

Reports from Jerusalem

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To cite this article: Herr Schick & J.E. Hanauer (1891) Reports from Jerusalem, Palestine Exploration Quarterly, 23:3, 198-207, DOI: [10.1179/peq.1891.23.3.198](https://doi.org/10.1179/peq.1891.23.3.198)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1179/peq.1891.23.3.198>



Published online: 20 Nov 2013.



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REPORTS FROM JERUSALEM.

LETTERS FROM HERR SCHICK.

JERUSALEM, *February*, 1891.

DISCOVERIES IN "SOLOMON'S STABLES."

SOME years ago the Moslems began to clear the earth from the so-called "Solomon's stables." Then the work rested for some time, and has recently been completed. After the removal of the earth some things of interest for the student came to light. First, that the north wall C, of the substructions consists of very large dressed stones. Second, that the west wall D, also consists of large stones, all, or at least the lower ones, *in situ*, and that there on the flooring the rock is visible. East of it, close to the wall E, are a few stone mangers. The wall E also has large stones; the wall F has stones of all sorts, and certainly of later period than the others mentioned. I think these walls were built up by Herod as a foundation for his grand hall or threefold cloister on the south side ("Antiq.," Joseph. xv, 11, 5) reaching to "the west and east valley," and just here (as the section will show) the slope of the valley begins. Under this part a *passage* was recently found by the Rev. J. E. Hanauer, and according to his description and measurements, I have laid it down on the accompanying drawing.

For what purpose this passage was made is not easy to say. One thinks first of water (aqueduct), but certainly this passage has never been made as such; and as there are under the Triple Gate similar passages which were found long ago, and are shown in all the plans published by the Exploration Fund, I have thought it well to make a copy of this part of the Ordnance Survey Plan, scale $\frac{1}{5000}$, of the Haram at Jerusalem, in order to show upon it the exact site of the new-found one, and also the others.

Both branches of one marked A A under the Triple Gate end in the north abruptly, and one wing has a crevice at the end.

It is tunnel-like, hewn in the rock, descends towards the south, and where its two branches are connected, comes out from the rock scarp, and further on is made of rough masonry. The rocky part was never for water, but it may be that in later time, especially at the time of the Crusaders¹, its walled prolongation was used as a sewer. Not so the other marked B, which was certainly intended for water—first to bring surface water to the cistern H by the upper branch, and when the cistern became full, to carry off the superfluous water by the lower

¹ According to Arabic writers the Crusaders had here the common water closets, which the Muhamedans, when again in possession of the Haram, removed.

branch into the same aqueduct B, which crosses the first channel marked A, being cut at a higher level, and taking an easterly direction, comes out from the rock on its eastern scarp, where there was once a kind of arched room, perhaps formerly a cistern. It then goes further (all masonry) to a point where it might meet the other, but the junction has not been ascertained. South of this suggested meeting point, about 65 feet distant, and in the same line, the Ordnance Survey plan, and others, show a conduit discovered by Sir Charles Warren when he found the underground rock-hewn stables. In front of the Triple Gate there was a *podium* formed of rock, scarped down on three sides and covered with very large, flat, and finely-chiselled flagging stones, as shown in the drawings. These channels or passages come out through this podium.

SPRING OF AN ANCIENT ARCH.

When the heap of earth in one of the corners at Solomon's Stables (marked I) was removed, there were seen, on the western wall of this corner three layers of large stones, and over them a fourth, put a little backward, which formed the spring of a former arch, in some degree similar to "Robinson's Arch." The height of this spring is about 4 feet, and its length visible for 11 feet 6 inches, but it is, very likely, still longer, going behind the block of masonry, which is apparently of a later date than the arch. The spring of the arch is about 14 feet from the ground or the present floor of the substruction. I hear that Mr. Lees has photographed the whole and sent a copy to the Exploration Fund, which certainly will afford a complete explanation,

VARIOUS NOTES.

JERUSALEM, *March 16th*, 1891.

I am sorry to say the history of the Siloam inscription has already, as I feared, produced evil consequences. I last week resumed the work of clearing the second Siloam aqueduct, but after a few days someone gave notice to the local authorities, and immediately the workpeople were arrested and put in prison. On my explaining the matter they were set at liberty, for "my sake," as they said, but going on with the work cannot be allowed, and I was directed to apply for a paper permitting such work.

