Guil south of gaza) gaza, Polestino, 16 Jan 1927. (1)

Guil south of gaza) Private of confidential. gener, the city of Abinalcal, and an etackly cleaning out the worms fith later levels hoping to get through the fifty feet of rucumine buildings and reach the certifit inty, su first we had but few men, hinde the 7 Egyption whom we brought is skilled executors. After a month our going of men , boys , & a few girls comes to about 120, and me current Expenses to over £ 50 awak por labour. We stall need were more workers, if we are to clear this most in portant and of the city by may, Hiffly there is no Roman or let frank layer, and we begin work in stuff sor -600 Be in the filling of of Endir buildings Aprolly 800 Be on bufor that. Were her been great danidation of the mound; one expellet, of great winder growing 35 for Diameter outh to be virgo; the rest fith with would have been over ground now 30 feet duper, movemen these graneris must have been soft or more in height, but only then fact of one edge is left. This sweeping cleromes his taken away the outer cops of the city, but we hope to get some evely remains in the central parts, The people are newly all settled Bedaning, who have been the a few years, cultiviting the former, betweether sittle himing in the open-side low tent of their aucestors. hem susprised to see how will they work strongh at goal bly bitans; also, how amenable they are and ready to be priently. Raid, which used the common here,

## Journal 7.

Tell Jemmeh, Gaza, Palestine. (9 miles south of Gaza)

16 Jan 1927. Private & confidential.

We are perched here at the foot of the great mound of Gerar, the city of Abimelech, and are steadily clearing out the rooms of the later levels, hoping to get through the fifty feet of successive buildings and reach the earliest city. At first we had but few men, beside the 7 Egyptians whom we brought as skilled excavators. After a month our gang of men, boys, & a few girls comes to about 120, and our current expenses to over £50 a week for labour. We shall need even more workers, if we are to clear the most important end of the city by May. Happily there is no Roman or late Greek layer, and we begin work in stuff of 500–600 BC, in the filling up of earlier buildings of probably 800 BC or before that. There has been great denudation of the mound; one edge < is> left, of great circular granaries 35 ft diameter on the top of a ridge; the rest of the circle would have been over ground now 30 feet deeper. Moreover these granaries must have been 50ft or more in height, but only three feet of one edge is left. This sweeping clearance has taken away the outer edges of the city, but we hope to get some early remains in the central parts.

The people are nearly all settled Bedawy, who have been here a few years, cultivating the ground, but mostly still living in the open-sided low tent of their ancestors. I am surprised to see how well they work, though not equal to Egyptians; also, how amenable they are, and ready to be friendly. Raids, which used to be common here,

have died away owing to good plan work, there have ? here four attempts on Bearshabe inthe year, but none reached out this region. The posts of winders at points in the wilderess, give what of surrements in time for the mounts police to seve the position Three trung in the week to prhia come much here to see that all is quiet, lither from gaze or Bearsheld, They also act is our postmen. Our position is it the stronger, owing to the drought. The leteress Vecantiness of the rains threaten to stop most It cultivation, a that the people are largely defendant on our wages to keep them for the season. In there was the wish fee your ording plan should be full grown with berling releat. But only two wiches frein have come in the last few rays, and all is have bonn for way will , up to about a Irsen will 5 the worth show weins have fallen. Until we got some main the wind - open agale - used to fill the air with fine dust, in which me would notice a hundred years, belowe a well two wills away, two brookish with requesies to mink or west sets forland, I we sent a camel 9 miles to gaza for that water, but wan that is enough to upset the mailes freely Mith pury. I we had seen to get bottled water for druking, with the rain came or filled ports in the ralley, When thouar Dog we shall in buch on gara water, Thus in various very weare nother near the wints of presticable work in a longer scale, we have to bring the water 2 miles for all an workmen.

have died away owing to good police work; there have been few attempts on Beersheba in the year, but none reached out to this region. The posts of wireless at points in the wilderness, give notice of movements in time for the mounted police to save the position. Three times in the week two police come round here to see that all is quiet, either from Gaza or Beersheba. They also act as out postmen.

Our position is all the stronger, owing to the drought. The lateness & scantiness of the rains threaten to stop most of the cultivation, so that the people are largely dependent on our wages to keep them for the season. In other years the whole face of the rolling plain should be full green with barley & wheat. But only two inches of rain have come <and that> in the last few days, and all is bare brown for many miles, up to about a dozen miles to the north where rains have fallen. Until we got some rain the wind – often a gale – used to fill the air with fine dust, in which one could not see a hundred yards. We have a well two miles away, too brackish with magnesia to drink or wash satisfactorily. So we sent a camel 9 miles to Gaza for that water, but even that is enough to upset the insides of nearly all the party. So we had even to get bottled water for drinking, until the rain came & filled pools in the valley. When these are dry we shall be back on Gaza water. Thus in various ways we are rather near the limits of practicable work on a large scale. We have to bring the water 2 miles for all our workmen.

