off at 6.5 with Jusef and Abd ur Rahman and got to {Arnas} Salah at {5.50} 7.25. The wonderful church lies to the W of the village. Stayed there till 9.20. It deserved a longer visit. Lots of mouldings, round the bottom of the narthex wall, round the inside of the nave (decorated and too high to take) doors etc. But horribly dark inside. Got to Arnas at 10.35 and stayed till 12.20. The church is much ruined - remains of the cymatium still to be seen outside. It has been restored but I think exactly on the old plan, ie the engaged piers here are part of the original structure. They fit onto the apse instead of leaving the awkward gap of the reconstruction piers. Lunched before I left. The church is part of a

house (the buildings of Mar Yakub are also inhabited by peasants). Two {apses} niches on the E side of court, one apsed, but both much later work. We rode down hill and up to another village, Halaf, which we reached at 12.55. At 2 we got to Kefr Zeh and stayed till 3.45. The church is inhabited by a nun - there was also a Kas but I'm not sure if he lived there - there was only one room. The piers here are part of a reconstruction: I shd think the church was originally vaulted from the walls only. Here and in both the other chambers fine decorated mouldings round the triumphal arch. I was very tired by the time I had finished. We were told it was 3 hours to Khakh but it was only a little over 2. We left Kefr Zeh at 3.45, {got to} passed Mar Hanik at 4.50 and so onto a plateau from which we presently saw Khakh lying on its hill with the mountains behind it - very beautiful. We had had thunderstorms all day and the evening was mild and lovely like an English spring. Got into camp at 5.50. After tea I took a look round and found that there was much to be done. Prayers were being said in the Adra, the women standing in the narthex, the men inside. One of the latter had put down his knife and half a cigarette in a holder on the narthex door step. As I came back through the village, the people coming up from prayers greeted me with "Marhaba Ingliziyeh." The Adra is occupied by a monk, a novice and a nun. The latter begged me to give them arms as a little time ago the Moslems came and said that order had been given that all Xians were to be killed. The Xians in Midyat heard the same thing and shut themselves into their houses for a day or two.

## 23/05/1909

Sun. May {24} 23. [23 May 1909] - I see I've got the days wrong somewhere and am a day on; now it's right. Thunder and heavy rain when I woke. Worked all day at the 2 churches here, the Adra and Mar Saba. The Adra is perfect but for the dome outside which was rebuilt 2 years ago by the Xians - to the great distress of the monk. Since the rebuilding the water comes in which it never did before. He says the old roof was incredibly solid. I don't think the church can be later than the 5th c. Splendid decorated mouldings. The [sketch] acanthus everywhere, with entrelacs, bead and reel, and vine rinceaux round the door from the narthex to the church. Mar Saba has been restored. The piers are later both in nave and aisles. I think the church was a basilica, but with solid walls broken only by doors between the nave and aisles. The difficulty is that the doors are all moulded on the aisle side, which seems very odd, especially in the N aisle where there is no entrance but from the church. Was the whole N aisle a later addition and the church only a nave with a narthex on the S side? Yes, the whole aisle is new - straight ..... in E wall. The N doors would then be outer doors. There is the usual apse to the E of the S court - this time I think original. N of Mar Saba another little church too full of fleas to work at. Elaborately decorated door bet. narthex and nave but later work than the other 2. Its small late chapel further W. Outside the town to the N is Mar [space left blank] - late, one monk inhabits it. To the E Miriam Aghuthaitha with a tower, late, a dome on squinches, and Mar Johanna of the same date I shd say as the church N of Mar Saba - a decorated door which I photographed.

## 24/05/1909

Monday May 24. [24 May 1909] In the night we were robbed. I woke and found a man in my tent, gave the alarm, but they were off having dévalisé us. At the first dawn sent Fattuh and Abd ur Rahman to Mezezakh to fetch the Chelabi ibn Ismail who owns this country from Jezireh [Cizre] to Mardin. At once they found a bag of change on the path leading to Zakhuran and later in the day a shepherd brought in one of my gloves found further along the road. At 5 the Chelabi arrived with a large and picturesque following robed in white and armed with rifles. After visiting me he held a mejlis in the der. Before sunset 14 men came in from Zakhuran, all swearing they knew nothing of the matter. Read the Bible in Spain - splendid book.

