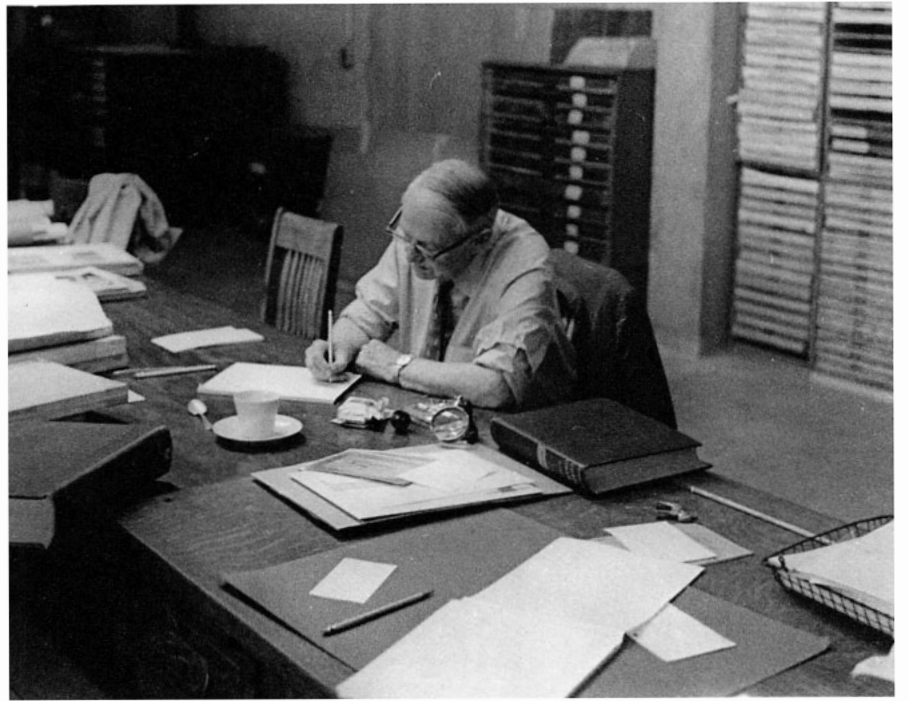


Recollections of an Egyptologist



Dows Dunham



Dows Dunham, 1971

**Recollections
of an
Egyptologist**



Dows Dunham

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

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The design on the title page is reproduced from a drawing of a Hathor cow lying among papyrus plants, which is the central motif on the inner face of a green faience bowl from the burial of a queen of the time of the Kushite King Piankhy, Dynasty 25 (ca. 720 B.C.), at El Kurru. Found by the Harvard University-Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Expedition, 1919. 24.1089. This motif was used by Dows Dunham on the title page of all his publications of the expedition's work in the Sudan.

*To the memory of William Stevenson Smith,
eminent scholar and valued friend of many years.*

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Preface

These reminiscences of the past do not claim to be a connected account of my long association with the Boston Museum and the Harvard-Boston Expedition; such a history has been fully and ably recorded by Walter Muir Whitehill in his two-volume work published in celebration of the museum's centenary, *Museum of Fine Arts, Boston: A Centennial History* (Harvard University Press, 1970). Rather, these are my memories of people, events, and experiences that have seemed to me to be exceptional and sometimes amusing.

The idea for these memoirs was originally conceived several years ago, and they have been written at intervals between other work. My first intention was to have them privately printed for distribution to my friends and colleagues. However, in 1970 Professor William Kelly Simpson, then recently named Curator of Egyptian and Ancient Near Eastern Art at the Boston Museum, kindly suggested that they be issued as a museum publication for somewhat wider circulation. My debt to him for this recommendation is obvious.

To my daughter Philippa D. Shaplin I am grateful for initial editorial advice. My thanks go to two of my colleagues in the Egyptian Department for contributing their skills: to Suzanne E. Chapman for drawing the map of the Nile Valley and to Mary B. Cairns for expert typing. Finally, I am indebted to Barbara Hawley and Margaret Jupe of the museum's Office of Publications for transforming my manuscript and snapshots into a presentable little book.

June 1972

Dows Dunham

Introduction

Friends and colleagues have been urging me for a time to put together some notes about my experiences during a long professional life in Egyptology, both in the field and at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Now, at the age of eighty-two, having published the final volume of reports on the museum's expedition in the Sudan, it seems that the time has come to reminisce, to look back over the fifty-eight years that have elapsed since I began to work in this field in the spring of 1914.

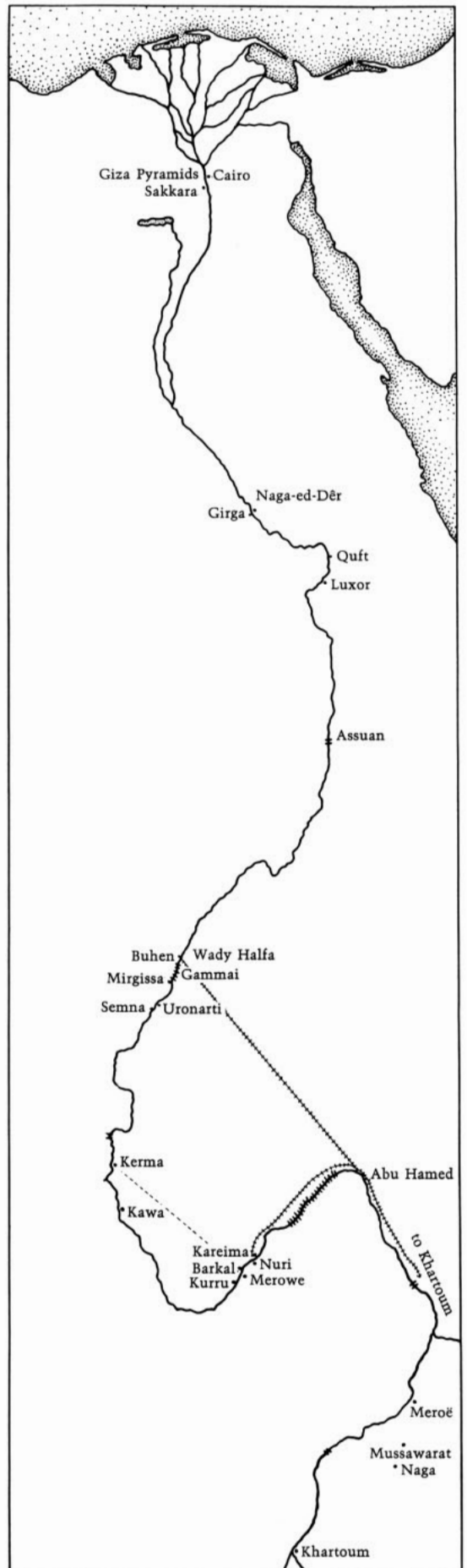
Readers may be interested to learn how I came to be involved in my life's work. When I graduated from preparatory school in 1908, I needed one or two credits for admission to Harvard, and my parents sent me to Europe for a year of further study. I spent the year traveling in France and Italy and took a side trip to Egypt and Palestine, which included a journey on horseback from Nazareth to Damascus (then under Turkish rule). During that year I found myself increasingly drawn to the study of the history of art as I visited museums, churches, and the ancient monuments of Rome as well as the antiquities of Egypt. Thus, when I entered Harvard in 1909 I was especially attracted to the courses offered in this field, in painting, sculpture, architecture, and classical archaeology. I had no specific plan but simply a predilection for the study of art history and criticism. Then, in the beginning of my senior year, my father suffered a serious illness; it was decided that his convalescence would be advanced by European travel and that I should take time out from college to accompany him and my mother on an extended sojourn in Italy, France, and England. It might be considered that this was a sacrifice on my part, but looking back on that experience I am convinced that the decision was a wise one. My interest in the fine arts, stimulated by my courses at Harvard, was developed by this further travel, and I returned to the university in the autumn of 1913 with even greater enthusiasm for my studies than before.

Because of the delay in completing my college work I was able to take a course in the history of Egyptian art offered only occasionally by Professor George A. Reisner. During my visit to the Nile Valley the year before entering college, I had become strongly attracted to Egyptian art, and I welcomed the opportunity to round out my studies in this subject before graduation. The course was small, attended by about fifteen or twenty students. Reisner turned out to be an inspiring teacher, and I became intensely absorbed in the subject. It was a half course ending at midyears, when I graduated (as of the class of 1913) in the field of art history. After the final lecture in his course, Reisner called me into his office and asked me whether I would be interested in Egyptian archaeology as a career. I was, naturally, attracted by the idea but uncertain whether this would be a wise course to follow. "Try it for a year," suggested Reisner, "and see how you like it. It will be a valuable experience, even if you decide not to go on with it. I am returning to Egypt at once to continue my excavations for the Harvard University-Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Expedition. I need assistance, and I believe you might find archaeology to your liking as a career." Before deciding to accept his offer, I consulted my father, whose advice I valued. My parents lived near New York City, and my father went to see Albert M. Lythgoe, then Curator of the Egyptian Department at the Metropolitan Museum, and asked his opinion of Reisner and of his offer. Mr. Lythgoe spoke in the highest terms of Reisner, both as scholar and top-ranking excavator, and said that, if I were contemplating a career in archaeology, I could receive no better training in field work

than with Reisner. On the basis of this favorable advice and my own inclination, I accepted Reisner's offer and he wrote my father the following letter, dated May 19, 1913, from "the Pyramids":

I am very glad to hear that your son still wishes to come out to Egypt. I liked him very much as a student in Cambridge and encouraged him then to make his plans to join the expedition. If he arranges to leave at the earliest possible moment after he has finished his examinations, he will get out in time for the spring season. We usually work the native gangs up to the end of May and he would thus have two or three months of active field experience. After that we are occupied with book work — a side which would not be without value for him. When he has had a couple of months here I have had a chance to talk matters over with him, I may be able to help him to a decision on his future course of study. I will arrange for him to gain a thorough knowledge of the Egyptian monuments and their bearings on the history of art. I am quite sure that whatever he decides to do, a couple of months familiarity with the objective historical methods of the expedition will be useful to him.

It was only years later that I came to appreciate fully the generous advice given by Lythgoe. He had originally worked in the field with Reisner as codirector of the expedition when it was sponsored by the University of California, and as the first curator of Egyptian art at the Boston Museum. When in 1905 the expedition was taken over by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and Lythgoe went to the Metropolitan, there had been no ill-feeling between him and Reisner, the latter retaining for many years a certain bitterness. But I shall not dwell here on the difference between two distinguished scholars of many years ago; for my own part, it suffices to say that I have always felt deep gratitude to Lythgoe for his generous advice to my father and for his unselfish estimate of Reisner's great qualities despite any disagreements there had been between them.



The Nile Valley as far south as Khartoum

Harvard Camp, 1914

In the spring of 1914 I arrived at Harvard Camp, headquarters of the expedition, on the desert hill west of the Giza pyramids. Reisner had already left there for the Sudan, and I was advised to put myself under the direction of his young assistant, Raymond Howe, to learn the ropes. During Reisner's absence Howe was in charge at headquarters, where excavation in the Old Kingdom cemetery of mastabas to the west of the Great Pyramid was in progress under the supervision of the head foreman, Said Ahmed. The latter spoke little English, and in the beginning I did not know any Arabic, but I observed the men at work and was initiated into the methods of excavation and the well-organized system of recording. At this time the workmen were engaged in clearing the area between the rows of tomb superstructures, their chapels, and the burial pits in and around the buildings. The objects that came to light, if small and fragmentary, were brought up to the camp office at the end of the day in baskets, each carefully labeled to indicate the place from which they came. Records were then made of them, which included verbal description, measurements, and drawings. My task was to watch the work in progress, to take notes on the spot, and finally to make the entries in the "object registers."



Giza. Excavations at the West Cemetery.
Basket carriers at the railroad.



George Reisner, ca. 1925.

When Reisner returned from the Sudan, he personally supervised my work, paying special attention to the keeping of the record books. I well remember his insistence on accuracy, particularly in the measuring and drawing to scale of the excavated objects. I still have a vivid recollection of Reisner sitting at his work table, surrounded by notes and papers, sucking on his inevitable pipe, which was usually out or being constantly relit. I would bring him a drawing I had labored over for an hour or so, together with the object itself; he would take one look and say "It's not right, do it again," and would indicate what was wrong. This procedure was sometimes repeated several times until he expressed his satisfaction. After several months of this apprenticeship, I became fairly proficient and was eventually allowed to keep the records without constant supervision. Reisner himself was a tremendous worker and never voluntarily took a day off. We assistants were supposed to work a six-day week and to have one day off for relaxation; this was always the local market day wherever the expedition happened to be working. Excavation was suspended so that the workmen could go to market. If we were at the pyramids we could take the streetcar from Mena House into Cairo, go shopping or sight-seeing or have a meal in a restaurant for variety from the camp fare, which, though good enough, became somewhat monotonous. Reisner was not happy at our stopping work for that one day a week and often grumbled. In my early days I used to give up the day off when he would complain about how much there was to be done and how much he was inconvenienced by my going. He would say "I can't spare you today. You must take another day when we are not so busy," and I would give in. But as I got to know him better, I became a bit more hard-boiled and would find compelling reasons why I had to go into Cairo. When we were digging in the back country or in the Sudan, we often dispensed with the weekly day off, since there was really nowhere to go, and we would use the day when excavating stopped to catch up on the records, which were often considerably in arrears.

Reisner's only home was Harvard Camp. Here he lived the year round in a rather rambling mud and rubble house built, by his own men, round a central courtyard together with supplementary buildings such as the kitchen and quarters for the servants and assistants, darkroom and



Giza, West Cemetery. Looking west from the top of the Great Pyramid. Harvard Camp is in the background.



Riding at the pyramids.



Giza, West Cemetery. Burial pit.

storerooms. With him lived his wife and young daughter, Mary, who had a rather pathetic German governess known as Miss Merkel. The Reisners kept three riding horses, and it was their habit to go for a ride early in the morning before the day's work began. This excursion was primarily for the pleasure of Mrs. Reisner and Mary; the "doctor," as Reisner was generally called, often begged off from accompanying them. Thus, it often fell to my lot to go in his stead, and among my pleasantest memories of life at Harvard Camp are these rides, especially in summer, before the heat of the day. They usually took us out into the desert to the west; they were especially delightful when the night mists still lay over the valley and out over the desert, and the air was cool and fresh. Despite the restricted visibility we never feared losing our bearings, for as the sun rose higher the mists would begin to clear away, revealing the tops of the pyramids, and using these as our guide, we would find our way back to the camp. With the changing conditions of light from dawn through midday to sunset and then to moonlight, the pyramids never ceased to vary. Sometimes during a strong north wind the Great Pyramid would look like a miniature volcano, with a plume of smoke-like mist trailing out from its summit, the result of the cooling of the wind as it rose from the warm surfaces to colder levels.

Reisner's knowledge and experience as an excavator are well illustrated by a little incident that occurred, if I remember correctly, during my first season with the expedition. Like other young people, I enjoyed a jest now and then. One day I picked up in a Cairo antique shop a quite unimportant Roman bronze coin for a few piasters and brought it back to camp in my pocket. The next day, while making notes at the excavations, I found that the men had just cleared a burial pit of considerable depth and were about to enter the burial chamber that had just been exposed. As usual, I went down the rope ladder to have a look at conditions before anything was disturbed. From the doorway I saw that the interior had been partially plundered as usual and that there was a confused mass of debris and a lot of broken pottery. What lay beneath this would only appear as the clearing progressed. Unobserved, I took the Roman coin out of my pocket and flipped it into the chamber, thinking it would be interesting to see how puzzled Reisner would be when it turned up in due course among the contents of the chamber, which were at least two thousand years older than the coin. I should have known better. A day or so later, when the objects from this chamber were brought to the house for recording, sure enough, the coin was among them. But Reisner was not puzzled. He simply looked at me and asked "Did you put this in the chamber?"

