

CHAPTER 8

The Wilderness of Zin

January – August 1914

LAWRENCE and Woolley set off to join the Sinai expedition on 29th December 1913. At Aleppo, Woolley received a letter from Sir Charles Watson, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, giving them detailed instructions: 'You are no doubt acquainted with the Survey of Western Palestine on the scale of one inch to the mile, which was carried out by the Society in 1872-77, and which has been the basis of exploration in Palestine since it was published. The southern limit of that survey was a line running approximately from west to east, through Gaza and Beersheba, to Masada on the western shore of the Dead Sea.

'The country, of which the survey is now to be taken in hand, is that south of the previous survey, up to the line of the Egyptian frontier, which extends from Rafah, on the Mediterranean coast about 20 miles south west of Gaza, in a S.S.E. direction, to the head of the Gulf of Akabah. The eastern limit of the new survey will be a line running north through the [Wadi] Arabah, from the Gulf of Akabah to the southern end of the Dead Sea.

'This country, notwithstanding its proximity to Palestine and Egypt, is but little known, and, though it has been crossed by travellers in certain parts, is to a great extent unexplored. A favourable opportunity has now presented itself, and Captain Newcombe R.E., with a party of the Royal Engineers, has obtained permission to make a survey of the district. The topographical work will be carried out by Captain Newcombe, but it is of great importance that an examination of the country should be made from the archaeological point of view, as there are many remains of great interest to the Bible student, and it is for this part of the work that the Committee are desirous of enlisting the services of yourself and Mr. Lawrence . . .

'Speaking generally, the objects of the expedition are as follows:—

1. To produce an accurate map of the country on the scale of half an inch to the mile.
2. To make special plans of important localities, ruins, and other archaeological remains.
3. To take photographs of buildings and other points of interest.
4. To take squeezes and photographs of any inscriptions that may be found.
5. To collect geological specimens, and ancient stone and flint implements.
6. To record carefully all names now in use . . .

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'On the conclusion of your work a complete report should be furnished, giving all the information that has been obtained, and including lists in Arabic of all places.'¹

Woolley replied at once, noting, however, that: 'Two months is a very short time wherein to tackle so big a piece of work as seems to lie before us'. He also mentioned the possibility of taking Dahoum, 'one of our

Jerablus men, who is a good photographer and excellent at squeeze-work; his wages would be only twelve piastres (about 1/9d) *per diem*, and he is a very useful fellow'.² Chap. 8
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They joined Captain Newcombe on January 10th. He later recalled: 'I rode northwards to Beersheba from my Survey camp, to meet the two eminent scientists, who had left their studies of Hittite remains at Carchemish. I . . . expected to meet two somewhat elderly people; I found C. L. Woolley and T. E. Lawrence, who looked about twenty-four years of age and eighteen respectively . . . My letters to them arranging for their reception had clearly been too polite. Undue deference ceased forthwith.'³

From Newcombe they learned a good deal more about the survey project, although they had already guessed (as Lawrence remarked in a letter to his parents) that: 'We are obviously only meant as red herrings, to give an archaeological colour to a political job.'⁴

To understand the background of this Sinai expedition, and the reasons why Woolley and Lawrence had been asked to join it, it is necessary to go back to events which began in the spring of 1913. As Sir Charles Watson's letter to Woolley makes clear, a triangle of uncharted land remained between the PEF maps of Western Palestine and the Egyptian Survey Department's maps of Sinai. Egypt was at that date effectively controlled by Britain, and Kitchener was the British Agent. Kitchener had himself worked on the PEF Survey of Western Palestine in the 1880s and he now saw good military reasons for wanting a map of the missing area. In April 1913, a request had been sent via the Director of Military Operations in London to the Foreign Office, asking whether it might be possible to obtain permission for the work from the Turkish Government. Sir Arthur Nicolson at the Foreign Office replied to the DMO on May 2nd that such an approach would probably not succeed. On September 19th, however, the DMO tried again: 'The fact that the Balkan War is over has so modified the situation, as it stood last May, that Brigadier General Wilson hopes that the objections, which were then held to make it undesirable to approach the Ottoman Government on this subject, may no longer hold good.

