

FEBRUARY 5, 1968

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On Thursday morning of January 26, 1967 we awakened to discover that it was snowing and obviously had been doing this for some time. The strong wind driving in from the east across the grey ice-speckled lake, swept the snow with horizontal force through the bare trees of the park. The steady traffic along the Outer Drive across the way went as usual. The motorists were on their way to work and each must have thought that this was just another light snowfall, as was promised by the weather reports broadcasted the night before.

We went ahead with our packing for the three-week trip to Jordan and Israel that we had long planned for and anticipated with pleasure. Our plane to Beirut was scheduled to leave at five o'clock that evening.

Our bags were ready by lunchtime. The snow had increased, it was as dark outside as if evening had fallen and the northeast winds battered the snowflakes against our windows facing the park with increasing force even to 60 miles an hour.

Shortly after lunch Miss O'Toole, our travel agent, called us and said that all planes were grounded and that she was making arrangements to put us on the same flight for the next day. This was disappointing, but at least we were in our own home, warm, well stocked with food in the freezer and surrounded by books, radio and television, and were not sitting in an increasingly crowded airport, jammed with conventioners frantically trying to get home.

It snowed all that night, and all the next day. The wind decreased its force now and then but was always strong. The morning local news report told us about the stalled traffic and the closed airport. Our travel agent called later and said that no planes were going to take off at least for 48 hours.

So there we were, really snowbound. The radio kept up a steady broadcast of disaster interest. Fewer and fewer busses and autos were moving. Ambulances and fire trucks could barely get through, finally to be completely blocked. People were beginning to buy the

shelves of the food stores bare. All this reminded us of the black January in 1937 in Cincinnati when the Ohio River flooded, creating disaster and confusion.

When we awakened on Saturday morning, the snow had stopped, the wind had died down and a bright sun was out. The snow lay at least 30 inches on the ground and in some places had drifted to a height of twenty feet. There was a complete silence outside. Not a car, bus or taxi moved. A few galoshed pedestrians walked in the deep snow here and there. The radio spoke of hundreds of stranded people, for example 2000 of them huddled in a firehouse. Women in labor were being rushed to hospitals by helicopter. It was the most severe storm ever to have hit the city.

I took a photograph from our pantry window of the carriage house of the old William Wrigley house across the street. It showed a drift of snow at least 10 feet high packed against the wall. It was beautiful.

Later on I glanced out of the window and saw that some very annoyed and rude guy had printed deeply into the drift and in large letters, the ancient Anglo-Saxon four letter excretory word, so expressive of profound exasperation and disgust. It was a "mot juste" worthy of Flaubert and I'm sorry that I did not photograph it to show, you, even if such words seldom, if ever, are seen or heard in this hallowed hall.

Parenthetically, I recall a meeting here before the war when the distinguished and very correct, Professor Semple, dressed in a dinner coat, black tie, and smoking a cigarette through a long holder while he talked, gave an extraordinary paper on "Perennial Wit". He translated for us various obscene jokes from the early Greek and Latin authors. It was a difficult task for us to keep proper attention and a perfectly straight face, becoming redder and redder with suppressed laughter, on hearing the precise and meticulous professor of Greek and Latin pronounce with smacking satisfaction this and other words of pungent and rude meaning.

But to return to the subject; by noon, the snow plows and hundreds of workmen had cleared at least, some of the main streets to one-way traffic, which wandered here and there, threading around stranded

busses and stalled automobiles in a crazy stagger. Here and there too, one could see some rare and new-fangled snowmobiles and the latest invention of snow blowers.

Miss O'Toole called and said that if we could get to Milwaukee, we could get a plane to New York. But there were already masses of people at the Milwaukee Airport with the same idea, even if by some miracle we could get there. Then she said that she could get us a bedroom on the train to New York leaving at six-thirty if we could get to the station by four to pick up our accommodations. If we could do this we could catch a seven o'clock plane for Beirut from New York the next evening.

We hurriedly collected ourselves, closed our bags and carrying them, waded with great difficulty through the deep and heavy snowdrifts for a block to one of the main north and south streets into town. By this time traffic was moving, slowly to be sure, but beginning to flow more easily. We were fortunate in hailing a taxi occupied by a person going south and after dropping this nice fellow we went on to the station.

The station was crowded with a swirling mob of people. Long lines were in front of each ticket window and disconsolate and frustrated individuals squirmed and twisted here and there among stacks of luggage, tired and crying infants and children, and distressed mothers.

After about three quarters of an hour, I reached the window. It was after four o'clock. The tired agent kept repeating to each person as he came up "Sorry, no space available". He said the same thing to me but I told him of our reservation and with a look of profound disbelief, he went to check on it. I could tell by his face when he returned that the news for me was good. I am sure that he was cheerful for the first time that afternoon.

