

which Alexander himself had crossed, we arrived in Tarsus on the Cydnus River around noon. According to Neil, this city, its ruins now at least twenty feet under the town of today, dated back to the 9th century B.C. Located near the sea, it had once been a great commercial center; a crossroads for trade between Syria, Egypt, the Far East and the central region of Turkey. Now it was twelve miles from the Mediterranean. Tarsus had also been the home of a Greek university of philosophy which was believed by some to have been of equal rank with the universities of Alexandria and Athens. This school was patronized by some of the first Roman Emperors, establishing Tarsus as a place of learning. Now this town was an unpretentious community of quiet streets, semi-tropical trees and shrubs, built of mud and stone with some modern buildings.

The story goes that when Alexander entered Tarsus, he had swum in the Cydnus River and within hours had become ill consequently having to convalesce in the area for two months before continuing his southern campaign. At the time of Roman occupation, Tarsus was at its zenith and the Cydnus River became the notable setting for the meeting of Mark Anthony and Cleopatra. Only slightly later, Tarsus became the birthplace of the Hebrew Saul, a Roman citizen, later to change his name to Paul after his conversion on the Damascus road.

Parked near a large crumbling wall, our first Roman ruin, we were given an hour for lunch. After inspecting the wall, some of us remained near the bus eating from our rations, while others

walked to nearby markets for fresh produce or to austere restaurants serving very good food.

As we left Tarsus, we passed the remains of "Kleopatra's Gate," its arch still in tact. Shortly thereafter, we caught our first glimpse of the blue Mediterranean and then passed through the busy port city of Mersin. To see this large body of water was exciting.

On the periphery of the coastal town of Selifke, we parked beside an isolated field containing leveled ruins of an ancient town--Greek or Roman we were not sure. Now it was overgrown by lush grass and bright poppies. From here we could see a well preserved castle off the shore rising from the sea. Neil told us that sometime during the Crusades (11th to 13th centuries) three Muslim princesses had been imprisoned in this island castle by crusaders on their way to free the Holy Land from Muslim control. Had we not lost so much traveling time in Kabul and Isfahan, this peaceful and beautiful setting would have been our first campsite; instead, it was only a brief photo stop.

At this point, Neil told us of our sixty mile proximity to the island of Cyprus and elaborated on this country which had been an independent nation since 1960. Politically for years, Cyprus had been a point of contention between Turks and Greeks. Eighty percent of the Greek Cypriot population wanted the island to unite with Greece while 18 percent of its Turkish Cypriots favored partition. Consequently, large scale fighting between these two groups erupted several times in the 1960s and eventually culminated in a crisis

worthy of United Nations' intervention in July 1974. Teaching in Melbourne at that time, I vividly remembered the emotional impact this crisis had on my Greek and Turkish students and their parents.

Our afternoon drive on the coast brought us into green mountains bejeweled with the ever present poppies and more leveled overgrown ruins. Around 10 P.M., we arrived in Anamur where we found our first campgrounds. Here on a dark beach, among settled campers, our camping experience began. We chose tentmates and Neil assigned us numbered tents. For the remainder of the trip, Jen and Tanya would share a two-man tent while I would share a three-man tent with Mary and Eileen. In the dim light radiating from the camp restaurant and light from individual flashlights and campfires, thirty-four overland travelers set up camp on the Mediterranean beach. As we struggled with our tents, Neil ordered a meal of spaghetti and meatballs, salad and fresh bread for us from the restaurant.

Our tents in place, Nino, Tanya, Jen and I had time for a quick stroll along the beach dotted by small fires warming other campers. By this time on the trip, we had become an identifiable foursome, gadding about daily, yet independent enough to socialize individually with the other members of the group. Dinner was ready by 11:00 and was served on the restaurant's terrace overlooking a dark sea.

I left the group as soon as I finished eating to prepare for bed. It was apparent that the campsite had not been readied for upcoming campers. The showers, sinks and porcelain slabs were full

of sand, fish scales and last year's leaves. The water pressure was so low that there was barely enough water to brush my teeth. I didn't bother to wash my face.

Anamur to Side to Pamukkale
Sunday, April 25

Awaking to the soothing sounds of the sea, I pulled the plug from my air mattress, more commonly called lilo by the Aussies, and was gently lowered several inches to the tent floor. Dressing in the cramped quarters, I rolled my sleeping bag and folded my lilo, throwing them out onto the damp beach. Then setting my suitcase and shoulder bag outside the tent, I crawled on hands and knees out into the misty morning. Dawn was breaking, affording me enough light to use my mirror as I combed my hair. In view of the unkempt facilities, grooming that morning was all but nil.