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'The proposed Survey is very desirable from a military point of view, and is essential for the proper study of the problem presented by the defence of the north-eastern frontier of Egypt.'⁵

Sir Eyre Crowe of the Foreign Office contacted the British Embassy in Constantinople, putting forward the DMO's suggestion that the request for the survey should be made in the name of the PEF. It was thought more likely that the Turks would agree if the expedition were presented as a scientific exploration. On 29th October 1913, the Embassy cabled that: 'Turkish Government have decided to allow "Survey of Palestine Exploration Committee" to be completed up to the Egyptian frontier'.⁶ The following day, therefore, Colonel Hedley (head of the Geographical Section of the War Office in London, and a recently elected member of the Executive Committee of the PEF) wrote to Sir Charles Watson and explained the proposal.

The PEF committee discussed this project at their meeting on November 4th, and decided to send an archaeologist with the survey party: 'It is a part of Palestine which has not been properly examined hitherto, and a careful investigation will probably lead to interesting results.'⁷ The Committee's first choice for this work was T. E. Peet,

an experienced Egyptologist. Later, when it learned that Peet was not available, the Committee decided to approach Kenyon, no doubt with a view to securing Leonard Woolley's services. This choice was not surprising since both Hogarth and Walter Morrison were members of the PEF committee, and Hogarth at least knew that Woolley meant to spend the winter in the East.

Kenyon had a particular reason to be interested in this proposal. The Museum had already calculated that it would save a useful sum by keeping Woolley and Lawrence on half-pay during January and February rather than paying their return voyage to England. However, if the PEF were to employ them during this period their half-pay could be stopped altogether and the saving would be even greater. Accordingly, he replied to Watson: 'Hogarth concurs in the idea of lending our men from Jerablus to the P.E.F. survey for about two months from the latter part of December, and suggests that, as the time is short, *both* should go. Their names are C. L. Woolley and T. E. Lawrence. The former is the senior man, with rather wider experience; the latter is the better at colloquial Arabic, and gets on very well with natives. He has, I think, more of the instincts of an explorer, but is very shy.

'Time being short, I have written already to Jerablus, to ask them if either or both care to entertain the idea, and to cable their answer . . . Both are good men: Hogarth can tell you more about them, if you wish.'⁸

Some days later this was followed by a letter from L. W. King of the British Museum, suggesting a rate of pay: 'In view of Lawrence's knowledge of Arabic, Sir Frederic agrees with me in thinking he and Woolley might be paid at the same rate, say £1 a day each, in addition to their travelling expenses and maintenance.'⁹ It is interesting that Kenyon should now feel that Woolley's and Lawrence's services were of equal value. For their work on the excavations at Carchemish Woolley received twice as much as Lawrence. This large difference no longer reflected their respective worth to the Museum, but it was maintained because Lawrence was still receiving £100 a year as a Senior Demy of Magdalen College.

When Woolley and Lawrence reached Beersheba in January 1914 they discovered that no equipment or stores had been provided, so they had to buy what they could for the journey. Fortunately Lawrence had brought his own camera and some squeeze paper from Carchemish. They went first to map the town of Sabaita, 'in some ways the most desert place we have seen: since there was no water and no soil for miles round: only a ruined town of white limestone in a gently rolling upland of red flints'.¹⁰ From there they worked slowly southwards. Lawrence did not find the journey comfortable: 'over the consequences of much riding of camels I draw thick veils: but take it as a summing up that we are very unhappy: Woolley is the more uncomfortable, since he is a flesh-potter: I can travel on a thistle, and sleep in a cloak on the ground. Woolley can't, or at least, is only learning to, quite slowly.'¹¹

On the way to Ain Kadeis something happened which Lawrence would have reason to recall. He, Woolley and Dahoum had sent their baggage caravan on ahead to make camp, while they continued more slowly, examining ruins. They were delayed by this work and so failed to reach the camp that night. When they arrived at the proposed campsite the following morning, they found no one there: the baggage camels had

taken a different route in the featureless desert. When Lawrence and Woolley failed to rejoin the baggage convoy there was some alarm and a wide area was searched. Not knowing this, they had waited at the campsite until midday. Since no one appeared, they travelled on until they reached the Egyptian border post at Kuseime, where they were received with enormous relief. Lawrence wrote to his family: 'They were just going to report our strange disappearance to Cairo!' He noted: 'It shows how easy it is in an absolutely deserted country to defy a government.'¹²

Early in February, the survey party split. Newcombe had intended from the outset to cover the southernmost section himself (from latitude 30°15' down to Akaba): 'it is a very rugged bit, but I ought to see it myself and can probably go as quickly as anyone else: also being so far from one's base will add to the difficulty.'¹³ Lawrence and Dahoum were to go with him, working down to Akaba and then returning via the Wadi Arabah. Woolley, with another party, went north-east.