Journ. 7

We are gradually learning the history of past conditions here. It was a great region for grain about 600 BC, shown by the many enormous granaries, circular buildings 17 or 35 feet diameter, and probably 50 ft or more high in proportion. Then in Roman times the land was crowded with villages, proving close cultivation. In 1500 B.C. the Egyptians reaped great crops out of Palestine. In 1300 B.C. Isaac "sowed in that land and received in the same year one hundred fold". The position seems to have been that Abimelech the Philistine had pushed up the Gaza valley, as far as he was still in sight of the sea, and got control of the corn production probably for export to Crete. He relied on Syrian troops, as his general was named "the Syrian", Phi-chol, Pa-khahu. The Bedawy Isaac came settling in the region, and was moved off because his ate herds ate up the grain supply, and did not leave enough for export. The climate must have been closely like the present, when flocks depend largely on wells in the dry season, & wells were always squabbled over.

So we can begin to realise how the history worked out. It might seem contradictory that Abimelech from his palace could see into the camp of Isaac close enough to observe actions. But we now see that the entrances of the city were to the south, and the great buildings <were> along a precipitous north face, below which the Bedawy now camp, so that every movement in the tents can be seen clearly from that position.

We have cleared down about 6 or 8 feet already, and every wall is planned & levelled, and all the pottery is searched, and

warefreshely learning the history spast conditions (3) her. It was a great regim for grain but 600 Be, show by the many anormous grandies, circular buildings 17 or 35 feet dimeter, and probably 50 ft armore high in perpertion. Then in Roman times the land was corrected with villages, proving close cultivation. h 1500 se. the Egyptim reaped gout corps out of Polistine, In/800 B.C. I suce "sound in that land and received in the same year any hundred pld" Ilu position seems & home been that Aleinelech the Philos time Lad pushed whether gasa ralley, on for as he was still in sight of the sea, and go enter of the own production probably for export to Crete. He relied on frian troops, is his goneral was mund "the Syrian", Phi-chol, Parkhalu. Uhr Bedauty Isaac came settling in the regin, and was amend It because his to heart ate up the grain captly, and I'm sor leve and for export. The chief must have been closely like the pround, New flocks depend largely on wells in the 2ng season, or wells were always equilable So we can begin to realise how the history worked out. It ight seem contradictory that Abrielal for his polace would see into the comp of bacc close enough & observe detives, But we were that the entrances peter city were to the south, and the great sillings clarge precipitars north feer, below which the Bedany was comp, to that may woment in the tests can be seen clearly from that possition. behave clean for about 6 or 8 feet already, and every wall is planned Hardlend; and all the potting is searched, and

Energ distinctive piece is kept marked with chamber (6 letter thent. There are very few such of grad and figure wases, (efter 450 Bc), but were of black tigure, and the great bolo hamiles of yours of for corriging from a pole, are common, of about 600 BC. One sural grases - black figur has Oatifus +the ophina. There is also apoints forther, opebur Doo Bl., after a burning ofthe town. graduly successive wents of rebuilding and burning are being gettind, and placed in order, Allow party are working well together; thorough mainly Janging men, Ridon + Harding workdring different facts yth work, her Risden + Her searting tolowing plans, share is the survey of the accounts of went market, and my out of the ways tuenes yourk, to Parker when aple all the art ments of ourselves the workeren, and is work active in going don't, At the water was not sell sough along, the wife fether congined was took pright on soing her present about, + show of two Back fully opcontrationed salt I men the well to present its being found while would and have cutally ahenry fine. Is for two days no are could which my Note vater, until it was all primper out, hely i like on the bonder land.

All our party are working well together; Starkey mainly gauging men, Risdon & Harding watching different parts of the work, M<sup>rs</sup> Risdon & M<sup>rs</sup> Starkey sorting & cleaning pottery, my wife keeping all the accounts of men & market, and my share is the surveying & photographing, with general planning out of the ways & means of work. D<sup>r</sup> Parker looks after all the ailments of ourselves & the workmen, and is most active in going about.

As if the water was not salt enough already, the wife of the engine man took fright on seeing two policemen about, & shot off two sack fuls of concentrated salt down the well to prevent its being found, which would ent have entailed a heavy fine. So for two days no one could drink any of the water, until it was all pumped out. Such is life on the border land.

Flinders Petrie.