My tentmates were now stirring, and soon emerged from the tent, adding their gear to mine. After unfastening and removing the tent poles and bagging them, we pulled the pegs out of the ground and bagged them. Then we folded and rolled the tent trying to keep it as sand-free as possible. Finally all three of us struggled to squeeze the tied tent, the pole and peg bags into the tight tent bag. We carried all of the gear to the bus for the bus detail to load.

By 7 A.M., we were on the road for another day of traveling mostly over cobblestone roads through rugged pine-clad mountains some of which tumbled into the sea. As we were trundled over the bumpy road, breakfast was prepared by the cooking detail of four.

Sitting in the center of the bus with one table set up, they spread three slices of bread with butter and peach jam for each of us. For a midmorning break, we stopped in a village at a small stone teahouse for glasses of hot chai and to use the loos nearby.

We then continued on through Alanya where we saw fortifications used during the Crusades. At various times during the day, we passed olive and banana groves and farmland being worked by peasants. Coming into the outskirts of the fishing village of Side in the early afternoon, we saw our first large Roman aqueduct. Here, Graeme and Neil dropped us off to tour the village's ruins and to have lunch. They would be waiting for us at the harbor.

Neil had told us that Side's harbor was one of the few natural harbors in Asia Minor, and, at one time, this village had been a large Greek colony where slave trade and piracy had flourished. In those days the worship of the Greek goddess Athena predominated the area and her image appeared on local coins. Even Alexander's march touched Side. In 188 B.C., this community passed under Roman rule.

Side was our first site of distinguishable Graeco-Roman ruins, as the ruins thus far along our coastal route had been too level and overgrown. Nino, Tanya, Jen and I walked among fallen white columns to the portico of what had once been a massive building built of stone blocks. Within its colonnade, stood an ancient marble statue with head and arms missing. We wondered if it could be Athena. We then climbed to the top of the crumbling amphitheater which had been built to seat thousands of spectators, and rested

on its stone seats soaking up the warm sun and visually absorbing these gleaming ruins set against the azure backdrop of the Mediterranean.

Leaving the ruins, we walked down a cobblestone road bordered by a few scattered shanty-type tourist shops to an outdoor restaurant near the water where Neil, Graeme and some of the fellows were eating. Some of the girls were browsing through the shops, while others sat on the beach snacking and sunning themselves as they watched fishermen mend their nets. At Neil's suggestion, we ordered tantalizing fish dishes, salads, breads and soft drinks. The village seemed deserted but for the waiters, the fishermen, the shopkeepers and ourselves. I could have remained in this superb climate and these provincial surroundings indefinitely, but, within two hours, we were on our way.

Nineteen miles further on, we came upon Antalya founded around the middle of the 2nd century B.C. Neil commented that Antalya had been a summer resort when the Seljuks ruled and today it was still considered by some to be the most popular resort city on the Turkish Riviera. Here, we stopped briefly at another amphitheater called Aspendos which is still in use today. We boarded the bus again, and to our regret, we were soon heading inland leaving a fabulous drive that reminded me of part of the California coastline.

Not long after turning north, I fell asleep, and when I awoke all was dark except for the bus headlights. We were riding on an abandoned road making several turns and passing through ruins of an ancient city. Still in the midst of ruins, we finally arrived

at a tourist compound of bungalows and a lighted restaurant near Pamukkale. Here, we realized our night stay would be among the ruins of Hierapolis, and that we were about seven miles north of Laodicea and not much further from Colossae. Biblically speaking, Laodicea was the last of the seven churches of Asia addressed by Christ in St. John's book of The Revelation. St. Paul mentioned the Christian communities of Laodicea and Hierapolis in his epistle to the Colossians.

We had learned from Neil earlier at lunch in Side that even before Greek dominance of the Phrygian city of Hierapolis an oracle had been established there. The worship of the nature goddess Leto, mother of the Greek god Apollo and goddess Artemis, was prevalent there. Festivals to Leto were characterized by orgiastic rituals and frenzied music. In time, this earlier religion of the Phrygians would influence both the Greek and Roman cultures.

Under Rome, Hierapolis was enlarged and improved. Today some of the Roman baths built to utilize the hot springs for which the site has always been famous are still in use.

Neil told us that tonight we would not unload the bus in order to get an early morning start; our shoulder bags would have to suffice. Dinner would be served at 11 P.M., so, if we cared to, there would be time for a swim in a large unlighted Roman bath next to the restaurant. Many of us girls had neglected to keep our swimsuits in our shoulder bags as we probably should have. When we asked to get them from our suitcases, Neil and Graeme flatly refused. So, throwing caution to the wind, we swam in T-shirts and

panties, using towels to get to and from the bath and our bungalows. The opportunity for a warm bath and the chance to swim where Roman patricians had bathed centuries before could not be missed due to modesty. Besides, it was dark enough, and by now we were one big family.

After our swim, Jen and I returned to our comfortable modern bungalow for quick showers before going to the restaurant for a dinner of Wiener schnitzel, chips, salad and a soft drink or beer. By 1 A.M., all was quiet on the compound.