The hardships they had encountered in the first part of the journey were not made more palatable by the knowledge that Kenyon had sent them to Sinai as an economy measure. They wrote bitterly to Hogarth, who passed the complaint back to Kenyon: 'Both grumble very much about their half-pay having been cancelled, their view being that the PEF allowance barely remunerates for a hard extra job imposed on them: and that our Fund, which stood to gain anyhow by the saving of their travelling expenses home, is now standing to gain more than is fair to them. They say that they had made various plans for the two months (bits of exploration at Hammam and in Mesopotamia) which they much wished to realise but had to forego: and now all they get is this thankless job and bare expenses. They say they are both hard up and needed the cash'.¹⁴

To make matters worse, Woolley and Lawrence were able to find almost nothing that related to the Biblical period in which the PEF was interested. The Jews may have spent forty years in this wilderness during the Exodus, but their passage had left no recognisable signs. Woolley wrote to Sir Charles Watson from Tell Kurnub on February 17th: 'I know of course that Byzantine sites are late for the interests of the Society, but the fact is that there are very few places where traces of earlier occupation exist; the country, at all other points, has been inhabited by nomads only; south of Beersheba there are hardly any old town remains, and the cities of Joshua xv etc either lay north of our boundary or were largely mythical; they may have been small collections of tents such as exist today, but just as today there are only three built houses between Beersheba and Akabah, so it was throughout history, with the single exception of the Byzantine period, and of a few early forts, of which we have found three dating back to the second Millennium B.C. and one (at Abde) of the second century B.C. Much of the country is so bad that even the Bedouins move out of it in the summer and come north of Beersheba and its district. You cannot find many traces of nomads, for they leave but few that will last. Indeed I fear that the results of the Survey as a whole can hardly but be a disappointment to the Society at least so far as biblical research is concerned.

'In the time at our disposal the only possible course has been to visit the most promising sites and to omit altogether such parts of the country as are reported by the surveyors to present on the surface little or nothing of interest . . . A great deal of our work is concerned with Byzantine things

simply because they exist, and as we are to examine the archaeology of the country they cannot be omitted'.¹⁵ Commenting on an earlier account of Ain Kadeis given by H. C. Trumbull, which misdescribed it as an 'oasis of verdure and beauty',¹⁶ Woolley added: 'It speaks wonders for the Children of Israel that they left Moses alive after he brought them to a place like that.'¹⁷

Lawrence learned a great deal from this six-week journey with Newcombe's survey parties. 'Living with him we got a clear insight into his methods. He had five parties under him, and yet in this unmapped wilderness always knew exactly where each party was, and how its work was going on . . . This labour of organisation would have been enough for most men, living as roughly and uncomfortably as Newcombe did: yet in addition he contrived to map a larger district than any of his assistants. Off by dawn with guides and instruments, he would return to camp at dark, and work perhaps till midnight, arranging and calculating and recording for the benefit of the other parties. He was the prime begetter of the Survey'.¹⁸ Through observing and occasionally helping in this work, Lawrence acquired a grasp of surveying techniques which he would later put to good use.

The map-makers also taught him a great deal about the geology of different landscapes, and he used this knowledge to enrich his writing. Passages in the report of his journey down to Akaba foreshadow the magnificent landscape descriptions of *Seven Pillars*. For example: 'The way down is very splendid. In the hill-sides all sorts of rocks are mingled in confusion; grey-green limestone cliffs run down sheer for hundreds of feet, in tremendous ravines whose faces are a medley of colours wherever crags of black porphyry and diorite jut out, or where soft sandstone, washed down, has left long pink and red smudges on the lighter colours. The confusion of materials makes the road-laying curiously uneven. The surface is in very few cases made up; wherever possible the road was cut to rock, with little labour, since the stone is always brittle and in thin, flat layers. So the masons had at once ready to their hand masses of squared blocks for parapets or retaining walls. Yet this same facility of the stone has been disastrous to the abandoned road, since the rains of a few seasons chisel the softer parts into an irregular giant staircase; while in the limestone the torrent has taken the road-cutting as a convenient course, and left it deep buried under a sliding mass of water-worn pebbles.'¹⁹

