

# XXI

We arrived in Benares (old name, Varanasi) midday at the Hotel de Paris, quite comfortable and went immediately after lunch to the Museum and a tour of the town with an excellent guide, a Protestant minister, originally from Lahore (same as our driver). The Museum had a good, small collection well presented, the University was Victorian architecture, there were Temples, etc. We worked our way finally by foot down to the Ganges river, it is considered sacred and pilgrims come to pray and bathe each morning from sun up. The route was so jammed with people, animals and rickshaws, one could only move slowly, York suddenly felt he was being propelled along not by his own force, bumping into people ahead. This was confusing when he discovered a cow's horn had hooked into his pocket and we had a good laugh. We were surprised to see so much activity late afternoon. We planned to return at 6 a.m. the following morning, the time to see the thousands of devout at prayer and dipping in the sacred water. Our guide helped us arrange to hire a boat to pass the scene slowly while York sketched.

The banks rose very steeply and were protected by cement steps and stones as the Ganges rises as much as 50 feet at flood time, many stone temples are then under water and much damage is done to foundations of buildings. The buildings are hotels, apartment houses, temples and a government hospital. One can see monkeys on the roofs of buildings and

are a nuisance at the hospital, going in the open windows and stealing things. Some of the Temples and grand buildings had been built by the Maharajahs during their wealthy period, now the government has taken over the maintenance. There are high cement platforms at the river's edge with rigid cement umbrellas under which sits a priest who preaches to the people and some hold classes for novices in the early morning. One can hear them chanting for great distances; they wear the same bright orange silk wraps as did the priests in Ceylon, Thailand and the Bonzes of Cambodia. The cement umbrellas every 50 feet or so are a replacement by the government in the hope of it being permanent. They are not manoeuvrable and are disliked by the priests who sit all day long with little protection from the boiling heat of the sun.

Returning next morning to our rented boat with a high deck we sat on ordinary chairs (complete cost four rupees, about 84 cents) and drifted along the Ganges in front of the devout from 6 a.m. until 9 a.m. York made dozens of sketches as fast as he could and had a stiff hand after. Most sat cross-legged, praying, looking upward, oblivious to anything around them. Some had washed their clothes, spread them out on the cement steps to dry, having donned a sari in which they bathed, others bathed in the nude. Everyone had a little brass pot and used to pour water over one's self for morning cleansing, even though they immersed themselves completely. The pots are kept gleaming with sand polishing. In dressing the more modest put their 'now' dry clothing over the wet, drop the wet which is then washed and spread out to dry. The priests wash their orange silk robes daily, some spread the yards of material out to dry while others hold them in the wind thus

seeming almost as if ironed. The fantastic shapes and colours of materials laid out to dry on the steps and sloping banks with interesting buildings in the background make good painting matter. «Dhobi Ghat» translates as a place for washing clothes.

The dead are cremated at the water's edge. The corpses of males are wrapped in white and the females in red, bound to a stretcher, carried by the family, dipped in the Ganges on arrival then left on the steps while wood is prepared to make a pyre. The smallest amount of wood that will burn a corpse is 200 pounds, costing six to seven dollars, but does the job rather badly at times leaving unburnt members. Tending the pyre is the lot of the eldest son which explains why a son is so necessary. It is said «Fortunate indeed is the man who sees the face of his son,» a soul can never rest unless there is a son to take care of this duty. If the family is better off, more wood is purchased and one sees only flames. The other members of the family watch from a short distance. Some or all of the ashes are then spread in the middle of the Ganges. An old custom is now forbidden, but rare is the Indian who would hinder a ceremony in which a widow dresses in her wedding clothes, the son gradually removes jewellery in front of the funeral pyre of the husband. The widow then throws herself on the pyre and is consumed with the corpse of her husband. The smell of the burning corpses, in plain view for all to see is most unpleasant. India's method of birth control has always been to destroy girl babies. Marriages have always been arranged by the family, men have been able to have as many wives as they wish, at least the first one is arranged. Adultery is a criminal offence, divorce impossible. Fortunately some of these

things have changed, women are being educated and have broader interests, little by little held in higher esteem.

The Tibetan Temple in Benares is a strange place, pastel colours are used in the ornate decoration and houses mostly books apart from religious objects. Our guide said the Tibetans have had to learn to wash since coming to India, that they never used to and carry a sausage roll inside their tunics to nibble from time to time.

