

2 September 1945

Dear Mom:

Just came back from a week's tour of Palestine and all the Holy places I have been reading about for the past several years and it certainly was a grand treat to me. Of course, I will always think of that symphony I attended at the Acropolis in Athens as the most unforgettable experience - but this trip to Palestine should come in second to my list of grand adventures. We left Verona Saturday morning at seven o'clock in the morning - arrived in Athens (via air) at noon, had a grand lunch there and then left for Tel-A-Viv where we arrived at 6 P.M. The air trip was long and monotonous, as I can't still get used to the idea of depending on a pair of wings and a propellar (mispelt) or two for safe travel - but nevertheless, it was a fast way of going places.

Early the next morning we left for the Sea of Galilee. On the way I stopped at the river Jordan where Jesus was baptized. The rest of our group took off their shoes and waded in the Jordan. Guess it was the first time for many of them to wash their feet - I spent my time trying to collect a bottle of Jordan river water in a little bottle I had - some day, I'll bust it over some convert's head and really baptize him. Anyway - we stayed around for a few minutes on the river's edge. The water was not clean as one would expect - but rather a dirty green. We then left for Galilee. The Lake is truly a beautiful scene. We stopped in Tiberias and made it our headquarters for the day and night. We spent most of the day swimming in the Sea - the water was warm and clear. After the swim we sat around the beach while our guide showed us the different places where Christ taught the people. Capernaum, Bethsaida, where he fed the five thousand - where he gave the sermon on the mount. We slept that night on the roof of the hotel - it was quite romantic there to sit and watch the Arabs in their ancient garbs trading in the open market with their camels and donkeys - and then to listen to the priest call them to prayer from the minaret. The next day we continued on our way through Cana and Bethlehem to Haifa. Cana is where he first performed a miracle and of course Nazareth is where he spent his childhood.

The next day the tour took us to Jerusalem - where we visited Golgotha, the mount of Olives, Gethsemane, the tomb of Christ, the mount of ascension, the Moslem, Bethlehem, the Dead Sea and Jericho. There are two Golgothas - one kept by the Episcopal Church and one kept by the Catholic church. Both are supposed to be authentic and they have arguments to prove it - so we either get skeptical or pat ourselves on our back for having two places for the price of one. I preferred the Episcopal version because it was a beautiful well kept garden while the Catholics have built an expensive overdecorated church over there as they have done over all the other places - thus taking away the natural beauty of the scene. In fact none of these places are authentic although they'll swear it is - but just traditional. The mosque was quite interesting and we had to cover our shoes with slippers before we were allowed to enter the holy of holies. The mosque is built around the rock upon which Abraham was asked to sacrifice Jacob - that happened some four or five thousand years ago but they still can show you the very spot Abraham sat. Modern science is truly wonderful.

Another interesting scene was the wailing wall - To see people leaning on a wall and crying their hearts out (some of them) or reading a book to a Wall - was something to behold. It was a sad scene however - and I understand it is the Holiest Sanctuary for the Jewish people. Then the mount of Aszension - they had a church built around that too - and on the hard rock - they will even show you the footprints of Christ as he ascended. Right next to the footprints will be a man selling you souvenirs - and our Arab guide looked down upon it and said something about money changers in the temple. Infact - in every shrine or every crypt of significance - the priest will sell you something.

The Garden of Gethsemene was truly a beautiful place to behold. Enjoyed that no end - then we saw the birthplace of Jesus in Bethlehem and the church tower which peals out the Christmas bells over your radio every Christmas.

One of the interesting sidetrips was through the bazaars of old Jerusalem. It is really something to see - built through narrow streets covered with stone archways several hundreds of years old - smelly, dirty, crooked - it was romantic.

In spite of the moneychangers in the temple, and the duplicate of almost every story - I came away from Jerusalem enriched. The bible will be a little more real and much more interesting for me as I can see the country in which all of this took place. Tel Aviv is a modern city - the people are well dressed but one can't get away from the idea that they are out to get the tourists - much more than any other place I had been in. There is quite a bit of political unrest between the Jews and the Arabs -

The above portion of the letter was written for Lady too so you'll understand the reason of such a travelogue. There are many more I would like to add - but will tellyat to you when I come back. I am sending you a box containing water from the Galilee and the Jordan which I would like to have you present to the Hwaiian board. I am sure that they will appreciate it. It is clearly marked - also several sets of pictures - Please keep them for me and when I come back I will like to make an Album of Palestine - pictures and story of each place and scene so that the Sunday school children will profit by it. Also sending home your letters up to the present period so that I won't have to carry it around - please save them for me.

Enclosed you will find a few pictures I have taken and negatives - as I have so many from this trip, I'll send them to you in each letter. The negatives I have in here have not been printed as yet so please print those.

There are many more things I'd like to add in the letter but as I have so much to do - will close for the present. Oh yes, enclose please find some Egyptian and Persian money for Peter - Love to the children and obachan

love

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Put Carlin in
name to Carlin
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