

How the “Jerusalem Scrolls” Became the Dead Sea Scrolls from Qumran Cave 1: Archaeology, the Antiquities Market, and the Spaces In Between

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■ Abstract

Seven animal hide scrolls with Hebrew and Aramaic writing were sold in Jerusalem in 1947. Additional smaller fragments of similar scrolls were sold from 1948 to 1950. Within a few years of their appearance, these “Jerusalem Scrolls” as they were then known, became “the Dead Sea Scrolls from Qumran Cave 1.” While this change of names may seem trivial, it glosses over some difficult questions about the provenance of these materials. What we now call “Cave 1Q” or “Qumran Cave 1” was excavated in 1949, but scholarship reveals considerable confusion concerning which purchased scrolls can be materially connected to fragments that were excavated by archaeologists under controlled conditions in Cave 1. Furthermore, Cave 1 is often treated as if it was a sealed context rather than the highly contaminated site that it actually was at the time of its excavation by archaeologists. For these reasons, it is not completely clear whether all the scrolls usually assigned to Cave 1 actually originated at this site. This article is an attempt to sort through the evidence to determine exactly which scrolls and fragments attributed to Cave 1 were purchased, when and from whom such pieces were purchased, and what can actually be known with confidence about the connection of these “Jerusalem Scrolls” with the site we now call Qumran Cave 1.

■ Keywords

Dead Sea Scrolls, Jerusalem Scrolls, provenance, after the fact provenance, archaeological context, antiquities market, manuscript discovery stories, Qumran

■ Introduction

In the summer of 1947, four animal hide scrolls were offered for sale to the Syriac Orthodox archbishop in Jerusalem. In November and December of 1947, three more scrolls were bought by a professor for the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.¹ These “Jerusalem Scrolls,” as they were called in 1948, would eventually come to be known as the first of the Dead Sea Scrolls.² These seven scrolls are among the best preserved of all the manuscripts that emerged from the Judean desert in the 1940s and 1950s. Their importance was recognized and famously summed up by William Foxwell Albright already in 1948: “unquestionably the greatest manuscript find of modern times.”³ Many would still agree with that assessment today, but with regard to these first scrolls, a more accurate summary might have been “the greatest manuscript *purchase* of modern times.”

The fact that these scrolls were bought from antiquities dealers is well known, and the story of their vicissitudes on the market has been narrated on more than one occasion.⁴ Yet, in spite of this knowledge, scholars often treat these seven scrolls as if they were artifacts recovered from a documented professional archaeological

¹ This research was supported by the Lying Pen of Scribes, a project funded by a FRIPRO/TopForsk-grant from the Research Council of Norway (2019–24, project number 275293). The essay has benefitted from a great deal of effort and enthusiasm from several individuals. My colleague Matthew Monger first pointed out to me some of the unresolved problems surrounding the scrolls that appeared on the market in the 1940s. Årstein Justnes and Eibert Tigchelaar engaged in extensive conversation with me and patiently answered many questions over a period of several months. Stephen Reed also gave generously of his expertise on multiple occasions. Several people read earlier drafts of this essay and provided excellent criticism and feedback: Sidnie White Crawford, Mary Jane Cuyler, Torleif Elgvin, Marcello Fidanzio, Ingrid Breilid Gimse, Charlotte Hempel, Morag Kersel, Liv Ingeborg Lied, Joan Taylor, and Jürgen Zangenberg. I explored several lines of thought in this essay on my blog, *Variant Readings*. Numerous commenters in that forum helped me to sharpen arguments and avoid inaccuracies. An anonymous reader for *HTR* saved me from conceptual and bibliographic oversights. I am very grateful for all of this help. These colleagues will not agree with everything that I have ended up arguing here, but what I have written is much better because of their input.

² See, for instance, John C. Trever, “Preliminary Observations on the Jerusalem Scrolls,” *BASOR* 111 (1948) 3–16; Athanasius Yeshue Samuel, “The Purchase of the Jerusalem Scrolls,” *BA* 12 (1949) 25–31.

³ William F. Albright, “Notes from the President’s Desk,” *BASOR* 110 (1948) 1–3, quotation at 2. The phrase echoes the language Albright had used after having seen photographs of just one of the scrolls earlier that year: “the greatest MS discovery of modern times.” See Albright’s letter to John C. Trever, 8 March 1948, quoted in John C. Trever, *The Untold Story of Qumran* (Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1965) 85.

⁴ The most recent and thorough investigation is that of Weston W. Fields, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Full History; Volume One, 1947–1960* (Leiden: Brill, 2009). More reliable on some of the details, however, is the earlier study of Trever, *The Untold Story of Qumran*.

excavation. It is also seldom noted that several other more fragmentary scrolls attributed to Cave 1 were bought rather than excavated by archaeologists. Furthermore, the connection of all of these pieces to a particular alleged site of “discovery,” the space we now call Cave 1 or 1Q, is problematized by the fact that Cave 1 was a thoroughly disturbed context when archaeologists finally excavated it in 1949.⁵ In short, the transition from “Jerusalem Scrolls” to “Dead Sea Scrolls from Cave 1 at Qumran” is not quite as simple as it seems.

Until quite recently, issues of provenance and the Dead Sea Scrolls appeared relatively straightforward.⁶ The exceptional case would be Cave 4, where the Bedouin uncovered thousands of fragments, and archaeologists quickly followed to recover thousands more.⁷ For about a decade, at least some scholars of the scrolls have been raising the possibility that a considerable portion of “Cave 4 fragments” may have originated in other caves.⁸ The materials attributed to Cave 1 have so

⁵ Specialists today typically use the designation “1Q” to refer to this cave, reflecting a system of classification developed as part of the Qumran Caves Expedition in March of 1952. See Roland de Vaux, “Exploration de la région de Qumrân,” *RB* 60 (1953) 540–61, and idem, “Archéologie,” in *Les “petites grottes” de Qumrân* (ed. Maurice Baillet, Józef T. Milik, and Roland de Vaux; DJD III; Oxford: Clarendon, 1962) 1–41, at 6. At that time, surveyors explored caves in the region of Qumran and assigned cardinal numbers sequentially (roughly from north to south) to the caves that contained evidence of human activity. They assigned a second set of “Q” numbers to those caves at which scroll fragments were found. This latter sequence is chronological, numbered according to the order of discovery. Thus, the first “scroll” cave discovered (Cave 1Q) is “Cave 14” of the survey. The second “scroll cave” (Cave 2Q) is “Cave 19” of the survey. At different points in this essay, I will be drawing attention to some curiosities of nomenclature and abbreviation used in scholarship on the scrolls, so, for now, I will simply designate the “scroll” caves of Qumran (1Q–11Q) as “Cave 1,” “Cave 2,” etc.

⁶ See Dennis Mizzi and Jodi Magness, “Provenance vs. Authenticity: An Archaeological Perspective on the Post-2002 ‘Dead Sea Scrolls-Like’ Fragments,” *DSD* 26 (2019) 135–69; and Årstein Justnes, “Fake Fragments, Flexible Provenances: Eight Aramaic ‘Dead Sea Scrolls’ from the 21st Century,” in *Vision, Narrative, and Wisdom in the Aramaic Texts from Qumran* (ed. Mette Bundvad and Kasper Sigismund; STDJ 131; Leiden: Brill, 2020) 242–71. The more intense focus on issues of provenance in recent years stems in part from work in related disciplines, such as papyrology. See, for instance, Roberta Mazza, “Papyri, Ethics, and Economics: A Biography of *P.Oxy.* 15.1780 (P39),” *BASP* 52 (2015) 113–42. Surely, however, the most proximate cause for the increased concern with provenance is connected to questions of authenticity raised by the emerging consensus that nearly all so-called Dead Sea Scrolls that have appeared since the turn of the millennium are forgeries. See Kipp Davis, “Caves of Dispute: Patterns of Correspondence and Suspicion in the Post-2002 ‘Dead Sea Scrolls’ Fragments,” *DSD* 24 (2017) 229–70; and Torleif Elgvin and Michael Langlois, “Looking Back: (More) Dead Sea Scrolls Forgeries in the Schøyen Collection,” *RevQ* 31 (2019) 111–33.

⁷ I am unsure of exact numbers of fragments recovered. Frank M. Cross reports “tens of thousands of fragments” coming from Cave 4. See Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran* (3rd rev. ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) 38. The sharp distinction between “archaeologists” and “Bedouin” is customary in scholarship, even though some Bedouin would become part of the archaeological team active in the hunt for further scrolls in the 1950s. See, for example, de Vaux, “Exploration de la région de Qumrân,” 540: “a contingent of Ta’amireh Bedouin was hired, and the work began immediately” (“on embaucha un contingent de Bédouins Ta’amrès et le travail commença aussitôt”).