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When Newcombe and Lawrence reached Akaba, the Kaimmakam forbade them to work in his area, and though this did not hinder Newcombe a great deal (maps of the locality already existed), it provided Lawrence with a number of adventures. On one occasion he wanted to examine the extensive ruined fortifications on Geziret Faraun, a small island known to the Crusaders as Graye, about four hundred yards offshore near Akaba. The Turkish police prevented him taking a boat but he managed to reach the island on a makeshift raft.

After this episode, to his disgust, he was escorted on the return journey northwards by a lieutenant and a squad of soldiers. Lawrence and Dahoum regarded this as a challenge and shook the soldiers off by making forced marches over appalling terrain: 'It is a country of awful crags and valleys, impassable for camels, and very difficult on foot. The lieutenant has gone home.'²⁰ There was some point to this expedition, however, and they found what Newcombe was looking for: 'the two great cross-roads

through the hills of the Arabah that serve modern raiding parties entering Sinai, and which served the Israelites a bit earlier. Nobody would show them us, of the Arabs, which accounts for our rather insane wanderings without a guide...¹²¹ This journey also gave Lawrence his first chance to visit Petra. It was the place, rather than the monuments, which impressed him, but he wrote little about it, saying: 'you will never know what Petra is like, unless you come out here... Only be assured that till you have seen it you have not had the glimmering of an idea how beautiful a place can be.'¹²²

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By the time he reached Petra, Lawrence was running very short of money and had too little left to pay off his guides and get back to Carchemish. Luckily he met 'two English ladies . . . curious people. At first they were dull, but later one of them, Lady Evelyn Cobbold, improved vastly . . . I borrowed a lot of money from her, since our post arrangements broke down'.²³ From Petra he travelled eastwards to Maan, where, after another minor conflict with the Turkish authorities, he took the railway northwards to Damascus, some 230 miles distant. He would revisit this railway in very different circumstances three years later.

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While Woolley and Lawrence were in Sinai, the British Museum had been fortunate in its quest for funds. Without waiting to be prompted by the articles which appeared simultaneously in the *Illustrated London News* and *The Times* on January 24th, Walter Morrison offered a further £10,000 for the work, and the full excavation of Carchemish seemed assured. Hogarth planned to visit Jerablus and agree a plan of campaign to last for several years ahead. He also wanted to talk seriously to Lawrence: 'His Magdalen Senior Demyship is running out. Is he to go on at Jerablus? If so, he will need a higher salary after this year. But does he want to go on with what leads nowhere in particular, and is it right that he should? This must be discussed with him. If he does not wish to go on, *someone else must be found this summer.*'¹²⁴

Hogarth was doubtless questioning whether Lawrence should continue in a subordinate position at Carchemish, where most of the credit for successful results would go to Woolley. Lawrence, now twenty-five, might better advance his career by conducting a dig of his own, as Petrie had suggested, or by returning to Oxford and completing his B.Litt. on medieval pottery.

Woolley and Lawrence were back in Jerablus at the beginning of March. To their surprise, they learned that the British Museum had forgotten to renew their digging permit, which had therefore expired. As a result they had to delay starting work. While waiting for a new permit, they spent some time putting up the fallen sculptures on the wall at the foot of the great staircase which Hogarth had excavated in 1911: 'The effect will be very fine when the wall is finished.'¹²⁵

On March 22nd it was at last possible to begin the season's excavation, but this was interrupted almost immediately by a fracas between the German railway engineers and their men. According to a report by Fontana, who went to Jerablus immediately afterwards: 'The affray seems to have arisen from the fact that the Kurdish workmen on the line at Jerablus are paid monthly, and that the wages they actually receive are much less than those promised and agreed upon . . . Thus a Kurd having received wages less than those promised loudly protested, and tried to

