

THE AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY
OF NEW YORK
BROADWAY AT 156TH STREET

Feb 22nd. 1914

Dear Professor Steindorff

It was a very great pleasure to receive your letter of January 31st, and I feel that at last I am making - almost - the personal acquaintance of one whom I have long wished to meet, and to whom I am under many debts of obligation although he may not be aware of it.

As for the actual matter which prompts the letter, the small respect paid to Lower Nubia in the new edition of Bardeker, I was perhaps a little over-zealous for recognition of my favorite and as I always think much-reflected district. For me, as no doubt for you also, the country between the first two Cataracts is full of the most thrilling interest, and I want the world to be awake to it. But of course guide-books have their limitations and you are a much better judge than I of what it is wise to put in them. - I wish I could tempt you to write one of your popular monographs on Lower Nubia and fully illustrate it - I think there is ample material.

I am very much interested in your attitude towards the work of the Nubian Archaeological Survey, and to tell you the truth it was more the omission of this than anything else that prompted

me to write my letter. - I cannot but think that even laymen ought to know something about this and that a representative book cannot afford to omit it. - The subject is difficult enough, and I infer from ^{the} your sentence in your letter that you are not convinced of the exactness or certainty of Reisner's dating. I also, in spite of my great respect for Reisner's work, was long sceptical about his dating. I have been over ~~the~~ much of the ground with him, discussed and debated the principal points, and am at last very nearly converted to his view - yet not so nearly but that a very little positive evidence in the opposite direction would alter my opinion. I have never yet committed myself to discussing the subject in print and shall not be able to do so until I have time and opportunity again to visit the Nile valley and see the whole Nubian collection. - Meanwhile I am "sitting on the fence"; but have very nearly descended on Reisner's side of the fence.

I cannot tell you how much gratification it gives me to see your expedition chase Aniba for its work. The only compunction that I ever felt on giving up my Nubian work at the end of my five

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years appointment was that I was obliged to leave Aniba
unexplored - I always hoped that some scientific expedition such
as your own would take over the site and I could not wish to see
it in better hands than yours. I most cordially wish you all
success in your explorations there.

Apart from our work on the
Romano-Nubian part of the site (the Cemetery, Castle, and town
of Karanog) we did very little at Aniba. In the first season
that I was there I cleared the inside of the half-dozen still
standing brick-pyramids and their wells. From the largest pyramid,
(the one shown in the illustration of the Ausstellung which you
sent me) I recovered a large grave-stela with a long inscription
rather badly carved on white-painted sandstone & part of an
inscribed door-jamb; from the others I obtained nothing but a
few potsherds and two fragments of inscriptions. - The stones are in
the University Museum at Philadelphia.

In the University Museum at Philadelphia are also a number
of small objects (pretty but nothing extraordinary) from some thirty
or forty graves of the New Empire (presumably 20th Dynasty) which
Mr. Woolley excavated during the ^{second} winter that I was at Kharga (1912).

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I think that I can put my hand on an inventory of all the objects from Amibe now at Philadelphia, and will be very happy to send you a copy if it would interest you. - Mr Woolley's notes are in the possession of the Philadelphia Museum; and if they would be of use to you I have little doubt that the Museum would be happy to send them to you - Mr Woolley and I always intended to bequeath them to whoever might be the heirs of the site. There is no general information in them; just plans of the tombs and descriptions of the contents, but they might be useful to complete some details for you.

In our absence during the autumn of 1904 some bad plundering was done by the natives, I think probably under the instigation of the Greek who lives opposite on the eastern bank; and at the same time the tomb of Penno was wrecked as you now see it. - I had kept a guard on the site the whole time at the expense of the expedition but he was terrorised and could not prevent the damage. - The only remedy is, as you know, to completely ^{to} work out a site and leave nothing for dealer or native. If my expedition had been continued I should have worked out every yard of Amibe, as I did of Buben.

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Your expedition would do a great service to history if you would completely work the site of Kasr Ibrahim. I have studied it constantly and closely and love the place (- I know almost every stone there).

The work would not be remunerative but it would be intensely valuable. It is possible that you might repay the expenses of working it by the few ~~&~~ Coptic (and perhaps Nubian, who knows?) grave-stelae from the graves at the foot of the hill. Whoever works the site of Kasr Ibrahim ought certainly also to work the site of Gebel Adda (near Abu Simbel as no doubt you remember); which is complementary to and very closely related in style and character to Kasr Ibrahim. There too the graves of the Christian period might just repay excavation.

I should say (for completeness) that, with Mr Maspero's approval, I took away from Kasr Ibrahim two fine Byzantine capitals which were suffering from the ruthlessness of Cook's tourists. One is in the Cairo Museum, the other at Philadelphia.

If there are any other points of information in regard to the site of Aniba, or any other site that I know, which would be of use in your work I should be most happy to tell you anything that I can. I wonder whether you possess the full series of the

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Reports of the Eckley - B. Cox's Jun. Exped? They make eight vols
in all, the latest ~~two~~ being my two volumes on "Buhen". - If
you were not put on the original presentation - list it was due to an
oversight and I am sure that the President of the University
Museum (Mr Cox himself) of Philadelphia would be happy to
send them to you if you would write to him on the subject.

I am at present, and for at least a year to come, so actively
engaged in reorganising this Geographical Society (- the only
important geographical Society in America) that I cannot go to
Egypt or even to Europe; but I hope that it will not be long
before I have the pleasure of really meeting you and talking
over ten thousand subjects in which we are mutually interested.

With all good wishes

Yours very sincerely
David Randall-MacIver