Monsieur P. M. J. Lagrange, Principal of the Dominicans' place, near Jeremiah's Grotto, made a journey beyond the Jordan. A description of it in French, by Delhomme and Briguel, Paris, was printed under the title, "Au delà du Jourdain." In it mention is made of inscriptions which were recently found, one being Nabatean, from Medeba, and another, a text of Scripture in Samaritan, from Amwas.¹

The winter rains have been very heavy, and severe storms occurred. A large steamer was stranded at Jaffa, and the bridge over the Jordan was destroyed and washed down to the Dead Sea, so that for a long time

¹ Photographs of these inscriptions are in the offices of the Fund.

the river could not be crossed except by the old bridge below the Galilean Sea. Bîr Eyûb here was flowing for several weeks.

A few months ago, I heard that in the village Shâfât an ancient church was found. As at the time I was not well, and there was nearly continually rain, I could not go there till *now*, but found no church, simply an old Crusading building with two preserved windows. The walls are about 6 feet thick, against which the fellaheen houses are built and so not easy to recognise. It was a kind of khan built in the usual Crusading way, with a vault a little higher in middle than semi-circular.

The Latins having got possession of a house in the Via Dolorosa or Tarik Es Sarai, on Sir C. Wilson's plan called "Veronica's house," have pulled down parts of it and intend to rebuild the whole, preserving some old parts. I examined the place but found nothing of interest, but will watch, and go there from time to time.

Inside the city, close to the town wall, at the corner between the newly-opened gate and the school of the brethren (the ancient Kâlât al Jalûd), the ground has been cleared away to the rock, as a new building will be erected there. Nothing of interest was found except large hewn stones and heavy rough boulders, a small cistern, some unimportant walls and *débris*. The rock is about 11 feet under the present surface of the ground.

Pool of Bethesda.—In consequence of the heavy rains some of the arches over this pool gave way, and so some vaultings and the part of the neighbouring houses fell and filled the pool.

The new buildings on the northern part of Mount Olivet for Mr. Gray Hill are advancing, and give to the scenery round Jerusalem a new feature. It will certainly be more agreeable and interesting when on the hill-tops round Jerusalem there will be buildings instead of bare hills.

THE NEWLY DISCOVERED ARCH IN "SOLOMON'S STABLES."

April, 1891.

I have been at the "Haram Es Sherif," and inspected what has been done there by the Moslems during the last three or four months. All the earth heaps, which were in those places where there is an opening in the roofing of the substructions, commonly called "Solomon's Stables," have been removed, and the floor of the substructions levelled. The eastern part is now not so high as before, the bottom having been brought up to a higher level, so that the holes on the corners of the piers once used to fasten animals and the mangers between the piers have disappeared, *i.e.*, are buried in the ground; so these substructions look now more clean and regular, but much less interesting. Some windows have been made in the south wall, and there is now full light even in the "triple passage." One of the three passages is walled up, and its northern part no more visible, and the middle one is opened at its northern end, so that people may go in and out there. Besides the arch and underground passage, for the greater part hewn in the rock, discovered by Mr. Lees and Mr. Hanauer, nothing else of interest has been found.

The visible portion of the arch extends about 12 feet north and south,

but the arch was once much broader, as I could easily observe. According to my measure, it was 38 feet from its southern commencement (G) to the northern corner, and very likely also goes some feet behind the corner, as the masonry there is more modern. The southern edge of this arch will have been 80 feet from the outer surface of the south wall of the Haram, and its north end about 120 to 125 feet from the same point. Robinson's arch is, from the south-west corner of the Haram wall 39 feet, and being 50 feet wide, ends at 89 feet. The spring of the arch in the eastern wall is 79 feet from the southern corner, and being 23 feet wide ends at 102 feet from the corner.

Mr. Lees measured the curve of the remains of the arch, and found in a 4-feet segment a curve of $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, which would give for the arch a span of about 13 feet.

I am sorry to say that the opening to the newly-discovered rock-cut passage I found walled up, so that I could not take the bearings. Nothing else can now be done in the stables.

EXCAVATIONS AT THE GOLDEN GATE.