In the Museum in Benares there is a Buddha from the time that Buddha was just an ordinary man trying to find peace of mind. This statue then is not a real Buddha, it represents him over 5000 years ago when he preached his first sermon at Sarnath, an early name for Benares but still not the original. Buddha was a married man with children and when he decided to leave them to go to a monastery to contemplate, he was taken to see the faces of his sleeping wife and children, still this was not enough to hold him and he left. It was a long difficult struggle to obtain peace of mind.

We left Benares early for Khanjour but arrived late and there was no accommodation. I was sick and after trying several places we were directed to a Government Guest House, again nothing but I pleaded. Finally after much conversation among themselves, they said we could stay if we were out by 6 a.m. as they were expecting a General. We agreed and much to our chagrin there was no bedding or linens, apparently travellers bring their own. We had a miserable night and were glad to return to New Delhi that day thankful for the air conditioning, safe water and good food.

The Canadian High Commissioner, Roland Michener and his wife Norah had heard we were in New Delhi and had

invited us to dinner. The Samples joked that we would find ourselves out on the street by 10 p.m. as Norah Michener was notorious among External Affairs people for accomplishing this feat. It was a pleasant, interesting evening and at 9:45 p.m. during coffee, Norah rose, started shaking hands and thanking people for coming in spite of not having finished their coffee. We rose to go with the others when Norah in an aside asked York to wait. When the door closed, Norah said she would like York's opinion on the paintings they had acquired in India. We had a good laugh with the Samples.

Mac Samples arranged a small exhibition of York's work painted in India and several were purchased by External Affairs people.

Toward the end of March we went to Kashmir, the Samples had a friend there living on her own houseboat, Gallatea, Miss Christie, a Scotswoman with a burr and retiree from the British High Commission. They advised us to ask her about a houseboat. We crossed the Himalayas on our way to Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir. The field patterns were fascinating in various tones of brown and greys, surprise shapes and then we came to the mountains, at times so high and snow covered we seemed to only just clear them. They are majestic and little life exists above a certain height, Srinagar itself is about 5000 feet, it was Spring with almond and cherry blossoms but too early for tourists. There had been no business from tourists the previous year because of the fighting between India and Pakistan and the houseboat owners were rabid for business. Unfortunately the impossible Tourist Office ignored our request to be taken to Miss Christie and sent us off to look at two boats «Special» and «First Class.» However the mob of

houseboat owners fought and hollered over us, our being the first arrivals, we stood it only long enough to look at the two boats and know we didn't want either or the owners and insisted that we be taken to Miss Christie's houseboat. We found her and were welcomed, she suggested we go in her Shikara to see Mr. Billoo's houseboat next door and she added, «He provides a good table.» We were three as a young English woman, Betty Horsman (frightened by the hubbub at the Airport) asked if she could tag along. We immediately had confidence in the nice Billoo faces and the boat was excellent with two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a pantry, dining room, living room with a round metal wood-burning stove, a balcony and sun deck for 55 rupees per couple plus 18 for an extra. Our 2/3rd share equalled about \$6.00 a day including food, all services and guiding.

Our friend Betty, a nice jolly English girl had been a legal secretary in California for the last 2-1/2 years except for a six month stopover working for the Tourist Bureau in Hong Kong. Prior to this she had worked for Onassis for two years in Monte Carlo, including a six week lend to Elsa Maxwell who tried to persuade her to stay with her. This was Betty's way of seeing the world and was now looking forward to a sojourn in England.

We were hooked up to the town water supply on the Jhelum River, much safer than on Dal Lake, they explained when we suggested moving the boat. In season the lakes, Dal, Nagine, etc. are thick with houseboats, everything goes into the water creating many more problems. It would take 1/2 a day and costs 30 rupees to move it to a lake. It is so large and all craft must go through a lock and the kitchen boat would

follow. All the Billoos live on the kitchen boat, where they cook our delicious meals and bring them over ready to eat. During our walks to Dal Lake and the romantic Shalimar Gardens we soon realized the lake was much too cold with the vast sweep of the wind.

The second son, Habib, was 30 and educated, ran the business and served us. He put glass jars filled with hot water in our beds each night and kept the stove going as it was bitterly cold, but we were comfortable though a little raw at times outside. There was snow on the surrounding mountains. We couldn't face many showers or baths in the shivering air having just come from temperatures over 100F.