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force his way into the German Bureau, but was ejected by a Circassian who, in the struggle, fired his revolver. The other Kurds near him, to the number of fifteen or twenty, then began to stone the engineers, who took refuge in the Bureau. The Circassians fired on the Kurds who withdrew to the railway embankment, and from there fired their revolvers at the Bureau, the Germans firing from one of the windows. A large crowd of about 250 Kurds and Arabs then collected on the steep *Kalaat* mound, at a distance of about 100 yards from and above the embankment and Bureau, and to this mound Mr. Woolley and Lawrence also hurried as soon as the firing began. It was there that the Englishmen were twice deliberately fired at, from below, by the Circassian Zacharia, at a distance of about 100 paces, a boy standing by Mr. Lawrence's side being wounded by the second shot. From the enquiry I made it is evident that no shot was fired from the mound, in spite of the fact that the arrival of a wounded Kurd, believed to be dead, caused the greatest excitement, and the beginning of a rush was made down the hill. Mr. Woolley himself pursued and disarmed the foremost man, Mr. Lawrence also seizing another, and by superhuman efforts and good humour the Englishmen, aided by their head-men Hadg Wahid, Hamoudi, and two others, managed to stop the rush and calm the crowd. Had they failed, the six Germans in the Bureau, which is a mere hut, would undoubtedly have been slaughtered . . . I propose suggesting to the Vali that distinguished Ottoman Decorations conferred upon both Mr. Woolley and Lawrence, who saved the situation at Jerablus and who have, besides, rendered such signal services to the Ottoman Museum, would serve to materially demonstrate the well-earned gratitude of the Ottoman Government. Distinguished German Decorations might also be conferred upon them with equal reason.¹²⁶ Woolley and Lawrence lost a good deal of time making statements to the Turkish authorities who came to investigate the affair, a further irritation since the season was already late getting under way.

The site had now become famous and eminent visitors arrived by the trainload. By recompense, the German railway engineers, who had continued to remove spoil from the digs during the winter, now lent some extra wagons for the light railway, which enabled clearing work to proceed more quickly. In the evenings Woolley and Lawrence worked at their report for the PEF, which was to be published as a monograph. Lawrence planned to spend about six weeks completing it during the summer in England, where he could consult historical source materials.

Although he described the Kurdish incident in letters to Leeds and other friends, Lawrence said nothing about it at first to his parents. They were therefore very alarmed to read an exaggerated report in *The Times* on March 25th, headed 'Riot on the Bagdad Railway': 'According to a telegram received at the offices of the Anatolian Railway Company, in the course of the disturbance the Kurds destroyed some sheds belonging to the works, and attacked the German engineers, eight of whom were wounded. One Austrian and one British subject were also wounded. The nature of their wounds is not stated. A telegram from the British Consul at Aleppo does not mention any British wounded, but adds that two British subjects, Messrs Woolley and Lawrence, engaged in excavations on behalf of the British Museum, exerted themselves to restrain their own Kurds from joining the other Kurdish labourers in an attack upon the Germans, and that one of them was fired upon by the Circassian guard

belonging to the Germans, but was not hurt.¹²⁷

Hogarth, who arrived at Jerablus a few days after this incident, reported to Kenyon that it was no more than 'the long expected row between the German engineers and their men, with whom relations had always been bad.' He recognised, however, that Woolley and Lawrence 'did splendid service to the Germans by preventing their own 300 men (who mostly had their arms with them) from joining in. This they did at much risk to themselves simply by the great influence they have with the men of the locality. I hear nothing but praise of them and they have been publicly thanked by the Governor General!'²⁸

As the season's work got under way, Woolley as usual split the labour force into two groups which he and Lawrence could supervise. One worked clearing the area between the West Gate and the building they supposed to lie behind the Herald's Wall, while the other worked on a postern gate in the North Wall. Much of the clearing work involved breaking up Roman concrete foundations using explosives, and in late March one of the workmen was killed when a mass of concrete fell on him. It was the only fatality at Carchemish in six seasons of digs. Hogarth wrote to Kenyon that the expedition was conspicuously short of supervisors, considering the scale of the work. Woolley agreed: 'Hogarth wants to promise me two assistants (besides Lawrence) for next year: it would be an enormous blessing, as the dig is too big to be properly run by two people.'²⁹ Hogarth's presence for three weeks helped a good deal, but he had to leave on April 19th, having written to Leeds: 'I'll tell Mrs. Lawrence about all the fighting and the fuss when I get back. Meanwhile reassure her.'³⁰