⁸ See Stephen A. Reed, “Find-Sites of the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *DSD* 14 (2007) 199–221; Corrado Martone, “The Excavated Fragments from Qumran: Steps Toward a Reappraisal,” *Kervan: International*

far escaped a similar level of scrutiny. The goal of this article is to provide such scrutiny: What can actually be known about the purchased scrolls that have been attributed to Cave 1? Which of them can confidently be associated with fragments from the documented excavation of Cave 1?⁹

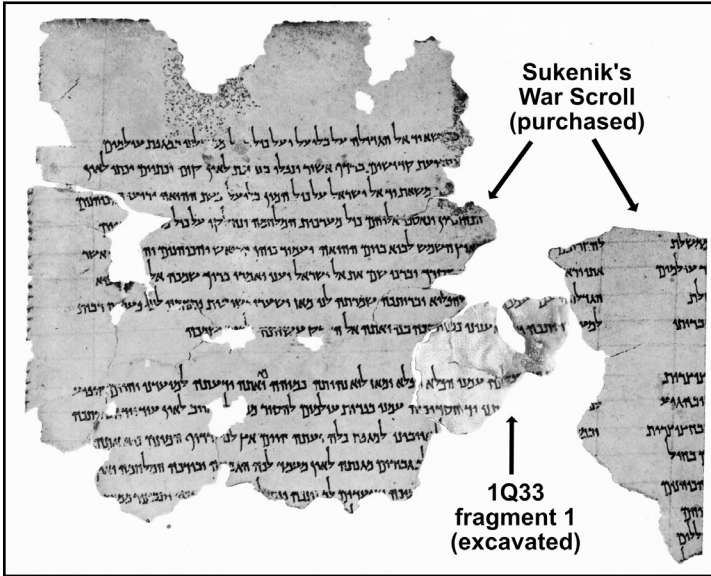


Fig. 1: Column 18 of Sukenik’s War Scroll with fragment 1 of 1Q33 set in place; images adapted from Eleazar L. Sukenik, *The Dead Sea Scrolls of the Hebrew University* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1955) plate 33 (courtesy of Magnes Press and © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem) and PAM negative M40.531 (courtesy of The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library; Israel Antiquities Authority, photo: Najib Anton Albina).

Before we can answer these questions, it will be helpful to dwell a moment on what is meant by saying that purchased scrolls and fragments are “connected to” or “associated with” fragments excavated by archaeologists. We generally say that particular scrolls bought from the market can be materially associated with or connected to a particular cave when they can be shown to be part of a manuscript actually found by the archaeologists who conducted controlled excavations in the caves.¹⁰ At Cave 1, the clearest instance of this situation is the case of “the War

Journal of Afro-Asiatic Studies 23 (2019) 101–10; and Eibert Tigchelaar, “Two Damascus Document Fragments and Mistaken Identities: The Mingling of Some Qumran Cave 4 and Cave 6 Fragments,” *DSD* 28 (2021) 64–74.

⁹ My focus is on the scrolls that were purchased and not on the various other artifacts that are said to have originated in Cave 1 and that were sold to various buyers. For details of these items, see the excellent survey of Joan E. Taylor, Dennis Mizzi, and Marcello Fidanzio, “Revisiting Qumran Cave 1Q and Its Archaeological Assemblage,” *PEQ* 149 (2017) 295–325.

¹⁰ Whether such a connection actually indicates *ancient deposition* in Cave 1 rather than modern intrusion is, strictly speaking, a separate question. As will be discussed below, Cave 1 was by all

Scroll” (a purchase made by Eleazar Sukenik, discussed below) and the fragments published as 1Q33, which were excavated by archaeologists.¹¹ The fragments of 1Q33 match the writing surface, script, and textual character of Sukenik’s scroll and in fact can be fitted neatly into the gaps of columns 18 and 19 of Sukenik’s scroll. Figure 1 illustrates the placement of 1Q33 fragment 1.

While a similar situation obtains in some cases of Cave 1 scrolls that I will discuss below, it does not appear to be as common as sometimes suggested.¹² Many of the purchased scrolls and fragments have no such connection to material archaeologists excavated from Cave 1. The complicated history of purchases of scrolls said to come from Cave 1 and the inclusion of purchased material alongside excavated material in the first volume of *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* (DJD) have obscured these relationships to the degree that even specialists can disagree about the status of certain pieces. For instance, in their 2010 re-edition of the Cave 1 Isaiah scrolls in the DJD series, Eugene Ulrich and Peter W. Flint state that parts of 1QIsa^b, specifically the fragments published as 1Q8, were found in situ by excavators.¹³ The editors of DJD I, however, clearly say that although these pieces were published *with* the material excavated by archaeologists, the particular fragments that make up 1Q8 were *not* excavated. They were *purchased*: “Among the fragments published here, sets number 8 (Isaiah), 20 (Apocalypse of Lamech), and 28 (annexes to the Rule of the Community) were bought from an antiquities dealer in Bethlehem.”¹⁴ The misunderstandings have even made their

reports a highly disturbed context when archaeologists first arrived on the scene. Illicit diggers had not only removed surface materials from inside Cave 1. They had also already dug into the deposits on the cave floor and thrown out a waste pile by the entrance of the cave by the time the professional archaeologists arrived on the scene in February 1949. See the discussion below.

¹¹ Another cause of confusion is the habit of using certain designations interchangeably. For instance, as noted above, 1Q33 refers to a group of fragments found by archaeologists in Cave 1. These fragments can be placed in columns 18 and 19 of Sukenik’s War Scroll (1QM). Yet, it is not unusual to encounter the designation “1Q33” used interchangeably with “1QM,” as if 1Q33 referred to the entire scroll. See, for instance, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *A Guide to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature* (rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008) 23.

¹² Treatments of the Dead Sea Scrolls written for general audiences tend to leave the impression that *many* of the purchased scrolls said to be found at Cave 1 were connected to fragments excavated by archaeologists. See, for example, Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective* (rev. ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981) 11–12: “In one essential respect, [the archaeologists’] findings were conclusive. Hundreds of manuscript fragments, some of them belonging to the scrolls already known, proved that the latter came from that particular cave.”

¹³ Eugene Ulrich and Peter W. Flint, *Qumran Cave 1, II: The Isaiah Scrolls, Part 2: Introductions, Commentary, and Textual Variants* (DJD XXXII; Oxford: Clarendon, 2010) 22: “While Sukenik was working on the main part of 1QIsa^b, those seven additional fragments were found during excavations in Cave 1 by [Gerald] Lancaster [*sic*] Harding and Roland de Vaux.” A similar slip with regard to 1Q8 (and 1Q20) occurs in Hartmut Stegemann and Eileen Schuller, *1QHodayot^a* (DJD XL; Oxford: Clarendon, 2009) 13 n. 3.

¹⁴ Dominique Barthélemy and Józef T. Milik, *Qumran Cave I* (DJD I; Oxford: Clarendon, 1955) 43. See also the statement at 107: “All the fragments that we group under the number 28 definitely belong to the same set (*ensemble*) as 1QS. In fact, they were sold to the Palestine Archaeological Museum in 1950 by the Bethlehem antiquities dealer together with fragments of ‘the Apocalypse of

way into standard reference works. As the preceding quotation indicates, 1Q20, a set of fragments of a work now generally known as the Genesis Apocryphon, was also part of a purchase. Yet, the Society of Biblical Literature's *Handbook of Style* describes 1Q20 as "excavated frags. from cave."¹⁵

Identifications of scrolls and fragments are also subject to change. This seems to be the case with the claim by Weston Fields in 2009 that fragments of the Thanksgiving Scroll purchased by Eleazar Sukenik (1QH^a) were found in Cave 1 by de Vaux's team.¹⁶ This was indeed the conclusion of scholars in the 1950s, but subsequent scholarship overturned that identification decades ago.¹⁷ According to the best current knowledge, then, there is no material connection between Sukenik's Thanksgiving Scroll and Cave 1.

It is these kinds of problems that have prompted the present investigation. What this essay seeks to provide is an organized discussion of the different purchases of scrolls attributed to Cave 1 and an examination of how the status of Cave 1 as a contaminated archaeological context complicates the assignment of some purchased scrolls to this cave. For at least some of these items, this transformation from "Jerusalem Scrolls" to "Qumran Cave 1 Scrolls" seems more than a little problematic.