Friday is the Muslim Sabbath and we took a fascinating ride by Shikara, nestled among cushions but refusing a hot brazier for under the blanket, to Hazrat Bal on Naseem Bagh, an important mosque as well as market day, 1-1/2 hours distant. Habib's brother came with us as a guide accompanied by two others to paddle, oars being long-handled with a circle on the end and a long pole for pushing when necessary. We took the Shikara from one river to another through a lock to Dal Lake to the Kraliar Canal and passed under the great Mogul Bridge. Habib's brother arranged a «Bandabust» (a price) as Habib had gone with Betty for the day. The brother wasn't educated as there wasn't a school in his day; he was married with two small children and was a Janitor for the Indian Army. These people go barefoot, even in the cold, however on disembarking he put on new, good-looking Western style oxfords but left the laces dangling. Of course we were the only foreigners among a few thousand and all stared and stared, even touched us, others poked their friends or children

to have a good look at us. If the staring and poking got to be too much, I would smile, gradually laughing if indicated. This usually gets the women and they end up laughing with me.

The crowds at the Mosque and market were fascinating and colourful, the chanting by a thousand voices over loud-speakers was deafening and they were prostrating themselves facing Mecca. Every Muslim hopes to make the trip to Mecca before he dies; the whole family assist in raising the money for each in his turn. Habib wanted undated Traveller's cheques as they had been trying to send his Uncle for two years. They try not to have Indian tenants in their boats as they often have little understanding of how to take care of it. It not only is a major cleaning job but sometimes costly in repairs.

There is a Craft Emporium near the Post Office (the building belongs to the government) which had only three sections open, carpets, furniture, carving and papier mache for which they're famous. There are papier mache bowls, plates, lamp bases, boxes, etc. The furniture has fine enough designs but very ornate. The things that do interest me are old metal sculptures, plaques, rice measures, braziers, etc. The Museum was poorly presented, they had quite a number of statues and fragments of other days but badly arranged and nothing catalogued. Their stuffed birds and animals were comical, it took a few moments to recognize even a fox and a case of stuffed ducks were all lying on their sides in a row. Pieces of embroidery, tapestries, carpets in glass cases were so rolled and some small Persian water colours were badly marked.

In the medieval city of Srinagar (the women still cover their faces from age 15 to 45 peering through a cloth grill).

York had made a friend, Mr. Ramzanas, who owned a large building on the river, jewellery on ground floor, metal wear another and carpets on the third. It faced a fascinating, medieval group of buildings across the river and Mr. Ramzanas invited York to paint any time from his windows. York returned one day by taxi to paint this scene, not knowing taxis were only available at the Airport he let it go, though 1-1/2 rupees an hour about 30 cents. This scene resulted in the famous painting Kashmir Facade owned by Dow Corning in Sarnia. On completion he wandered around the town and started to search for a taxi but none were to be seen and by now he was completely lost and couldn't communicate. When he tried asking likely prospects, they laughed and a crowd soon gathered, following him and bursting out laughing each time he opened his mouth asking a newcomer. They began to push him back and forth, it became frightening when someone rescued him realizing the situation but still unable to communicate, he walked with York a mile or two and arranged a horse and cart driver to take him to his destination, not being able to explain, he went to the Post Office knowing his way from there.

Our hosts are Kashmiri and tell us 95% of Kashmiri are Muslim and fit better with Pakistan than India. They feel like prisoners as they are not allowed to listen to Pakistan radio nor walk around in groups of four or more. India promised that Kashmir would have the right to decide her future, a vote would be taken to join Pakistan or India or have her independence. India went back on her promise and will not give up Kashmir. A year ago Pakistan and India were fighting there, now Indian troops are stationed everywhere. Habib says

there will be no peace in Asia until the Kashmir question is settled. Two soldiers walked behind me in the Museum carrying rifles with bayonet ends.

We left Kashmir and flew back to New Delhi for a few more days. York shipped paintings back to Toronto. We left one day at noon for a flight to Kabul, Afghanistan, sat in the Airport all afternoon, learned at 6:30 p.m. flight cancelled. Returned early next morning as told and flight finally left two hours late. Kabul is the capital and many passengers left from there for Tashkent. Afghan Airways are called by the ancient name of the country «Ariana» and are completely unreliable as to schedules.