It was announced that our train would be at least an hour late in leaving. My wife suggested that we eat some sandwiches with our martinis and take some (of both) with us on the train. How wise she is. We found no diner on the train when it finally left, packed

with refugees standing in the aisles. Every berth including the uppers, was filled, something that has not happened since wartime travel. There was no diner the next day either. At the end of one of the coaches there was a small counter, behind which stood a tired, exasperated and harassed porter, who had sold the last drop of coffee and the last sandwich. There were only seven candy bars remaining on otherwise empty shelves.

However, about noon the train picked up some food supplies at a waystation, and as soon as word of this got around, an eager, rapacious crowd pushed against the food counter, waving dollar bills and seeking to catch the porter's eye. It was a wonderful demonstration of the workings of the law of supply and demand and also too, of Leo Durocher's law that "good guys come in last".

Our train was hours late and when we arrived at Grand Central Station at last and stood on the sidewalk in search of a taxi, we had only three quarters of an hour left to catch our plane at the Kennedy Airport. Cabs were very scarce but having decided not to be a good guy, at least at that moment, we pushed into one that we grabbed and asked the driver to step on it.

It was a Sunday evening and the traffic was fairly light. Our driver was good and anticipating a good reward, put on as much speed as he could. We drove up to the reception door just at seven. Leaving my wife to pay the taximan and get the luggage in, I dashed to the T.W.A. counter and breathlessly asked if our plane had left. Briefly glancing at the clock, he said in a flat tone "It has just departed". It was a bitter blow to have missed by only five minutes.

In talking over our problem, the clerk found out my name. "Oh", he said brightly, "You are placed on the next plane which leaves for Beirut at eight-thirty. Miss O'Toole has called me twice and finding out that your train was so late, we decided to put you on this other flight. It's a better one anyway".

After stopping in London, Paris, Rome and Athens, we arrived in Beirut the next evening, very tired. It is a beautiful city and after a good omelet, a couple of drinks on the rocks and a sleeping pill,

we sat on our balcony and watched the night fall over the tranquil sea and on the very modern buildings of the city.

The next day was beautiful and after a little more than an hour flying over the rugged historic ground that had taken the pilgrims and the crusaders weeks, months and even years to cover, we arrived in Jerusalem.

Here we were met by friends from the St. John's Ophthalmic Hospital. To see this hospital and visit with old London friends who were to be there at the same time, was the main purpose of our trip. Sir Stewart Duke-Elder, the world's most well-known eye surgeon, is the Hospitaller of the Order, and was responsible for the planning of the Hospital. In this capacity he paid a visit to it each year for a month for clinical and surgical work with masses of mid-eastern eye patients.

We stayed at the American Colony Hotel which is well known to all travelers in the Middle East. It is on the east side of the road running north from the Damascus Gate of Jerusalem to Nablus, Samaria and Galilee, and is a little more than half a mile downhill from the Gate. The shelled and broken old stone wall on the west side of the road across from the hotel marked the boundary of no man's land, separating Israel from Jordan, that was established in the truce of 1948. Five months after our visit this truce was abruptly ended and now no man's land is no more. Halfway back to the old city and on the west side is the American Consulate, situated at a fork of the road that leads almost at once through the famous Mandelbaum Gate, which was forbidden to photograph.

Our hotel had evolved from a cluster of houses originally owned by Rabbah Effendi, a member of the Royal Hussein family and purchased from him in 1888 by a group known as the American Colony sometime after the death of its founder, Horatio G. Spafford. He had gathered together a group of miscellaneous Christian Americans voluntarily exiled in the Holy Land. The Spaffords came from Chicago where in their home on Lakeview Avenue, a street on which we now live, they had survived the Chicago Fire in 1871. Subsequently, they endured almost intolerable family tragedies.

Spafford had been an active Presbyterian and even a Trustee of the McCormick Theological Seminary in that city. However, his personal tragedy and restless spirit, increasingly irritated by orthodox Presbyterianism, led him to emigrate with his wife, two daughters and twelve converts to his way of religious thinking. In search of peace they arrived in Jerusalem in 1881 and rented a large house just within the Damascus Gate. This later became the famous Spafford Memorial Children's Hospital administered today by two of Spafford's granddaughters and their husbands. The grandson, Horatio Vester runs the Hotel.

Their mother, Bertha Spafford Vester, now 90, and somewhat senile, lives in the annex of the Hotel. She has lived a remarkably adventurous life, having endured through War I, and II, the British Mandate and now two Israeli-Jordan wars right in her front yard. The outside wall of our pleasant room on the ground floor still bore bullet and shell scars, and now I understand several more notches were added last June. The Hotel still functions and the nice old lady still crosses from her annex through the delightful garden to the dining room for her meals where she converses in fluent Arabic with the servants and distinguished Arabs coming to dine. Her memory for recent events is almost nil, but she can entertain you deliciously with tales of her early life in Jerusalem and its history.

