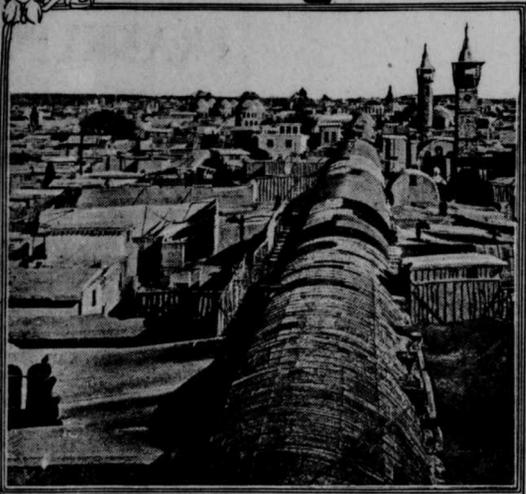


OLDEST LIVING CITY



Roof of the "Straight" Street in Damascus.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

When France obtained the mandate for Syria after the World war, she fell heir to what is reputed to be the oldest "living" city in the world—Damascus. Nearly 4,000 years ago the writer of Genesis mentioned this old city, and spoke of it as a place of note. It existed when the Pharaohs ruled over Egypt; it probably saw Babylon rise, and certainly it saw that proud city fall. And it has lived as one of the world's oldest places about it have passed into oblivion or lost their glory: Memphis, Thebes, Nineveh, Sardis, Tyre, Sidon, Jerusalem, Susa, Ephesus—a long procession of mighty cities.

Situated at the head of Arabia, near the east end of the Mediterranean and on the land route between Egypt and the rest of Africa on one hand, and Asia and Europe on the other, Damascus occupied a position in which it could not avoid importance. With the establishment of Mohammedanism, it took on increased importance as the assembling point for the final long crossing of the desert sands to holy Mecca. And when it is added that the city is encompassed by a fertile plain through which flows an abundance of water, its early consequence, its vitality and its long life can easily be understood. It is set in the oasis of oases, a grove more than 50 miles in circuit of nut and fruit trees interspersed with gardens of vegetables. No wonder the Bedouins from the sandy stretches of Arabia and Syria called it "the pearl of the desert."

In recent times Damascus was the second city in Turkey, being surpassed in size and importance only by Constantinople. Now Aleppo, also in old Turkish territory, and since the war, a part, too, of French Syria, has about overtaken Damascus in size. But Damascus' hoary traditions will long give it first place in the hearts of the East.

Fascination of Its Streets.
Damascus is the rendezvous of peoples from all parts of the Mohammedan world. One cannot be long on its streets without being interested in the motley crowd of humanity that swarm through them, and, in spite of creed and nationality, manage to keep sweet temper. The urban Damascene rubs against the swarthy, sun-burnt son of the desert without even a word of scorn or anger; the Mohammedan shoulders the Jew as if they were brothers in the faith; the spotless visitor from the Occident jostles the not-any-too-clean peasant from the surrounding villages, while Persians, Moors, Afghans, Indians, Egyptians, Sudanese, and others from many parts of the globe hurry along, all intent on something of importance that has brought them to this metropolis of the Orient.

On the streets are to be seen vendors of almost everything under the sun, especially in the way of eatables, and, to those who are familiar with the value of the goods offered for sale, the words of the native visitor are plain when he informs you that "in Damascus you can sup or breakfast for nothing," because of the little cost of food.

On the same street, within a few yards of each other, may be seen the vender of cucumbers with his wares fresh from the garden, exposed on a donkey's back (when the load was sold in pre-war days, it brought between 20 and 30 cents); the bread seller with his warm cakes of bread on a tray resting on a stand ready to supply the hungry with a good-sized loaf for a cent, and the vender of milk, who for another cent will give you a large basin of sweetened milk in which to soak your loaf. At different seasons you may fare well at little cost of melons, grapes, apricots, plums, peaches, apples, oranges, figs, etc., all the products of the gardens and orchards around the city.