It was quite a flight over the Hindu Kush range of mountains, often so high and snow covered we seemed only to just clear the higher ranges. This took much of our three hour flight as they are so wide and Kabul at 5000 feet was very cold in mid April. The people are descendants of the Moguls, their features different, rather full faces, but again primitive, plodding around their muddy streets, bare feet inside heavy work boots, bundled up with anything they could tie around themselves but most men wore neat close-fitting caracul fur caps, narrower than the Russian style. There were weird turbans and sometimes almost a Western suit with long shirttails hanging from under the jacket and we were told over 95% illiteracy. Now they are supposed to go to school but no one bothers very much. They had paved a few roads recently but no railroad exists, a buffer state between Russia and India but quietly going their own way, not modernizing but now making an effort to span 1000 years. These countries need a staggering amount of help in every direction. We met a young

Peace Corps worker who had been in Pakistan 1-1/2 years teaching Forestry, had a short trip in India and was now trying desperately to get back for his students' graduation but couldn't because of unreliable flights. He had to go through Kabul as he couldn't return to Pakistan directly from India because they were enemies. Kabul was his third delayed flight and the graduation was taking place that day. A few days later when we left for Teheran he was still sitting there. When he completes his two year stint he will return to the U.S. and take a degree in Economics as he finds they need this more than forestry. He will then return to teach Economics, someone said «Why» and he simply said, because they need it so much. With so much waiting around in Airports we all became one big family, worrying about each other's problems. Now we continue to meet some of the group at other Airports or viewing ancient ruins and we hail each other as old friends. An organized group going to Pakistan commandeered all the taxis in Kabul to get to the border when their flight was postponed in the hope of making other connections. Another group had been delayed because their plane had been chartered by someone else. We left them sitting there, already two days later, guests of the Airline while they found an answer. The Peace Corps chaps didn't mind unless they were in a hurry as they ate better and had better accommodation as guests of the Airline. They are supposed to live with and under the same conditions as the people they're helping. A Peace Corps lad was telling us and an American Doctor about eating from the same bowl of rice called «the friendship bowl» with his Indian Trainees at which point the American Doctor exploded and said «Friendship Bowl my eye, it's the same as letting them spit in your mouth.»

No one can imagine how some of these people live if they haven't seen it!

There were two hotels «Kabul» and «Spinzar» where one would stay and eat in Kabul plus one government restaurant. They were expensive and ordinary. As we were sitting in the large lobby of the Kabul Hotel one day our attention was drawn to a large, important-looking woman wearing an enormous amount of jewellery. York and I often played games guessing what unusual-looking people might do for a living. York said, «I'll bet she's a jewellery buyer for Eatons.» I said, «I'll bet she's a receptionist of some grand establishment.» York said, «Let's go and ask her,» which we did telling her about our game and she laughed. She said she was the Polish Countess Kazimiera married to an American, Ernest Seaton, lived in New York. She said the Polish people had spirited much of their Art out of Poland when the communists took over. They bought a huge mansion in New York where much of it was housed waiting for the day when they were free again. She invited us to visit her in New York which we did when we were at our studio there and were amazed at the beautiful works of art in all directions, including furniture.

The Museum in Kabul had an outstanding collection of coins and ivories, a few Goddesses about 12-15 inches delicately carved out of ivory, 500-600 B.C., the like of which I had never seen before, not Chinese, not Indian. In fact there were many very old and fine pieces, well presented. The attendant seeing our interest unlocked and lighted each room for us, locking it again after. There was a special tomb we went to see, it was being rebuilt as the children had damaged it, I believe it was Akbar's grandfather.

We left Kabul for Teheran in Iran, a direct two hour flight on an Iran Air jet. Fortunately we had changed airlines, Aryana would have been six hours. We stayed at the Teheran Palace Hotel, first class. Teheran is a large modern city, a top-notch Museum, the wealth from oil is quickly bringing Iran up-to-date, what a difference in cleanliness, health and comfort. The people for the most part dress Western style, but the majority of women covered themselves completely, all but their eyes, with a large, dark piece of cloth, often with a small subdued design. It is put over the head and falls to the ground, pinched together at nose and waist. The Bazaar was not very interesting apart from great stacks of carpets, some metalware and jewellery. There are miles of lanes with awful plastics. Iran is old Persia and the rugs are marvellous, one relates their designs to the ancient tiles in the Mosques, the more common have a lot of red and of course there is no red in the Mosques, just blue, white, yellow, green and black. There is one Mosque with a tinge of pink around the edge of one section of tiles, so hard to see, it takes a moment of looking, this is pointed out as unique. They do not allow images so some designs are pointed out as unusual because with imagination one can almost see a fish, an elephant's trunk, etc. Some prayer rugs I saw rolled were blue and white only. They were rolled while repairs were made to the oldest Mosque in Teheran.