■ The Story of the Discovery

Despite the variants in its many retellings, the tale of the discovery of the first seven Dead Sea Scrolls is very well known, at least in its broad outlines. Nevertheless, it is worth repeating a version of the story here to set the stage for the discussion to follow. Here is a summary from the classic overview of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls by Frank Moore Cross:

In the spring of the year 1947 two shepherd lads were grazing their mixed flocks of sheep and goats along the foot of the crumbling cliffs that line the Dead Sea in the vicinity of Qumrân. . . .

According to their account, one of their animals strayed. In searching for it,

Lamech' (published here as 1Q20) and the Hebrew University's Isaiah, =1QIs^b, published here as 1Q8."¹⁵

¹⁵ *The SBL Handbook of Style for Biblical Studies and Related Disciplines* (ed. Billie Jean Collins, Bob Buller, and John F. Kutsko; 2nd ed.; Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014) 282. The same description of 1Q20 ("Excavated frags. from cave") is found in Emanuel Tov, *Revised List of the Texts from the Judaean Desert* (Leiden: Brill, 2010) 12.

¹⁶ Fields, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 111: "The official excavation found fragments from Sukenik's scrolls only. These were fragments of the War Scroll (IQM) and the Thanksgiving Scroll I (IQH)." In a footnote, Fields does hesitate somewhat: "Even the two fragments of the Thanksgiving Scroll do not contain sufficient text to make a conclusive paleographic analysis of the connection between them and larger parts of the scroll" (535 n. 65).

¹⁷ For a discussion of the non-identity of Sukenik's Thanksgiving scroll and 1Q35, see Emile Puech, "Quelques aspects de la restauration du Rouleau des Hymnes (IQH)," *JJS* 39 (1988) 38–55, esp. 39–40; and Hartmut Stegemann, "The Material Reconstruction of 1QHodayot," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Fifty Years After Their Discovery, 1947–1997* (ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman, Emanuel Tov, and James C. VanderKam; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2000) 272–84, esp. 279.

one of the shepherds, Muhammed ed-Dîb by name, casually threw a stone into a small circular opening in the cliff face. Instead of the expected smack of rock against rock, he heard a shattering sound. He was frightened and fled. Later, presumably when the fear of *jinn* or hyenas finally gave way to the lure of buried gold, he and his companion Ahmed Muhammed returned and crept into the cave and found decaying rolls of leather in one of a number of strange elongated jars embedded in the floor of the cave. These were the original “Dead Sea Scrolls.”

In the year between the Bedouin discovery and the first press releases announcing the discovery to the world, there was confusion, blundering, and intrigue, as is associated often, unfortunately, with spectacular, chance finds. At least one, and probably several clandestine excavations ravaged the cave site; additional materials came to light; there is evidence that a considerable amount of precious material was destroyed in the process. The details of this phase of the vicissitudes of the scrolls of Cave I are most difficult to establish. In any case, after some of the scrolls (three, according to Ta’âmireh claims) had been passed about in the tents of clansmen, they were brought to Bethlehem for sale and fell into the hands of antiquities dealers. At some point they were joined with a portion of the manuscript materials from clandestine excavations. Ultimately one lot came into the possession of the Syrian Orthodox Metropolitan of Jerusalem, a Syrian cobbler of Bethlehem acting as broker; another was purchased by the late E.L. Sukenik for the Hebrew University.¹⁸

The focus here, as in the majority of such accounts, is the moment of discovery. Yet, Cross is more circumspect than most in mentioning both the subsequent “clandestine excavations” after the initial discovery and the story of the purchase of these first scrolls in two separate lots. And it is the details of these transactions that will be our first area of investigation.

■ Four Major Purchases: Two Batches of Scrolls and Two Batches of Fragments

It is well known that the first seven scrolls to be offered for sale in 1947 ended up in the hands of two buyers. One group of scrolls was purchased in July of 1947 by Athanasius Yeshue Samuel, better known as Mar Samuel, the Syriac Orthodox archbishop in Jerusalem. This group was purchased from Khalil Iskander Shahin (“Kando” in most scholarly discussions, or occasionally “Quando”) and consisted of the Community Rule (1QS), the Habakkuk Peshier (1QpHab), the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a), and the Genesis Apocryphon (1QapGen).¹⁹ A second group of scrolls was bought from the dealer Faidi Salahi (sometimes anglicized as Feidi Salahi and sometimes identified as Faidi-al-Alami) by Eleazar Sukenik for the Hebrew University in November and December of 1947. This second group included three

¹⁸ Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran*, 20–22.

¹⁹ There are numerous accounts of this purchase. For an early version, see Samuel, “The Purchase of the Jerusalem Scrolls.”

scrolls: a second copy of Isaiah (1QIsa^b), the Thanksgiving Scroll (1QH^a), and the War Scroll (1QM).²⁰

While none of these basic facts is in dispute, detective work carried out by scholars in the 1950s determined that the story of these sales was a little more complicated.²¹ On the basis of interviews with the sellers and alleged finders of the scrolls, John C. Trever concluded that a first group of scrolls was found in a cave by Muhammad ed-Dhib in late 1946 or early 1947.²² This group consisted of three scrolls: 1QS, 1QIsa^a, and 1QpHab. Two fellow tribesmen of Muhammad ed-Dhib, Jum‘a Muhammad and Khalil Musa, brought the three scrolls to Bethlehem in March 1947 and deposited them “for several weeks” with a carpenter and antiquities trader named Ibrahim ‘Ijha.²³ Having not been sold, the scrolls were then entrusted to Kando, probably at some point in April 1947.²⁴ The Syriac Christian George Isha‘ya Shamoun (a.k.a. George Isaiah or George Shaya), a mutual acquaintance of Kando and Mar Samuel, informed the latter about the scrolls and aroused his interest in purchasing them. In May or June of 1947, George Isha‘ya and Khalil Musa brought four more scrolls, said to have come from the same cave as the first three scrolls, to Kando’s shop in Bethlehem.²⁵ At that moment, it seems that for a

²⁰ Again, there are numerous accounts of this purchase. See, e.g., Eleazar L. Sukenik, *The Dead Sea Scrolls of the Hebrew University* (prepared for press by Nahman Avigad; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1955) 13–17.

²¹ The summary here relies on Trever, *The Untold Story of Qumran*, 101–13 and the accompanying notes. It should be remembered that Trever’s reconstruction does not exactly match with reports from Mar Samuel and Kando. Mar Samuel’s account makes no mention of the Genesis Apocryphon being part of a separate find, although he was likely not in a position to know such details. See Athanasius Yeshue Samuel, *Treasure of Qumran: My Story of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1968). Kando also gives a different version of events (Trever, *The Untold Story of Qumran*, notes on 196–97), but I take Trever’s critical sifting of the evidence as the most convincing reconstruction. For an assessment of some of the dynamics at play within the Syriac Orthodox community at this time, see Sarah Irving, “Palestine’s Syriac Orthodox Community and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *Contemporary Levant* 6 (2021) <https://doi.org/10.1080/20581831.2021.1881720>.

²² The full name of the person usually identified as the first “discoverer” is given both as “Muhammed Ahmed el-Hamed, whose nickname is ‘Edh-Dhib’” (Trever, *The Untold Story*, 103) or “Muḥammed edh-Dhib Ḥassan” (Frank M. Cross, “The Discovery of the Samaria Papyri,” *BA* 26 [1963] 109–21, at 114 n. 4). In what follows, I adopt a customary designation and transliteration, Muhammad ed-Dhib.

²³ In his account of the story of the discovery (said to be based on a written account by Najib S. Khoury), Sherman E. Johnson states that the first dealer involved was one Dawood Musallam (see Johnson, “The Finding of the Scrolls,” *ATHR* 39 [1957] 208–17). For doubts about the reliability of this account, see Trever, “When was Qumrân Cave I Discovered?” *RevQ* 3 (1961) 135–41, at 139. The name Dahoud (Daud) Musallam appears in connection with the scrolls allegedly found in Cave 1 in the archive of Anton Kiraz (see George A. Kiraz, *Anton Kiraz’s Dead Sea Scroll Archive* [Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2005] 93, 100, and 106–7).

²⁴ Trever, *The Untold Story of Qumran*, 174.