The Outbreak of World War I

In August 1914 came the war. Reisner had received much of his earlier education in Germany, had studied in Berlin under such noted Egyptologists as Adolf Erman and Kurt Sethe, and had been intimately associated with Steindorff, Borchardt, and many other German scholars of his generation. He loved Germany and its culture, and the outbreak of the war shook him badly. His work in Egypt for the past fifteen years had led to many friendships with the international group of archaeologists in that field, French, British, American, and Egyptians, and he had a deep affection for and understanding of the Egyptian peasants who had labored for him for many years. I remember how for a time he practically stopped his normal work, how he devoured the newspapers, both Arabic and European, and seized upon every scrap of information

to be gleaned from the various official statements and from long conversations with people in all kinds of positions — government officials, representatives of the various embassies, scholars, and Egyptian notables from up and down the country. He would spend hours pacing up and down his office, sucking his pipe and weighing such evidence as he could gather as to the rights and wrongs of the war. Then, at last, after many days of anguished thought, he made his decision, perhaps the hardest of his life. I remember the tears welling from his eyes as he expressed his judgment that the Allies were in the right and his decision to take that side, which meant for him the breaking of old ties and friendships. And then, having made his decision, he returned to work.

Throughout the war Reisner offered his services as a source of intelligence on Egyptian matters to the British authorities in Cairo. Many were the discussions he had with Egyptians from the provinces and from all walks of life. He was able to furnish the authorities with a great deal of information bearing on the morale and the attitudes of the natives, whom he knew so well. Although, as an American, he was neutral, his help to the Allied cause was of no little value, and he was highly regarded by the British who were at that time to all intents and purposes the rulers of the country.

By the autumn of 1914 World War I had built up into a major conflict. There was much anxiety as to Turkish threats to Egypt and general insecurity in the Mediterranean area as well as in Europe. My family at home became very insistent that I return to America. While Reisner himself believed that the danger to our safety was not great and had no thought of shutting down the excavations, my father, after consulting the authorities in Washington, felt otherwise. After correspondence back and forth, Reisner reluctantly agreed that I should go home and suggested that I take a position at the Boston Museum for the time being. Accordingly, I was given an appointment as an assistant in the Department of Egyptian Art, where I unpacked and recorded the shipment of Egyptian antiquities that had recently come in from the excavations. I did this from the autumn of 1914 through the following summer. By the autumn of 1915 there was no immediate prospect of invasion of Egypt, and I returned to Cairo to resume field work with the Harvard–Boston Expedition.

During the months spent in Boston I had been studying hieroglyphics, using Adolf Erman's *Egyptian Grammar*, which was published in German, and I took the book back with me to Egypt. The customhouse at Port Said, where I landed, was under tight military security, and the examination of arriving travelers very thorough. My passport and other documents were quite in order, however, and as a neutral American, I anticipated no trouble. But when the Egyptian military customs officials came upon Erman's *Grammar*, written in an enemy language, I was immediately under suspicion. I was placed under detention for some hours, and only after my case had come before a somewhat senior British officer was I able to convince the authorities that I was a harmless archaeologist and permitted to resume my journey to Cairo.

That autumn, in the intervals between excavating and recording at Giza, Reisner instructed me in hieroglyphs (using the same grammar book that had so aroused the suspicions of the customs officials at Port Said). These lessons usually took place in the evenings, and although Reisner was a good teacher, study in the evening after normal working hours, when both teacher and student were apt to be tired, was not altogether satisfactory, and my progress was not as rapid as it might have been.

Gammai

Toward the end of 1915 I was sent off to the Sudan. Oric Bates, who had worked with Reisner a few years before, had been carrying out excavations at Gammai, near Wady Halfa, under the auspices of the Peabody Museum at Harvard. For personal reasons he was obliged to return to the United States, leaving his work unfinished, and it was arranged that I should go to Gammai to complete his excavations. On previous trips to the Sudan Reisner had obtained the concession to excavate the site of Gebel Barkal, the great temple in the region of Napata, and he had planned to go to the Sudan to start on that site in January 1916. I was to finish up at Gammai for Mr. Bates, then join Reisner at Halfa on his way south and go on with him to Barkal. This was my first test in working on my own, although I had obtained some proficiency in recording at Giza, and Reisner therefore sent with me Said Ahmed, the head foreman, who was thoroughly experienced as an excavator and in managing the men. He would have been quite capable of running the excavation by himself, but as he spoke little English, I went along primarily to keep the records and to be the white man ostensibly in charge (which was thought to be essential in relations with the largely British Sudan authorities). When we arrived at Wady Halfa, preparations were made for the journey to Gammai, a little less than fifteen miles; this had to be made by camel, as there was no other means of transport. I had ridden a camel as a tourist at the Giza pyramids and thought nothing of it. A journey of this length, however, on a rather inferior mount was a totally different undertaking! The result was that I spent the first two days at Gammai in bed, with aching muscles, quite sorry for myself, and since that experience I have never really enjoyed riding a camel.



Said Ahmed and son.

My few weeks at Gammai taught me more than all my previous months in the field. In the first place I learned to speak Arabic with sufficient fluency for the tasks involved. Said Ahmed, with his long experience and his phenomenal tact, instructed me in field archaeology, and I became proficient much more quickly now that I had greater responsibility. At the same time, there developed a friendship and mutual respect between Said Ahmed and me that we both valued throughout our years together.

Before my departure for the Sudan Reisner had cautioned me about the problem of the censorship of mail, in case I should happen to make a find of significance at Gammai. Because of the war the mails coming down to Egypt from the Sudan were being censored by young British army officers traveling between Halfa and Shellal on the mail steamers, and Reisner feared that they might gossip among their colleagues about tidbits picked up from letters they read. Reisner was always highly opposed to any talk about the finds we were making until the time came for official conversations on the division of finds between our expedition and the Sudan government; public discussion of our results should at all costs be avoided in advance of these conversations. During the course of the excavations we found a bronze chest containing a number of precious objects about which I was anxious to report to Reisner without divulging the matter to the censors. I wrote a letter to him saying I had unearthed an inscription that I found difficult to read. Then, using Egyptian hieroglyphic characters, I wrote a report in English of my find. The censors naturally thought the inscription to be in ancient Egyptian, and Reisner in due course sent me a reply in hieroglyphic, purporting to be a more correct reading of the alleged inscription but actually instructing me in English how to handle the find. The censors never



By train through the Sudan.



The rest house at Merowe.

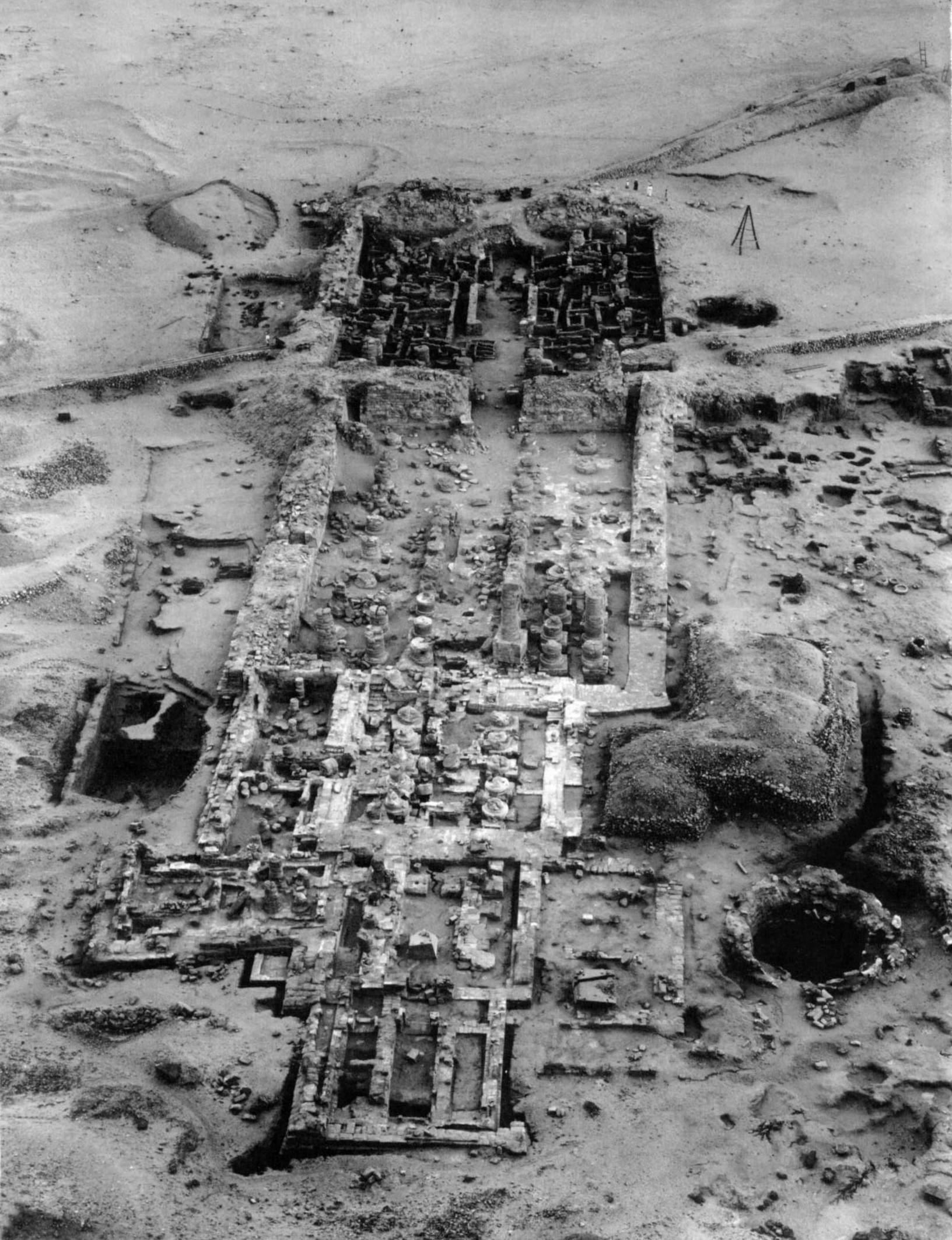
caught on, and we were able to carry on this secret correspondence beneath their very noses!

Gebel Barkal

In January 1916, after completing the excavations at Gammal, I rejoined Reisner at Wady Halfa and continued by train to Abu Hamed and thence on the branch line past the Fourth Cataract to Kareima. This train, which carried both passengers and freight, ran twice a week and took all day to reach its destination. The line ran near the north bank of the Nile, in this stretch quite unnavigable, and constituted the only means of access to the Dongola Reach, where steamers served the area between the Fourth and Third Cataracts. The country was largely uninhabited, and the occasional stations at which we stopped existed primarily for the service of line maintenance, with a water tank and siding and a small crew of maintenance men. This particular trip entailed excessively long stops at each station, for the train carried a barber whose task it was, once a month, to attend to the needs of the railway personnel all along the line. The Sudan Railways had very kindly attached a first-class sleeping car with kitchen facilities for the accommodation of Dr. Reisner's party, and here we spent the night on arrival late at Kareima, the end of the line. Kareima was a fairly large village with shops for the repair and maintenance of the stern-wheel steamers that served the Dongola Reach. A few miles downstream on the opposite bank at a place called Merowe (the name means "ferry" in the local Nubian dialect) was the administrative headquarters of Dongola Province, and here was the residence of Jackson Pasha, the British governor of Dongola. The following morning our party was transferred to the governor's steamer, which took us from Kareima to Merowe. The Reisners and I moved into the very comfortable government rest house, which had been put at our disposal as living quarters. Even in January the weather was quite hot, but the single-story house, with lofty ceilings and open windows high in the walls for ventilation, was reasonably cool except in the middle of the day; there was also a pleasant little garden. And with our own houseboys to cook and care for us, we were quite comfortable.



Mount Barkal seen from the northwest.



The excavations at Gebel Barkal were about a mile from the railroad station at Kareima, and to reach them we used a rather decrepit old motor launch. The daily trip up the river to Barkal took about an hour, but the return journey in the evening was faster because of the fairly rapid current. The focal point of our work was the great isolated Mount Barkal, a mesa-like hill, which was the most prominent feature in the landscape for many miles around. It was known in ancient times as the "Holy Mountain," and against its precipitous east face had been built a series of temples ranging in date from Dynasty 18 to the latter part of the Meroitic Period. Nearby, to the southwest, were two conspicuous groups of pyramids of the Middle Meroitic Period. From 1916 to 1920 the work of the expedition was centered here, especially on the great temple of Amon, known as B 500. About 150 yards farther south was a smaller temple built by Taharqa, the inner part of which was cut in the solid rock of the mountain, giving shelter from the heat and glare of the midday sun, and this we used during this first season as a workroom and a convenient place to eat our lunch, which we brought with us every morning.

When we started excavating at Barkal, we brought with us from Egypt a small group of trained diggers, many of whom had been with the expedition for years; they knew their work thoroughly and were completely trustworthy. But the heavy work of excavation, the removal of accumulated sand and debris (which preceded the more delicate work of exposing the underlying ancient remains), required a large number of laborers and basket carriers, and these were hired locally at relatively small cost. On arrival on the site, we sent out a call to the nearby villages for men. We had plenty of applicants, since we paid good wages, and the people were poor and eager for employment. A hundred or more "locals," as we called them, were engaged, and our foremen entered their names on the payroll. Their faces soon became familiar to our trained diggers, beside whom they worked.

At the end of the first week, when the time came to pay the "locals," we made a quite unexpected discovery. In a number of cases, when a name was called out, an entirely unknown man would step forward to receive the money, and when the paymaster would say that he was not so-and-so, he would reply "No, but I am his master and I take the money." We then discovered that we were dealing with a social system in which slavery still persisted, and that it was a common practice for slave owners to hire out their slaves and collect their wages themselves. Of course, we could not follow this practice ourselves and insisted on paying the worker, his relations with his master not being our business. Inquiry soon elicited the fact that slavery still existed (inherited from the days before the British had taken over the administration of the Sudan), although it was gradually dying out under the wise laws instituted by the new regime. Slavery had been widespread and long-established in the Sudan, and its abrupt abolition would have caused great disruption of the country's economy and great hardship to both owners and slaves. Under the new regime the buying and selling of slaves became illegal; no child could be born into slavery, and every slave had very specific rights to proper care with regard to food, clothing, and housing. If hired out by his master for wages, a slave was entitled to a substantial share in his earnings, and he further had the right, for a modest sum fixed by the government, to buy his freedom if he so desired. Our own experience with the local people showed that there were perfectly friendly relations between master and slave. In many cases we had slaves working for us side by side with the sons of their

masters, and frequently the older slave had a protective attitude toward the young master, helping him and trying to see to it that he was not overworked.