A mashie shot from the hotel and on the same side of the road going north is the Ej Jarah Mosque. It is a simple building with its tall minaret gallery for the muezzin, lighted by a garland of white electric bulbs at evening during the prayers. It is a nice coincidence that the Arab word "Jarah" means surgeon, and the person honored by the mosque may well have been the famous Jarah sent by Saladin to King Richard lying seriously ill in his tent outside of Jaffa (now Tel-Aviv) shortly after his remarkable victory over the Saracens at that place. It is said in the chronicles, that during this battle Saladin himself sent two fine horses as a gift to brave Richard to replace the ones killed under him. Later not only did he send his surgeon but also gifts of peaches and pears and snow from Mount Hermon to cool the drinks of the fevered King.

The Jarah Mosque was clearly visible from our

north bedroom windows and we soon became very fond of the muezzin, whom we called Joe. We only saw him during his call for prayers, and could clearly hear his shrill high voice intoning the call which sounded like a railroad announcer calling the names of stations. Although by holy law, the call for prayers had a strict time schedule, our Joe had a delightful sense of independence and made the call when it suited him best, although always within an hour or two of the scheduled time.

One of the things that attracted us particularly to Joe was the fact that he sounded the call himself. He did not use a loud speaker, nor even an electrical transcription of the holy words as do so many of the modern muezzins throughout Islam today.

At the foot of the minaret and covering the Nablus Road facing no man's land, was a pill box, barely knocked about in 1948. I often wonder whether Joe himself seized a gun and occupied the still useful pill box on June 5th when the Israelis attacked across no man's land and the Nablus Road, whether he was shot or is he living now to call again the faithful to prayer? There certainly weren't many faithful when we were there and I am sure that there are many fewer of them now.

About a half a mile further north and still on the Nablus Road on the east side, one finds the beautiful, modern ophthalmic hospital of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem.

In the London Times of October 20, 1960 there is found this item. "Rome, Mecca, Canterbury and Geneva were united in Jerusalem last week when the new hospital of the Order of St. John was inaugurated by the Lord Prior, Lord Wakehurst, in the presence of a company of knights and dames from all over the Commonwealth, prelates and pontiffs of many faiths and the joyful sons and daughters of Jerusalem. The city was en fete.

After a luncheon given by the Mayor, he offered a symbolic key of the Holy City for transmission to the Duke of Gloucester, Grand Prior of the order.

The new building occupies the eastern fringe

of the plateau on which the XIth and XVth legions were encamped by Titus in the year 70, about a mile north of the old city, and on the historic road to Bethel, Shechem and Galilee which is still a main artery of communication - an important asset for a hospital, most of whose patients come from afar and by public transport".

The Hospital, well designed for its purpose, is built with the grayish brown field stone so commonly used in the Holy Land. Each stone is masterfully cut and squared by masons whose art was handed down from Old Testament days. Everywhere you looked, especially in Jordan, you saw square flat houses, some old, some new, built with this stone.

The Hospital has 75 beds, most of them in wards, and two operating rooms. A floor of a wing is set aside for research laboratories and the fame of the recent studies on Trachoma and the search for an effective vaccine done there has spread throughout the civilized world. The hospital serves as a training school for Arab eye surgeons, nurses and post-graduate students. In 1962 an eye bank was established by American and British ophthalmologists, to which H. M. King Hussein spontaneously bequeathed his own eyes.

This indeed was a noble gesture, for the religion of Islam forbids the wilful removal of any part of the body after death. The matter of the religious ethic of using the human cornea as donor material had been referred to the leading religious leaders and wise men learned in the Koranic law, no doubt running their fingers frantically through their long beards, for decision. They debated the question long and seriously, but the liberals won out more or less. At least, the Eye Bank could function, but it should not be encouraged.

Thus, when King Hussein signed the form donating his own eyes to the Bank after his death, the enormous weight of his royal prestige was added to the rather feeble support of the Church. However, old customs and beliefs die hard in the Holy Land and the local supply of human corneas is still very little. I like and admire tragic King Hussein very much for his generous and kingly act. I wish that he were the

ruler of Syria and Egypt, for he is a kindly man.

The Warden, Mr. Arthur J. Boase, an expert eye surgeon, lives with his wife and ten children in a house adjacent to the Hospital and next door to the modern bungalow supplied by the Order for use by the Hospitaller, now Sir Stewart Duke-Elder or his deputy, Mr. T. Keith Lyle, on their annual visits to the Hospital.