²⁵ At least one of Trever’s sources, an interview of Muhammad ed-Dhib and Jum‘a Muhammad conducted by Anton Kiraz in 1961, gives the number of scrolls recovered by Isha‘ya and Khalil Musa on this occasion as two rather than four (Kiraz, *Anton Kiraz’s Archive*, 93). I am grateful to Torleif Elgvin for drawing my attention to this discrepancy.

brief time all seven of the first scrolls were in the possession of Kando.²⁶ Kando kept only one of the four scrolls brought by Isha'ya and Khalil Musa (apparently the Genesis Apocryphon) as payment for funding he had provided for Isha'ya's expeditions to the cave. Isha'ya and Khalil Musa sold the other three scrolls they had brought (a second copy of Isaiah, the War Scroll, and the Thanksgiving Scroll) to another dealer, Faidi Salahi. Thus it was that in July 1947, Mar Samuel bought four scrolls from Kando: the Community Rule, the Habakkuk Pesher, the Great Isaiah Scroll (all allegedly found by Muhammad ed-Dhib), and the Genesis Apocryphon (allegedly found by Isha'ya and Khalil Musa). Mar Samuel eventually took these scrolls to the United States and there sold them (unknowingly) to Yigael Yadin, who saw to their return to Jerusalem in 1954.²⁷ Thus, according to this reconstruction of events, the Genesis Apocryphon was actually part of the *second* group of manuscripts that appeared on the Bethlehem antiquities market, the rest of which were eventually sold to Sukenik by Faidi Salahi through a negotiation mediated by Levon Nasri Ohan.²⁸

In addition to these two groups of well-preserved scrolls, there were also two groups of fragments that were purchased and that are generally associated with Cave 1. One of these batches was a cigarette box containing fragments that came into the possession of Mar Samuel at some point before September 1948.²⁹ These

²⁶ Trever, *The Untold Story of Qumran*, 106. This is an important point that Trever alone seems to have noted. That Kando was at one time in possession of all seven scrolls helps to explain the contents of the material he sold to the Palestine Archaeological Museum in 1950. On this sale, see the details below.

²⁷ See the account in Yigael Yadin, *The Message of the Scrolls* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1957; repr., New York: Crossroad, 1992) 39–52. Page numbers taken from the reprinted edition. Some very small pieces of the scrolls bought by Mar Samuel in 1947 ended up in the possession of John C. Trever, who had photographed the scrolls after Mar Samuel bought them. According to Trever's account, "several small fragments of leather from the outer margins of the Isaiah Scroll, bits of ancient repair material and linen thread, remained in the satchel, and a few had fallen to the table during the repair work. There were a few which the Metropolitan claimed belonged to a 'cover' which had been attached to the scroll when he first saw it. These I gathered onto sheets of paper, and the Metropolitan suggested that I keep them as souvenirs" (Trever, *The Untold Story of Qumran*, 43–44). Trever sold these pieces to Martin Schøyen in 1994, and they now form part of the Schøyen Collection in Spikkestad, Norway (see Martin Schøyen, "Acquisition and Ownership History: A Personal Reflection," in *Gleanings from the Caves: Dead Sea Scrolls and Artefacts from the Schøyen Collection* [ed. Torleif Elgvin, Kipp Davis, and Michael Langlois; LSTS 71; London: T&T Clark, 2016] 27–32, at 28–29).

²⁸ Sukenik referred to an intermediary in the deal simply as "X." Yadin's account further identifies this person as a friend of Sukenik and "an Armenian dealer in antiquities" (*The Message of the Scrolls*, 16). Trever seems to have identified him as "Mr. Ohan" shortly after the publication of *The Untold Story of Qumran* in 1965 (see the exchanges of letters in Kiraz, *Anton Kiraz's Archive*, 190–93). Subsequent scholars often give the name as Nasri [Yousef] Ohan, the father of Levon and a dealer well known in Jerusalem in the early twentieth century, but the elder Nasri Ohan died in 1942. I am grateful for Michael D. Press for alerting me to this potential confusion.

²⁹ The main sources for this purchase are Trever, *The Untold Story of Qumran*, 123–33; John C. Trever, "Completion of the Publication of Some Fragments from Qumran Cave I," *RevQ* 5 (1965) 323–44; and Mar Samuel, *Treasure of Qumran*, 174 and 205–8.

pieces consisted mostly of a “mass of leather” said to have been illicitly removed from Cave 1 by Isha’ya around August 1948.³⁰ This material was also brought to the United States by Mar Samuel. When taken apart by John Trever at Yale University in April 1949, the clump of leather was found to consist of fragments of two copies of the book of Daniel (1Q71 and 1Q72) and a fragment of a liturgical prayer (1Q34^{bis}). The other pieces in the box were “a ragged piece of coarse leather” preserving a portion of the so-called Book of Noah (1Q19^{bis}), and a fragment of papyrus containing several letters of an unidentified text (1Q70^{bis}). To the best of my knowledge, nearly all of this material remains in New Jersey under the care of the Syriac Orthodox Church.³¹

When DJD I was published in 1955, the volume was said to include all the scrolls from Cave 1 excavated by de Vaux and his team. But more material than this was published in the volume. In addition to these excavated pieces, an appendix included editions of the fragments Trever had sorted from the cigarette box in the possession of Mar Samuel. Yet, another subset of scrolls in DJD I are singled out as part of a purchase made by the Palestine Archaeological Museum (PAM) from “the Bethlehem dealer” in the spring of 1950.³² This purchase included the sets of fragments designated 1Q8 (fragments of Sukenik’s Isaiah scroll), 1Q20 (a fragment of the Genesis Apocryphon), and 1Q28 (a set of fragments belonging to the Community Rule scroll).³³ A set of PAM photographs of these items dated 4 March 1950 provides a probable rough date of acquisition.³⁴

³⁰ Trever, “Completion of the Publication,” 323: “Not long after July 18, 1948, the beginning of the second truce in the Arab-Jewish conflict of 1948, Cave I was again visited by George Isha’ya who picked up some (or all?) of these fragments and delivered them to the Syrian Metropolitan of St. Mark’s Monastery.”

³¹ The archdiocese of the Syriac Orthodox Church in New Jersey did not respond to my request for confirmation of the whereabouts of this material. Some small fragments of the leather clump were given by Mar Samuel to Trever (Trever, *The Untold Story of Qumran*, 187 n. 4). These fragments were also among those that Trever sold to Martin Schøyen in 1994. See Schøyen, “Acquisition and Ownership,” 28–29.

³² The purchase is mentioned twice in DJD I (Barthélemy and Milik, *Qumran Cave I*, 43 and 107). John Allegro provides a detailed (and highly dramatized) narrative of director of the Palestine Archaeological Museum Yusuf Saad’s purchase of several fragments from Kando, and John C. Trever connects this narrative to these specific items. See John Allegro, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1956) 23–32, and Trever, *The Untold Story of Qumran*, 146. As Kando had been in possession of the larger portions of all these scrolls in 1947, it makes sense that he would have retained these fragments.

³³ The designation of 1Q28 is somewhat complicated, as the fragments collected under that heading had all (apparently) at one time been physically connected to 1QS, though none of them actually contains text from the Community Rule. The set 1Q28 consists of a fragment of skin containing a partially preserved title for the Rule of the Community and at least one more text. This “title” sheet would have been attached to the beginning of the whole scroll (before 1QS). What is designated 1Q28a is a set of fragments with another “rules” text (the Rule of the Congregation, 1QSa), which would have been attached to the end of 1QS; and 1Q28b is a set of fragments with still another “rules” text (the Rule of the Blessings, 1QSB), which would have been attached to the end of 1QSa.

³⁴ The photographs are PAM 40.059–40.077. See Stephen J. Pfann, “Chronological List of the Negatives of the PAM, IAA, and the Shrine of the Book,” in *Companion Volume to the Dead Sea*

■ Lingering Questions Connected to Purchased Fragments Associated with Cave 1

Conflicting evidence or missing data prevents firm conclusions with regard to some purchases. This is the case with a fragment from column 2 of 1QSb (1Q28b), a set of scraps containing text from Deuteronomy (1Q5, fragment 13), and a record of a purchase for “fragments” apparently from Cave 1 in 1951.

That 1QSa (1Q28a) and 1QSb (1Q28b) were originally part of the same scroll as 1QS is highly probable.³⁵ To judge from the statement of the editors of DJD I, it would seem even more certain that 1QSa and 1QSb were purchased: “All the fragments that we group under the number 28 definitely belong to the same set (*ensemble*) as 1QS. In fact, they were sold to the Palestine Archaeological Museum in 1950 by the Bethlehem antiquities dealer.”³⁶ Yet, Trever makes a curiously specific claim regarding one fragment of this text: “A small piece of 1QSb (Col. II) also was sifted from the debris” during the excavation of Cave 1.³⁷ I can find no corroboration of Trever’s statement, but if it were correct, this fragment would constitute a material connection between Cave 1 and the three scrolls associated with Muhammad ed-Dhib. Thus, it would be very useful to see if Trever’s statement can be somehow confirmed or disconfirmed.³⁸

Scrolls Microfiche Edition (ed. Emanuel Tov and Stephen J. Pfann; 2nd rev. ed.; Leiden: Brill, 1995) 73–95, at 75, but note that these materials are not, as the entry suggests, “from excavation.”