A couple of incidents concerning the local workmen, which took place during this first season at Barkal, have remained in my memory. On one occasion we had been advised to expect a visit from the British governor general of the Sudan, who was to make an inspection tour in the district and wished to visit the excavations. A day or two before the expected visit, the regular train came into Kareima with a flat car carrying an automobile. That afternoon I was working in the excavations surrounded by many of the local workmen, who always sang and made a good deal of noise as they worked. Suddenly, I became aware of complete silence around me. Looking up, I found that all the local people had vanished and the Egyptian foremen were laughing. They began to point in the direction of the station, and I saw a car approaching followed by a cloud of dust. As it drew nearer, I saw it was driven by a British soldier, accompanied by an officer. I went out to meet them, and the car stopped just outside the excavations, steam rising from the radiator cap. As they drew up, the driver asked me if he could have some water for the overheated engine, and I sent off one of the Egyptians to fetch it for him. Meanwhile, I could see the local people peering out from behind rocks at a safe distance, watching the proceedings with great interest but not venturing to approach. The officer told me that this was the governor general's car, and that he was giving the car a trial run to see whether it could be used for the great man, who was to arrive in his special train the next day. When the water was brought, the driver began pouring it into the radiator. At this moment the "locals," who had never seen a car before, came out from hiding and gathered around us, chattering with excitement. I asked the foreman about the change in their attitude. "They thought the car was some kind of devil breathing fire," he explained, "but when they saw it drink water, they knew it was only an animal, and they were no longer afraid of it."

The other incident that I remember vividly provides a colorful example of the involved social relations of the primitive people of the area. A middle-aged man employed by the government as a gardener looked after the grounds of the rest house at Merowe. One morning he came rather excitedly into the living room and planted himself in front of Dr. Reisner, holding a small, bloody object in his hand. "Look at this," he said. When Reisner asked him what it was, he lifted up the side of his turban and revealed that the top of his ear was missing. He then told us that his wife had bitten it off and had made him very angry. Eventually the whole story came out. It appears that a certain widow of the village had a daughter who was unmarried and a burden on her. Anxious to find her a husband, the widow finally, in desperation, married the girl to our gardener, a poor man, but the best match available. Soon after this, there turned up a more suitable young man with better prospects, and mama regretted having arranged the marriage. She told her daughter to get rid of her husband so that she could marry the younger man, and the girl, at her mother's urging, tried to make life as unpleasant for her husband as she could. Apparently the incident of the ear was the last straw, and our gardener, brooding on his wrongs, finally lost his temper and went for his wife and her mother with a knife. The result was that he was arrested for assault and battery and was sentenced to a term in prison, and he thus disappeared from our ken. I felt at the time that it was really mama who should have been sent to jail.

Excavating in the Sudan

During my first winter with the Harvard–Boston Expedition in the Sudan we concentrated principally on the excavation of the great temple of Amon at Gebel Barkal and the two small groups of pyramids to the south and west of the mountain. These stood out conspicuously on high ground, many of them quite well preserved, with small chapels built against their eastern faces. Of Meroitic date, the pyramids had never been seriously investigated, and the location of their burial places was unknown, for they gave every appearance of being composed of solid masonry without interior chambers. The expedition's meticulous and painstaking examination of them revealed their secret. East of each of the chapels there proved to be a cut in the rock containing a stairway that led down to the entrance to one or more burial chambers cut out of the natural rock beneath the pyramid. This discovery led to the excavation of not only the burials associated with these pyramids but eventually of the many tombs at other sites in the Sudan examined by our expedition. (Together these cover the entire history of ancient royal and private tombs from about 800 B.C. to the end of the Meroitic Period in the fourth century A.D.) Thus, the method of attack in uncovering the vast number of burials throughout the Sudan was solved at Barkal in 1916. Preliminary examination made that winter, of the early Kushite site at El Kurru, about fifteen miles southwest of Barkal, and of the great royal site across the Nile at Nuri, about eight miles northeast of Barkal, confirmed our findings, although their intensive excavation had to be postponed to subsequent seasons, for by April the weather in this region became too hot for field work.

The Pyramids at Gebel Barkal.



An Interlude in Chicago

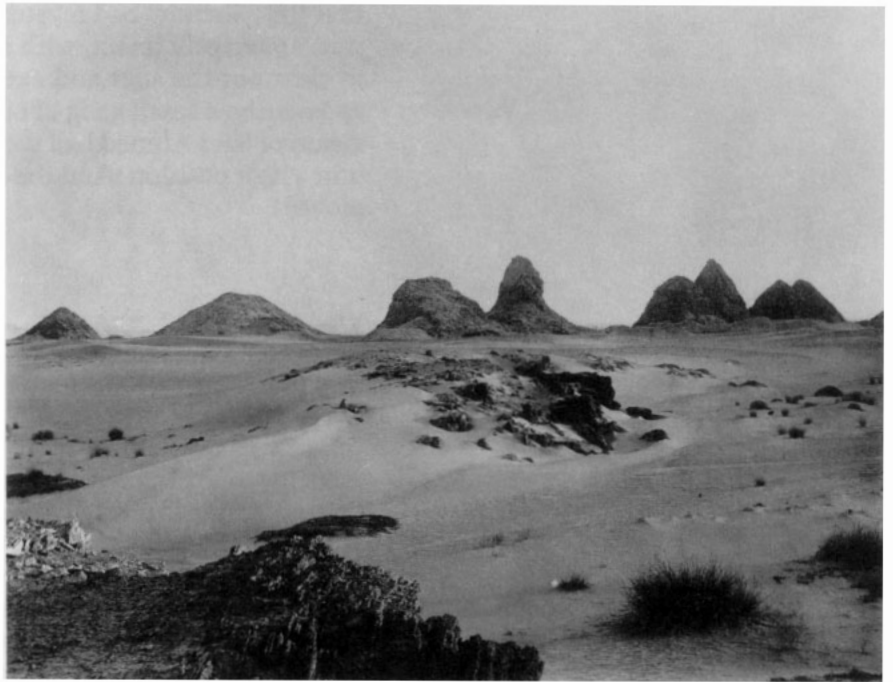
In the summer of 1916 I returned to the Boston Museum, and in September of that year I went to Chicago to study at the Oriental Institute with Professor J. H. Breasted as a special student of Egyptian. While I gained much from the concentrated study of the Egyptian language, I was not happy in Chicago. World War I had been gaining in intensity, and my stay in Egypt and the Sudan, where sympathy with the Allies had been very strong, had greatly affected my own attitude toward the conflict. At this time the atmosphere in Chicago was markedly pro-German, and I found it increasingly difficult to be completely detached from the problems of war and to devote my thoughts to my studies. At Christmas I left Chicago and joined the American Field Service as an ambulance driver in France, and, after the United States entered the war in 1917, I served as an officer with the American army. Thus, from January 1917 until the late spring of 1919 my career in archaeology was suspended.

Return to the Sudan

After being demobilized I returned to Boston briefly and then, in 1919, rejoined the Harvard-Boston Expedition at Gebel Barkal. The early Kushite cemetery at El Kurru had been excavated in 1918-19 while I was still in the service in France. During the season 1919-20 we completed excavation of the temples at Gebel Barkal as well as of the great Kushite cemetery at Nuri. By this time the expedition had set up its camp at Barkal, not far from the great temple. We had tents as sleeping quarters and a larger tent for eating, but the workroom, in which most of the recording was done, was a roughly constructed building of mud rubble, consisting of a storeroom, in which to keep the smaller finds, and a sort of veranda open on the south side, with matting on the floor and a large table on which to keep the records. There I spent much time in drawing, recording, and keeping the diaries up to date.

The veranda gave shelter from the sun and from the prevailing north wind, and when the temperature was high, as it usually was, it was a reasonably comfortable place. I remember an incident that occurred here while I was working late on the records. It was a particularly hot evening, and I was wearing the minimum of clothing, with my bare feet thrust into a pair of Arab slippers. Suddenly, I felt something moving across my instep, and, since I knew that there were poisonous snakes about, my first thought was that one was on the floor. I froze, wondering what I should do. After a moment I again felt a slow movement across my bare instep, and I was now convinced that it was a snake, although I could see nothing from where I sat, and I dared not move. Again came the feeling of movement on my foot. Very carefully I braced my hands against the edge of the table, then with one rapid motion I leaped back and away. At a safe distance I lifted the lamp from the table and looked beneath. There was nothing there except a long, loose strand from the floor matting, which, as I watched, waved gently back and forth in the slight breeze that blew through the veranda from time to time. I have never forgotten that moment, for I had always had an unreasoning fear of snakes ever since the time, as a small boy running barefoot, I jumped down a bank and landed squarely on top of a long, fortunately harmless snake.

The great Kushite cemetery at Nuri lay a mile or so east of the place on



Pyramids at Nuri, looking northwest.

the river where we landed our launch every morning when we came over from the main camp at Barkal. From here we would ride donkeys, first through palm trees near the river and then across a belt of sand dunes to the site. Here stood the large group of pyramids, some sixty in number, the tombs of the kings and queens of Kush from Taharqa to Nastasen (ca. 663–308 B.C.). The normal pyramid, as I have mentioned, had a small chapel on its east face, in front of which was a cut in the rock and a stair descending to the entrance to the burial place under the pyramid. Before we could enter the burial chambers therefore, we first had to locate the stair cut and clear it out, a task that required the labor of a good many men. For this we employed some hundred or so local Sudanese laborers working under the supervision of our skilled permanent staff, with Said Ahmed as head foreman. These local laborers, recruited from the villages in the region, were quite untrained, without education, and very superstitious, but they made excellent basket carriers. They were devout Moslems, dedicated to their local customs and especially to the veneration of local holy men.

There was a certain large, isolated thorn tree in the neighborhood that was regarded as sacred. Anything placed under this tree was untouchable, and it always sheltered a goodly number of objects valuable to their owners, serving as a primitive bank vault or safe-deposit box.

Just east of one of the largest pyramids at Nuri was a monument to a local holy man. Known as a "Sheikh," the monument consisted of a fairly large pile of stones on which were poles bearing little flags of colored cloth. The "Sheikh" was a holy place to the local people, and to tamper with it would have aroused their indignation. Unfortunately, it stood squarely on top of the stairway to this pyramid and thus prevented us from entering the burial chambers. Reisner was puzzled as to what could be done yet dared not interfere with the "Sheikh." Said Ahmed reassured him, however. "Leave it to me," he said. "Just wait a few days and work somewhere else for the present." Shortly thereafter there came a night with no moonlight, and the following morning we saw



Pyramids at Nuri, looking west.

that the "Sheikh" had mysteriously moved about twenty feet to one side, apparently intact, with flags flying as before. We were now able to clear out the stair and excavate the tomb. In the dead of night, apparently, a small gang of our Egyptian workmen under the supervision of Said Ahmed had dismantled the "Sheikh" and re-erected it in a new position. And the local people never noticed that it had been moved!

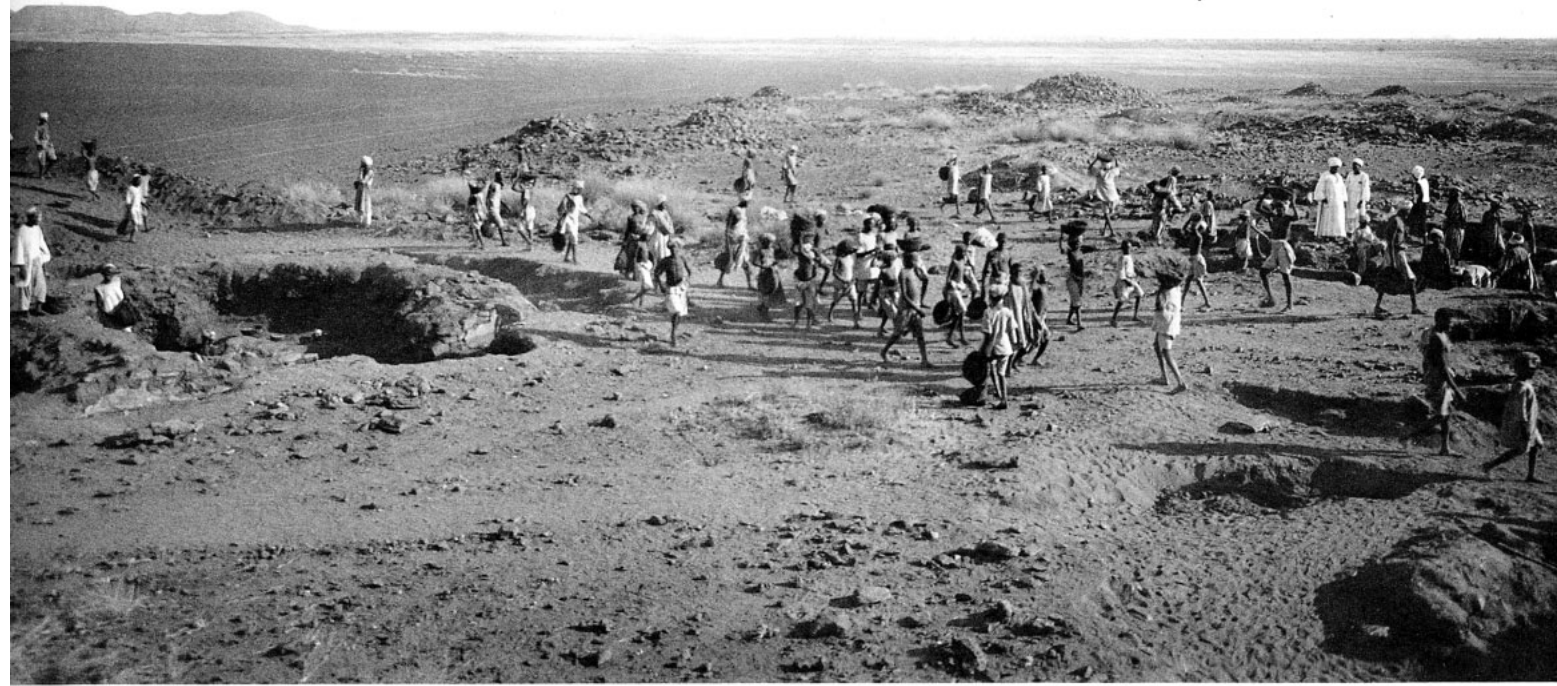
The Qufti Workman

One of the questions sometimes put to me is How much was stolen by the workmen in the course of excavation? During my years of experience in the field with the Harvard-Boston Expedition, I know of no thefts by our own men. In only one case did an object found by us turn up on the market, but I am convinced that its appearance there can be explained in the following way. The excavation of the tomb of King Taharqa at Nuri yielded a very large number of that king's shawabtis (stone funerary figures) — 1,107 in all — of various sizes and types. At the end of the season the shawabtis were laid out on a flat, sandy place beside the camp for sorting and classification prior to packing for shipment. The figures could be easily identified by their inscriptions, and a few years later one of them turned up in the hands of a dealer. It is probable that this one had become buried in the sand and was overlooked in the packing; that after the expedition had left the site, some of the local people discovered it and sold it for what they could get.

Reisner's organization of his Egyptian workmen was, I think, responsible for our freedom from the theft problem. Those who were professional diggers all came from a few families in the village of Quft, in Upper Egypt, whose livelihood was archaeology. As younger members of the Qufti families became old enough, they were taken onto the force on the recommendation of fathers, uncles, and cousins. Under this system the conduct and record of each man were the responsibility of his family, and the family's livelihood in their profession was dependent on their reputation. As an illustration of the effectiveness of this system, I recall a rather tragic incident that took



Shawabti figures from the tomb of King Taharqa at Nuri.



Meroë. Excavating at the West Cemetery.