The building of this gate stands now on three sides quite free, as the earth round it has been removed to a depth of about 30 feet, and for about 20 feet wide. Against the earth beyond a wall will now be built to keep it up. This wall will be about 16 feet distant from the building, so that one may walk round the three sides. In the portion of earth removed *a great many graves* were found, in a level a few feet above the flooring of the gate. All these graves are in a direction from west to east; all are lined with stones round about, and covered with stone slabs. All of them had still bones and mould, and seem to have been made in time of peace—not in haste or a time of tumult. So I am inclined to think they are very likely Christian, and from the time of the Crusaders. The workpeople told me that nothing else than bones were found in them; no crosses or any such things.

TOMBS AND OSSUARIES AT RUJM EL KAHAKIR.

In the Jerusalem volume, Part ii, pages 342 and 343, under the number 29,¹ this heap of stones is mentioned without further notice. Recently the proprietor of the ground, a Muhammedan of the city, being about to enclose his property with a dry wall, opened the "Rujm," or stone heap, and made a deep trench in it, in order to get stones for the wall, but found nothing but rather small stones, the largest such as a man may carry. It is now clear that there are no "ruins" under it, but rock-cut tombs, and that others are also in the immediate neighbourhood, of which I will now report.

No. 1 is a rock-cut tomb, of which I send plan and section.² There is a way 7 feet 6 inches wide and about 15 feet long, cut horizontally into

¹ See also Jerusalem sheet of the large map.

² The map, plans, and sections which accompanied this report are in the office of the Fund.

the rock. This leads to a usual door a couple of feet high and wide, in a rock wall only 15 inches thick. I found it locked with a new iron door, but the proprietor opened it for me. It was full of those little stone cases with human bones and mould. The room is 11 feet long and 8 feet wide and about (on an average) $5\frac{3}{4}$ feet high. It has on its west side one *loculus* 7 feet 6 inches deep, and on its north side two 7 feet deep; the one in the north-western corner is a little declining. The cases were not all found here, but several in other places, and now simply stored here. They are of the usual form, and with the already well-known ornaments on the front, some of the lids are flat, others domed or pyramidal. I found no inscriptions on them. The largest is 2 feet 8 inches long, $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches broad, and 1 foot $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches high; the smallest 1 foot 2 inches long, 8 inches broad, and 9 inches high.

Thirty-nine feet north is another group of tombs. The first room is 9 feet each way sunk into the rock, and once arched or vaulted, but now broken down. It has at the south-western corner two ordinary *loculi* 6 feet 6 inches deep, one on each side, and on the eastern side also two of the same kind. Towards the north is a door leading downwards into another chamber of the same size, but with benches on three sides, 2 feet 3 inches high, and 2 feet 6 inches and 3 feet 6 inches broad. Towards the east are two *loculi* and one opposite in the west; also one in north wall, but only 4 feet 6 inches deep. The roof is rock. This room had been plastered inside with lime and chippings of Kakooli stone, which gives a curious appearance. As the rock is soft and brittle, it seems the plastering was made to protect it. On the field round about these tombs I saw many pieces of broken "stone cases," such as described above; also several of the closing stones of the *loculi*; they are heavy blocks, pinned on one side, so as just to fit the opening of the *loculi*, and some had been used for doors.

At No. 3 on the map, just under the large "Rujm," are very old rock-cut tombs, of which Sheet iv gives a section and plan. The entrance is from south, going northwards, and a few steps down into an open court 30 feet long; its breadth I cannot tell, as there is a large heap of stones in it, but I estimate it at 20 feet. In its middle, towards the north-west wall, is a square opening leading into a rock-hewn chamber 8 feet wide, 16 feet long, and 8 feet high, without any *loculus*. Opposite the door is (close to the following) another door leading to a second room, which is 14 feet long, $12\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide, and 7 feet 6 inches high. Its flooring is 4 feet 2 inches lower than the first. On each of three of its sides are two *loculi*, which are rather unusually deep, from 8 to 10 feet (the deepest or longest which I have ever seen), and on the fourth side again a similar door leading into a further chamber, the third, 11 feet 3 inches by 12 feet 6 inches wide and 6 feet 6 inches high, its flooring 2 feet lower than the former. It has one *loculus* on the left wall, and two in the right; one is in a slightly slanting direction, the other is rather short (6 feet) and very wide (5 feet) and high (3 feet 9 inches). On the inner wall, also close to the following, a similar, but narrower door, leads into the fourth chamber,

which measures 8 feet in each direction, and is 6 feet high, and looks somewhat rough, as if not quite finished. Its flooring is also 2 feet deeper than the former, so the sun rays may at a certain time of the day fall even into the innermost. I could not find or see any bones, so this tomb must have been rifled long ago. Shepherds keep their flocks during stormy nights in it. In some places the rock is damaged.