Ever since the Hospital was opened in 1960, about 100,000 patients have attended each year. They come from all over the Middle-East, most of them Arabs. When Sir Stewart is in attendance, wealthy Sheiks with their wives and colorful entourage seek his skill and agreeably pay princely fees for his services which he turns over for use by the Hospital. He and Mr. Lyle work very hard indeed when they are there. In the meantime Mr. Boase and his sub-warden, DR. KHALIL M. BUDEIRI with their staff of thirteen, four of whom are Arabs and one the American Fellow of the American Society, Associates of the Order, keep things going the year around. In 1966, for example, they performed 6,030 operations, 32 of which were corneal transplants. Five thousand three hundred and three pairs of glasses were prescribed, and 3,029 patients were hospitalized. Very few large and famous eye hospitals in this country or abroad can equal or surpass this annual record of up-to-date, superb eye care.

The Matron, Miss M. J. Holloway, an attractive, young, slender and quick brunette, runs a very tight ship. She and her trained staff are responsible for the nursing care of the patients, and for the training of the Arab young men and women nurses.

Three days after our arrival we went to a Prize Giving ceremony at the Hospital. This was held in a large assembly room and attended by all of the staff, the nurses and student nurses, and distinguished visitors, among whom was the American Consul General, Mr. Wilson and his wife.

Hospitaller Sir Stewart Duke-Elder, the Deputy Hospitaller, Mr. Lyle and the Warden, Mr. Boase sat at the head table, dressed in their St. John robes. Miss Holloway introduced the nurses, Sir Stewart gave the Hospital Badges, Certificates and prizes and then delivered

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an inspiring address on the importance of the occasion; the Florence Nightingale Pledge was taken and Miss Mary Toubassy, a most attractive young Arabian graduating nurse gave a somewhat nervous but sweet talk. We then went to another room for a collation that had a delightful oriental flavor.

I had forgotten to bring my Colcichine for gout and I could find none in Beirut. Shortly after our arrival in Jerusalem I asked Lady Duke-Elder to see if she could find the drug for me. She reported no success. However, at the tea table following the ceremony, she said that she had asked Mrs. Wilson, wife of the American Consul General if she could get Colcichine for me in Jerusalem, Israel. Mrs. Wilson kindly agreed to do what she could.

The assignment of our Consul General is to Palestine. This meant that he had to have two complete households, one in Israel Jerusalem and the other in Jordan Jerusalem. Each of these houses was near the Mandelbaum gate, through which he and his wife went back and forth as the occasion demanded, of course with diplomatic immunity.

A few days after the ceremony, while my wife was attending a meeting of the Ladies' Guild, Mrs. Wilson quietly slipped four small bottles of Colcichine to her. My wife loudly thanked her for this kindness; whereupon Mrs. Wilson looked disturbed, for there were some Jordan ladies present and she motioned to Bebe to shush. When later Bebe gave me the package, the bottles were wrapped in the following note:

"Dear Dr. Vail, this is the Colcichine and the drug store itself decided on the quantity! If too much, let me have the leftover to return. Please do not leave the bottles or their labels around where they will be remarked! See you soon.
Sincerely, LEILA WILSON".

I need hardly say to those here who have gout, the disease of the intelligentia, how very welcome it was to me finally to get my hands on some Colcichine, without which I was certain to be incapacitated. Later sight-seeing to Jerusalem, Jerrash, Petra, The Gulf of

Akaba and other places in the Holy Land would have been an insufferable burden. The tablets were quickly hidden in my medicine case and the labels were washed off, saving one, however, for a souvenir. I found out later that the Israelis manufacture many of the commonly used drugs along with delicious wines which may have something to do with gout.

Knowing what a burden a visiting doctor to a busy clinic can be to those actively engaged in its work, I refrained from attending the clinics or the surgery. Instead, under the helpful guidance of the gentle Mrs. Boase, an ardent and learned Roman Catholic, whose love for and knowledge of the Holy Places of Jerusalem probably exceeded that of any other person there, we went sight-seeing and saw many things that an ordinary visitor would have missed. Furthermore, she well knew the history of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem and its hospitals from its origin to the present, which she related to us with enthusiasm.

We spent our evenings in "dalliance and pleasant intercourse", as the late Miss Marion Devereaux, Society Editor of the Enquirer used to say about the glamorous activities of Cincinnati Society in the gay twenties, in her extraordinary and mellifluous prose. But I must admit that little or none of our cocktail or table conversation had to do with Ophthalmology. Many times it concerned the story of the St. John Hospital, which I now pass on to you.

Early in the Christian era, pilgrimages to the Holy Places in Jerusalem began. The journey by land or sea was long, arduous and very dangerous. About 600 A.D. Pope Gregory the Great commissioned Abbot Probus to set up a hostel for pilgrims in the city. Two hundred years later the Emperor Charlemagne was allowed by the Caliph, Haroun al Raschid to rebuild and enlarge it. Two hundred years after this, the crazy Caliph El Hakim (which incidentally means "the doctor" in Arabic) destroyed all of the Christian buildings including the Hospice, in the city.