Pamukkale to Ephesus to Keusadasi
Monday, April 26

Some of us were up extra early for a prebreakfast walk to examine the ruins, look for the hot springs and hopefully discover more Roman baths. By daylight, we appeared to be on a bleak plateau broken in places by hills with few trees. Dewy grass, poppies and wild flowers blanketed the ground and many of the ruins.

We breakfasted at 7:00, leaving the compound by 8:00 only to pull off the road a few minutes later for a photo stop of a striking phenomenon--a Niagara size falls of dazzling white travertine limestone formed over the centuries by the hot springs which still fed it. It was so large that my camera could not capture it in its entirety. Much of this limestone covered the ruins disfiguring them.

Within ten minutes, we were back on the bus and heading west toward the Greek and biblical city of Ephesus. Neil and Robert

took turns at the mike prefacing our visit there. According to Neil, this city dated as far back as the 11th century B.C. In the centuries that followed, it became a leading seaport and point of departure for overland trade into Turkey. Having an oriental background, it had always been a center associated with pagan worship which culminated with the worship of the Greek goddess Artemis, prompting the building of a magnificent "great temple" in the 4th century B.C. four times larger than the Parthenon in Athens. The story is told that Alexander, on his southern march, had offered to complete the construction of the Temple, but the Ephesians rejected the offer telling him that "one god should not build a temple for another god." In the 2nd century B.C. under Roman domination, the Temple came to be known as the Temple of Diana attracting pilgrims from all parts of the known world.

Regarding the early Christian church, Robert stated that Ephesus was the third leading city of Christianity after Jerusalem and Antioch. By 55 A.D., Christianity had been well established there by St. Paul who sojourned in the city for three years. With his denunciation of the worship of Diana, Paul's stay in Ephesus ended abruptly.

Timothy was the city's first bishop, and according to early belief, John made Ephesus the headquarters of Christianity. Even Mary, the mother of Jesus, lived and died there. Other Christian notables such as Mary Magdalene, Andrew and Philip spent time in Ephesus.

By the 3rd century, Ephesus had become a well established city

for Christian pilgrimages; yet the worship of Diana continued until the Christian Roman emperor Theodosius (ruled 379-395) closed all of the pagan temples by an edict. Some of the marble stones from the Temple of Diana were used to build the great cathedral of St. John nearby.

After the Goths destroyed Ephesus in 262 A.D., even though the city was rebuilt, it never regained its former importance, and in time was abandoned after the harbor silted up.

We stopped to lunch at Selceh in an area captured long ago by crusaders. Around 3:30 P.M., we parked on the edge of Ephesus near a tourist shop where Neil paid our entrance fee to the ruins. Returning with literature and maps of the original Ephesus, Neil distributed these and gave us two hours to tour. Ephesus was ours except for a few individual tourists.

The day had turned warm and windy with the clouds and sun vying for dominance. Nino, Tanya, Jen and I grouped off as did the others. With maps and brochures, we headed for the stadium stumbling over vague foundations and pieces of marble and stone in the grass, passing parts of walls and columns of various heights to the site of the stadium. Further on over the ancient stone street, we came to the site of the theater built to seat thousands of people. Here, Robert and Ross stood on the ancient stage exhorting an audience of Paul's day, reading from his letter to the Ephesians. We could almost feel their presence. We then continued on to the site of Hadrian's Temple (Hadrian had embellished Ephesus around 120 A.D.) and detoured from the street to the site

of the library, the agora (marketplace) and then the brothel. From there, we were lured to the hills above Ephesus where we viewed the skeletal frame of this once Greek city second only to Athens in importance. Skipping down the hill passing through the agora again, we soon came upon the Arcadian Way, bordered by broken columns, which had once led to the harbor, now farmland. Here, fleets of ships in from Tyre and Carthage had once docked, and Egypt's Cleopatra made a triumphant entrance. Now Ephesus was about twenty miles inland from the Aegean Sea.

We joined some of the others in the tourist shop for soft drinks before boarding the bus. After comparing notes, we were disappointed to discover that we had failed to find the legendary tomb of St. John and the house where the Virgin Mary lived out her last years. Yet, we were all pleased to see that a vast restoration effort was underway, many of the marble and stone remnants were marked, categorized and being stored.

As we drove away, Neil called our attention to a grove where the apostle John had worked on many of his writings. Within thirty minutes, we were on the Aegean coast near Kusadasi where we set up camp across the road from the beach.

The campground came equipped with good facilities including a complete kitchen where for the first time our cooking detail would prepare dinner. The two large rectangular wicker baskets containing all the food and eating equipment had been unloaded from the boot. With no time to shop in the markets for fresh meat and vegetables, the cooks set to work fixing "bachelors," the Aussie from the boot.