Meroë. Excavating at the West Cemetery. The workmen's huts are at right.

place while we were working in the Sudan. A young man who had been recently employed was seen by the older men to pick up a small gold object in the course of the digging and secrete it in his clothing. The older men promptly took it away from him and then reported to Reisner, saying "This new boy has been caught stealing from the 'Company' (as they called the expedition). What is your pleasure?" Reisner simply asked to which family the boy belonged, and when they told him, he said, "This is your affair. You decide what to do." The next day the boy was discharged by his own family and given a railroad ticket back to the village, which was a four-day journey from the camp. The elders of his family sent a telegram to the village, saying that the boy had been discharged for stealing from the expedition. When he got home, he was completely ostracized — no one would speak to him or give him anything to eat — and presently he went out into the desert and killed himself. This was certainly drastic action, but it was undertaken by the boy's own people. There is little wonder that under this system theft by our regular men was unknown.

While we were in the Sudan, we employed local people for the heavier dirt lifting. The expedition never allowed these men to take part in the laying bare of valuable finds and as far as possible kept them away when there was a likelihood of important objects being discovered. The clearing of tombs likely to yield objects of value was done solely by our trained Qufti workers and by ourselves, for there was always the chance that, with a large body of local people about, their cupidity might get the better of them. I recall one example of such a situation while we were excavating the great West Cemetery at Meroë in the winter of 1923. One day I was surveying the site, with a couple of local boys as helpers. Several small groups of our Egyptian diggers were working on tombs in scattered places nearby. Presently Said Ahmed walked over to me and said in Arabic "We have found some lemon peel." I looked at him in surprise and received from him a very definite wink. He then walked away without another word, looking back at me over his shoulder. I realized that something was up, and making one more entry in the survey book, I dismissed my helpers, saying that would be all for the day.



Meroë. Deposit of the queen's jewelry in Tomb W5. The skull of the queen's maid is at top left.

I strolled off casually in the direction taken by Said Ahmed, who went down into a hole where two or three of the Egyptians were working. I followed him. The men were crouched down in a small tomb, busily working with knives and brushes. I joined them and watched as they laid bare a number of skeletons and a small deposit of objects, in which the glint of gold was beginning to appear. After a time the situation became sufficiently clear for me to begin taking notes and making preliminary sketches. At the right the principal burial lay in the remains of a wooden coffin, with a necklace of gold beads around its neck. To the left were several other skeletons, one of which had on its chest a bronze mirror that partly concealed a tight little group of jewelry. At this point our Egyptian photographer was sent for, and he took a few pictures while the already waning afternoon light still lasted. When there was insufficient light for further work, we stopped for the night, and two of our most trusted men settled down to keep watch until morning. None of the local people had any idea of what was going on, and the day's work came to an end without their suspicions being aroused. As soon as it was light enough the next morning, the recording was completed, and the contents, placed in covered baskets, were removed to the house for further recording and safekeeping. The tomb where this find was made was the burial under a small queen's pyramid known as W 5, and the deposit of jewelry, originally contained in a cloth bag, had been in the charge of the queen's maid, who was buried with her mistress. It consisted of six pairs of gold earrings, two pairs of gold and carnelian bracelets, and a number of necklaces. Half of this deposit is now in the Boston Museum, and half went to the Khartoum Museum.

Life at Meroë and Naga-ed-Dêr

During a considerable part of winter 1923 Reisner himself was in Egypt, and I was in charge at the site at Meroë, assisted by my wife and a young Bostonian named Amory Goddard. We had built a rough excavating house of fieldstone, roofed with palm logs and palm leaves. The weather was hot and the work was usually dirty, and our favorite relaxation at the end of the day's work, after we had had a bath, was to go riding. Unfortunately, however, we were not well provided with mounts. The expedition had one horse, one donkey, and a hired camel of rather indifferent quality. As all three of us much preferred the horse, we used to take turns on him. The horse loved to gallop, and his rider would dash about, running circles around the others. The donkey was quite a good one and would trot along at a fairly steady pace. But the camel, who was rather lazy, was difficult to urge into a slow shuffling trot; this was only slightly less uncomfortable than his usual walk, in which one was thrown forward and back in a distressing manner. Really good riding camels are rare, but if one is lucky enough to find one that moves at a slow trot, it is bearable and one can get accustomed to it. Needless to say, the one whose turn it was to ride our camel was distinctly out of luck.

This particular camel had one blind eye, which normally did not much matter. When not wanted, he was hobbled and turned loose to graze, mostly on the leaves of the many thorn trees that grew all about. His owner, one of our local workers, would go out and catch him when wanted and ride him into the camp. One evening when he was being brought in, he promptly ran into a tree and then into a stone wall. It



Camp at Meroë.



Dows Dunham's turn for the camel.

then appeared that he had run a thorn into his good eye and was totally blind. We thought this would be the end of his usefulness for us, but his owner said "Oh no, he will be all right in a day or two. If you will give me a cigarette, I will cure him." I gave the man a cigarette, which he promptly put in his mouth and chewed up. Then he pulled the camel's head down and spat the contents of his mouth into the camel's eye. Whereupon the beast let out a roar and dashed away into the desert. Two days later, sure enough, he had recovered his eyesight, and we had no further trouble with him.

My last season of excavating in the Sudan was that spent at Meroë in the winter of 1923. After a brief vacation that summer, I was sent by Reisner to a site in Middle Egypt called Naga-ed-Dêr, where the expedition had worked previously on tombs of the Predynastic and Old Kingdom periods, in order to examine graves and rock-cut tombs of the First Intermediate period. The place lay on the east bank of the Nile, opposite the provincial town of Girga. There was no village very near to our camp, and my wife, who assisted me in the recording, and I were there alone, except for the workmen and house boys who looked after our wants. The work was in scattered places at some distance from our camp, and I used to go off each morning either on a donkey or on foot to the excavations, returning in the evening in time for a bath before supper.

One day I was taking measurements inside a rock-cut tomb at the bottom of a shallow pit in the floor, when suddenly something hit me a heavy blow on the shoulder. A large piece of stone from the roof had fallen, and had I not been wearing a rather solid sun helmet, it would have landed on my head and probably killed me; as it was, the helmet had deflected the blow, and I was not seriously hurt. The men pulled me up out of the pit, and I lay down for a time to recover from the shock. Then I continued my work. That evening, while telling my wife of my narrow escape, I fainted, due to delayed shock, perhaps, and to the realization of how close I had come to being killed.

It was an almost daily occurrence at Naga-ed-Dêr for the local peasantry to come to our camp seeking treatment for their ailments. They had an almost childlike faith in the wisdom of white people, and although neither my wife nor I had any medical knowledge, they preferred to seek help from us rather than to go to the Egyptian government doctors at the hospital at Girga across the river, where they would have to pay. We had a few simple remedies such as aspirin, epsom salts, disinfectant ointments, adhesive tape, and bandages, and we could often help them with their cuts and their stomachaches and headaches. Early one morning, before I went off to the excavations, there came a man with a bundle of rags in his arms. He told me his baby was sick and asked me to cure it. Then he unwrapped the rags and exposed a small baby. One look told me that the infant was seriously ill, too weak even to cry. "Your baby is very sick, and I am not a doctor," I said to the man, and I pointed across the river to the hospital at Girga. "Take him to the doctor at the hospital or he will surely die." The man thanked me politely and went away, and presently I got on my donkey and started off to the excavations. On the way I passed the man with his bundle of rags walking in the opposite direction from the hospital. Many of these people had a deep-seated fear of hospitals and their doctors and would not willingly go to them. I never saw this man again, but I am afraid that his child must have died.

The following little anecdote was told about Reisner while he himself

was working at Naga-ed-Dêr; it well illustrates his occasional touches of humor. He had received a letter from two Yale professors who were in Egypt on sabbatical leave, asking if they might come to visit the excavations. Reisner replied that he would be glad to welcome them, and he instructed them to take a certain train from Cairo and to get off at the station of Girga, on the west bank of the Nile opposite Naga-ed-Dêr. There he would have them met and conducted by boat across the river to the camp. Since he did not want to take the time to meet the train himself (it was frequently quite late), he delegated two of his most intelligent men to meet them. As the workmen spoke no English, he gave them specific instructions and coached them carefully beforehand. When the train pulled in at Girga, only two obviously European passengers got off. Our two men approached them respectfully and saluted, and then one of them said in very distinct tones "TO HELL WITH YALE!" No more had to be said; the welcoming committee of two was clearly identified as coming from Harvard Camp, and the visitors, though somewhat startled at the greeting, put themselves willingly in the hands of our guides and were conducted to Reisner.

Mariette's House, Sakkara

Shortly after my work at Naga-ed-Dêr, in the late autumn of 1923, it was arranged that I should be lent to the Egyptian government to assist Cecil Firth in his work at Sakkara. At the time we had two young children, a daughter of about two and a half and a son of sixteen months, who had been with their grandmother in London. We were able to have them with us at Sakkara, where I stayed for about two years, for we were given adequate quarters in Mariette's house (named after Auguste Mariette, founder of the Antiquities Department in 1858) close to the excavations in the Step Pyramid area.

The area was sandy desert, and it was therefore impossible to take the children out in the usual baby carriage. So we hired a donkey and had made a wicker pannier with a seat on each side of the donkey's back, with a small Egyptian boy to look after the donkey. The two children would sit in the panniers, and we would put a stone in the pannier with our son to balance the weight of his heavier sister. Then the children would be taken off behind one of the dump heaps from the excavation, out of the wind, where they would play. It was here that they would find odd things to amuse themselves with, sometimes human bones or other fragments discarded from the excavations. I have often wondered since, when my daughter developed an interest in archaeology, whether the unusual toys with which she and her brother used to play had had a subconscious influence on her tastes. On other occasions the children would play in the shade at the entrance to one of the famous tombs at Sakkara, which was frequently visited by groups of tourists. To the vast entertainment of the tourists, a small boy, just beginning to talk, would take over from the guide and point to some of the reliefs in the tomb of Ti, saying "Man" or "Donkey" and the like.

During my stay at Mariette's house an incident occurred that illustrates the tremendous hold of the Mohammedan religion on the Egyptian peasants with whom we came in contact. One of our house boys, a lad of about eighteen, had the duty every evening of carrying the slops out into the desert to be buried. One night he returned from this errand very much agitated and told me that he had been bitten by a snake and was going to die, and he showed me his bare foot, where there was a small

red spot. I asked the boy if he had seen the snake, and he said that he had not, for it was too dark, but the bite was very painful, and he knew his hour had come. I told him I would take him to the hospital, but first I would give him a drink of whiskey to make him strong till I could get him to the doctor in Cairo with my car, a trip of some eight miles. The boy replied that he could not drink whiskey, as it was against his religion, but I told him he must or he would die. I am quite sure he believed me, but he still refused, saying "If it is God's will, I must die, but I cannot do something prohibited by Allah." I got him in the car and drove him to the hospital in Cairo, where they gave him an anti-venin injection. In a few days he recovered, for it proved to be only the sting of a scorpion, which, though very painful, is seldom fatal to a person in normal health. Nevertheless, I was greatly impressed by his faithfulness to his religious beliefs.

Speaking of scorpions, I recall another incident that occurred later on — in 1924, I think — at Sakkara. A boy aged perhaps twelve from the nearby village, who was employed as a basket carrier, was stung by a scorpion in the small of the back. The creature had crawled out of the basket of dirt that the boy carried on his shoulder. A sting in such a location on a boy of this age could easily be fatal. It so happened that I had provided myself with antivenin serum in case my own children should be stung, and I was able very promptly to inject this into the child. I then took him to the local doctor for further precautionary treatment, and he went home to his village and I saw him no more. Some ten years later on a brief visit to Sakkara to see how the work there was progressing, I was walking alone across from the excavations to the house that served as headquarters when I noticed a man coming across the desert in such a way as to intercept me. I did not know him, but he was a large man, rather shabby looking and apparently not recently shaven, and I said to myself "I don't much like your looks." The man came directly in front of me and planted himself in the path facing me, so I stopped and looked at him not too cordially. "Are you Mr. Dunham?" he asked. "Yes," I replied, "what do you want?" He then reached out, seized my hand, and kissed it. "Why did you do that?" I asked. "You saved my life, and I wish to thank you," answered the man. "I am the boy that was stung by the scorpion, and you gave me medicine so that I did not die."

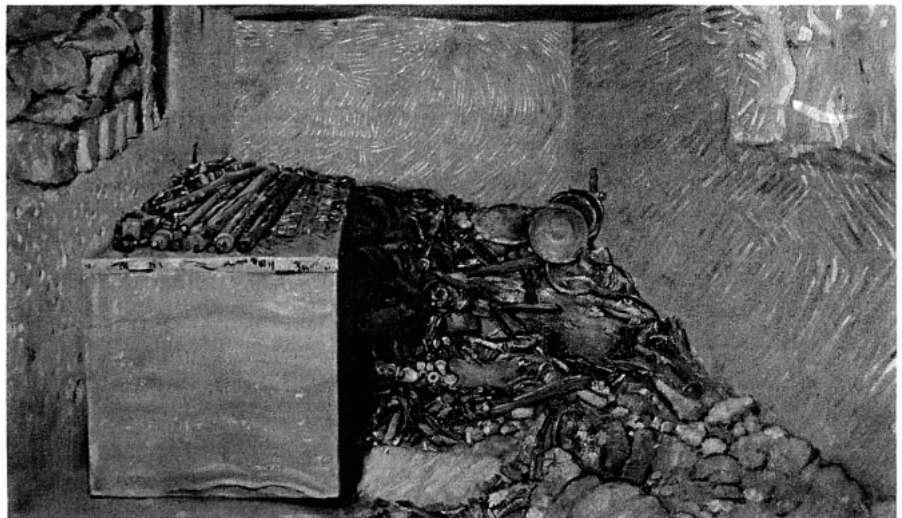
During my second year at Sakkara, I worked partly at Dahshur, a few miles south of Sakkara, where the Egyptian government was excavating the Mastabet-el Faraoun under the supervision of Gustave Jequier. I had a Model T Ford car in which I went to the site over the desert. There was no road, but I was able to work out a route that, with a little practice, usually obviated getting stuck in the sand. Occasionally, however, I would get stuck, but since the workmen at either Sakkara or Dahshur were within hailing distance, it sufficed for me to blow my horn and wave to have a few men come running to push me out, and the delay was not serious. I used the car also, from time to time, to drive to Giza, Cairo, or Lisht, where the Metropolitan Museum was digging under the supervision of Ambrose Lansing. The roads were quite passable, being built on the tops of irrigation embankments through the cultivation, but they were of single track width, and passing presented a problem. One day my wife and I drove over to Lisht in the afternoon for a visit with the Lansings, to see their dig and to have supper with them. Returning about 10 P.M. along the dike road, my headlights picked up a group of men lined up across the road with guns pointed at the car, and so we drew up in front of them. They were the

country police, without uniforms but wearing official arm bands to indicate their authority. Their leader came forward and said he wanted the license number of the car. When I said "There it is, read it," he replied "I cannot read, tell it to me." So I told him the number, and he went off down the embankment, leaving his men still pointing their guns at us. Presently he came back, called off his men, and said we could go on, but he gave no explanation. The next day we read in the newspaper that the sirdar, the commander in chief of the Egyptian army, had been shot in Cairo and that the murderers had got away in a car, the license number of which had been taken. That night every car moving throughout Egypt had been stopped by the police in the attempt to catch the culprits. As far as I know, however, they were never found.

Another episode involving the country police had its comic side. One night one of the Egyptian draftsmen at Sakkara was very severely burnt attempting to light a primus stove, and I was asked to rush him to the hospital in Cairo. I took with me the head guard of Mariette's house to tend the man on the way to the city, and about midnight we duly delivered him to the hospital and started back to Sakkara. Once again we were stopped on the dike road by the police. They said they were looking for a stolen camel! The head guard of Mariette's house then gave them a piece of his mind in no uncertain terms. "You idiots! How do you think we could be concealing a camel in this little car. Look for yourselves, since you are so stupid as to imagine such a thing!" The police retired, looking rather sheepish, and we went on home.