³⁵ Barthélemy and Milik, *Qumran Cave I*, 107. Tov has argued that 1QS was not stitched to 1QSa. See Emanuel Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert* (STDJ 54; Leiden: Brill, 2004) 111–12 n. 149. More recently, Charlotte Hempel has analyzed unpublished photographs of 1QS that more clearly show the remains of stitching at the end of the last column (see Charlotte Hempel, *The Community Rules from Qumran: A Commentary* [TSAJ 183; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020] 17). Furthermore, material analysis carried out on an uninscribed scrap of 1QS and an inscribed fragment of 1QSb in the Schøyen Collection led Ira Rabin to conclude “that they may derive from a single skin, or at least from the same preparation batch” (see Rabin, “Material Analysis of the Fragments,” in *Gleanings from the Caves*, 61–77, at 67). The portion of 1QSb in the Schøyen Collection was purchased from the family of William Brownlee, who had received the fragment as a gift from Mar Samuel (see George J. Brooke and James M. Robinson, “A Further Fragment of 1QSb: The Schøyen Collection MS 1909,” *JJS* 46 [1995] 120–33). It is unclear whether Mar Samuel acquired the fragment with the first four scrolls he bought or with the more fragmentary material he acquired from Isha’ya.

³⁶ Barthélemy and Milik, *Qumran Cave I*, 107.

³⁷ Trever, *The Untold Story of Qumran*, 203 n. 2. The sentence is identical in Trever’s revised edition, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Personal Account* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977) 231 n. 2.

³⁸ In theory, Trever’s claim could be either confirmed or disconfirmed by reference to photographs taken by Harding at the time of the excavation itself in 1949. As Harding wrote in DJD I: “Inscribed fragments were mounted between glass each day as they were found, and photographed on the spot for safe record” (Gerald Lankester Harding, “Introductory: The Discovery, the Excavation, Minor Finds,” in Barthélemy and Milik, *Qumran Cave I*, 3–7, at 7). While a very small group of these photographs seems to have been published (see the bibliography in Barthélemy and Milik, *Qumran Cave I*, 43), I have been unable to locate the original copies of this set of excavation photographs. The Jordanian Department of Antiquities did not respond to my queries concerning these photographs. Stephen Reed reports that the John C. Trever Collection of photographs includes some of Harding’s images (see Stephen A. Reed, Marilyn J. Lundberg, and Michael B. Phelps, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*

The story of one of the fragments of 1Q5 (1QDeut^b) is also somewhat confusing. The set 1Q5 consists of dozens of small fragments assembled into about 50 relatively larger fragments.³⁹ One of these composite pieces is fragment 13. At first glance, the editors of DJD I appear to have associated the purchase of a part of fragment 13 with Batch 3 above (the fragments in the cigarette box that Mar Samuel had obtained from Isha'ya): "The fragments published in the appendix as well as the central part of frag. 13 of 1Q5 are the remains of the clandestine explorations of the Syrians."⁴⁰ The editors' association of the Deuteronomy fragment with "the Syrians" cannot, however, mean that the Deuteronomy fragment was part of the same acquisition as Batch 3. The Batch 3 items that appear as an appendix to DJD I were published without photographs, as those fragments had been brought to the United States by Mar Samuel.⁴¹ In a footnote, the editors add that pieces of fragment 13 were actually found by de Vaux's team as well: "The fact that frag. 13 of 1Q5 could be supplemented by two small fragments found during the excavations that took place during February and March 1949 provides a further argument that these different lots share an identical origin."⁴² Trever twice mentions the source of a purchased portion of 1Q5, giving different, though not incompatible, stories. At one point in his narrative, he associates the Deuteronomy fragment with what I am calling Batch 4, the 1950 purchase by the Palestine Archaeological Museum:

The story of Saad's efforts to make the acquaintance of Kando, and finally (in 1950) to secure the mass of fragments which the cobbler and his associates had dug from the cave, reads like a Sherlock Holmes detective adventure. It was then that fragments of the Hebrew University Isaiah Scroll (1QIs^b), some from the "Genesis Apocryphon" (1Q20, now 1QApo), several large pieces (including two almost-complete columns) from the Manual of Discipline (1QS) and some fragments of a scroll of Deuteronomy (1QDeut^b) were

Catalogue: Documents, Photographs, and Museum Inventory Numbers [RBS 32; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994] 451–52). According to the descriptions Reed provides, the Harding photos in the Trever collection seem to contain a mix of excavated and purchased materials, so these may not be the excavation photos that Harding mentioned. I contacted James Trever, the son of John Trever, in July 2020 to try to obtain copies of this material, but he was unable to locate these photographs or negatives. Among the PAM photographs, at least one sequence seems to derive from Harding (PAM 40.433–40.552). Although the date given for the photographs is April 1953, these images appear to be photographs of earlier photographs by Harding (PAM 40.508 is actually labeled "MR LANCASTER HARDINGS (*sic*) PHOTOGRAPH A1"). Again, these contain a mix of excavated and purchased materials, and none of them seems to match the published photographs mentioned in DJD I, 43. The recovery of Harding's excavation photographs is a desideratum.

³⁹ There is some disagreement about how many different scrolls of Deuteronomy might be represented by the fragments published as 1Q5. See Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra, "Paleographical Observations Regarding 1Q5—One or Several Scrolls?" in *Qumran Cave I Revisited* (ed. Daniel K. Falk, Sarianna Metso, Donald W. Parry, and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar; STDJ 91; Leiden: Brill, 2010) 247–57.

⁴⁰ Barthélemy and Milik, *Qumran Cave I*, 43 ("Les fragments édités en appendice ainsi que la partie centrale du f. 5 13 sont les restes de la prospection clandestine des Syriens").

⁴¹ See Trever, *The Untold Story of Qumran*, 123–33.

⁴² Barthélemy and Milik, *Qumran Cave I*, 43 n. 1.

secured for the Department of Antiquities, but only after payment of the large sum of £1,000 (\$2,800).⁴³

Treuer reiterates what the editors of DJD I had also made clear, namely, that the purchase of Batch 4 took place in 1950. But this date would seem to raise a problem, for the museum had purchased the main part of the Deuteronomy fragment already in 1949. In that year Harding mentioned the fragment in one of his first publications about the discovery and excavation of Cave 1, noting that, in addition to the excavated fragments, “some other fragments in the square script, which have been acquired from an outside source, are of the book of Deuteronomy.”⁴⁴ That this statement refers to fragment 13 of 1Q5 is made clear by a photograph that accompanies the article (the upper image in fig. 2).



Fig. 2: Top: Photograph of 1Q5, fragment 13 taken in 1949; Bottom: Photograph of 1Q5 with additional fragments taken in 1961; images adapted from Gerald Lankester Harding, “The Dead Sea Scrolls,” *PEQ* 81 (1949) 112–16 and plates XVII–XXI, at plate XX, fig. 3 and PAM negative 43.751 (courtesy of The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library; Israel Antiquities Authority, photo: Najib Anton Albina).

⁴³ Treuer, *The Untold Story of Qumran*, 146. Allegro’s narrative of this purchase more vividly depicts the “Sherlock Holmes” elements but frustratingly leaves out the details of the manuscripts involved (see Allegro, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 23–32).

⁴⁴ Gerald Lankester Harding, “The Dead Sea Scrolls,” *PEQ* 81 (1949) 112–16, at 113.

Trever's second statement on the origin of the Deuteronomy fragment offers a possible solution: "[The archaeologists] also found small pieces of the larger Deuteronomy fragment, part of which was reported to have come from Isha'ya and part from Kando."⁴⁵ Trever thus suggests the fragment came from three sources: a portion bought from Isha'ya (one of "the Syrians"), a portion bought from Kando (the 1950 purchase), and a portion recovered by the archaeologists in 1949. If this interpretation is correct, it must be the portion purchased from Isha'ya that was already in Harding's possession in 1949. Comparison of the 1949 photograph with an infrared photograph taken in 1961 (PAM 43.751) suggests that the bits recovered by archaeological excavation—and the 1950 purchase, if it did indeed include parts of this fragment—were not very large (the fragment as a whole is about 12 cm wide by 8 cm high; see fig. 2).⁴⁶

Finally, in 2009, Weston Fields published a ledger that includes purchases made by the Palestine Archaeological Museum. One column in the ledger records the alleged source of each purchase. For one item purchased on 12 May 1951, the source is listed as "Q1," presumably a reference to Cave 1 at Qumran. The only description of the purchase is "fragments," and the name of the seller is "Haj Taher Marakshy."⁴⁷ It is unclear to me whether the expenditure in this ledger entry represents an actual purchase of scroll fragments or if it refers to non-scroll material said to come from Cave 1.⁴⁸ The numbered designation "Q1" also suggests that the ledger was retrospectively filled out, as no other "manuscript caves" were known to museum officials until the 1952 regional survey, a point to which I will return.