## 25/05/1909

Tuesday May 25. [25 May 1909] The Chelabi visited me in the morning and I told him I wd ruin the world if my things did not appear. All the govts of Europe said the priest wd present themselves in force. The good Chelabi then rode off to Zakhuran with Fattuh and all his party- and I went to Der es Salib. It belongs to the later period. The church down a long dark passage, narthex, nave crossways and 3 sanctuary chambers. No decoration inside but a late decorated apse in the court with the usual cross in its roof. At the SW corner of the outer wall some very big stones but I doubt whether any part belongs to the older period. It is 2 1/4 hours from here. We passed a late ruined monastery and village

on our way. At 6 Fattuh came back. The Chelabi picked up another glove on the road. He is calling in all the Mukhtars and is to bring the suspects here tomorrow. I sent one of my soldiers to Midyat with a letter to the Kaimakam asking for soldiers tomorrow at dawn. Things look brighter - Informers are beginning to turn up. Two villages are suspect and it is clear that there are plenty of people who know where the things are.

## 26/05/1909

Wed May 26. [26 May 1909] The Chelabi came back in the morning with 5 prisoners selected I fancy at haphazard, but no news of my goods. I finished The Bible in Spain. In the evening 10 zaptiehs arrived. During the day some men of Zakhuran proposed to search the hills and bring the things next morning.

## 27/05/1909

Thurs. May 27. [27 May 1909] But nothing arrived. The Chelabi went off to Zakhuran with the Zaptiehs after taking an affectionate farewell of me. I rode out that way to see a ruined church but found nothing interesting. While I was away 50 infantry with 3 officers arrived. They were Mulazim Muhammad Agha, Zaptieh Ibrahim Chowwish (who spoke a little French) and Askari Mulazim Suleiman Effendi, the old man who came to see me while I was at Midyat. The priest tells me that the exedras in the courts of the monasteries are where the bp said the week day prayers, the church being used only on Sunday. The inscrips in the exedra here (there are a good many) are all tombstones of monks, without dates, he says. They were simply written on the interior of the exedra at any time. I then went to the Adra and

re-measured it, the officers taking a friendly interest. They were most kind. After lunch came a message from the Chelabi that man woman and child had fled from Zakhuran, taking the flocks with them. The soldiers therefore prepared to depart - they were sitting in a temporary shelter on the monastery roof. The Mulazim gave each man a very coarse loaf, they formed up, blew their trumpet and marched away, taking with them the 5 prisoners and the Mukhtar of Khakh, Melkeh. I felt dreadfully concerned at all this. Everyone now is under suspicion including the Chelabi, and a whole village has been driven into the hills. I remeasured the ruined church. We decided in the evening that I shd go with the caravan to Diarbekr [Diyarbakir (Amida)] and leave Fattuh with the Chelabi.

## 28/05/1909

Friday May 28. [28 May 1909] But in the grey dawn one of the villagers woke us shouting from the ruined tombs on the opposite hill that our things were there. It appeared that a man from Zakhuran had told him. My servants rushed off and found everything except the money, Fattuh's clothes, a camera strap and 3 anticas. So we breakfasted and I sent the camp on to Midyat while I rode off with Fattuh, Abd ul Ghani Effendi (he arrived last night - I don't know what his duties are) and 2 zaptiehs to Zakhuran which we reached in 11/2 hours. It was completely deserted except for cocks and hens; the Chelabi and the soldiers had gone into the hills to fetch the flocks. It lay in a deep rocky valley, a regular robbers' nest. I lay down under a ruin on the top of the hill and went to sleep while the others sat under an oak tree. When I woke a bp from Karboran had joined the party - dressed in purple with a gold and jewelled cross, Urfa [Sanliurfa (Edessa)] work. So it being near 11 I lunched and talked to the bp who said he had seen me in Jerusalem [(El Quds esh Sherif, Yerushalayim)]. He spoke well of the Chelabi - said he was a friend to the Xians which I believe from the care he took of Khakh. The sheep were seen coming in but still no Chelabi. I wrote various notes at the request of the bp for the release of Melkeh and the return of Xian sheep which had been swept in with the rest. This was under a tree by the village - a few red eyed women had returned by this time. At about 12 I rode off with Fattuh, Abd el Rahim and a Zakhuran man. We went by extraordinarily rocky barren valleys, the villages on the hill tops like little forts. We passed near Kefr Zeh and Arnas and got into camp at 6. The Kaimmakam and others visited me and after sunset I went and looked again at the ruined church.