About 200 feet south of this (marked No. 4 on map) is another site of tombs, shown on Sheet v in section and plan. A flight of rock-cut steps leads northwards down into an open court, 10 feet wide each way, and with rock walls round 7 feet high. Close to the western wall, on the lowest step, which is broad and high, is a small rock-cut pool, 2 feet 7 inches wide each way and the same deep. In the flooring is on, and partly under, the eastern wall of the court, an oval-shaped cistern 6 feet deep, in diameter 6 feet, and 3 feet 6 inches at the middle of its height, where it narrows upwards.

From the court in the north wall, and close to the flooring, an ordinary tomb door leads 2 feet 6 inches by three steps down into a chamber, 10 feet 3 inches wide each way, and 6 feet 6 inches high, all cut in rock. It has in the west wall one common loculus, and three in the north and three in the east wall, in which were found several of the well-known stone cases (*ossuaires*), and some broken slabs with inscriptions. The proprietor of the ground took me to his house, marked *d* on the map, the first of the new houses, and there showed me these things, also some pottery, small jars, &c. A piece of a slab or flat stone $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick, $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches broad, which apparently was originally 12 inches broad, and at least 1 foot long, bears engraved letters in two lines, as the copy will show.¹ As I had no paper with me for making a proper squeeze, and heard that Mr. R. Lees had already made such, and sent it to the Palestine Exploration Fund, I thought it not necessary to do more than simply to report on it.

Another is a hard reddish-looking and somewhat thicker piece of a flagstone, with a very incomplete inscription in Greek letters. It measures 7 inches long by 6 inches broad. The letters are large and deeply engraved.



INSCRIBED SLAB FROM RUJM KAHAKIR.

No. 3 is a soft stone slab, having apparently once formed the side of one of those repeatedly mentioned stone cases.

¹ See Professor Clermont-Ganneau's paper, page 240.

As shown on the Ordnance Survey Plan $\frac{1}{100000}$, there is a kind of plateau, or a high level ground, enclosed within a series of stone heaps made of small stones, which appear to have been gathered from the surrounding ground, and arranged in regular lines on the declivity of the plateau. Of which heaps the "Rujm Kahakir" is the largest and highest (*i.e.*, most prominent) and the most southerly; from its top the land is level northwards, and also north-eastwards on the top of the stone heaps, and the whole is artificial, I cannot help thinking that *this is the Roman camping ground of Titus!* According to Josephus' description (Bell. Jud. 5, 2, 3) it was a "plain," not the top of a hill or ridge; the temple to be seen there, and 7 furlongs from the city. The "Rujm Kahakir" is (according to the Ordnance Survey map) 5,200 feet distant from Damascus Gate. If we take for the outer works of the city, as ditch, &c., 200 feet, there remains 5,000. And as a furlong, according to Smith's Bible Dictionary, was 607 feet, it makes about $8\frac{1}{2}$ furlongs. The top of the ridge at the Nâblus road is 1,500 feet farther distant. It has also to be noted that the southern row of the said stone heaps extends exactly eastwards to the Nâblus road, and that there seems east of this road a similar place, as if the camp had been divided into two parts.

LETTERS FROM THE REV. J. E. HANAUER.

A SUBTERRANEAN PASSAGE IN SOLOMON'S STABLES.¹

The earth that had accumulated during centuries in the vaults at the south-east angle of the Haram area has been removed, and a portion of a massive wall, built of stones like those underneath the "Cradle of Jesus," was observed by Mr. Lees to have been uncovered. It is of four courses, each about 4 feet high, the upper course forming the spring of an arch. It runs northwards parallel to, but about 86 feet to the east of, the arched passages running northward from the Triple Gate. I think that this discovery is important, and will have a bearing on the arguments concerning the real site of the Temple. At Mr. Lees' invitation I accompanied him to the spot, and was so fortunate as to make a discovery, which I will endeavour briefly to describe.