All due to the River Barada.

But some will ask whence comes all this abundance, for in no other part of Syria or Palestine is there such a profusion of fruit and vegetables at such low prices. The cause is the

abundant water supply provided by the ever-flowing and life-producing river Barada, the Abana of the Bible.

Rising some miles northwest of the city, the river is conducted to all parts of Damascus through thousands of channels. It is also tapped to irrigate the gardens, orchards, and fields outside the city that are constantly under cultivation to supply the needs of the inhabitants.

There are many pleasant spots by the river's side, whither the Damascenes resort after the work and business of the day to pass an hour over the coffee cup or the ever-acceptable water pipe as they talk over the news of the day or the doings of the outer world as revealed to them through the Arabic or Turkish papers.

Would you investigate closer some of the most primitive and interesting doings of the Damascene, turn aside to the place where the famous Damascus curtains are made, and there in semidarkness you will find dozens of lads and men engaged in weaving these primitive of looms, and yet they are able to produce an article that will compete with anything from the most complete and up-to-date factory in Europe.

Or, would you see how thousands of bushels of flour and measures of oil are produced, you have only to turn aside into one of the many mills to see that instead of steam the patient camel is used to turn the mill whose stones crush the grain or bruise the berries or seeds from which different oils are extracted. Some will say, primitive, indeed; but the Damascene's reply would be that it is effective and inexpensive; and, where time is of little object, these are important items.

Views From a Minaret.
But the sights of Damascus are not all on the streets. For a good view of the city itself one must get the favor of a minaret keeper, and have his permission to climb to the gallery of the minaret and from there look out over the roofs, courts, towers, and streets of the city below. Be it said to the credit of the Damascene that, although he is a faithful follower of the "desert prophet," the fanaticism so often exhibited by Mohammedans is absent in him.

An interesting outlook of the city is obtained from a minaret near the west end of "the street called Straight." From this position one immediately appreciates how well that ancient thoroughfare deserves its name, for it runs in a direct line across the city from west to east for about one and a half miles. This street, which is roofed in, still bears the same name as in the days of the Apostle Paul.

The principal attraction of the city is the great mosque, which is located in the heart of the busy capital and can only be reached through one of its many populous streets. This spacious resort for worship was rebuilt, early in the Twentieth century, the funds being contributed from all parts of the Mohammedan world, for in 1893 the edifice had been almost entirely destroyed by fire.

The mosque has had a varied experience, being at one time a heathen temple, then a Christian church, then held jointly by the Mohammedans and Christians and used as church and mosque at the same time; but since the Eighth century the Mohammedans have had the sole use of it for their own purposes.

In the mosque is the reputed tomb of John the Baptist's head, a shrine respected alike by Mohammedans and Christians. The local tradition says that after the execution of the Messiah's forerunner his head was sent to Damascus, then the capital of the district over which Herod had jurisdiction, so that his superior officer might see that the deed had really been done and one supposed inciter to rebellion disposed of. When the Saracen conqueror Khalid captured Damascus and was searching the church for treasure, he came across this revered relic and caused it to be interred and covered by a fine structure.

The Paying Guests

By CLARA DELAFIELD

I don't know what it was first made me suspect that Mr. and Mrs. Crane weren't married. Maybe it was the attention he showed her. That ain't natural or proper between married folks.

I would never have taken paying guests on the farm, only the interest was due on the mortgage, and then the cow died. I always knew Cy Hicks poisoned her because I showed him up when he was courting Ada White for her money. But I couldn't prove it, and of course a rich man can always buy the courts. So I had to take paying guests that summer.

Well, the Cranes was the first, and I took a dislike to Mrs. Crane the minute I set eyes on her. She wore them smart city dresses and she used to wash her hair and set on the stoop with it all hanging out to dry, and dyed down to the roots, so that you could hardly tell it. And, as I was saying, it ain't respectable for decent married folks to set holding hands on the stoop after dark, and that's what must first have made me suspicious.