A Secret Tomb

In 1925 the expedition made what proved to be one of the greatest discoveries ever made at Giza. This was the secret tomb of Queen Hetep-heres. When the tomb was first discovered, Reisner was in Boston. The hundred-foot shaft leading to the small burial chamber having been cleared, it was decided that the chamber, which was filled with a deposit of great complexity calling for prolonged work of the most delicate nature, could not be dealt with until Reisner himself returned from America. At this time I was living with my family in a rented house in the Cairo suburb of Maadi, having just completed my tour of duty at Sakkara for the Egyptian government.



Giza. The tomb of Queen Hetep-heres when first opened.
(Painting by Joseph Lindon Smith.)

When Reisner returned to Giza and inspected the deposit, he realized that the process of examining the contents of the chamber would require many months. First of all it would be necessary to have plenty of light so that photographs could be taken. The first step, therefore, was to install an electric light plant, for it was not possible in a small chamber at the bottom of such a deep shaft to take satisfactory pictures by reflected sunlight (i.e., using two mirrors, one to throw light down the shaft, and the other to reflect the beam into the chamber). After some delay a motor generator was set up near the mouth of the shaft, sufficient to supply four 1,000 candlepower bulbs. But since the heat generated by even one lamp in such a confined space would make work in the chamber unbearably hot, it was also necessary to devise a system of ventilation: an electric fan drawing hot air from the chamber through a metal tube and allowing cool air to come down the open shaft to replace it. This worked out very well, and during the many hours a day that we worked down there we never suffered unduly from the heat. As a matter of fact the temperature in the chamber varied but little, running 80 to 85 degrees almost constantly. We also installed a windlass at the top of the shaft with a wire rope from which was suspended a wooden seat. Thus, two or three men manning the windlass could lower us down the shaft and raise us up again with relative ease. While these preparations were under way, I returned to the expedition to assist Reisner in the work, although I continued to live at Maadi with my family, commuting daily back and forth in my Ford car.

The clearing of the burial chamber of Queen Hetep-heres was, as we had foreseen, a lengthy process. It was possible for only one or two people to work in the confined space, every square foot of which was covered with the deposit. On and around the great alabaster sarcophagus lay the objects that had been placed in the tomb, a mass of gold-cased wooden furniture, fallen apart, together with stone vessels, pottery, and other funerary equipment in various states of decay. The burial was entirely unlooted and was the oldest royal burial that had ever been found undisturbed, its condition being the result of natural decay over a period of over forty-five hundred years.

One problem that became increasingly annoying during the early months of our work in the tomb was fleas. The windlass at the top of the shaft by which we were lowered and raised to and from the work below was manned by a couple of our workmen, so that we were in constant communication with them and with the surface. In the spring and early summer the men were bothered by fleas, and from time to time these would fall down the shaft. Thus, it was not long before we found the accumulation of these creatures in the chamber a serious irritant. The problem was eventually solved when we purchased a supply of flypaper that we spread out on any vacant space in the tomb every evening, when we stopped work for the day. Once we had departed, the fleas that had not ensconced themselves on our persons would hop about in the chamber and get stuck on the flypaper. The next morning, when we went down, we would count the bag of fleas, with now and then a fly or two for variety.

We were still in the early stages of the clearing process when an American admiral came to call on Reisner. I was alone in the chamber at the time, while Reisner himself was working in the camp office. A note was sent down to me asking me to show the visitor the tomb. I sent up word to the men manning the lift to send the guest down to me and then I placed a small box in the cleared area, which was very limited. When the admiral arrived, I greeted him and said "If you will

just sit on this box, I will explain things to you." He sat down and looked around him, then suddenly stretched out his hand to pick something up. I grabbed hold of his wrist and said "Don't touch!" He looked very surprised and annoyed — he was obviously not accustomed to being so sharply addressed by a very young civilian — and I had to explain to him that if anything were moved or disturbed before it was properly recorded, it would be destroying evidence that might prove of real significance. He then said that he wanted a souvenir of his visit, so I handed him a little piece of natural stone lying in a corner, which had come from the filling of the shaft, a fragment of no possible archaeological importance, and he went away rather dissatisfied. Insofar as possible we tried to avoid having visitors in the tomb except for an occasional professional colleague who would know how to behave.

We had to be extremely careful, ourselves, of how we moved about. In the course of the four and a half millennia during which the deposit in the tomb had lain undisturbed, the natural processes of decay had caused the items of furniture to slowly fall apart and had led to a surprising state of instability. We soon learned that abrupt movements and loud sounds had to be avoided so that air currents in the chamber should not be set up. I remember once quite early in the work, while Reisner and I were together in the tomb, I made some remark that he found amusing, and he let out one of his hearty laughs. Instantly, there was a slight rustling noise as a fragment of sheet gold at the back of the chamber slid down to a lower position as a result of the vibration of air set up by the noise.



Dows Dunham at the official opening of the sarcophagus of Queen Hetep-heres, March 1927.

Well on in the second season of our labors in the burial chamber the time came for which we had all been waiting. We had cleared away all the beautiful objects that had been placed in the tomb to accompany the queen to the next world, and the chamber was at last empty except for the great alabaster sarcophagus, its lid still in place. This was now to be opened, and we were to see the queen's mummy, together with jewelry and regalia. On March 3, 1927, a distinguished company assembled one hundred feet underground. The American ambassador, one of the king's chamberlains, the director general of antiquities, and the chief inspector of antiquities for the Giza area were present, as well as Reisner, his two assistants, and head foreman. At a nod from Reisner, the jacks that had been placed for the purpose began to turn. Slowly a crack appeared between the lid and the box. Little by little it widened until we could see into the upper part of the box; nothing was visible. As the lid rose higher we could see further into the interior and finally to the bottom of the box. The sarcophagus was empty! Not a word was spoken, but astonishment and disappointment pervaded the chamber. Then Reisner turned and looked at the plastered niche in the west wall. What lay behind it? We had not long to wait for the answer. When the plastered blocking had been removed, we saw a low but deep cavity in the rock in which stood a plain, square, alabaster box. And when it in turn was opened, it was seen to be divided into four compartments containing all that will ever be found of the mortal remains of Queen Hetep-heres, four packets of her viscera, which, according to Egyptian custom, had been separately embalmed and deposited in a Canopic chest. (In *The Egyptian Department and Its Excavations*, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 1958, pt. 4, pp. 61–63, an explanation is given of the mystery surrounding the disposal of the queen's mummy.)

The examination, dissection, and recording of this unique burial chamber occupied Reisner and me the best part of two years, and the reconstruction of the furniture and other objects was made possible

only because every move was meticulously recorded by notes, drawings, and photographs made from day to day on the spot. Perhaps the most important result of this work was the recovery of a number of pieces of furniture such as had never before been found. They had been made of wood, which, for the most part, was so completely decayed as to be useless, but all had originally been covered with heavy sheet-gold casings, and these, though somewhat torn, allowed us to recover the form and exact dimensions and construction of each piece. By a process of trial and error we were able to make facsimiles of each object in new wood to the exact form of the originals; the original gold casings were then applied to the facsimiles, and in this way we achieved precise reconstructions.

One of the finest pieces of furniture in the tomb was the queen's carrying chair. The back had been decorated with hieroglyphic inscriptions, giving the name and titles of the queen, and it was from these inscriptions that we were able to discover the ownership of the tomb. They had been beautifully made of gold hieroglyphs, about as thick as a five-dollar piece, inlaid into strips of ebony. While the wood had completely decayed, the little gold signs lay in the original order so that the inscriptions could be read quite clearly. Each was perfectly preserved, and when we came to examine them carefully, we found interesting evidence of the dishonesty of the ancient craftsman who had made the chair during the Fourth Dynasty. Every single sign, beautifully modeled on the surface, was intended to have a smooth flat back for inlaying in the original wooden panel. But in each case a bit of gold had been gouged out of the back by the craftsman who had the task of setting it in place in the wood. One could see quite clearly how the man, having fitted each sign in the wood, had surreptitiously stolen a bit of gold from the back, just before the final gluing into place. More than four thousand years later this chicanery was revealed!

Eventually the reconstructed furniture, covered with the original gold casings, was placed on exhibition in the Cairo Museum, and replicas of the major pieces, covered with modern gold leaf, were later made for the Boston Museum. (A detailed account of this remarkable find has been recorded by Reisner in a series of articles in the *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts* (1927–28) and in a detailed scholarly report by the late William Stevenson Smith in *Giza Necropolis*, vol. 2, *The Tomb of Queen Hetep-heres*, Harvard University Press, 1955.)

Unwrapping Mummies

In 1923 I worked for a few months at Sheikh Farag, where we were clearing a cemetery of the First Intermediate to Middle Kingdom period. The site was a provincial one, and the people whose burials we were investigating were relatively poor. We found a number of mummies, often rather badly preserved, and we unwrapped a few of these in order to study the methods of embalming. Here we were able to see how the ancient undertakers did a cheap job in contrast to the meticulous and time-consuming embalming of the rich nobility and royalty, whose entire bodies, including flesh, skin, hair, and fingernails were well preserved, and whose features were often recognizable. When these provincial mummies were opened, we found a skull, some of the larger leg and arm bones, a bundle of rib bones, a long wooden stick, and a number of stones, all wrapped up to give the appearance of a complete mummy of the proper size, form, and weight, but almost certainly not

the complete skeleton of any particular individual. Undoubtedly, the undertakers simply pickled the bodies en masse to remove all the flesh parts, picked out a few bones more or less at random, and made up a suitable parcel on which the identification of the dead person could be inscribed. The finished mummy would then be returned to a family who would never know that they had been cheated.

Return to Boston

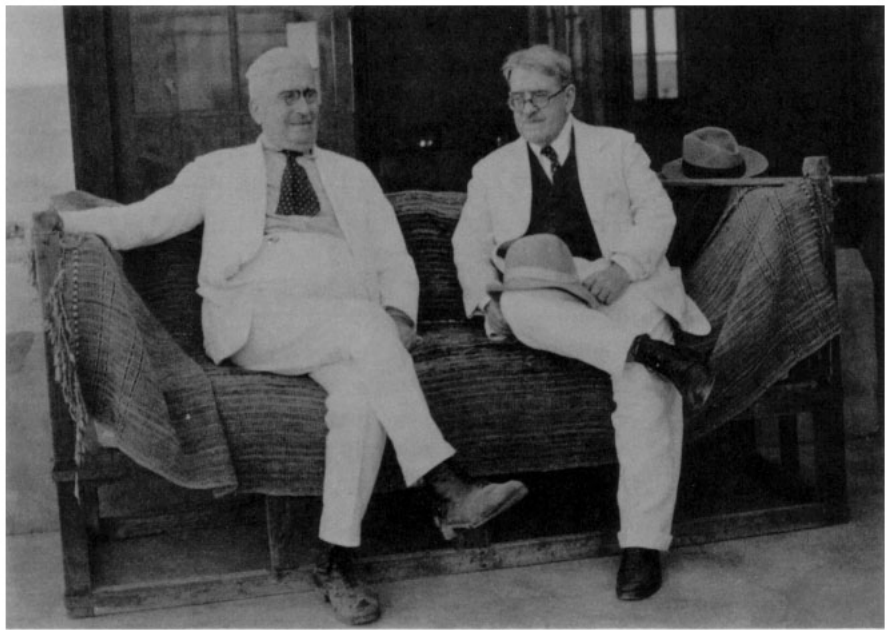
In 1927, after two years of excavations at the tomb of Hetep-heres, it was necessary for me to give up my work in Egypt and return permanently to the United States. The time had come to consider the education of my children — now three in number, ranging in age from two to six — and there were no suitable schools for them in Egypt.

The growing Egyptian Department at the Boston Museum badly needed a permanent, trained, resident official. While Reisner himself held the position of curator until his death in 1942, he was seldom able to leave his primary work in Egypt, and the department had been cared for too long by temporary incumbents with other obligations, such as L. Earle Rowe (who had been appointed to the directorship of the Museum of the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence), Lyman Story, registrar of the museum, and Ashton Sanborn, secretary of the museum. I was therefore appointed assistant curator, and I remained with the department until my retirement in 1956, becoming successively, associate curator, and after Reisner's death, curator. On my retirement at the age of sixty-five, the curatorship was taken over by the late William Stevenson Smith, while I received the title of Curator Emeritus and continued working at the museum on the publication of the Harvard-Boston Expedition's excavations in the Sudan.

Professor Steindorff

Earlier in these memoirs I spoke of Reisner's decision at the outbreak of World War I to espouse the Allied side in the conflict, and how this meant, at great cost to himself, the severing of old and valued friendships with his colleagues in Germany, where he had received his early training. Perhaps the most intimate of these friendships was that with Professor Georg Steindorff, director of the Egyptological Institute at Leipzig. He and Reisner had been students together in Germany in the 1890's, and later in Egypt, about 1910, they had excavated side by side at Giza near the Great Pyramid. All through the war years there had been no communication between them. Then in 1927 they met once more, down in the tomb of Hetep-heres. No word was spoken of the past; there was just a firm handshake to symbolize the renewal of a comradeship that had developed through shared scholarly interests.

At this time I did not myself know Steindorff personally, but some years later I met him in Leipzig and liked him enormously. Still later I came to know him even better and was privileged to be of some service to him. Steindorff was part Jewish, and when the Nazi regime came to power in Germany, he was forced to flee the country. Leaving behind all his possessions except his scientific library, he came to America as a refugee and joined his son in Los Angeles. In great financial straits, he attempted to make a living by writing and by lecturing in museums and universities.



Georg Steindorff and George Reisner at Harvard Camp, ca. 1938.

In 1941 I was able to arrange a lecture for Steindorff at the Boston Museum and invited him to stay at my home for a few days beforehand. The day before his lecture, while we were sitting together in my office, he was suddenly seized with a serious heart attack and collapsed. We sent a call to the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital near at hand and were fortunate to have it answered by Dr. Eugene Eppinger of their staff, a highly qualified heart specialist, who was fluent in German and capable of great understanding and sympathy. After a preliminary examination of Professor Steindorff, who seemed to be only semiconscious, Eppinger told me that the professor was in very serious condition, and that he would call an ambulance and take him to the hospital. Steindorff heard this and appeared very distressed, exclaiming "Oh, no! Please take me to your house." The doctor then drew me aside and asked "Can you possibly manage? I will get you a good nurse, but it is very important in such a case that the patient be kept as happy as possible. It could easily make the difference between death and recovery." Faced with this alternative, I had to make a quick decision. I called my wife, who agreed that Steindorff should stay with us. The professor was then brought to our house by the doctor himself, who remained with us until the arrival of an excellent nurse, who fortunately also spoke German.