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Lawrence had decided to stay on at Carchemish and was even planning to learn Kurdish. He wrote home: 'I don't think that I will ever travel in the West again: one cannot tell, of course, but this part out here is worth a million of the rest. The Arabs are so different from ourselves.'³¹

At first, the 1914 season produced few interesting objects. Woolley was concentrating on heavy clearance work, exposing the town's fortifications and clearing out more of the buildings around the Lower Palace to establish their ground plans. Lawrence wrote: 'we have found nothing this year, and don't expect to find anything . . . next year perhaps. It makes a difference in one's working as to whether one has obtained a new grant . . . or is in want of one.'³² At the beginning of May, however, they found some seals and a bronze greave from the armour of a Hittite soldier. Lawrence was delighted: 'I think this is one of the most interesting things of all found in Carchemish. It came out in the West town gate, which seems well preserved.'³³

The flow of visitors continued throughout the season. On May 4th Lawrence told his family: 'In the last two months we have been alone to dinner just four times.'³⁴ Guests were received in the expedition house, which through successive enlargements had become a sizeable building. The interior was also impressive; that spring Lawrence took photographs of the living room and sent them to his family with a note on the antiquities used as furnishing. Since there were to be more Europeans in future seasons, a second sitting room was built, as well as a new *antika* store, stable, charcoal store and wash house.

With all this going on, Lawrence's occupations were varied, especially

on Fridays when the digs were shut down: 'in the morning we slept later than usual, and then I riveted up a set of points on our light railway till midday. In the afternoon read a little, measured up a building, worked at the plastering of a broken relief, bathed, and shot a little at 200 yds. Now I ought to be reading, but am not.'³⁵

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Around May 19th the expedition was visited by Stewart Newcombe and his assistant Lieutenant Greig, the two RE officers who had been in charge of the Sinai Survey. Woolley and Lawrence had done their best to interest the surveyors in archaeology and had invited them to visit Carchemish on their way back to England. To provide Newcombe with an excuse for this detour Woolley had suggested that the region might yield information of military interest (for example about the engineering of the Baghdad Railway). Newcombe had put this to Kitchener, and had accordingly been given specific instructions. After a brief visit to Carchemish, the two officers travelled 150 miles westward to the Taurus mountains, hoping to find out about the exact route and construction of the railway through this most difficult terrain. p. 146

Lawrence was planning to leave Jerablus on about June 10th. The season had been quietly satisfactory, with interesting excavations at the West Gate and progress at the foot of the mound. In the last week of May, Woolley wrote to Hogarth: 'The awful mess on the river side of the cement mass is also clearing up as we see what is beyond it: now that the plan works out we must retrace our steps a little bit and we shall have an intelligible line of buildings right along from the Water Gate to the Herald's wall and also, I hope, a continuous wall-front on the other side from the Water Gate to the stairs i.e. a walled passage or roadway between the two.'³⁶ There were several points at which major new discoveries seemed likely, and an architect was to be recruited for the autumn to make plans of the buildings and fortifications. 'Both of us', Woolley told Kenyon, 'are glad to have reached the end of the season, being pretty tired and considerably slack in consequence. I want a summer in England to buck me up again'.³⁷

On June 2nd Lawrence wrote to his family saying that he intended to take about a fortnight extra on his way home in order to visit Baghdad. Immediately after this, however, a letter arrived at Carchemish from Newcombe, who had reached Constantinople. He had found the railway construction road through the Taurus mountains and with some minor difficulties had been able to travel along it. But it had proved difficult to obtain much information about the railway itself. He therefore asked Woolley and Lawrence to try and take the same route on their way home. This was clearly a request for information which could be of military significance, but they accepted the challenge, delighted at this opportunity to score off the German railway engineers and the Turkish authorities.

Early in June, therefore, they took leave of the men at Jerablus and set out via the Taurus mountains for their summer holiday in England. Lawrence was planning to return before the end of August, and the new season would begin in September. Woolley later wrote: 'in June 1914 the catalogue had been brought up to date and of inscribed stone fragments alone more than two thousand had been recorded, and complete type-lists of all Early Bronze Age pottery had been drawn up'.³⁸ Lawrence left these precious notes behind, but took his camera for the Taurus journey.