After El Hakim died, trading merchants of Amalfi bought the site of the old hostel and built a church and hospital for Christian pilgrims. The eight pointed white cross, part of the arms of the Republic of

Amalfi, was adopted by the Benedictine monks who served the new hospital, and later became the famous Maltese Cross.

The next hundred years were hard ones for the pilgrims. The Moslim persecution of the Christians waxed and waned, but as the eleventh century wore on it became worse, so that towards the end, the Holy Places were practically closed. Pope Urban, influenced by the mounting tide of indignation that was sweeping through Europe and influenced by two other factors, the initial success of the Christian knights in driving out the infidels from Spain, and the unruliness of the knights of Europe, especially the younger sons of noble families, who had little else to do, and no place of their own, except to fight and brawl among themselves, called for a crusade to free the Holy Land. His call was supported by Peter the Hermit. Thus began the first crusade, resulting in the capture of Jerusalem in 1099.

At that time the warden of the Hospital was Gerard of Martiques in Provence. Because of his saintly life and tireless care of the sick, he was known as the Blessed Gerard. It is said that during the siege of Jerusalem, he stood on the battlements and tossed loaves of bread to the storming crusaders, while telling the Muslim defenders that he was only throwing rocks. This is probably not a true story, for the Moslim defenders forced all Christians out of the City when the siege began. When the City was captured, every inhabitant, man, woman and child, was cruelly and mercilessly slaughtered by the Crusaders, all in the name of our Lord.

Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, the elected ruler of the captured city with the title of "Defender of the Holy Sepulchre" for he believed that only Christ should be called king, visited Gerard's hospital. He was so filled with admiration for this holy healing work, that he endowed it with more land and buildings. Other Crusaders gave valuable gifts and when many of them returned to their own countries on completion of their vows, they spread its fame throughout Christendom.

The Blessed Gerard was thus encouraged to reorganize the Brotherhood of the Hospital into a new

order of Hospitallers. The monks changed their rules of life and became Augustinians, since the Benedictines were considered to be too severe. They kept, however, their vows of chastity, obedience and poverty. The old Greek monastery of St. John the Baptist, lying just southward of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the area since called the Muristan, was acquired. St. John's Church, whose primitive crypt, in which they worshipped, is still shown to visitors, is close by. Thus the Order was established.

In the Bull of Pope Paschall II, dated February 15, 1113, the purposes of the Order are thus set forth:

"Paschal the Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to his venerable son Gerard, founder and Provost (prepositus) of the hospice (Xenodochium) of Jerusalem, and to his lawful successors forever:

A pious request and desire should meet with satisfaction and fulfillment. For as much as of thine affection thou hast requested that the Xenodochium, which thou hast founded in the City of Jerusalem, near to the Church of the Blessed John the Baptist, should be supported by the postolic See, and fostered by the patronage of the Blessed Apostle Peter. We, therefore, being much pleased with the piety and earnestness of thine hospital work (hospitalitas), do receive thy petition with paternal kindness, and we ordain by virtue of the present decree that the House of God, the Xenodochium, shall always be under the guardianship of the Apostolic See and the protection of Blessed Peter..."

Gerard died in 1120 and was succeeded by Raymond du Puy who was the first to be known as Master of the Hospitallers. He died in 1160. The piety, devotion and administrative skill of these two remarkable priests ensured the success of the Order during the first critical years of its development.

In 1119 it is said that two French Knights voluntarily assumed the task of protecting pilgrims and travelers from the coast of Palestine up to Jerusalem. Other knights soon joined them and in a few years this group formed a military order. King Baldwin II of Jerusalem granted them space in the remains of Solomon's

Temple and so they became known as the Knights Templar. The underground stables of these knights are still to be seen and explored beneath the Dome of the Rock.

Raymond du Puy decided that some of his Hospitallers should become fighting men in order to assist the Knight Templars to defend the faith and in the growing task of protecting the increasing numbers of pilgrims.

Because many knights, pilgrims and foot soldiers often stayed long enough only to fulfill their vows, the two militant orders, more or less fixed in the Holy Land, and responsible only to the Pope, became the main fighting forces of the Christian kings and rulers of the country. They soon became enormously wealthy, independent, spoiled and arrogant, particularly so the Templars. But the Hospitallers never were a purely military body. Wherever they went they established hospitals.

The membership of the Order consisted of three main classes, the Knights, the Chaplains and the Serving Brothers. The Knights wore a red tunic with a plain white cross over their armor. In the Convent, as they called their monastery, all wore a black robe with the eight-pointed white cross on the left breast. The four arms of the cross represented the Christian virtues of Prudence, Justice, Temperance and Fortitude, the eight beatitudes that derived from these virtues were represented by the points. White was the symbol of purity of life that was required to defend the Faith and to succour the poor pilgrims and the sick and injured.