Whilst examining the large stone, I noticed at the foot of the wall, and at a point 18 feet from its northern end, a hole about 15 inches long and 10 inches high, and looking as if a small dog or jackal had been burrowing there. It seemed to be of some depth. Having succeeded in obtaining a small candle-end, I lay down on my face, and, on looking in, found that I was peering into a passage below me, running with a slight downward slope towards the south-west. The passage was about 8 feet high, and wide enough to allow a person to walk along it with ease. I threw off my coat, and, after considerable difficulty, succeeded in squeezing myself, feet foremost, through the hole, and then climbed down into the passage. The side walls were formed of rough rubble, uncoated

¹ See Plan, page 198.

with cement, the roof of flat stones, "sawakeef," laid across. Following it for 13 paces (say about 39 feet), it suddenly widened, and I found myself inside a long artificial cave gallery, or tunnel, roughly hewn in the rock, and turning slightly more to the left—that is, southwards. Stalactites were hanging from the roof, and the floor was covered with a snow-white calcareous deposit. Pick-marks were plainly visible on the walls, and from their curve downwards, it was clear that the miners had tunnelled in the direction of the passages under the Triple Gate. The place was certainly not part of an underground quarry, for, though I looked, I nowhere found traces of beds from which blocks had been removed. Such beds are common in ancient quarries throughout the country. Seven paces (21 feet) further I found a large recess on the left. It may have been the entrance to a side gallery, which had been blocked up.¹ Twelve paces further (36 feet) brought me to the end of the tunnel. It was an unfinished work, very roughly hewn, as if made in great haste. At this spot it was 8 feet 8 inches in width; at the farthest end a long, low horizontal crevice, probably made with crowbars, tapered away into the rock wall. I cannot help thinking that what I found may be a trace of the unsuccessful tunnelling operations of the stone-cutters of Simon the Tyrant, the son of Gioras (Jos., "Wars of the Jews," vii, 2). The masonry tunnel, now blocked up at its eastern end (under the hole I entered by) by a rough wall built across, would strikingly answer to the description: "Now, as far as had been digged of old, they went onward along it without disturbance," whilst the unfinished rock-cut gallery, with its steady downward slope, was undoubtedly like the place where "they dug a mine underground, and this in hopes that they should be able to proceed so far as to rise from underground, in a safe place, and by that means escape; but when they came to make the experiment, they were disappointed of their hope, for the miners could make but small progress, insomuch that their provisions, though they distributed them by measure, began to fail them."

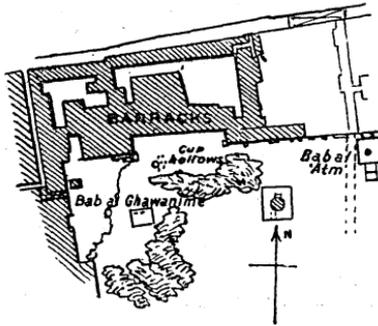
Retracing my steps, I called to my companions (Mr. Lees and Mr. C. Hornstein), and advised them to come down. They did so, and after examining the place and taking the measurements, we found it necessary to retire, as our candle-end was nearly used up. If it was rather difficult to get in, it was much more so to get out. I was the stoutest of the party, and after climbing up to the entrance hole and putting my head and one arm through, I was caught like a snake in a noose. I could neither get backwards nor forwards, and though several days have elapsed since then, my ribs, elbows, and knees still ache in consequence of that fearful final wriggle to get out. In fact, I might be wriggling still had not the sheikhs of the Haram caught hold of me by the head and shoulders and pulled me through. The sheikh of the mosque told me he was going to close the hole up next day, and asked me to tell Mr. Schick about it.

¹ Just here a hole in the rock roof, as if of a narrow shaft leading upwards was noticed. It was blocked with a stone.

CUTTINGS IN THE ROCK IN THE HARAM-AREA.

When Dr. Lansdell, of Siberian and Central Asian fame, was here a few weeks ago, I had the pleasure of accompanying him to the Haram-Area.