By a mixture of bluff and good luck, he and Woolley got on to the railway construction road where they chanced on a senior Italian engineer who had just been sacked by the Germans. Woolley loved Italy and spoke the language fluently. He made friends with the disgruntled engineer who gave him all the information Newcombe wanted. Woolley later wrote: 'It is the only piece of spying that I ever did before the War.'¹³⁹

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Woolley and Lawrence had to spend the next two months in England working on their archaeological report for the PEF. About half the text had been written during the last season at Carchemish, but there was still a good deal of work to do, especially on the plans and illustrations.

Lawrence returned to his bungalow at Polstead Road, but spent much of his time working in the Bodleian and the Ashmolean. On July 5th he visited the Hogarths, with whom Gertrude Bell was staying for the weekend. She had returned to England from the greatest of her Arabian journeys, made during the preceding winter. It was, as Hogarth later said, 'a pioneer venture', and perhaps the most valuable result was the 'mass of information that she accumulated about the tribal elements ranging between the Hejaz Railway on the one flank and the Sirhan and Nefûd on the other, particularly about the Howaitât group, of which Lawrence, relying on her reports, made signal use in the Arab campaigns of 1917 and 1918.'¹⁴⁰ After this meeting in July 1914, Hogarth wrote to Woolley: 'I have now heard all her adventures which seem to have been dramatic. She and Lawrence traversed most of Arabia yesterday morning.'¹⁴¹

There was sad news from another friend. Flecker, who had contracted tuberculosis, had left Beirut in the summer of 1913. He was now dying in a sanatorium in Switzerland. To cheer him, Lawrence had sent a long and entertaining description of the battle between the Kurds and Germans at Jerablus. Flecker replied in late July: 'I am sorry if you really can't come and see me as – well I won't be macabre. Should like to see you again so much. I am miserable. Many thanks for the jovial account of the Row. You promised me some toys from Carchemish – you horror and never have sent none. Too weary for more.'¹⁴²

At 11 p.m. on 4th August 1914, twelve days before Lawrence's twenty-sixth birthday, Britain entered the Great War. He would never see Carchemish again. Later, he wrote with nostalgia of his early adult life: 'The first time I left England [in 1906] was a dream of delight . . . I began my own, independent, voluntary travels. France, mainly: then further afield, by slow degrees, until the War cut short that development of me into a sort of Hogarth: a travelled, archaeological sort of man, with geography and a pen as his two standbys.'¹⁴³ Yet Lawrence's very words point to the underlying continuity between his pre-war and wartime careers. Geography and writing were to be his principal activities for the next two years, and throughout the war he would draw on his earlier knowledge and experience. There would also be continuity in Lawrence's development as a person. While some people respond to the challenge of war with hitherto unsuspected ability, this was not so in his case. By August 1914 the personal qualities which would bring him fame were already evident.

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Notes for Chapter 8. The Wilderness of Zin

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1. Sir Charles Watson to C. L. Woolley 16.12.1913. PEF.
2. C. L. Woolley to Sir Charles Watson 1.1.1914. PEF. In his book *The Illicit Adventure* (London, Jonathan Cape, 1982), H. V. F. Winstone makes the astonishing claim that Lawrence and Gertrude Bell met secretly for Intelligence reasons on 5th January 1914 and again later that month. As evidence for the first ‘undoubted’ meeting, Winstone states (p. 418) that Lawrence and Bell were both at Ziza on January 5th. In reality, while Bell was at Ziza on that date, Lawrence was visiting Gezer, an archaeological site many miles distant. The only evidence for the second alleged meeting is a photograph by Bell reproduced by Winstone (facing p. 273). He claims that Lawrence appears in this photograph disguised as an Arab woman; I find this identification preposterous. *The Illicit Adventure* is a highly speculative and contentious book in which the discussion of Lawrence’s role is rendered valueless, in my opinion, by a great many factual errors.
3. S. F. Newcombe in *Friends* p. 105.
4. T. E. Lawrence to his family 4.1.1914 *HL* p. 280; *MB* p. 56. Bodleian MS Res C13.
5. Director of Military Operations to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs 19.9.1913. FO 371/1812 fos. 279-80. The background to the Sinai Survey is described in greater detail in my introduction to Lawrence’s *Military Report on the Sinai Peninsula* (Fordingbridge, Castle Hill Press, 1990), where the official documents referred to here are printed *in extenso*.
6. Sir L. du P. Mallet to Foreign Office London, telegram 527(R), 29.10.1913. FO 371/1812 fo. 285.
7. Sir C. R. Watson to W. C. Hedley 5.11.1913. PEF.
8. F. G. Kenyon to Sir C. R. Watson 21.11.1913. PEF.
9. L. W. King to Sir C. R. Watson 26.11.1913. PEF.
10. T. E. Lawrence to his family 24.1.1914 *HL* p. 283. Bodleian MS Res C13.
11. T. E. Lawrence to E. T. Leeds 24.1.1914 *L-L* p. 89; *MB* p. 56. Leeds papers.
12. T. E. Lawrence to his family 29.1.1914 *HL* p. 284. Bodleian MS Res C13.
13. S. F. Newcombe to Sir C. R. Watson 3.1.1914. PEF.
14. D. G. Hogarth to F. G. Kenyon 17.2.1914. BM/A.
15. C. L. Woolley to Sir C. R. Watson 17.2.1914. PEF.
16. H. C. Trumbull: *Kadesh Barnea: Its Importance and Probable Site, Including Studies of the Route of the Exodus and the Southern Boundary of the Holy Land* (New York, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1884) pp. 272ff.
17. C. L. Woolley to Sir C. R. Watson 17.2.1914. PEF.
18. C. L. Woolley and T. E. Lawrence, *The Wilderness of Zin* (Palestine Exploration Fund *Annual* No 3, 1914-1915, London, Palestine Exploration Fund, 1914) pp. xv-xvi.
19. *Ibid.* pp. 11-12.
20. T. E. Lawrence to his family 25.2.1914 *HL* p. 287. Bodleian MS Res