John of Wurzburg, a German pilgrim who visited Jerusalem about the year 1160 wrote the following description of the original hospital.

"Over against the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, on the opposite side of the way towards the south, is a beautiful church built in honor of John the Baptist, annexed to which is a hospital, wherein in various rooms is collected together an enormous multitude of sick people, both men and women, who are tended and restored to health daily at very great expense. When I was there I learned that the whole number of these sick people amounted to two thousand, of whom sometimes in the

course of one day and night more than fifty are carried out dead, while many other fresh ones keep continually arriving. What more can I say? The same house supplies as many people outside it with victuals as it does those inside, in addition to the boundless charity which is daily bestowed upon poor people who beg their bread from door to door and do not lodge in the house so that the whole sum of its expenses can surely never be calculated even by the managers and stewards thereof. In addition to all these moneys expended upon the sick and upon other poor people, this same house also maintains in its various castles, many persons trained to all kinds of military exercises for the defense of the land of the Christians, against the invasions of the Saracens".

John of Wurzburg also tells of the Knights Templars, of their rich palace and expensive revenues. He adds, "It gives considerable amount of alms to the poor in Christ, but not a tenth part of that which is done by the Hospitallers".

In 1187 Saladin proclaimed a holy war, and rallying the various quarrelsome factions of the Saracens, defeated and destroyed the Christian army at the famous battle of the Horns of Hattin above Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee. The port of Acre was captured and three months later Jerusalem itself fell to the infidels. The Crusaders in their strongholds held out here and there, sometimes helped by new crusaders for the next hundred years. In 1192 Richard, Coeur de Lion recaptured Acre and the Christians held it through many fights and various treaties and treacheries until a hundred years later Sultan Qalawun of the Moslems, after having conquered Syria and Palestine, captured Acre after a great siege and bloody fighting, followed by a terrible massacre of the Christians. In these hundred years, however, the Hospitallers had been able to build and maintain a hospital in Acre even greater than the old one in Jerusalem.

After the fall of Acre and definite loss of the Holy Land, the Templars and the Hospitallers moved their headquarters in Cyprus. The Master of the Hospitallers, John de Villiers, one of seven survivors of the siege of Acre, established the Convent of the Order at Limassol adjacent to the castle of Colossi that had been given

to the Order by the King of Cyprus eighty years before. Here all available knights were summoned from Europe to attend an emergency meeting of the Chapter General. At this meeting it was decided that the Order must continue its work for the service of the sick and the protection of pilgrims and to maintain its headquarters near to Palestine with the hope of reconquering the Holy Land.

The Order stayed for 19 years in Cyprus, devoting most of their activities to the development of a strong fleet. Their welcome by the King of Cyprus was becoming threadbare and the Knights wanted to become completely independent. The nearby island of Rhodes struck their fancy and in 1310 the knights captured the island from governors who owed careless allegiance to the Emperors of Constantinople.

Two years later the Order of the Knights Templars, whose wealth and power became too ominous, was destroyed in every country in Christendom and its wealth was divided among the kings and rulers. Later the Pope himself dissolved the Order and transferred much of its scattered property, over the bitter objection of the kings and rulers, to the Order of St. John. The acquisition of this great wealth led to many disputes and lawsuits and in time threatened the existence of the Hospitallers. However, with a sharp clamping down of discipline, the danger of disintegration was passed.

Soon after their arrival in Rhodes in 1310, the Hospitallers were divided into eight Langues or tongues. They included Provence, Auvergne, France, Italy, Aragon, England, Germany and Castile and embraced priories or branches scattered in every part of Europe. Each Langue was given a specific task for the defense of the island, and to each was assigned a headquarters building or auberge. These lovely 14th and 15th Century buildings can still be seen today in Rhodes. The English Langue supplied the officer known as The Turcopolier, who commanded the auxiliary troops of light cavalry known as Turcoples. To this day this office is kept in reserve in case of the restoration of the English Langue within the Sovereign Military Order of the Knights of Malta.

The brothers of the Order within a year after

settling in Rhodes, had built a functioning hospital, even while they were working on the massive fortifications. The first hospital was a provisional one and construction of a second and better one was started. In time this was not sufficient and in 1437 the final hospital was begun and finished in 1478. This splendid building has come down to us almost intact and when I saw it in 1960 I was deeply moved.

In my imagination I could see the great empty and pillared hall furnished with canopied beds for patients, a lovely altar dedicated to St. John the Baptist, the separate alcoves furnished with more splendor for the most important patient and the place peopled with serving brothers, the patients attended by their medical officers.

The Hospital is now a municipal museum and is one of the glories of Rhodes, but to a physician it will always be the supreme example of a medieval hospital which had served patients of both sexes including abandoned infants.