## 29/05/1909

Sat May 29. [29 May 1909] At which I did a few minutes work in the morning. Then with Fattuh to the shop of one Galleh Hormuz, a rich merchant. He took me to Mar Shimuneh where I saw two evangils, one illuminated. Then back to the shop to interview the other bp about the Xian sheep. He abused the Chelabi and so did Galleh; they said Zakhuran was his own people, the Mukhtar his cousin, he wd certainly try to get them off at the expense of the Xians. So I wrote a letter for the release of the sheep of Shahrika and Shapisna and gave it to the Kaimmakam who had now turned up. I borrowed £5 off him and set off at 7.55 with a very nice zaptieh. At 8.30 we passed Este. At 10.15 we got to Kenderib[?] and found there Thomas Effendi, the dragoman from Diarbekr [Diyarbakir (Amida)] with 3 esterlis. So I dismissed my zaptieh with regret and at 10.50 we rode off together. He gave me news of the massacres at Adana [(Seyhan, Ataniya)] and said they had all been in fear of their lives. At 11.20 we reached Apsheh. At 12.15 we lunched under a tree for 1/2 an hour - poor Thomas had come 16 hours yesterday - 5 today before he met me. At 1.10 Haldakh. Then into rocky hills and down a valley to Killeth which we reached at 4. Thomas knows the Yezidis well. He says Malek Ta'ous is the fallen angel and the Yezidis worship him because they think God will some day take him back into favour and then it will be best to be on the right side of Him. They are all Kurds.

## 30/05/1909

Sunday May 30. [30 May 1909] Off at 5.45 and by a beautiful valley full of vinyards [sic], water loving poplars by the stream, to Ahmedeh, 7.5. We saw Saun[?] in the hills. Then down the valley, narrow here, past a ruined church and up a hill to the W onto an upland. We saw at 10.30 Gireki Hajji Faris to the right about a mile away. At 11.20 Girreh Azair. 12.15 to 12.50 lunch at Isa Punar. At 1.20 Koghiyyeh by a tell. At 2.10 the Sheikhan Chai with Kara Punar on the other side. Uplands all covered with corn. Till the fall of Abdul Hamid this road was too dangerous to take, on account of the robbers. At 3.35 Hajjiyyet Turkan (Turkman, Kizil Bash) and at 4.45 Kerkha (Kurd) lying under its big mound. A long day.

## 31/05/1909

Monday May 31. [31 May 1909] We left Kerkha at 5.45 and forded the Tigris at 6.35. At 7.5 we came to Holan, at 8.45 to Satli Keui - all this across flattish country all cultivated. At 10.5 we passed Sadi Keui on the right. We had already sighted the minarets of Diarbekr [Diyarbakir (Amida)] far away, now they were quite close, and the great walls standing up on the high Tigris bank. We forded the river again - it was rather deep and came into mulberry gardens, through which we rode and up a paved road into the Mardin gate at 11. I went straight to the Consulate and found that Mr E Rawlins had gone to meet me by another road. She greeted me most kindly (she was a Miss Kappus the niece of Lütticke) and insisted on my staying with them though her baby is not 4 weeks old. I found 2 month's post waiting for me and while I was reading letters, Mr R. came in. In the evening appeared Miss Baldwin who is a nurse come out to help Dr and Mrs Ward (Americans) to found a hospital, a nice woman. Diarbekr is much disturbed. A massacre was only avoided by a miracle. The local committee intercepted a telegram from C'ple [Istanbul (Constantinople)] to the Ferik on Ap 17 ordering disturbances. A member of the committee showed a copy 3 weeks later to Thomas Effendi. For a few hours the town was in a panic. Mr R. walked through the streets quieting the people. The Ashraf are very anti Xian and anti Constitution. They have looted Ibrahim Pasha; all the Kurdish tribes turned against him as soon as he fell. The very men who are appointed to judge the case of Abd ul Hamid and his 2 brothers are at present riding on the former's best mares which they have taken. Yet the Committee from C'ple appointed after the fall of I. Pasha found the sons guiltless and so reported. I. Pasha was a great protector of the Xians and had many prosperous Xian villages many of which are now looted. Went to see the acting Vali who was the man who instigated the massacres in the Kizil Bash country - Devsim - the other day.