The tremendous ground floor of the Teheran Museum was practically all B.C., some items 600 or more B.C. The second floor mostly 10th century. Someone said that the Canadian archaeologist, Douglas Tushingham might be there so we checked the Canadian Embassy and obtained his phone number. Doug cancelled a dinner date and joined us. He

spends his mornings in a vault with a cameraman, two guards with guns behind locked doors as he is cataloguing the Crown Jewels. He searches old photos, paintings, any mention of the various jewels to find their origin and changes of ownership. Many are well known because some are the biggest or highest carat in the world. He checks Royalty, friends, etc. for information and there will be a book, now a fact, published shortly after by the Royal Ontario Museum. We had a delightful if much too late evening bringing each other up to date on news. At that point he knew nothing of Sam and Ayala Zacks' small museum on a Kibbutz in Israel about to open shortly.

The next day we went to Shiraz and saw the beautiful colours of the tiles in the Mosques, the Khalili Garden, Ghavami Mirror Houses, unbelievably sparkly, fortunately odd bits of lovely old Persian painted ornament and a heavenly garden, the tomb of the poets, Hafez and Saadi, each with a lovely garden. The little Museum was poor. Our next stop was Isfahan, I will never forget the astounding beauty of the blue tiles there in the Mosque. We met an English couple who invited us to share a taxi to Persepolis which was mostly rubble, little had been restored as yet. It was once the grand Capital of the Safavia King.

We returned to Teheran and left the next day for Baghdad in Iraq which was ancient Mesopotamia, which means between two rivers, in this case the Tigris and the Euphrates. It was a little more than a two hour flight from Teheran, in Iran, again great wealth from oil so better living standards, better hotels, expensive but good, ours the Kyham at 3500 rils, out of season, one dinar equals \$2.80. Here it is 85% Muslim, Arabs, Kurds

and a small Jewish population. This is part of the Biblical land of Sumerian and Chaldean Civilizations of Babylon and Nineveh. The enchanted land of the Arabian Nights, it is now a Republic; the Royal family were all murdered in 1952 and the second in command to the President became the elected Head but he was killed a few days ago in a Helicopter crash, caused by a bad storm. His brother is acting President and an election is expected soon. There has been fighting for some time with the Kurds, they want independence. It is difficult for other than Muslims in a Muslim country, a Jewish (Christian) engineer is now a guide because they would not permit him to remain an engineer. The moment the Arabs are told what to do, they do it, even the worst against their non-Arab friends. They are followers without knowing the reason. Each Group or Village has a Sheik (pronounced Shake) or Leader, his house has a red flag, others have a black for those related to Mohammed through their mother and green for their father. The Sheik settles all problems, even murders, one method is giving women from the murderer's family to the family of the murdered, thus having intermarriage, becoming one family, hence no reason for more fighting, otherwise they would never stop until all were wiped out. Girls mature and marry young in hot countries, from 12 years on, as parents like to see their grandchildren. The hope is to get the Rule away from the Army one day and have Civilian Rule.

The Baghdad Museum is in the midst of moving into a fine new building. Their collection of Middle East pieces is large including great stone sculptured walls from palaces and giant-size sculptures, quite a selection of Luristan and Sumerian bronzes. The various ways of dress here are endless, there are

coverings that look like grey flannel nightdresses slit up the sides, a Western style jacket, a headdress that looks like a tea towel with blue and white checks with two of the corners rolled back (of course today we are used to Arafat), socks and Western shoes.

Our guide, George has a sister in Mimico, Toronto and a brother in Reseda, California. The sister married to an English architect who worked there before the revolution, first with the Embassy then one day he shared a taxi with an illiterate Arab, who asked, «What do you do?» He said he was an architect. The Arab said, «I'm wealthy and with your brains and my money we could do well together.» The bargain was sealed by the end of the taxi ride. The Arab knew everyone so they started getting contracts immediately. When sealed tenders were sent to the government, the Arab said, «It has nothing to do with the lowest or best bid,» and proceeded paying off Committee members, the contracts always came to them. This Arab turned out to be generous too, each car he bought or whatever was the biggest and the best, he always bought in pairs giving one to his English colleague as well as a handsome salary, then came the revolution. He told the Englishman to leave, dropping a 20,000 pound cheque in his wife's handbag. The Arab was ill at the time but he lasted long enough to hear they were safely in England with their family. The Architect couldn't get going in England and moved to Canada; he had always been an ardent stamp collector, had 12 volumes of stamps worth 12,000 pounds each when he left Iraq. Every stamp covering the last 200-300 years of a certain area, plus many sheets of stamps with errors, etc. He was now in the stamp business in Toronto.