There ensued several days of anxiety, during which Dr. Eppinger came daily, sometimes twice a day. Then, one evening, after examining the patient, the doctor said to me "It looks bad. I don't think he will pull through. Has he any family?" When I told him that Steindorff's wife was in California, staying with their son, he announced "You had better send for her, and she had better take a plane." We telephoned Los Angeles, and it was arranged that Mrs. Steindorff should arrive in Boston the following evening. The next day, after the doctor had examined the patient, he inquired whether Steindorff's wife was coming. When I told him she was on the way, he said "Steindorff has taken a turn for the better and may pull through, but he must not be excited and therefore must not see his wife for the present." A friend in Cambridge — a wonderful woman — Elsa Bengstrom Uhlich, wife of a Harvard philosopher, very generously agreed to accompany me to the airport to meet Mrs. Steindorff and to take her into her home for the

time being. Poor Mrs. Steindorff was naturally eager to go to her husband, but when the matter was explained to her, she was very brave and agreed to wait until the doctor thought it safe for her to see him. In a day or two, after his visit, Dr. Eppinger said to me "Things are looking better, and I think we can risk telling Steindorff that his wife is here. Come with me and we will tell him." The professor was lying in bed with eyes closed, but when we entered he opened one eye and exclaimed "Oh, have you come back, Doctor?" "Yes," replied Eppinger, "I have some good news for you." For a moment Steindorff was silent; then, with a twinkle he asked "Is Hitler dead?" "No," said the doctor, "your wife is here." After a pause Steindorff asked "Does that mean I am dying?" "No," rejoined the doctor, "it means that you are going to get well."

So it proved to be. Mrs. Steindorff moved from the Uhlich's in Cambridge to our house. After two or three weeks the professor was able to move to a nursing home for further convalescence and eventually to return to California in easy stages, stopping over in Chicago with colleagues at the Oriental Institute. I must add to this happy conclusion an acknowledgment to professional associates, both in New York and Chicago, who generously came forward with financial assistance toward expenses incurred by Steindorff's illness. Dr. Eppinger was more than generous where his own services were concerned, but there were also the costs of the private nurse, the nursing home, and the journey back to California. It is a tribute not only to Professor Steindorff's eminence, and the high regard in which he was held by the scholarly world, but also to the generosity of his many admirers.

A Visit to Egypt

When I returned to the Boston Museum in 1927, my active work in the field had come to an end, and thereafter I returned to Egypt only twice. The first occasion was in the autumn of 1933, when the trustees sent me out to visit Reisner and to obtain for them from him and from the Egyptian Antiquities Department their views about the future of the Harvard-Boston Expedition.

At this time Reisner's major work in the Sudan was substantially finished; his health was showing signs of deterioration, and the backlog of unpublished records of his many years of excavating was a cause of anxiety to the Antiquities Departments in Cairo and Khartoum as well as to the trustees of the Boston Museum. As a result of my conversations with Reisner and with the authorities it was possible to satisfy both that progress would be made on the publication of the results of the excavations, and that the concessions given to the expedition by the government for work at Giza would be extended. It was agreed that Reisner himself would continue to work at Giza and prepare the records of past work there for definitive publication; I would undertake publication of the expedition's work in the Sudan, in much of which I had taken part; while William Stevenson Smith, who had been assisting Reisner at Giza, would undertake publication of Giza material that Reisner himself would not have time or energy to complete.

Before returning to Boston I was able to take a few days off to make a rather hasty trip to Luxor and refresh my memory of the antiquities of that area. While at Luxor I decided to cross the river to pay a visit to the great temple of Medinet Habu, which I had not seen for five or six

years, and where the Oriental Institute of Chicago had been working in the interval. As it was too early in the season for the influx of tourists, I hired a donkey and rode out across the Theban plain to the temple. There was no one about, and, leaving my mount in charge of the donkey boy in the shade of a thorn tree outside the gate, I spent perhaps an hour or more in the temple examining the many fine reliefs and inscriptions on its walls. When I emerged, I found not only my donkey waiting where I had left it but also a peddler who had laid out his stock of "anticas" in the hope of making a sale to the "tourist," whose advent the local grapevine had reported. I paid no attention to the man as I mounted my donkey, but he came up to me and presented a large scarab for my inspection. He proceeded to expound in his pidgin English on its value and rarity: "This very old scarab, very fine, very valuable. You very fine gentlemen. I sell you cheap, special price: only five pounds to you, first gentleman this season. I poor man, I make you a special price because you very nice gentleman," and so on. Taking the scarab in my hand, I saw that it was an obvious fake. I said nothing, however, and simply looked down at him and back at the scarab, turning it over several times. For some minutes I let the man continue with his spiel without replying. At last, when I saw that he was getting quite discouraged about making a sale, I looked him straight in the face and said in Arabic "Who made it?" He was so surprised at being addressed in his own language that he blurted out "My uncle made it, five piastres" (which was one hundredth of the original asking price). "No," I said, "I do not want it," and handing it back, I rode off. The poor man looked quite crestfallen.

Egypt after Reisner's Death

Reisner died in 1942 at his beloved Harvard Camp. It was a fitting place to end his days, for it had been his home for many years and the site of his life's work. This was in the middle of World War II. Reisner had sent his wife and daughter home to the United States just prior to the great battle of El Alamein, when it looked as though Egypt would fall to the German armies advancing across North Africa. But Reisner himself would not leave, and though by this time practically blind, he valiantly continued to work, dictating his notes to his devoted secretary, Evelyn Perkins. He was cared for during these months by his faithful Egyptians. Until the war ended it was not possible to go to Egypt to evaluate the new situation, and the camp and its records and equipment were placed under the authority of the American Embassy, while the Egyptian foreman and the house servants kept the camp running. Finally, in the early autumn of 1946, I was sent out to Egypt and was accompanied by my wife and William Stevenson Smith.

Bill Smith (as he was generally known) had graduated from Harvard in 1928 and joined the museum staff in that year. In 1930 he went to assist Reisner in Egypt, where he developed talent in the study of the chapel reliefs at Giza and special gifts as an art historian, devoting himself largely to this field rather than to active work in excavation. He was made assistant curator of the museum's Egyptian Department in 1940. In 1942 he joined the United States Navy and remained in service, largely in the Near East, until early in 1946, when he returned to the museum.

My mission in Egypt was twofold: first, to review the new position of the museum vis-à-vis the Egyptian government and advise the trustees



William Stevenson Smith, 1963.

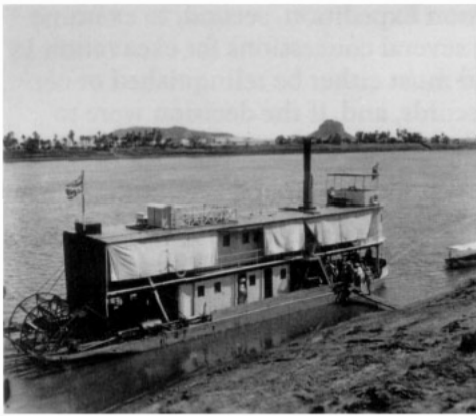
as to continuing the Harvard–Boston Expedition; second, to examine the situation in the Sudan, where several concessions for excavation by our expedition were still valid and must either be relinquished or continued; to complete unfinished records, and, if the decision were to close down the expedition, to pack and return the records to Boston.

The expedition storerooms contained much material accumulated over the years that had to be sorted and examined prior to being submitted to the Egyptian government for division, and this task required a good deal of time. In earlier years government policy had been to allow the excavator approximately half of the antiquities found, but the policy had now altered to the extent that very few of the remaining antiquities were assigned to us. This fact, together with the greatly increased labor and living costs since the war and the necessity for me to remain in Boston, led to the trustees' decision to give up our concession at Giza, to return the records of the expedition to Boston, and to devote the efforts of the Egyptian Department, for the time being at least, to the digestion and publication of the great collection that had resulted from Reisner's many years of excavation in the field.

Journey through the Sudan

In the winter of 1946 it was also necessary for me to go to the Sudan in order to review with the Sudan government the state of our several concessions there, to re-examine the sites where Reisner had worked, and, again, to close down our interests. Thus, in December my wife and I, leaving Bill Smith to carry on the work at the Pyramids, took the train to Assuan and thence the river steamer to Wady Halfa, the frontier town for entry into the Sudan. Here we forgathered with Anthony Arkell, at that time commissioner for archaeology to the Sudan government, and with three other people specializing in the archaeology of that country: Miss Rosalind Moss, of the Griffith Institute at Oxford, her assistant, Mrs. Charles Burney, and John Cooney, of the Brooklyn Museum, who wished to review the possibilities of starting excavations in the Sudan for his museum. Miss Moss was the compiler of the great *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings* (published by the Griffith Institute, Oxford). The seventh volume, dealing with the monuments originating outside Egypt proper, including the Sudan, was then in preparation (it was published in 1951). The party that assembled at Wady Halfa, three ladies and three men, was remarkably congenial; we had a common interest in and a knowledge of archaeology, and Arkell, who was our host on behalf of the Sudan government, was a charming guide. I can recall no similar journey that has given me so much enjoyment, and it remains one of the highlights of my experience.

In the course of a few weeks we visited many of the known ancient sites from Halfa to Khartoum, by train, boat, "lorry" (a light, half-ton truck with a covered body), and once by camel. We put up only once, at Halfa, in a hotel, living the rest of the time on riverboats, railroad sleeping cars placed on sidings, or in government rest houses. The objective was always the inspection of ancient sites, some of which I already knew. Miss Moss was fully occupied in making notes on inscriptions and reliefs for her forthcoming book. I was very busy checking on the guards and on the expedition equipment, which had remained in their charge since our previous excavations, and Jack Cooney was engaged in familiarizing himself with the sites, with a view to future work for his museum.



The *Water Lily*.

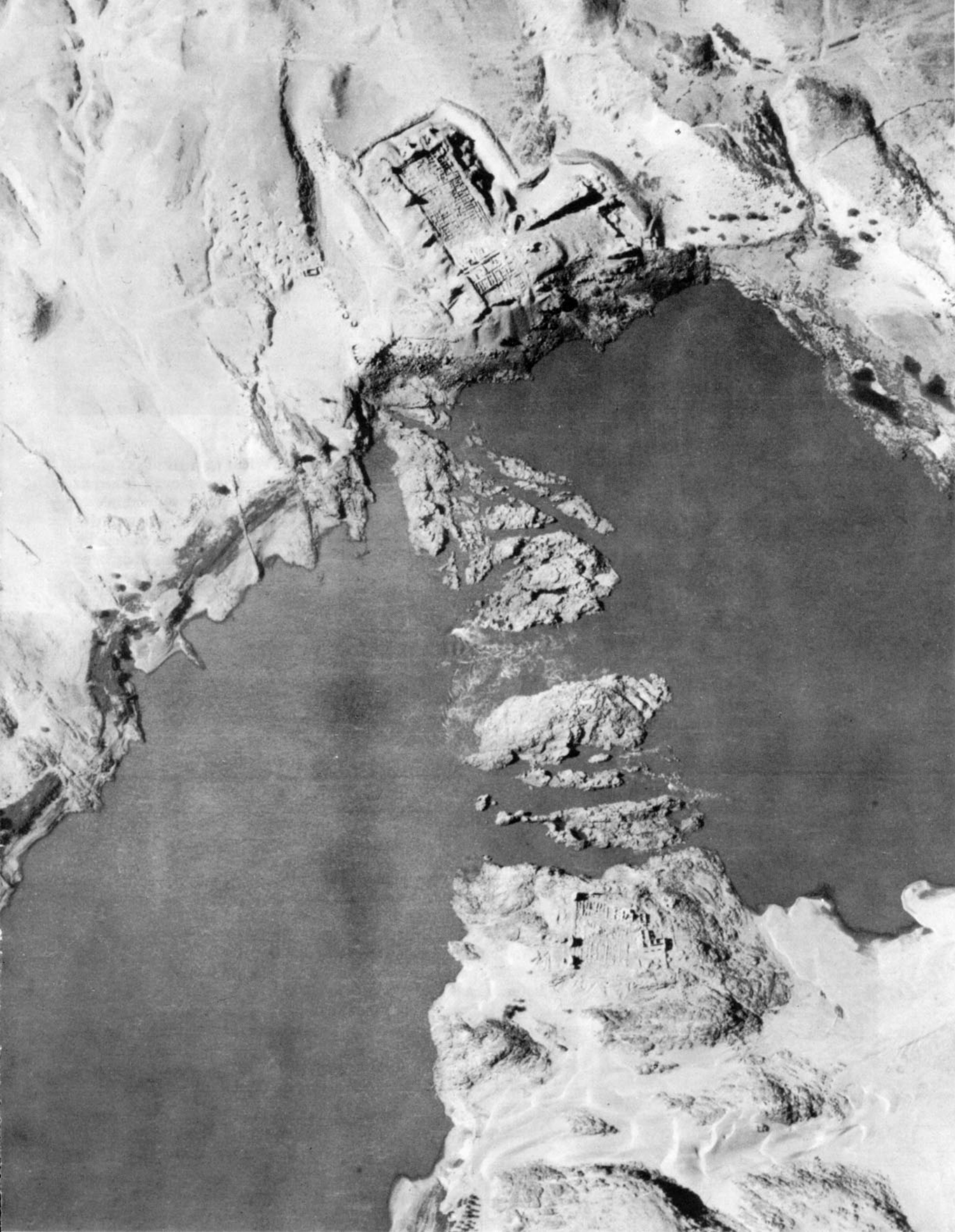
Sometimes the conditions of travel were far from luxurious, but we were never subjected to real hardship, and we had many amusing and unusual experiences. From Halfa we ferried across the Nile to the old temple of Buhen to examine the work done there by Walter Emery for the Egyptian Exploration Society, then crossed the desert, a trip of well over an hour by camel, to the fort of Mirgissa, where Reisner had carried out his last excavations in the Sudan. The ride back to Halfa was tiring, and poor Cooney suffered it in silence. He had not ridden a camel before, and he became greatly chafed from the saddle, to such an extent that we had to seek the aid of the local doctor. For several days he was obliged to sit on an air cushion while we traveled by light truck over bad roads, or none at all, to see the fortresses at Semna and Uronarti in the Second Cataract region.

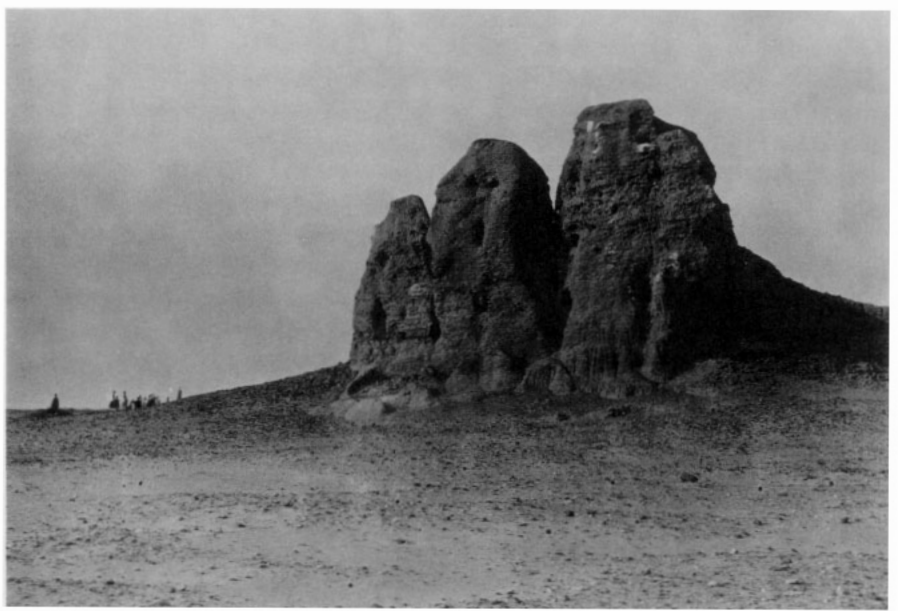
Provided with camp beds, cooking facilities, and a servant, we stayed at Semna for two nights. The three ladies of the party found shelter in the one room of the old expedition house, which still had a roof over it, while the men set up their camp beds in some of the rooms of the ancient temple. The only feasible means of travel in this region, as well as in other desert areas where roads did not exist, was the "lorry." Though not the most comfortable of vehicles, it would carry six or more passengers together with their camp equipment. Hung on hooks along each side of the body were steel troughs that reached from just behind the front wheels to the rear wheels. These were essential for negotiating patches of soft sand. These troughs would be detached and worked under the driving wheels to provide traction, and we seldom had to repeat the process more than two or three times to get through.