For two hundred and thirteen years (1310-1523) the Hospitallers occupied and controlled Rhodes mainly using it as a base for their strong and usually victorious navy. It was strongly fortified and the walls were kept in good repair against certain attempts at capture by its enemies who were now the Turks.

In 1420 the island was besieged for three months by the Turk Sultan Mohomet II, but the attack was repulsed. Bajazid, son of the Sultan, then negotiated a treaty with the Order and gave it the precious relic of the arm of St. John the Baptist, which is now in the Royal Chapel at Belgrade, or was before War II.

Suleiman the Magnificent, became Sultan in 1520, two years later capturing Rhodes after a fierce siege lasting six months. The Hospitallers and their supporters were vastly outnumbered, but fought with great valor. So impressed was Suleiman that on capture of the island, he graciously permitted the Christian survivors who wished it, to leave. On January 2, 1523, the Grand Master, his surviving knights few in number and some thousands of Greek refugees sailed for Crete and then to Italy. The Hospitallers were settled in

the ancient Roman port of Civita Vecchia near Naples. Here they remained for seven years, deciding finally to ask for the Malta group of islands from the Emperor Charles V. The Pope, Clement VII, a Knight of St. John, supported the request. The Emperor did not at first yield but finally did so on July 24, 1530.

One of the first acts of the Hospitallers on arriving at their new home was the erection of a Hospital in the Borgo, this later became a monastery when the new hospital was built in Valetta after the famous siege of Malta (1565) in which the Turks were repulsed with great loss.

This hospital was described by John Howard, the famous English prison reformer after his visit there in 1786. I wish that I had the time to quote from John Howard. His detailed report is of particular interest to physicians. All great hospitals of that period were dirty and not too well ventilated, and the Knight's Hospital was no exception. An interesting item worthy of note in his mention of the large number of plates, bowls, dishes and spoons of heavy silver, weighing in all about 1300 pounds. This was "liberated" by Napoleon when he captured Malta in 1798 on his way to Egypt. He melted the silver to pay his troops, but the wonderful treasures of the Order taken from the palace and church lie in his sunken flagship, "l'Orient", in Aboukir Bay.

For hundreds of years silver was supposed to have an innate antiseptic quality and was used in all of the Order's Hospitals for the rich and powerful patients. Others had their food served on platters of pewter.

The English Langue had been abolished by Henry VIIIth following dissolution of the monasteries in 1540 and was withdrawn from Malta twenty-five years before its siege. There were only two Englishmen in Malta during the siege, one of them Sir Oliver Starkey, was the Latin Secretary of Grand Master La Valette. His body rests alongside that of La Valette's in the crypt of the Cathedral of St. John's of Malta, the only non-grand Master there.

The English Brethren had been members of the

Order of Jerusalem shortly after it was founded by the Blessed Gerard. As time went on they possessed extensive and valuable Priories throughout England, Scotland and Ireland. One of these near the well of the Clerks in the City of London had been the gift of Jordan de Bricett and his wife Muriel in 1144. This became the Headquarters of the Order in England.

The Priory, Church and Hospital was destroyed in 1381 during Wat Tyler's rebellion. The work of rebuilding soon began and slowly completed. One of the last portions to be rebuilt was the famous Gate House, by Grand Prior Thomas Docwa in 1504. This is the only part of the headquarters of the Order still standing even after the bombing of London in the last war. Today it is the Grand Priory in the British Realm of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem and full of treasures.

When Queen Mary came to the throne, Catholicism returned and in 1557 the Order was reinstated and the estates restored, only to be confiscated ten years later when Elizabeth I ascended the throne. But the Order itself was not dissolved and the Royal Letters Patent issued by Mary were never revoked.

In 1831, almost three hundred years after Henry VIIIth, the Order was revived in England by a Commission of French Knights. It was hoped that the admission of Protestants in England could be accomplished as had happened in the case of the Protestant Branch of Brandenburg in Germany following the Peace of Augsburg in 1555. In 1763 the Knights of Bailiwick of Brandenburg were officially confirmed as a part of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.

The negotiations for the admission of the English Protestants to the Sovereign Order went on for many years, but in 1858 the Lieutenant Master in Rome, there then being no Grand Master, slammed the door, and refused to recognize a Protestant Branch. In recent years the matter has been reopened and relations between the Independent British Order and the "Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta" are becoming more and more cordial, to the point that a Concordat was signed in 1963.

The revived Langue of England therefore went its own way and its devoted work of healing flourished, particularly in military medicine and training in first aid. In 1877 the St. John Ambulance Association was formed, in 1882 the first St. John Ophthalmic Hospital in Jerusalem was established and in 1887 the St. John Ambulance Brigade. These are the three components of the British Order. Commanderies were formed in thirty-six countries of the former widespread British Commonwealth.