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21. T. E. Lawrence to E. T. Leeds 28.2.1914 *DG* p. 166; *L-L* p. 95; *MB* p. 59. Leeds papers.
 22. *Ibid.* *DG* p. 167.
 23. T. E. Lawrence to his family 28.2.1913 partially omitted from *HL* p. 287.
 24. D. G. Hogarth to F. G. Kenyon 8.2.1914. BM/A.
 25. C. L. Woolley to F. G. Kenyon 14.3.1914. BM/A.
 26. R. A. Fontana to the British Ambassador in Constantinople 26.3.1914, enclosed in Sir L. du P. Mallet to Foreign Office London, dispatch N. 240, 8.4.1914. FO 371/2132 no. 16157.
 27. *The Times* (London) 25.3.1914. See also *The Times* 26.3.1914: 'Kurdish Labour on Baghdad Railway'.
 28. D. G. Hogarth to F. G. Kenyon 30.3.1914. BM/A. See T. E. Lawrence to J. E. Flecker *DG* pp. 171-7, for a long description of this incident written in June 1914.
 29. C. L. Woolley to F. G. Kenyon 5.4.1914. BM/A.
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 31. T. E. Lawrence to his family 23.4.1914 *HL* p. 295. Bodleian MS Res C13.
 32. T. E. Lawrence to Mrs Rieder 24.4.1914 *DG* p. 170.
 33. T. E. Lawrence to his family 4.5.1914 *HL* p. 296. Bodleian MS Res C13.
 34. *Ibid.*
 35. T. E. Lawrence to his family 17.5.1914 *HL* p. 299. Bodleian MS Res C13.
 36. C. L. Woolley to D. G. Hogarth 25.5.1914. BM/WAA.
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 38. C. L. Woolley, preface to *Carchemish* Vol. III (London, British Museum, 1952) p. [5].
 39. C. L. Woolley, *As I Seem to Remember* (London, Allen & Unwin, 1962) p. 93. See also the article by S. F. Newcombe and J. P. S. Greig, 'The Baghdad Railway' in *The Geographical Journal* (London) Vol. XLIV, No. 6, December 1914, pp. 577-80.
 40. D. G. Hogarth, address to the Royal Geographical Society, 14.4.1927, quoted in *The Letters of Gertrude Bell* ed. Lady Bell (London, Ernest Benn, 1927) Vol. I, p. 353.
 41. D. G. Hogarth to C. L. Woolley 6.7.1914. BM/WAA.
 42. J. E. Flecker to T. E. Lawrence 27.7.1914 *LTEL* p. 57.
 43. T. E. Lawrence to D. Knowles 7.12.1927 *DG* p. 553. (In this letter Lawrence gives the date of his first journey alone to France incorrectly as 1905.)