After our excursion to the Second Cataract forts we returned to the hotel in Halfa and thence took the train on the main Khartoum line to Abu Hamed. There we were given a special sleeping car, which was detached from the Khartoum train and picked up by the branch-line train for Kareima. (From Abu Hamed to Kareima was an all-day journey.) This small town was close to Gebel Barkal, site of the great temple of Amon, which was our principal objective. We left the train at Kareima and were transferred to the *Water Lily*, the steamer belonging to the governor of Dongola Province, whose headquarters were at Merowe, a few miles downstream. On this boat we lived for several days while we studied the series of ruins at Barkal and the pyramid ruins at El Kurru and Nuri, which we could reach easily on donkey back.

Our next objective was somewhat more difficult to reach. The temples of Kawa and the Middle Kingdom site of Kerma, which our expedition had excavated from 1913 to 1915, and which I had never seen, lay about one hundred miles to the west across uninhabited desert with no road and no water. The usual approach to these sites was by river steamer around the great bend of the Nile, a journey of at least three days each way. To save time, Arkell arranged for a "lorry" to make the desert crossing. Since we ran the risk of a breakdown out in the desert, we had to carry food and water as well as our camp equipment, and it was decided that only four of us, Miss Moss, Jack Cooney, Arkell, and I should make the trip. My wife and Mrs. Burney remained behind on the *Water Lily*, which was moved down to Merowe, where the two ladies were hospitably entertained by the resident district commissioner during our absence.

Early one morning our party set out on the desert crossing. Such a trip had to be made with special government permission, and on leaving Kareima we reported to the local police, who telegraphed to the police





Kerma, the western Defufa.

post at Kerma to announce our departure. When we arrived at Kerma we again reported to the police, who wired the news of our safe arrival back to Kareima. If there had been no notice of our arrival within twelve hours, the authorities would have sent out a rescue party. Although there was no road, the route was marked from time to time by cairns, and as one of these was always in sight, there was no danger of our getting lost. We duly reached the fairly large village of Kerma in somewhat under eight hours, having stopped for breakfast after the first hour or two.

I shall always remember that journey, the heat of the sun and the glare of the barren desert, but especially the approach to Kerma, during the last hour, when we came into a low-lying region of grass, with trees, pools of water, and many birds. This was the famous Kerma Basin, which is flooded at high Nile. The relief of shade and coolness after the hours of desert travel was indescribable.

At Kerma we were most hospitably received by the local notable, whose name I have unfortunately forgotten. We were told that, in the days before the rule of the Anglo-Egyptian government, his father had been king of the region. Although our host spoke nothing but Arabic, he was a man of considerable wealth and great influence. He insisted on our staying the night in his fine home and provided a room for Miss Moss, while we men set up our camp beds on the large shady porch. We all sat in the comfortable reception room, whose walls were decorated with large photographs of the family, and our host and Arkell, who were old friends, conversed at length in Arabic. We then moved into the large dining room for dinner, an excellent and lavish meal. I was especially interested in the furnishings. There was a fine dinner table with matching chairs and a large mahogany sideboard, but the place of honor in the room was held by a large white refrigerator, to which our host called our attention with great pride. He had recently purchased it, as the latest thing in modern furniture, in Cairo and had it shipped to Kerma by river steamer at great expense. I think he had no idea of its real purpose, for there was no electricity within hundreds of miles!

The next day we visited the temples of Kawa, which had been excavated some time before by Professor Griffith, of Oxford and Liverpool



Massawarat es Safra: Marion Dunham, Mrs. Charles Burney, Dows Dunham, Rosalind Moss, Jack Cooney.

universities, and published by Dr. M. F. Laming Macadam. We then went on to the government rest house not far from the excavation carried out by our museum's expedition at Kerma, which lay some distance beyond the village of that name. In due course we returned by "lorry" across the desert to Kareima, where Mrs. Burney and my wife rejoined us. They reported that they had been very warmly received and entertained at dinner by the district commissioner and his assistant and had had a delightful stay. Indeed, one found that all over the Sudan, where hotels are largely nonexistent, the local residents, whether officials or not, offered lavish hospitality to the occasional traveler.

At Kareima we took to the train again and moved to the area of old Meroë, some two hundred miles north of Khartoum. At Kabushiya we left the train and moved to a houseboat on the river, and from there we visited the ruins of the city of Meroë and the pyramids where Reisner and I had worked from 1921 to 1923. Then again we took to overland travel, once more by truck, and paid visits to the temples of Naga and Mussawarat es Safra. At the former site, where there are several temples of the Meroitic period, we spent a night in the government rest house; at least, the three ladies slept in it, while the men set up their camp beds in the open.

It was not a restful night, but one full of interest. For at Naga there was one of the rare wells in this arid region, to which the nomadic shepherds and camel herders of the area came in great numbers to water their animals. There was a full moon and throughout the night there was a constant coming and going of the herders, watering their flocks and filling their waterskins from the well. These people, with their women and children, who spent many days at a time wandering about, grazing their animals on the sparse grass, here found the rare opportunity for the exchange of news, for gossip, and for animated bartering and trading. It was a fascinating sight, and it vividly brought to life a picture of the kind of existence that must have been led by the children of Israel in the days of their wanderings after the exodus from Egypt.

We ended our hegira in Khartoum just before Christmas 1946. Khartoum is a modern town, the headquarters of the Sudan government, composed largely of administrative buildings, government offices, and the houses of officials. The original city of Omdurman, much larger than Khartoum itself, lies across the Nile. My wife and I stayed for



The Pyramids at Meroë, looking north.

several days in Arkell's house while we saw the sights and studied in the museum, which housed many of the objects we had excavated in past years. Even at this time of year it was hot — about one hundred degrees in the shade in the middle of the day — and on Christmas evening we dined at the club in our shirt sleeves and sat over drinks in a garden filled with roses in full bloom. After a memorable three weeks our journey had come to an end, and we returned to the expedition headquarters at the pyramids to continue the work of closing the camp and packing up our records for return to Boston.

The End of an Era

In the spring of 1947 we finally closed down Harvard Camp at the pyramids. The day came when we had to say “good-by” to the faithful workmen we had paid off for the last time. Lined up in a row were fifteen or twenty elderly men, most of whom had spent all their adult life in service to Reisner and the expedition, and many of whom I regarded as old friends. I had to say words of thanks and farewell to them, knowing that I should probably never see them again. They were as fine a lot of men as I could ever hope to know and work with, and I am not ashamed to record that they and I were very close to tears before I got into the car and drove off from Harvard Camp for the last time.

Recollections of thirty-two years of association with the Harvard–Boston Expedition in Egypt would be incomplete without a few words about the various people with whom I came in contact. During most of this time, the Department of Antiquities of Egypt employed Europeans in the highest governmental posts. I knew three different directors general. At first there was Sir Gaston Maspero, with whom, as a junior member of the expedition, I had but little association. I remember better Pierre Lacau, a distinguished French archaeologist of great charm and authority. He was a strikingly handsome man with a magnificent white beard, which earned him the somewhat irreverent nickname of “God the Father.” I was frequently in touch with him during the work on the tomb of Hetep-heres in 1926–27 and then later in 1933, when I had several discussions with him about the future of the expedition on behalf of the museum's trustees in Boston. Lacau was a scholar who had a deep understanding of the contributions to Egyptology made by Reisner, and he was very ready to do everything in his power to facilitate the continuance of his work.

Later, in 1946–47, when I had the task of making a final division of objects prior to closing down the expedition after Reisner's death, I dealt largely with the Abbé Etienne Drioton, the last French director general in Cairo. While extremely cooperative personally, he was working under considerable difficulties; by this time his authority had been greatly undermined by higher Egyptian officials, for the government was no longer willing to give full power to European officials.

During the twenties several of the official positions at the Cairo Museum were held by Europeans. Edward Quibell, an Englishman, was conservator at the museum. He was an old friend of Reisner's and a frequent visitor at Harvard Camp in the early days. Rex Englebach, also English, was keeper at the museum. Alfred Lucas, the chemist, whose valuable book *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries* (1926; 4th ed. 1962) is frequently used by every Egyptian archaeologist, spent many days at Harvard Camp in 1926–27 investigating the physical problems posed by the finds from the tomb of Hetep-heres. While



Joe Smith copying a relief.

working for the Egyptian government under Cecil Firth, Inspector of Antiquities at Sakkara, from 1923 to 1925, I came to know Jean Philippe Lauer, whose masterly work in the restoration of the buildings associated with the Step Pyramid of Zoser has been continuing ever since those days. I would also mention here Dr. Douglas Derry, the physical anthropologist, whose advice on the skeletal remains from Reisner's excavations was often sought.

The Department of Antiquities was represented throughout the country by a number of Egyptian officials who held positions as inspectors of antiquities, charged with the care of the ancient monuments, with research and excavation, and especially with the suppression on behalf of the government of illicit digging. Many of these officials were highly competent. I remember especially three of them with whom we often came in contact. Dr. Zaki Saad, who carried out important excavations at Helwan, has of recent years left the service for a career in teaching. Then there is Ahmed Fakhry, under whose guidance in the last year of the expedition I made an interesting and instructive tour of some of the Delta sites, accompanied by my wife and Bill Smith. Finally, I would mention Labib Habachi, who paid us a visit in Boston a few years ago, and whose wife is today a valued member of the Cairo office of the American Research Center in Egypt. All through the years, even after the museum's expedition came to an end, these Egyptian scholars have continued to show friendly interest in their American colleagues and have been helpful to us on many occasions.

In the Sudan we had occasional visits from J. W. Crowfoot, who was commissioner for archaeology of the Sudan government, and with Frank Addison, with whom I once made a side trip to a Meroitic site in the desert east of Meroë known as Aleim — a long day's journey by camel from our camp at the Meroë pyramids. Later in 1946, during our final visit to the Sudan under the guidance of Anthony Arkell, I also came to know Peter Shinnie, then assistant and later successor to Arkell as commissioner, and Thabit Hasan Thabit, who succeeded Shinnie as commissioner in the Sudan.

Certainly, no memoirs of past days should omit mention of Joseph Lindon Smith and his dynamic and charming wife Corinna. Joe Smith's association with the Boston Museum and the expedition was long and intimate. Even before my own advent on the scene he had been an almost yearly visitor, devoting long hours to the reproduction on canvas of reliefs exposed by our excavations both in Egypt and the Sudan as well as to the copying of many other monuments throughout the country. Harvard Camp was often his headquarters, and he was always a welcome member of the expedition for weeks or months at a time. Many of Joe Smith's canvases have come to the museum; for their faithful reproduction in full color of scenes, the originals of which are seldom accessible, they are of considerable scientific as well as artistic value.

Smith had been named honorary curator of the museum's Egyptian Department in 1927. He was an old friend to Reisner as well as to many of the trustees, who greatly appreciated his counsel. A man of great charm as well as an artist of note, he was on friendly terms with most of the excavators of his day, and we enjoyed his companionship. Corinna Smith, who accompanied her husband to Egypt, was a fascinating person in her own right, and in her younger days a great beauty. She and Joe knew everyone, both Europeans and Egyptians. Corinna had two absorbing interests in addition to her husband: in Egypt



The Egyptian Department, Gallery E7.
1931. On the wall are Joe Smith's paintings of
the site at Meroë.

she undertook the serious study of Arabic and the Koran, and at home she was active in promoting the welfare of the American Indians. After my return to the museum in 1927, "Uncle Joe" (as we called him) was a frequent visitor to the Egyptian Department; he was of great help to me in my work and in maintaining liaison with the trustees and with Reisner in Egypt right up to the latter's death.

The American Research Center in Egypt

At approximately the time that the Harvard-Boston Expedition was closed down, in the spring of 1947, the Expedition of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York also came to an end. Thus, the two major American archaeological undertakings in Egypt ceased after many years of accomplishment, and many of us felt that this constituted a serious blow to Egyptology in the United States. As a result of this unsatisfactory situation, a number of scholars began to consider whether there might be found some way of continuing in a small way American activity in the field. In the same year, 1947, Joe Smith, Bill Smith, and I, with the strong support of Edward W. Forbes, a trustee of the museum and an influential leader in the Department of Fine Arts at Harvard, together with a few other interested people, formed a modest organization called the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE).

The purpose of the center, which was initially supported by voluntary contributions from relatively few individuals, was to establish an office in Cairo to serve as headquarters for scholars in Egypt engaged in Egyptian and Islamic studies, aided by grants from museums and universities. In due course the ARCE became incorporated as a tax-exempt educational institution, recognized by the United States government and by the Egyptian authorities. Its membership was increased by the inclusion of universities as institutional members. A second administrative office was opened in Cambridge, and a board of directors was elected through which a small group of qualified scholars received grants for research in Cairo. The work of the ARCE was at first made public in a series of newsletters sent to all members and later in the *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, which has now become a recognized vehicle for the publication of scholarly reports. For some years William Stevenson Smith acted as president, then from 1966 until 1971 the presidency was held by Professor Gustave von Grunebaum of the University of California, an eminent scholar in the field of Islamic studies. The office was then moved to Princeton, more convenient than Cambridge as a center for the expanded membership, which now includes universities throughout the United States.

At the Boston Museum

When I first received an appointment as an assistant in the Department of Egyptian Art, Dr. Arthur Fairbanks was director of the museum and Charles Hawes assistant director. Fairbanks was an eminent classical scholar, and as a very young and rather diffident junior in the museum I found him rather formidable. My relations were mostly with Hawes, whom I found kindly and understanding.

Quite early in my career at the museum an accident occurred while I was installing a group of pottery vessels in a large wall case in one of

1966. After renovation.

the galleries. The case had two glass doors that opened outward. After arranging the vessels in the right half of the case, I opened the left-hand door. Alas! In my inexperience, I had failed to make sure that the case had been firmly attached to the wall. It tipped forward, shooting the contents onto the floor, and several of the pots were broken. Appalled at this catastrophe, I marched right over to Hawes, told him what had happened, and tendered my resignation. He asked how many of the vessels had been broken. "About ten of them," I replied, and Hawes said simply "Have them mended, and be sure next time that the case has been properly secured before you use it. As to resigning, don't be ridiculous!"

Dr. Fairbanks retired from the directorship in 1925, and Edward Jackson Holmes, a leading trustee and devoted benefactor of the museum, resigned from the board in order to become director. He held this position from 1926 to 1934, while Hawes remained assistant director. My own dealings continued to be with the latter. Holmes was devoted to the museum throughout his life and was a generous donor, but there were certain difficulties in dealing with him as director. Unaccustomed to keeping regular office hours, he was seldom available for consultation until late in the afternoon, when everyone else had completed work for the day. Thus, obtaining his decision on matters requiring his approval often took considerable time.

In 1934 Holmes was elected president by the trustees and was succeeded as director by Professor Harold Edgell of Harvard, while Hawes retired from administrative work. Edgell had been for many years not only an outstanding teacher at Harvard in the field of Italian painting but also, for a time, in charge of the Graduate School of Architecture there. (I had been one of his students in my undergraduate days.) During the twenty years of his directorship at the museum my relationship with him was always a happy one. On more than one occasion he was good enough to say that the Egyptian Department, of which I was in charge, was one that never caused him any serious trouble. The later years of Edgell's directorship were difficult for him, for his health was failing, and the sudden, tragic death of his wife was a heavy blow. I was truly grieved when he died in 1954 and felt that I had lost a sympathetic friend as well as an understanding leader.