## 01/06/1909

Tuesday June 1. [1 June 1909] Wrote letters most of the day. The Wards and Miss Baldwin came to tea after which Mr R. [Rawlins] and I rode down to the bridge. It is supposed to be Roman but I did not see anything earlier than what might have been Arabic. The arches on the E side (or on the S side, left bank) are different from the others, the bridge here considerably narrower and on the lower side the arches are of alternate black and white stones. The old khans in Diarbekr [Diyarbakir (Amida)] are built in the same way. There is one inside the Mardin gate and another in the bazaar where my caravan put up. Also many of the mosques are striped and the modern houses inside the courts are adorned with patterns and stripes of white. Half the bazaar was burnt down in 1895 at the time of the massacres. It is very attractive, shaded with trees, but dirty!

## 02/06/1909

Wed June 2 [2 June 1909] Went out early and planned 2 churches, the Jacobite and the Chaldaean. The former was particularly interesting, both originally of the same period. In the afternoon worked as well as I could at the mosque. The N,E and W sides of the old palace court remain. Byz. of the period of all the churches I have been seeing, ie 4th - 6th - probably nearer the former. We had a violent thunderstorm and rain after which Mr R [Rawlins] and I walked out round the walls and saw the inscriptions {(cufic)} and ..... on the 4 bastions between the Mardin and Aleppo Gates.

## 03/06/1909

Thurs June 3. [3 June 1909] Walked round the top of the walls with Thomas Effendi from the Kharput Gate to the Mardin Gate then down and into the great chamber S of that gate and then outside as far as the Yeni Kapu. The other 3 gates are all of the Edessa-Cairo pattern, with 2 big round bastions and a quite simple moulded doorway. In the Aleppo gate there were 2 doors[?] - perhaps 3. There are also a few posterns. The 2 main streets cross the city from the 4 gates. The oldest part of the walls is from the Aleppo gate to the river where all the bastions are round. The great inscribed bastions are certainly later - they have stalactite work on the top - and from this point most of the towers are square. The interior arches and domes and vaults are everywhere of brick. Fine shallow domes in the chambers in the old round bastions. The Yeni Kapu over the river is quite a different pattern, with one square bastion on the E side. After I had come in Mrs Thomas came to see me and also Hajji 'Adleh, I. Pasha's second wife, a fine determined looking woman. She came to ask my help for the sons and brought with her a bright eyed Xian servant, the only one of their servants who had not deserted them. Khansa Khatun, the chief wife is with the tribe. She is reported to be a very able woman. The Milleh are nearly blotted out. After lunch walked down to the citadel, photographed the arch of the Serai with its curious relief and inscrip. (I do not think the latter is Arabic) and took photographs from the top of the mound. All the work of the citadel seems to belong to the Arab period. Went to see Mrs Thomas and to tea with the Wards.

## 04/06/1909

Friday June 4. [4 June 1909] Off at 7. Thomas Effendi rode with me to the barracks outside the town. There is a kiosk on a hill a little way off which is said to have been built for Sultan Murad when he came fighting here. At 8 we passed Shilbe, at 9.5 Uch Keui - all the country flat. At 10.45 we crossed the deep valley of the Dere Gechid Chai; at 11 the tiny village of Tolek on the top of the further side of the valley and so out onto the plain again. Mostly cultivated but the crops not good. From 12 to 12.35 lunched. At 1 we crossed the little Kara Khan Chai and at 2.45 got to Tarmul where there is a village on a mound and a small khan. Cool delicious weather [...]