I lay low and said nothing, but one day when I was doing up their room a letter caught my eye, and it showed me my suspicions were correct. It was written to a woman called Mary, which was what Mrs. Crane called herself, and signed "your loving husband, Horace." Now Mr. Crane's name was Percy.

It gave me a terrible shock, in particular because I found out that she was an actress. It was all about parts in theaters, and if I'd guessed I'd never have had them on the farm. But they were too smart for me, and I'm naturally trustful.

After that duty compelled me to look in Mr. Crane's pockets when he was out with that woman, and it wasn't long before I came across a letter written by a woman in Elmira, signed "your loving wife, Maisie." Now that woman's name wasn't Maisie—at least, she called herself Julia, though of course it was an alibi.

Well, it was my clear duty to stop this wave of immorality that was surging over my village, and so I set down and wrote an anonymous letter to the real Mrs. Crane, which I signed "A Friend," and another to that woman's husband, telling them what their partners was up to. Then I waited and watched them. Sure enough, a day or two later they began to look worried, and I wasn't long in finding out the reason.

There was an awful letter from that woman's husband, whose name was Dickens, saying he was coming on the next train to shoot Mr. Crane dead in his tracks.

And there was a letter from the real Mrs. Crane, saying that she was coming too, and there wouldn't be much hair left on that woman's dyed head when she got through with her. Coarse but neat, I called it.

Well, there was a pretty kettle of fish. I waited till the night train come in, and off I went to the depot. There was a strange man there, looking black as thunder, and a strange woman, crying. And each says to me, "Can you tell me the way to Miss Ann Jones's farm?"

I showed them the longest way round, and I run as hard as I could to the police station, and told Cy Hicks, who's our police officer, to come up to the farm or there'd be murder. I guess I must have threw a scare into Cy, for he turned white as a sheet, and then got down his rabbit gun and pairs of handcuffs from the hooks, and started off as spry as he could go.

We'd just reached the potato patch—it was nearly dark—when there come a blood-curdling scream from the house which made me go funny at the knees. Then a woman's voice, saying:

"Spare me! Don't shoot me! I'll never see him again, I swear it! Only let me go!"

And an awful man's voice followed: "You false traitress, say your prayers, for I swear you haven't got another minute to live. I'm going to shoot you in your tracks as I've shot this perjured breaker-up of my happy home!"

There followed the most terrific scream I've ever heard, and then the sound of a gun. And a few moans—(y and I was nearly at the house now—and then the hollow, mocking laugh of a maniac.

I caught hold of Cy, and he didn't go quite so spry as before, and I could see the rabbit gun kind of going up and down in his hands, but at last he got sand enough to knock on the door with the butt end of the gun and say:

"Open in the name of the law. The house is surrounded, and if you don't come out you'll be shot dead where you stand!"

At that the door opened, and there stood both the Cranes inside, with the two strangers, laughing at us.

"What's this mean?" demanded Cy, looking kind of foolish. "What you hollering about?"

"O, that?" says Mr. Crane. "Why, we was just referring for our new piece on Broadway next month. You see, we're actors, and this gentleman and his wife come down to spend the week-end with us."

"It's a plant," says Cy. "What's the name of this here piece you spoke about?"

And I'll never forget the hateful, oily sound of that man's voice as he answered:

"It's called 'The Prude's Progress,' or 'Anne Asked For It.'"

FIND ANCIENT SCRIPT

Writing Similar to Chinese Discovered in Idaho.

Scientists Will Explore Caves and decipher the Writing Before Revealing Location—May Find Valuable Relics.

Boise, Idaho.—Symbols and signs, chiseled, it is believed, ages ago, were discovered recently on lava rocks in a remote section of Owyhee county, southwestern Idaho.