Sid Maddocks, manager of Travelworld Tours from Los Angeles invited us to join them on a couple of tours, first to the remains of an old Sassanid Castle, 55 B.C. at Ctesiphon. Today a large arch and a 4-story wall remain, the arch is said to be the largest, unsupported brick arch in the world. The wall has a dangerous crack and a German woman archaeologist built a buttress wall to support it, the walls were seven feet thick. There were storks everywhere on top of the ruins, generally in pairs.

The Arab Bedouins are nomads, wandering to greener pastures and better weather at will. Their tents are dark brown strips of woven goats hair, sewn together, supported by regularly spaced poles, pictures and ornaments are hung on the poles, rugs cover the interior over the sand, including a padded sitting and sleeping area along the wall. Coffee is served strong without sugar in small cups. A blind musician (whose complete family is blind) played and sang for us on a funny little instrument in the violin direction. A woven money bag hung on a pole, most ornate, it went over the head with a big square front and back with divided sections and heavy ball-fringe ornament, the whole thing big and heavy. The centre of the tent had a part wall of woven strips and during a visit the men sit together for an evening in one half, the women in the other, but these customs are changing. One sees the native costume still in quantity, a long striped gown like grandfather's nightshirt. The adult male Bedouin's is a thin, long, brown woven robe like fine sacking, probably goat's hair, over other long robes often white and a white head covering held on by two circles like black velvet covered wire that fit the head exactly. The Arab hospitality is great, if a group of

roving Bedouins appear they are fed and taken care of for the night, thus the Bedouin has few expenses, buying products in one area and selling in another. They often become wealthy and build great estates.

We came to a small village in the desert and went into a store selling Bedouin clothing. I was intent on looking at things and didn't notice York had disappeared. As I walked out of the store, paying no attention to a Bedouin as I passed when he touched me from behind. I turned around in amazement that he would be so bold and it turned out to be York dressed as a Bedouin looking very authentic. Sid Maddocks, the Tour manager and York had a good laugh at their spree.

We went to Babylon, there is little left today of this great city of the past, mounds and piles of rubble, mostly of Nebuchadrezzar's city, 600 B.C. although the first Babylon dates back to 4000 B.C. It was such a prize that the Babylonians were constantly attacked, finally deserting it for this reason. The most valuable objects were removed to Berlin by a group of German archaeologists who uncovered the walls and buildings left standing that one sees today. After 19 years of excavating, it was stopped by the European war. The famous Ishtar gate was taken to Berlin, a replica replaces it today with its mythical animals in the brick work, the head of an animal, tail of a snake, hind legs of a large bird, the forelegs usually of a lion. The same sort of animals in the brickwork of the walls along Royal Procession Street. It is said they were covered with tiles, now removed to Berlin. Another area has double-headed animals, one facing each way at each end. There are figures and animals along great stairways and entrances, one great stone lion standing on its victim on a giant stone pedestal (said to have been raised from a nearby ditch) of which there are two stories. One is that it is a General who taunted the lion constantly - the other that it is the lover of the General's wife, and is

believed stolen from the Hittites. It may be one of several which overlooked the entrance to the Sacred Way. The lower jaw is the only broken part; it was said that the Germans were so mean they broke it to analyze the stone which seems unlikely especially by an archaeologist. The hanging gardens one has to imagine nothing remains, the story goes that Nebuhadrezzar built the gardens for his wife who came from an area with wooded hills and flowers to this flat plateau and longed for her homeland. A small hill was built to please her and trees and flowers planted on the hillside which gave the effect of «hanging gardens.» Nothing remains of the mighty Ziggurat or Temple Tower which is thought to be identical to the Tower of Babel except for a ditch area filled with water which might have been a moat to protect people at prayer. One is able to pick up pieces of pottery and stones with markings, in the excavated soil and know these pieces date from 4000-600 B.C.