We thus have evidence for five discrete purchases of material attributed to Cave 1 (or perhaps six, if the 1951 purchase contained scroll fragments). Figure 3 summarizes the data. Because these groups represent purchases and not alleged "discoveries," I have placed the Genesis Apocryphon in Batch 1 (scrolls sold by Kando to Mar Samuel in July 1947), even though Trever has established that the Genesis Apocryphon probably came to the market with Sukenik's scrolls rather than with the other three bought by Mar Samuel.

⁴⁵ Trever, *The Untold Story of Qumran*, 203 n. 2.

⁴⁶ An infrared PAM photograph taken in 1953 (PAM 40.531) appears to show fragment 13 of 1Q5 in a similar state as that depicted in the 1949 photograph, but some small rotted portions of the top of the fragment seem to have been removed. The plate including fragment 13 of 1Q5 published in DJD I in 1955 seems to include nothing more than what is seen in the 1961 PAM photograph (PAM 43.751), although the published plate has been subjected to some fairly extensive touching up (see Barthélemy and Milik, *Qumran Cave I*, plate X).

⁴⁷ Fields, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 421 and 561. The ledger also lists "rewards" given to two individuals in 1950, Ibrahim Shaghanriyah and Mahmoud Hussein. No indication is given for the purpose of these "rewards."

⁴⁸ On the non-scroll material, see Taylor, Mizzi, and Fidanio, "Revisiting Qumran Cave 1Q."

	Scrolls	Seller	Buyer	Date
Batch 1	1QIsa ^a , 1QS, 1QpHab, [1QapGen]	Kando	Mar Samuel	July 1947
Batch 2	1QIsa ^b , 1QH, 1QM	Salahi	Sukenik	Nov.–Dec. 1947
Batch 3	1Q19 ^{bis} , 1Q34 ^{bis} , 1Q70, 1Q71, 1Q72	[Isha'ya?]	Mar Samuel	August 1948
Batch 4	1Q8, 1Q20, 1Q28, [1Q5 frag. 13]	Kando	Yusuf Saad (PAM)	March 1950
Batch 5	1Q5 frag. 13	“an outside source”	Harding	Feb.–March 1949
Batch 6	“fragments” from “Q1”	Haj Taher Marakshy	PAM	12 May 1951

Fig. 3: Purchases attributed to Cave 1.

The tabular format makes it easier to see connections among the various purchases. For instance, we can see that Batch 4, the museum purchase from Kando in 1950, contains materials connected to both the Mar Samuel purchase (Batch 1) and the Sukenik purchase (Batch 2), which can be explained by Kando having been in possession of all seven of the scrolls in 1947. He would have had the opportunity to keep any fragments that detached from the main scrolls. We are also now in a better position to see connections between the purchased material and pieces that were excavated under controlled conditions by archaeologists (see fig. 4).

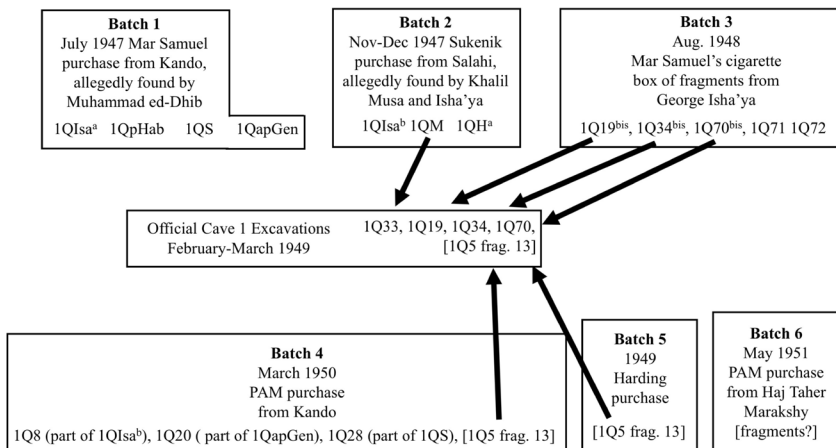


Fig. 4: Connections between the manuscript purchases and the manuscripts excavated by archaeologists from Qumran Cave 1.

What is most striking about the diagram is the fact that Batch 1 is completely unconnected to Cave 1. That is to say, none of the material said to have been found by Muhammad ed-Dhib (Mar Samuel's July 1947 purchase, with the exception of the Genesis Apocryphon) can be connected to the material excavated from Cave 1 by archaeologists.⁴⁹ Further exploration of this problem will require turning to the details of the identification and excavation of Cave 1 itself.

■ The Identification of Cave 1 by Archaeologists

In the late 1940s, the scrolls we have been discussing were said to come from "a cave" or "the cave."⁵⁰ Today, they are described as coming from "Cave 1," a cave first identified and excavated by scholars in early 1949. But that identification was apparently made without assistance from anyone who had actually visited the cave before 1949.⁵¹ Here is how Harding described the identification of the cave in DJD I:

Then a Belgian observer on the United Nations staff, Captain Lippens, who had become interested in the story of the find, raised the question with Major-General Lash of the Arab Legion. Lash offered, subject to the approval of the Department of Antiquities, to send a small contingent of men to the area where the cave was believed to be located in order to try to rediscover it. This was done at the end of January 1949, and the cave was actually found by Captain Akkash el Zebn after only two or three days' search. The discovery was duly reported back to headquarters, and I went down to examine the place. At first I was sceptical whether it could really be the right cave, but the presence of many potsherds and fragments of linen showed that it had at least been occupied and must be investigated. Accordingly on 15 February the Jordan Department of Antiquities in collaboration with the École Biblique et Archéologique Française and the Palestine Archaeological Museum started work there and continued until 5 March 1949.⁵²

So, what the archaeologists found and excavated was a cave that showed signs of both ancient activity and modern pillaging. Other accounts of the arrival of the archaeologists at the cave provide a more vivid description of the condition of the site. Ovid R. Sellers, who visited the cave twice during the 1949 excavations, described the scene as follows in a note dated 21 March 1949:

The operation was complicated by previous clandestine excavators, who last November dug up the surface of the cave to a depth of several inches in the vain hope that the Bedouin had missed some scrolls. So in the debris were cigarette stubs, a little modern cloth, and scraps of newspaper which had been used to wrap food. . . . No complete new scrolls were found, but there was part of one scroll (which has not been unrolled) and there were hundreds of

⁴⁹ Fields heavily stressed this point in *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, esp. 111–13.

⁵⁰ See, for instance, Ovid R. Sellers, "Excavation of the 'Manuscript' Cave at 'Ain Fashkha,'" *BASOR* 114 (1949) 5–9.

⁵¹ This is a point noted by Fields, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 111.

⁵² Harding, "Introductory," 6.

bits of manuscripts as well as a large quantity of sherds. Undoubtedly the cave was the correct one; for some of the manuscript fragments clearly belong to the scrolls which are known. Apparently the Bedouin broke open all the jars and removed the manuscripts, ignoring the pieces which broke off and fell on the floor. These pieces were mixed with débris in the unauthorized excavation.⁵³

In his own descriptions, de Vaux is more precise about the degree of disturbance. In one of his first detailed accounts, he made the following remarks as he described the features of Cave 1:

The ceiling was 2.5 to 3 m above the “archaeological layer.” This represents in fact only the surface of the cave disturbed by the most recent looters in search of manuscripts and of a “treasure”; it is in this layer and in the rubble tossed out in front of the entrance that we found all the potsherds, the remains of linen, and the fragments of manuscripts. Its thickness varied from 25 to 50 cm.⁵⁴

We thus learn that the scroll fragments all came from the thoroughly disturbed interior surface context or from the debris of illicit digging left outside the cave itself. Harding goes further, noting a total lack of stratigraphy: “In view of the earlier clearance no stratification could be observed.”⁵⁵

There are two points to take away from these descriptions. First, Cave 1 was highly contaminated when professional archaeologists finally reached it. Second, the excavators operated under the impression that there was only one cave with manuscripts. When they found a disturbed cave with ancient remains and identified what they believed were small pieces of the scrolls already known, they were satisfied they had found the single source from which *all* of the first seven scrolls and fragments had emerged.⁵⁶ Yet, when archaeologists conducted a wider search of the area in 1952, they found many such disturbed areas, some in very close proximity to Cave 1. The space we call “Cave 2,” for instance, sits fewer than 200 meters south of Cave 1. It was first visited by archaeologists in March 1952 and was found to be thoroughly disturbed. In the words of one of the excavators, “signs of illicit

⁵³ Sellers, “Excavation of the ‘Manuscript’ Cave,” 7. See also Millar Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Viking Press, 1955) 34.