Many of the inscriptions bear striking resemblance to Chinese alphabet characters of today, it was said, although archeologists say they may be anywhere from 400 to 30,000 years old.

Discovery of the inscriptions, which are said to be a mine of archeological treasure, was made by Robert Limbert, a Boise taxidermist. Their exact location will not be made public until they are examined thoroughly this summer by a number of scientists who are coming here.

The volcanic rock on which the inscriptions are carved is scattered over a 30-acre sagebrush flat. In the immediate vicinity are several large caves, around the entrance of which the rocks also are inscribed. It is believed these caves never have been explored. Possibly, it is said, they contain many relics of scientific value.

Two distinct types of carvings, ideographic and pictographic, have been noted. Archeologists believe the ideographic antedates by many years the pictographic. Both systems have been found together on one rock and near them can be discerned what appears to be a third system, supposed to antedate both of the others, but which has weathered beyond possibility of deciphering.

Clear bits of this prehistoric writing are found on one huge water-worn boulder 25 feet long, 14 feet wide and 5 feet high. Near the center is a series of triangles believed to indicate Indian tepees, and next to them are rows of dots and dashes, thought to be numerals.

Resemblance of many of the inscriptions to the characters of the Chinese alphabet was taken by some to substantiate the theory that the North American native descended from a race which came from Asia by way of Bering straits.

Indians now living in Idaho, when questioned regarding the carvings, say the more modern or pictographic are the work of their forefathers, but they assert the others to be the work of spirits.

SOVIETS KILLED 22 PRELATES

Metropolitan of Kiev Gives Figures From 1917 to 1920—Nine Tortured to Death.

London.—The Bolsheviks in Russia from 1917 to 1920 killed one metropolitan, five archbishops and sixteen bishops, of whom thirteen were shot and nine tortured to death, according to a telegram sent by Archbishop Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, says the London Times.

The Metropolitan says he has no information concerning the year 1921.

DOG HEARS MASTER BY RADIO

Terrier Cuts Capers as He Recognizes Owner's Voice Calling Him Over Wireless.

Lexington, Ky.—An Alredale terrier in the radio receiving room of the University of Kentucky heard his owner at Pittsburgh, Pa., call him. The owner, F. Paul Anderson, dean of the university, was speaking from the Westinghouse broadcasting station. The dog was sleeping as Anderson's voice came in. He sprang to his feet, wagged his tail and then capered about the radio outfit.

Big Price of Little Land.
Harrisburg, Va.—Probably the smallest transfer of real estate to be entered on record in the office of the County Clerk here was recorded yesterday when a conveyance of twelve square feet located between two dwellings was made for a consideration of \$100.

The price was at the rate of \$308,000 an acre, it was pointed out. The strip of land was 28 feet long and 3 1/2 inches wide.

Mule Fell on Him.
Greensburg, Ind.—Clarence Melish of this city was the victim of an unusual accident the other day while digging a ditch here. A mule, driven by Thomas Burton, fell in the ditch at the point where Melish was working, and he was held prisoner by the weight of the animal until it was removed by fellow workmen. Melish suffered an injured hip and a few minor bruises.

Dog Tows His Master to a Cake of Ice.

Red Wing, Minn.—When eight-year-old Pierce Seebach fell into the Mississippi river, coming to the surface 20 feet from shore, his dog plunged in and swam around until the boy seized his hind legs. Then the dog towed his master to a floating cake of ice, from which he was rescued by onlookers.

EXPORTED BOOZE MAY FLOW BACK

Liquor Sent Abroad Before Volstead Act Went Into Effect Has Chance to Return.

Permits Reimportation of Whisky Shipped Before Law Became Effective—Billion Dollars' Worth May Come Back.

New York.—Liquors having a value in the legitimate market of more than \$300,000,000 and worth in bootleg channels more than \$1,000,000,000, shipped from the United States to foreign countries just before the Volstead act went into effect on January 16, 1922, eventually will find their way back to this country, under the provisions of the Willis-Campbell act passed by congress last November to supplement the national prohibition law, according to John D. Appleby, general prohibition agent in charge of New York and New Jersey.

