

and also those of the church at Bireh, north of Jerusalem, which was completed by the Templars in 1146 A.D. The general style, and the roofing, closely resemble the details of the church of St. John at Gaza, dating about 1152 A.D. The pointed arches of the windows indicate that the church does not belong to the earliest Crusading period, as the round arch was used for half a century after the Crusaders took Jerusalem. It appears, however, quite safe to attribute the building of the Hebron church to the latter half of the 12th century, probably about the year 1167 A.D., when the town became a bishopric. The low pitch of the roof may, perhaps, indicate that it has been rebuilt at a later period; but, on the other hand, the vaulting of the clerestory and aisles is much more like Crusading than Arab work.

3. The earliest Arab work appears historically to belong to the year 1331 A.D.; the tomb of Joseph to 1393 A.D., and the outer gates, with the passages and flights of steps, which have the character of the best Arab work, to the same period—the 14th century, during which, fine buildings were erected by Moslems in Jerusalem, Damascus, and other parts of Syria. The stained glass windows are probably not earlier than the 16th century. Restorations in the courtyard date from the end of the 18th century, and additional adornments of the shrine have been given by Moslem rulers at a yet later period. The chambers in the north-east angle belong to a later period than the rest of the Arab buildings in and around the courtyard. The pavement is also comparatively modern, and probably later than the Crusading work.

The accompanying plan gives in colours the various building periods thus enumerated, the original Herodian masonry being shown in black, the mediæval Christian work in red, and the later Arab work in yellow (14th century) and in brown. The attached note by Sir C. Wilson was written on reading the original rough draft, of which the present report is an amplification.

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Captain Royal Engineers.

NOTE BY LIEUT.-COLONEL SIR C. WILSON,
C.B., K.C.M.G., R.E.

I HAVE read through Captain Conder's report on the Hebron Haram, and have much pleasure in bearing testimony to the accuracy of his remarks.

A close inspection of the masonry of the Haram showed that it was identical in character with that of the Wailing Place in the wall of the Jerusalem Haram, and therefore almost certainly Herodian. This may throw some light on the character of the exterior wall of the Temple of Herod. Both at Jerusalem and Hebron, a level platform is obtained by massive walls of large stones, with marginal drafts. At Hebron a

surrounding wall, ornamented with pilasters, rises to a height of 25 feet above the platform, and it is probable that Herod's Temple enclosure was surrounded by a similar wall, which has long since disappeared, with the exception of a solitary fragment which was discovered by Captain Conder a few years ago. It would indeed almost seem as if the Hebron Haram were a copy in miniature of the Temple enclosure at Jerusalem.

As regards the question of an entrance to the caves, it may be remarked that the whitewash on the walls of the chamber (at C on the plan) was white, clean, and apparently of no great age; and that the papers on the ground did not seem to be old. From this it may be inferred that the chamber, whence there is an entrance to the cave, is periodically visited and cleaned by the guardians of the mosque.

It appeared to me that access to the chamber might be obtained by removing the perforated stone at the point C on the plan. This stone rises above the floor of the mosque, and is pierced by a circular hole a little more than 12 inches in diameter; I noticed, however, that beneath the floor the hole became larger, and, if the stone were removed, I believe a man could be lowered by means of a rope.

It is possible that the original entrance was similar in design to that at "Barclay's Gateway," in the Jerusalem Haram, and that the portal in the massive masonry is concealed by the buildings known as Joseph's Tomb. It seemed quite clear that some entrance to the caves beneath the level of the platform was closed by the wall of the chamber at C, opposite the small square doorway. The pavement at A, which is secured by iron clamps, and which is said to cover a flight of steps, did not seem to have been disturbed for many years. The arrangements for reaching the cave by a flight of steps in one corner of the church is similar to that adopted by the Crusaders when building the church at "David's Tomb" at Jerusalem.

C. W. WILSON, *Lieut.-Colonel.*

Jerusalem,
April 8th, 1882.

TOUR OF THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES PRINCES ALBERT VICTOR AND GEORGE OF WALES IN PALESTINE.

THE Royal party reached Jaffa on Tuesday, 28th March, and re-embarked at Beirut on 6th May, having thus passed forty days on shore, during thirty-one of which they were travelling. The total length of the route