⁵⁴ Roland de Vaux, “La grotte des manuscrits hébreux,” *RB* 56 (1949) 586–609, at 586–87 (“Le plafond était à 2 m 50 ou 3 m au dessus de la «couche archéologique». Celle-ci-ne représente en fait que la surface de la grotte bouleversée par les derniers pillards en quête des manuscrits et d’un «trésor»; c’est dans cette couche et dans les déblais rejetés devant l’entrée que nous avons trouvé tous les tessons, les débris de linges et les fragments de manuscrits. Son épaisseur variait de 25 à 50 cm”).

⁵⁵ Harding, “Introductory,” 6.

⁵⁶ This point comes across very clearly in Harding’s early reports: “The thrown-out soil was the first thing we tackled: it was full of potsherds and fragments of linen, and the first hour’s work on it showed that it also contained small fragments of inscribed leather, the first definite proof that this was indeed the right spot” (Gerald Lankester Harding, “The Dead Sea Scrolls,” *The Illustrated London News* [1 October 1949] 493–95, at 493).

digging were very much in evidence.”⁵⁷ In his discussion of the excavation of Cave 2, de Vaux put matters more starkly: “The cave had been completely emptied” by clandestine diggers.⁵⁸ Elsewhere, de Vaux mentions that only two small fragments were found by archaeologists in the spoils left behind by the Bedouin.⁵⁹ The fact that another plundered cave that (seems to have) contained scrolls was found quite close to Cave 1 should give us pause.⁶⁰ I do not mean to suggest that the purchased scrolls generally linked to Cave 1 actually came from Cave 2 specifically, just that plausible alternative locations exist. Indeed, the plausible alternatives are more numerous than typical maps of the “scroll caves” indicate. Most maps of the Qumran region label only those caves in which manuscripts were found. On such maps, Cave 1 can appear fairly isolated, except for the presence of Cave 2. This picture is somewhat misleading.

The survey of caves carried out in the spring of 1952 revealed several other areas both in the immediate vicinity of Cave 1 and slightly further afield that de Vaux identified (on the basis of material remains) as having been, in his words, “utilized by the community at Qumran.”⁶¹ These sites are marked with white triangles in fig. 5:

⁵⁷ William L. Reed, “The Qumrân Caves Expedition of March, 1952,” *BASOR* 135 (1954) 8–13, at 9.

⁵⁸ De Vaux, “Archéologie” (in *DJD* III), 9: “La grotte avait été entièrement vidée.”

⁵⁹ De Vaux, “Exploration de la région de Qumrân,” 553. See also “Archéologie” (in *DJD* III), 3: “We knew that the Bedouins must not have left much behind, and in fact we found that they worked with astonishing care. The cave had been emptied down to the smallest crevice, and they left behind just two small fragments that we found while examining their rubble.” I am not aware of the identity of these fragments.

⁶⁰ The frequently repeated statement that this cave had been discovered by the Bedouin for the first time just a month earlier, in February 1952 (e.g., de Vaux, “Archéologie” [in *DJD* III], 3), cannot be substantiated. It may well have been visited months, or even years, earlier.

⁶¹ Roland de Vaux, *Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (trans. David Bourke; The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy 1959; London: The British Academy, 1973) xv. Here, de Vaux makes the point by identifying those caves that appeared not to be related to Qumran. See also de Vaux, “Archéologie” (in *DJD* III), 6–13.

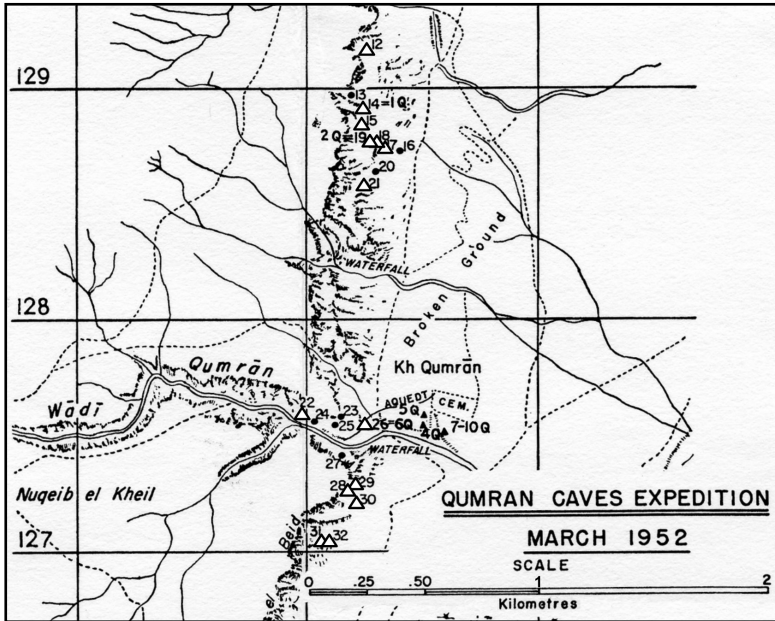


Fig. 5: Plan of the caves in the Qumran area; white triangles mark sites identified by de Vaux as having been “utilized by the community at Qumran”; image adapted from Roland de Vaux, *Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (trans. David Bourke; The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy 1959; London: The British Academy, 1973) plate XL, by permission of the British Academy.

It would thus appear that there are several additional locations in the vicinity of Cave 1 that could have potentially been the source of some of the well-preserved scrolls generally associated with Cave 1. For instance, the survey’s “Cave 12” was found to contain at least one cylindrical “scroll jar” but no scrolls or fragments of scrolls.⁶² Subsequent surveys of the region have located even more caves in the area with Roman-era remains.⁶³

Before leaving the topic of the 1952 survey, I should note that it is only at this point—in 1952—that the conventions for designating the caves with numerals were established. “Scroll Cave 1” or “1Q” is thus a retrospective designation for the provenance of all the “texts from the Judean desert” that came to the knowledge

⁶² See de Vaux, “Archéologie” (in DJD III), 8. Marcello Fidanzio adds the following important observation regarding the survey’s “Cave 12”: “It is noteworthy that a jar base contained linen textiles like those associated elsewhere to the scrolls. This is documented in the photo album kept at the École Biblique” (personal communication; I have not seen this photograph myself). For a recent treatment that emphasizes the relative neglect of these “non-scroll” caves, see Jürgen Zangenberg, “The Functions of the Caves and the Settlement of Qumran: Reflections on a New Chapter of Qumran Research,” in *The Caves of Qumran: Proceedings of the International Conference, Lugano 2014* (ed. Marcello Fidanzio; STDJ 118; Leiden: Brill, 2016) 195–209.

⁶³ See Yuval Baruch, Gabriel Mazar, and Debora Sandhaus, “Region XI: Survey and Excavations of Caves along the Fault Escarpment above Horbat Qumran,” *Atiqot* 41 (2002) 189–98.

of scholars between 1947 and early 1952. Or to put it another way: As of 1952, “the Jerusalem Scrolls” and all material purchased between 1947 and 1952 came to be called material from “Qumran Cave 1.”

There is one final complication to consider: The alleged finder of the first scrolls was not always consistent in his identification of Cave 1. It seems that Muhammad ed-Dhib told multiple conflicting versions of his story. Harding’s published versions of the discovery story seem to rely on interviews with Bedouin sources.⁶⁴ These stories are somewhat vague but not incompatible with the identification of Cave 1 as the place of discovery. In 1957, however, William Brownlee published an account said to have been transcribed from an interview with Muhammad ed-Dhib in 1956, in which several details about the discovery of the scrolls differed substantially from the traditional story.⁶⁵ Although the main discrepancy that drew attention in the 1950s was the different *date* that Muhammad ed-Dhib gave for the discovery, the key difference for our purposes is that his 1956 account problematized the *location* where the first three scrolls were found. In this later statement, Muhammad ed-Dhib described the find spot as “a cave with its entrance open at the top like a cistern.”⁶⁶ As Trever noted in a response article, this description is “clearly not that of Qumrân Cave 1.”⁶⁷ Trever pointed out this and other inconsistencies with earlier accounts and concluded that Muhammad ed-Dhib’s 1956 version of events deserved no credence (Trever judged the earlier oral accounts attributed to Muhammad ed-Dhib to be more reliable). At the same time, de Vaux asserted that the story published by Brownlee could not be correct because de Vaux had himself employed Muhammad ed-Dhib in 1952 and had heard him identify the cave excavated by Harding as the

⁶⁴ See Harding, “Introductory,” 5: “The cave was found early in the summer of 1947 by two Bedu shepherds of the Ta’âmireh tribe named Mohammed edh Dhib and Ahmed Mohammed. The following is a considerably condensed version of their account of how they found it.” See also idem, “A Bible Discovery: Earliest Known Texts of the Old Testament,” *The Times* (9 August 1949) 5.