Already one big shipment has been made to this country under the provisions of the supplemental law. Gin valued in bootleg circles at \$3,000,000 was reimported from Cuba about two weeks ago. The distillery which made the shipment had gone out of business, a fact that apparently was not discovered by the government agents until the gin had arrived here. A special permit had to be obtained from Washington before it could be stored in a local warehouse, pending its withdrawal for medicinal purposes on permits from the director's office.

Prohibition agents were mystified in checking up the cargo to note on the manifest 112 empty barrels. They have not yet been able to make out the reason for the empties, but Federal Prohibition Director Ralph A. Day regarded it as a suspicious circumstance.

The passage of the Willis-Campbell law, ostensibly for the purpose of killing medicinal beer, has made it possible for the thirsty to be supplied with good liquors for a much longer period than appeared likely before the measure was adopted, prohibition officials said. In some quarters the provision for the reimport of liquors was considered as a "joker."

The law provided "that the commissioner may authorize the return to the United States, under such regulations and conditions as he may prescribe, any distilled spirits of American production exported free of tax and reimported in original packages in which exported and consigned for redelivery in the distillery bonded warehouse from which originally removed."

Liquors have been stored in France and other countries in large quantities, according to Mr. Appleby. The prohibition department plans to scrutinize carefully the applications for permits to reimport.

What is regarded as another "joker" in the supplemental law is the provision which exempts payment of tax and penalty for distilled spirits upon which the tax has not been paid which are "lost by theft, accidental fire or other casualty while in possession of a common carrier subject to the transportation act of 1920 or the merchant marine act, 1920, or if lost by theft from a distillery or other bonded warehouse."

FIX MAIL SERVICE TO RUSSIA

Federal Postal Authorities Form Plan With British Officials for Delivery.

Washington.—The Post Office department has entered into an agreement with the British postal authorities for the delivery of regular mail matter and parcel post packages to various points in Russia. It was announced here by First Assistant Postmaster General Bartlett. Tons of parcels, containing clothing mostly, are being forwarded each week and, according to reports received here, 75 per cent of the packages are being delivered to those to whom they were addressed.

PHILADELPHIA O. K.'S BOBBING

Teachers With Shorn Locks Need Not Fear Jobs, Says School Head.

Philadelphia.—The Philadelphia board of education is worrying little about a question that has agitated other communities, namely, whether schoolteachers will be permitted to bob their hair if they desire. The matter rests entirely with the teachers and the younger ones with "curtailed locks need not fear dismissal, Edwin C. Boome, superintendent of schools, said here.

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Macaw Made Trouble.

Columbia, Pa.—When a Peruvian macaw bit a Pomeranian puppy on the ear at the home of Clifton Shutter in Wrightsville, the dog ran between Shutter's legs and upset him as he was taking a tray of half-hatched prize Minorca eggs from an incubator to turn them. Shutter's body flew in one direction and the tray of eggs in another. The man sustained painful wounds to his head, and every egg sustained internal injuries.

OLD BOAT NOW POWER PLANT

Former Mississippi River Steamer Seems to Have by No Means Outlived its Usefulness.

One of the survivors of the days made famous by Mark Twain's "Life on the Mississippi," the steamboat Andrew Paddock, is now serving as a power plant at New Orleans. Perched high in the air on stilts, smoke still belches forth in black masses from its tall stacks, but the sternwheel that once churned the murky waters of the river is motionless.

The captain and crew of the "Andy," as it was affectionately termed by the negro roustabouts, were transferred to other boats, and the crew now consists of two firemen, each of whom is addressed jocularly as "captain." The numerous passing craft invariably blow their sirens in salute, and old "Andy" always replies vigorously from its position just beyond the water's edge.

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