In 1888 the first Royal Charter was granted to the Order by Queen Victoria. A new Royal Charter was instituted in 1926 and the title of "The Grand Priory of England" was changed to "The Grand Priory in the British Realm", making it a great Imperial Order. In 1955 Queen Elizabeth II authorized the title to become "The Grand Priory in the British Realm of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem". For the sake of brevity, however, the Charter declares that it may be called "The Order of St. John".

At the request of the British government in 1882, the Turkish Sultan gave to the British Order a large piece of land a short distance south of the City of Jerusalem on the road to Bethlehem. Because of the prevalence of eye diseases in the area, the British Knights decided to build an Ophthalmic Hospital there.

Temporary hospital buildings were quickly erected and in three years or so, more than 10,000 patients had been treated. As time went on more and more additions were added until December 1914, when the Turks took it over. They stripped it of badly needed supplies and used the buildings for the storage of ammunition during the first world war. When Lord Allenby entered Jerusalem in 1917, the Turks blew it up but fortunately did not totally destroy the buildings.

The Order immediately began the rebuilding of the Hospital which reopened on February 26, 1919. Eight years later a serious earthquake severely damaged it. The hospital was again rebuilt and continued to do its work treating poor Jews and Arabs throughout the Second World War. In 1948 following the Israeli-Arab war, it found itself on the Israeli side near no man's

land and had to be abandoned and later sold.

In the autumn of 1869 the ancient ruins of Gerard's original Hospice of the Hospitallers was given to the King of Prussia by the Sultan. Later the Bailiwick of Brandenburg built a beautiful Lutheran Church on the corner of the Muristan near to the Holy Sepulchre, and sold off part of the unused land to the south to the British Order in 1925. Further bits of adjoining land was purchased by the British Order and a building was used as a training school for poor Arab girls. In 1936 Lady Watson, a Dame of the British Order of St. John, bequeathed her house next door, to the Order. This house was used as a baby welfare and eye clinic.

So, when the Ophthalmic Hospital in Israel had to be abandoned, Watson House and its neighbor, along with the Spafford Hospital, were turned into Ophthalmic Hospitals and the Order was hard at work seeing to the care of some 90,000 eye patients a year until the new Hospital north of Jerusalem opened in 1960.

"In 1955 the American Society of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem and associated with the British Order was formed at the instigation of Lord Wakehorst. It is composed of United States Citizens and British Residents in the United States who are Members or Associates of the British Order. They are persons who are well known in a field such as medicine or education, or in the direction and support of institutions carrying out such services, or in some other distinguished work for mankind. The American Society has, since its founding, made ophthalmology its special focus, and its major charitable work at the moment is support for the Eye Bank in the Hospital in Jerusalem. Contributions for much needed equipment have been sent to Jerusalem, and the Society has assumed responsibility for an annual Fellowship of \$10,000 in support of an American Ophthalmologist to serve there. Although still young, the American Society of the Order has already proven its stature and usefulness, exemplifying the Order's enduring humanitarian traditions in significant ways. In the future, the Society expects to increase its membership (already over 150) and its service to the critical problems of eye disease which plague so many people of all ages, throughout the world". (quoted from a brochure

of the American Society). The Chancellor of the American Society is Grayson Kirk and the Honorary Chancellor is Lewis W. Douglas, former ambassador to the Court of St. James.

On January 6, 1960 I had the honor of being invested as a Commander (associate) in the Order by the Lord Prior, Lord Wakehurst, in the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in New York. It was a moving and impressive ceremony which I shall long remember. As you can well imagine, I am a strong and enthusiastic supporter of the aims and purposes of the American Society, and proud to wear the ancient badge of the Order.

The Israeli invasion on June 5, 1967 did little damage to the new hospital. Israeli soldiers took over, lowered the flag of the Order and raised their own standard. They messed up the interior but after courageous and strong diplomatic action on the part of Warden Boase and his people, the Israeli authorities withdrew their soldiers and restored the hospital to the Order. After cleaning up the mess, Warden Boase and his devoted staff are now back in action and once again Jews and Arab patients, remarkably friendly to each other, are attending the Hospital in increasing numbers.

We passed through the Mandelbaum Gate on February 12th, with regret on leaving our old and new friends. After a week sightseeing in Israel, we flew home. We found the old snowdrifts practically unmelted, but now they looked like piles of coal. The obscene word in the Wrigley drift across the way had faded a bit. It was now outlined in black. We knew we were home again in our modern American city which like others is physically, politically and morally polluted.

I was content, for I had fulfilled my subconscious, silent vow as a sworn Hospitaller. I had safely completed my own special pilgrimage to the Holy Places of Jerusalem, the places to which countless other pilgrims for more than a thousand years had gone before me to "seeke the hooly bilsful martir that hem hath holpen, when that they were seeke".

Derrick T. Vail, Jr.