⁶⁵ William Hugh Brownlee, “Muhammad ed-Deeb’s Own Story of His Scroll Discovery,” *JNES* 16 (1957) 236–39.

⁶⁶ Brownlee elsewhere claimed that the upper entrance to Cave 1 could be entered from above (see William Hugh Brownlee, “Some New Facts Concerning the Discovery of the Scrolls of 1Q,” *RevQ* 4 [1963] 417–20, at 419). But the description “like a cistern” most readily brings to mind Cave 4, which was most easily entered from above. There is, however, conflicting information about whether or not the Bedouin accessed Cave 4 in this way. According to Brownlee, Harding stated “that the ceiling entrance into Cave IV was made by the archaeologists when they excavated the cave, that the Bedouins who first entered the cave gained access through one of the side balconies to which they had to descend over the side of the cliff” (Brownlee, “Some New Facts,” 420). This statement would seem to be contradicted by de Vaux’s report, according to which the Bedouin did indeed have access to the cave through a “chimney” of sorts: “They arranged easier access to the cave by widening the narrow chimney made by the rain at one of the edges of the chamber. They had thus passed very close to the ancient entrance that was filled up and that they had not recognized.” (de Vaux “Archéologie,” in *Qumrân Grotte 4 II* [ed. Roland de Vaux and J. T. Milik; DJD VI; Clarendon: Oxford, 1977] 3–22, at 3).

⁶⁷ John C. Trever, “When Was Qumrân Cave I Discovered?” *RevQ* 3 (1961) 135–41, at 136. Trever was of course aware that the original entrance to Cave 1 was high off the ground, but he was adamant that it was “not at all ‘like a cistern’” (136).

site of the initial discovery.⁶⁸ Brownlee replied with a fairly tepid defense, noting only that Harding's own early accounts also had discrepancies.⁶⁹ There the matter rested, with variations of Harding's version of events going on to become canonical.

Nevertheless, it should be recalled that, as noted above, none of the material that was said to be found by Muhammad ed-Dhib (1QIsa^a, 1QS, and 1QpHab) can actually be connected to the material excavated by archaeologists from the cave we call "Cave 1." The balance of evidence suggests that we should at least be open to the possibility that 1QIsa^a, 1QS, and 1QpHab may very well have come from a different cave or caves.⁷⁰ It is indeed true that some of the other early purchased materials can be connected with confidence to material excavated from Cave 1 under controlled conditions. Yet, the contaminated nature of Cave 1 as an archaeological context, the fact that other disturbed areas nearby yielded scroll fragments, and the fact that still other caves contained empty cylindrical "scroll jars" all indicate that we should perhaps be more cautious about assuming that *all* of the "Jerusalem Scrolls" originated at Cave 1.

■ Conclusions

This investigation has gone some way toward clarifying the history of purchases of scrolls attributed to Cave 1. Some questions remain unanswered (such as the identity of the "fragments" said to have been purchased in 1951, according to the ledger Fields published), but on the whole, the picture of which fragments were bought and which were excavated seems clearer. The question of whether all seven of the well-preserved scrolls on the market in 1947 came from the same cave is less clear. But we are now in a better position to ask: Does this point really matter? Are we not reasonably confident that all these scrolls came from the same general area? Does the *particular* cave really make a difference? At one level, these kinds of uncertainties do in fact complicate those studies that invoke the contents of particular caves as distinct corpora.⁷¹ Those of us who work on ancient book

⁶⁸ See Roland de Vaux, "Les manuscrits de Qumrân et l'archéologie," *RB* 66 (1959) 87–110, at 89: "In 1952 I had as a worker Muhammad ed-Dhib, the Bedouin who had first entered the cave, and I had him tell his story in front of his comrades who checked his account. One cannot reject the testimony of the Bedouins... [nor] the fact that some of the fragments that we recovered from [Cave 1] belong to the manuscripts that were sold by the Bedouins as coming from this cave."

⁶⁹ William Hugh Brownlee, "Edh-Dheeb's Story of His Scroll Discovery," *RevQ* 3 (1962) 483–94, at 483: "Mr. Harding may have such [an interview with Muhammad ed-Dhib] tucked away in his notes, but he has not published it in any recognizable form. Instead he has published two contradictory accounts, and we are not informed which portions of the accounts come from edh-Dheeb himself."

⁷⁰ Fields also reached this conclusion in 2009 (*The Dead Sea Scrolls*, esp. 111–13). It is not clear to me how much impact his arguments have had among scholars of the scrolls. While expressing appreciation for the work that Fields carried out, Taylor, Mizzi, and Fidanio dismiss in a footnote the suggestion of "1Q" scrolls coming from anywhere besides Cave 1 ("Revisiting Qumran Cave 1Q," 322 n. 2).

⁷¹ See, e.g., Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra, "Old Caves and Young Caves: A Statistical Reevaluation of a Qumran Consensus," *DSD* 14 (2007) 313–33.

collections and libraries more broadly would very much like to know exactly which manuscripts were found together.

But this desire may be asking too much. It tempts us to reconstruct beyond what the evidence allows. It also raises the question of how we perceive our jobs as scholars. Is our task to attempt to reconstruct lost archaeological contexts? To determine which of the “Jerusalem Scrolls” really are scrolls from “Qumran Cave 1”? Or does undertaking that kind of exercise serve to gloss over the many unknowns and fail to face up to the fact that the site was disturbed and the archaeological context has been irretrievably lost? Is it instead the job of scholars to remind each other and the public about the fragility of much of what passes as knowledge? From my own experience working with dispersed Christian materials, I am well aware of how important it is to gather as much evidence as possible to try to reconstruct what we can know with confidence about manuscript discoveries. But the trap of *overconfidence*, into which I have fallen more frequently than I would like to admit, seems to be ever present in the world of Qumran scholarship. It is easy to forget just how messy and anecdotal our evidence is. Fundamentally, the kinds of gaps and fissures I highlight here serve to remind us that *a significant portion of these scrolls are plundered antiquities*. We generally use bucolic and romantic euphemisms to discuss the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls—“found by Bedouin shepherd lads” and so forth, but the reality is distinctly unromantic: many of the Dead Sea Scrolls, including some of the most famous ones, are decontextualized products of the antiquities market.⁷² Our knowledge of them has been compromised from the beginning.

⁷² The role of the Ta’amireh tribe of Bedouin in these early discoveries (as something other than naïve herders) requires greater scrutiny. See Morag Kersel, Christina Luke, and Christopher H. Roosevelt, “Valuing the Past: Perceptions of Archaeological Practice in Lydia and the Levant,” *Journal of Social Archaeology* 8 (2008) 298–319, esp. 309–14. In the years leading up to the appearance of the first Dead Sea Scrolls on the market, members of the Ta’amireh tribe had already been associated with the sale of antiquities in Bethlehem. See, for example, René Neuville, “Statuette érotique du désert de Judée,” *L’Anthropologie* 43 (1933) 558–60 and Louis-Hugues Vincent, “Une grotte funéraire antique dans l’ouady et-Tin,” *RB* 54 (1947) 269–82. Indeed, Vincent notes that Neuville’s explorations in the 1930s had already encouraged the Bedouin to search caves for portable antiquities: “The successful prehistoric investigations carried out by Neuville in the caves of the Wadi Khareitoun about fifteen years ago stimulated the excitement of the Ta’amireh Arabs, the semi-nomadic people who occupy the region. The smallest crevices were diligently searched, and remarkable pieces of bronze and pottery began to flow into the clandestine market for ‘antiquities’ in Bethlehem” (“Les fructueuses recherches préhistoriques effectuées par M. R. Neuville dans les cavernes de l’ou[adi] Khareitoun, il y a une quinzaine d’années, stimulèrent le zèle intéressé des Arabes Ta’amireh, semi-nomades qui occupent la région. Les plus minimes cavités rocheuses furent diligemment scrutées et de remarquables pièces de bronze et de poterie commencèrent un jour d’affluer sur le marché clandestin d’«antiques» à Bethléem”) (269). The phenomenon of Bedouin artifact-hunting in the caves of the Judean desert in the 1930s and early 1940s would seem to merit further exploration.