Whilst we were looking at the rock-scarp on which the present Turkish barracks stand, I noticed that the earth lying on a part of the rock levellings (about twenty-five paces to the south of the spot where it appears that the entrance to a rock-tunnel in the scarp has been blocked up with masonry), had, as it seemed, quite recently been cleared away, revealing a circular rock-cut hollow or basin, about five feet in diameter,



PLAN OF NORTH-WESTERN CORNER OF HARAM.

(Showing Position of Cup Hollows.)

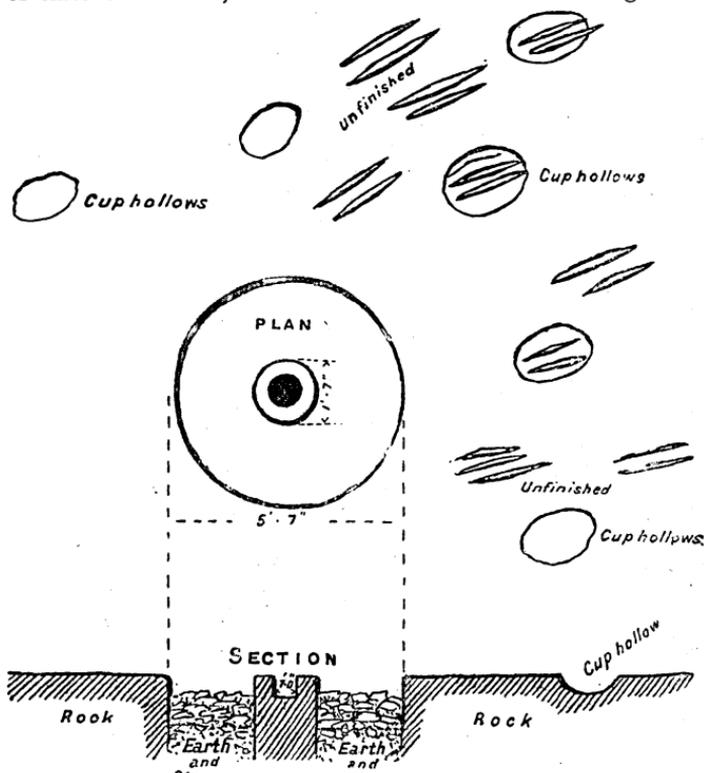
and surrounded by a large number of cup-shaped hollows, excavated in the rock.

Some of these had only just been commenced, and others were in a more or less advanced stage of completion, when the work of making them was relinquished perhaps centuries ago, so that it was possible to see how they had been scooped out. The method adopted was to cut two or three parallel gashes, about seven or eight inches long and about two inches apart, in the hard rock surface, then to remove the stone between these, and gradually to enlarge the hollow thus made.

In some of these hollows you can still see the bottoms of the gashes. In other spots the gashes alone scar the face of the rock. The rough sketch will give an idea of what I mean. As I had never noticed these curious cuttings before, and did not know whether anyone else had, it struck me that perhaps it would be as well to mention them, though, of course, in a place like the Haram, where at every step you notice something interesting, it seems absurd to call attention to such insignificant details. The enclosed rough tracing of the north-west corner of Haram shows approximately the position of these cuttings.

It seems to me that these hollows cut in the rock were made (as Mr. Schick told me I would find) by abrasion. I could not detect any

sign of chisel or iron tool, and the insides and bottoms of the gashes and



PLAN AND SECTION OF CUTTINGS IN THE ROCK IN HARAM AREA.

hollows are perfectly smooth and rounded, almost polished. I got measurements of the fountain-like cutting, and I enclose a sketch of it.

REPORTS FROM MR. F. J. BLISS.

TELL EL HESY, April 6th, 1891.

You will see by the account that I have had to buy out a lot of crops, and got them for the price paid only after a tremendous amount of talk and bother. The beans we got cheap, but the barley was dear. You see the crops are rich this year, and the owners justly wish to be recompensed for the damage done to the adjacent crops not bought by us, and yet more or less encroached upon by our workpeople, who number about 100 at times.

The work has now gone on for three weeks. The first eight days I worked over the north section of the west town. I turned up all the