Edgell's death left the directorship vacant, and for a year Henry P. Rossiter, the senior curator at the museum and distinguished head of the Print Department, served also as acting director pending the appointment in 1955 of Perry T. Rathbone, who came to us from the St. Louis Art Museum (then known as the City Art Museum). My relations with Rathbone were always easy, but officially they were of short duration, for at the beginning of 1956 I retired from the curatorship in favor of William Stevenson Smith, who had been my chief assistant since 1940. Thus, from 1956 until Bill Smith's sudden death in 1969, I remained at the museum as curator emeritus, without administrative duties, in order to devote myself to publishing the work of the expedition.

Under Perry Rathbone's directorship the appeal of our exhibition galleries has markedly improved, and a whole series of modernizations have taken place these past years which have been of great value. During his regime too, there has been considerable growth in the educational activities of the museum, and the Department of Public Education has become one of our busiest.

Acquisition Policy

The acquisition of our outstanding Egyptian collection during Reisner's curatorship resulted from his excavations with the Harvard–Boston Expedition. We received the share of the objects found by the expedition after division with the Egyptian and Sudanese governments, who granted us permission to excavate. The two governments were trying to control and prevent illicit excavation, and it was Reisner's policy to support their efforts. As long as he was excavating under contracts with these governments, he refused to enter the market for objects obtained by unlawful means, however desirable they might be.

The problem of control of unauthorized and unscientific excavation has been a difficult one in many countries, including Italy, Greece, Turkey, and more recently Mexico and Central America. The governments of these countries have often found their attempts at control hampered by the willingness of museums and private collectors to buy objects illicitly dug up and smuggled into the European and American art markets. Reisner believed that, as long as the Boston Museum was working by agreement with the local governments, it would be wrong for it to enter this market, and the only purchases made during this time for the Egyptian Department were of objects that could not have been illicitly exported in recent times from Egypt — objects that had been in the hands of private collectors or on the market for many years. There were a number of instances where we refrained from buying, when the object offered had appeared on the market quite recently. The Egyptian government knew of Reisner's attitude on this matter and was grateful to him for his cooperation in discouraging illicit digging. Their recognition of his honorable principles was undoubtedly an important factor in the generous treatment usually enjoyed by Boston in the division of the expedition's finds.



Bronze aegis. Ca. Dynasty 22. 31.195. Before cleaning.



Bronze aegis. After cleaning.

Of the few purchases made by me while I was in charge of the Egyptian Department I recall two in particular that were clearly in accordance with Reisner's policy. In 1931 the curator of the Semitic Museum at Harvard asked me one day to come to Cambridge and advise him on the importance and condition of a small group of Egyptian bronzes in their collection. They proved to be of no great worth; a few appeared to be of doubtful antiquity, and a number were suffering from bronze disease and required treatment to arrest its spread.

The curator then told me that he had also, on loan, another bronze that was in a very advanced state of corrosion, and that he had sequestered it from the rest of the group lest they also be affected by the disease. "As a matter of fact," he said, "the owner would like to sell it, but I don't want to buy it because of its bad condition." We then looked at the piece, which, I could see, had once been a remarkably fine aegis but was now indeed in a deplorable state. I did feel, however, that the head of the Boston Museum's Research Laboratory, William Young, who had had great success in treating such cases, might be able to save it. I therefore suggested that, with the permission of the Semitic Museum, I take the aegis to Bill Young for examination and ask his opinion on whether it might be restored with a view to its purchase by our Egyptian Department. The prognosis was favorable, and with the concurrence of the owner and of the Semitic Museum, I was able to recommend to our trustees that we buy the piece, as a frank gamble on its successful treatment in the laboratory. Well over a year of skilled electrolytic treatment restored the aegis to excellent condition and revealed its elaborate inlaid decoration, which had been hidden by the corrosion.



King Haker torso. Dynasty 29. Black granite.
29.732.

The other purchase I vividly recall was even more remarkable. One day in 1929 a gentleman came into the office with some snapshots of several pieces of Egyptian sculpture that he was thinking of selling. He told me that they had been in the garden of his home for many years, and he wondered whether they might be of interest to the museum. Although the photographs were not very good, I thought the pieces looked worthy of inspection, and I arranged to go to the owner's house and look at them. There were six objects, ranging in date from the Eighteenth to the Twenty-ninth Dynasty. The latest was the torso of a finely modeled royal statue in black granite inscribed with the name of King Haker, a little-known king who ruled just prior to the Ptolemaic Period.

None of these sculptures were complete, but all were of considerable archaeological interest. They were quite desirable for the museum, and we eventually acquired all of them. (The three most important of these objects were published by me in the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 15 [1929], 164-166.) When I asked the owner how he came to have them, he told me a very unusual story. During the American Civil War a Yankee ship captain trading in the Mediterranean put in at Alexandria prior to returning to America with a half-empty ship. There he acquired these objects, and he put them aboard as curiosities to serve as ballast. As he approached the American coast his ship was captured by the Confederate forces, who took it into New Orleans, where the sculptures were placed in the customhouse. After the defeat of the Confederates, the present owner's father was appointed collector of customs at New Orleans, and when he returned to New England he brought the sculptures with him and placed them in his garden. Neither father nor son had any special interest in or knowledge of Egyptian art, and the latter was ready enough to turn them over to the museum.

Now and again a day of serious work in the department would be enlivened by some strange or comical event. The following episode concerns the largest object in the Egyptian collection, the fourteen-ton granite sarcophagus of King Aspelta of the Kushite Dynasty, which was excavated by our expedition at Nuri in the Sudan in 1918. It was brought to the museum with great difficulty and installed in its present location, in front of the lecture hall, in 1923. A special pier to support it had been constructed in the basement, for no normal floor in the building could have carried such a weight.

The entire sarcophagus is covered both inside and out with inscriptions and reliefs, all of which had to be carefully recorded for publication in the report that I prepared on the site of Nuri (*Royal Cemeteries of Kush*, vol.II, 1955). To permit me to copy the inscriptions on the inside of the sarcophagus and lid, the latter, weighing four tons, had to be raised up on blocks; I could then crawl into the box from a step ladder and work inside with the aid of a drop light. Here I spent many days, quite invisible to the people walking about the area. I was frequently amused by the comments of the passersby who could not see me hidden within the sarcophagus, and who sometimes wondered aloud as to its nature.

One day I heard two female voices speculating in this way in French, and saying, "Qu'est-ce que c'est que cette boîte énorme?" I simply could not resist the temptation to reply: "C'est le sarcophage d'un roi ancien." Dead silence. I quite expected a scream in reaction to what must have sounded like a voice from the dead. Not at all; in a moment

a voice said "Tiens, il y a quelqu'un là dedans!" I put my head out and saw two nuns, not in the least upset, and we conversed for some minutes. I wonder if their familiarity with things supernatural made them impervious to the shock that many people would have had.

Visitors to the Egyptian Department

The majority of visitors to the department come to us with objects for identification. Usually they profess to be quite ignorant on the subject, but they are hopeful that they have something of value, and they occasionally wish to sell or give an object to the museum. It often turns out that the object is a modern forgery (as are many scarabs) or something of which we have more examples than we can use.

Many people have little conception of the great age of Egyptian antiquities, and in a number of cases, when I have tried tactfully to intimate that an object was a modern imitation, I have been told that the owner *knew* it to be very old, since it had belonged to his grandfather who died a hundred years ago! When I explain that genuine antiquities are two thousand or more years old, the reaction is one of surprise. One or two visitors have made it clear that they had no faith in my knowledge of the subject, and I have been told outright that I knew nothing. "Oh, you are quite wrong. I bought this last year in Egypt from Hasan (or Abdulla) and *he knows* Egypt." In such a situation my only answer is "If you have faith in the knowledge and honesty of your dragoman, why ask me for my opinion?" On the whole, however, visitors generally take one's opinion quite readily.

Identification is a service that, in my view, we owe to the public; it can also very occasionally lead to the discovery of objects that we are glad to acquire. I remember such an instance in 1949. A visitor came to see me bearing four small Egyptian objects that he said he would like to sell. Of real interest, these pieces had apparently been given the visitor's father while in the service of Theodore M. Davis, an amateur Egyptologist who financed excavations for the Egyptian government during the first decade of this century. There was an unusual blue marble vase of the Middle Kingdom, a rare stone funerary figure of King Siptah of the Nineteenth Dynasty, and two small pieces of limestone relief. We bought these objects, and the vase and the funerary figure have been exhibited in our galleries.

Shortly after World War II the discovery of an important object came about in a similar fashion. A visitor brought in a very fine gold and enamel finger ring of the Meroitic period, striking in appearance and at once familiar to me. I was sure that I had seen it before, or at least that I had seen a photograph of it. I told the visitor that it was a most unusual piece and asked him if he would leave it with me for a few days, so that I might see whether I could find a parallel to it. This he was quite ready to do. When I asked the man where he had acquired the ring, he told me that while serving in the American army, he had been stationed for a time in Berlin at the end of the war. He had there been able to help some of the few Jewish inhabitants of the city who had survived the purges of Hitler's regime, and they had given him the ring in gratitude.

As soon as the visitor left the museum, I consulted the publication of the well-known Ferlini treasure, which had been in the Berlin Museum for many years (Heinrich Schäfer, "The Gold Treasure of a Meroitic Queen" [in German], in Berlin Museen, *Mitteilungen aus der Ägyptischen*



Shawabti of King Siptah. Dynasty 19.
49.1071.

Sammlung, 1910, vol. 1, pt. III). There I found photographs of this very ring with its Berlin accession number. I then had a photograph taken of the ring and wrote at once to the officer in the State Department in Washington whose function it was to trace objects stolen during the war from known museums and collections in Europe. The outcome of this episode was that our government eventually arranged for the return of the ring to the Berlin Museum, from which it had "disappeared" in the confusion at the end of the war.

Sometimes our visitors show a touching innocence. On one occasion — again, after the end of World War II — a young man came to the office and asked me if we would be interested in acquiring an Egyptian obelisk. When I replied that I certainly would be interested and asked him if he had one, he said he had and that it was outside in his car. This I found rather surprising, for obelisks are apt to be large, weighing several tons. I suggested that I go out with him to see it, but he offered to bring it in to the office. And presently back he came carrying a cardboard box, out of which he took a small brass model of an obelisk mounted on a base. It appeared that the man had served in the navy as a diver, and while engaged in salvage operations on a sunken army transport in Okinawa harbor, he came upon this obelisk, which he appropriated out of curiosity. A friend told him that it might be quite valuable, and he was therefore hoping to sell it for a large enough sum to help him buy a small business now that he was out of the service. The little obelisk was, of course, of no interest to the museum, and the poor man was much disappointed when I told him so.

Model obelisks can be found in the tourist shops in Rome, where they are sold as souvenirs, representing in miniature the genuine Egyptian obelisks that are displayed in many squares in that city. I felt reasonably certain that this model had originally been acquired by an American soldier who had been through the Italian campaign, had had leave in Rome, and had later been transferred to the Pacific theater, where his transport had been sunk at Okinawa with the loss of his personal possessions and perhaps his life.

Occasionally I have been confronted with a visitor who is obsessed with the belief that an object in his or her possession is bringing bad luck. Some years ago a lady brought me a small Egyptian bronze figure of the god Osiris, which she offered to give to the museum. This figure was of a well-known type, mass produced and of little artistic or archaeological value, and we had many more examples than we could possibly use. I thanked the lady for her generous offer and explained why we could not accept her gift. The visitor then said that she really must ask us to accept the gift, and when I asked the reason for her insistence, she told me that the bronze figure was bringing her bad luck. "And I can't give it to any of my friends," she said, "for it would bring them bad luck if I did." "If that is the case," I said, "why would you want to pass on the jinx to the museum? Why don't you just throw it in the river?" The visitor then explained that such an action would not break the spell, for it must be owned by someone else, and she thought that an institution like a museum would not be subject to the same jinx as a private owner. Finally, the lady reluctantly went away armed with my suggestion that she offer the bronze Osiris to the Children's Museum, which might be willing to accept it. I never knew the outcome of this episode, but since the Children's Museum is still functioning normally, I assume either that she did not give it to them or that, if she did, its evil influence was not transmitted.

We used to get a number of callers whom we referred to as "Pyramid Cranks." To certain people there seems to be something mystical about ancient Egypt. Its fabulous antiquity and the rather exaggerated notions of some classical writers about the vast wisdom of the Egyptians, together with the fact that until the beginning of the nineteenth century their writing had remained undeciphered — all add to the sense of mystery that stirs the imagination. Further stimulus to this kind of fascination has been concentrated on the Great Pyramid by such books as Piazzzi Smyth's *Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid*, published in 1864, in which the claim is made that this famous monument is filled with hidden significance.

The "Pyramid Cranks" were not easy to deal with. They were quite sincere in their belief in the mystical significance of the pyramid and quite impervious to the arguments of scholarship, which seeks concrete evidence to support its statements. I remember one such visitor to whom I tried for some time to demonstrate that there was no basis in fact for his allegations. All in vain. Finally I said to him "We archaeologists seek factual evidence to back up such pronouncements as you are making before we can accept them. You might as well tell me that the moon is made of green cheese. I should reply 'Perhaps it is, but I cannot accept such an assertion as fact unless you can produce a sample of the moon that can be analyzed, so that we can prove whether you are right or wrong.' " The visitor looked at me in some surprise. "That is an interesting idea," he said. "You know, perhaps it is!" He had entirely missed the point I was trying to make, and I finally realized that we had no common basis for argument. There was no point in continuing the discussion.

On the theme of mysticism, I remember another case that I found quite pathetic. A middle-aged woman came to see me and asked if I could read ancient Egyptian. When I said that I had some knowledge of it, she told me that she had a daughter about whose mental condition she was greatly troubled. The girl was subject occasionally to strange hallucinations in which she was convinced that she was the reincarnation of an ancient Egyptian princess. She would go into trances during which she would make strange marks on paper with a pencil, which she claimed were Egyptian writing. Since neither the woman nor her daughter's friends could make anything of the marks, she had brought the papers to me. She hoped that I could tell her whether her daughter was really writing something intelligible to an Egyptologist.

When I examined the papers, I found that the marks were nothing but meandering scrawlings quite without meaning. I was obliged to tell the woman that they had no relation to anything Egyptian, and the poor lady was much upset. She had obviously been hoping that her daughter was as she claimed, a reincarnated Egyptian princess.

Visitors frequently show us textile hangings that they think must be ancient Egyptian, for these often depict figures reminiscent of Egyptian scenes and sometimes include hieroglyphic signs that appear to the layman to be legible inscriptions. These textiles are, in fact, quite modern, made within the last century, and are produced for the tourist trade, where they have a popular sale. The designs are in colored felt applied on a base of coarse cotton cloth and are usually crude approximations of ancient Egyptian scenes. The technique is well known in the Arab tradition of decorative hangings, the genuine ones bearing abstract designs and inscriptions in that language; the best of these are often quite handsome.

Occasionally, too, we are shown things that the visitor believes to be Egyptian but in fact are not. I recall one instance of this kind where the visitor brought me an excellent photograph of a handsome object: a large shiny black stone in the shape of an Egyptian pylon, on the top of which rested a gilded figure of a winged sphinx. There were gilded representations of hieroglyphs on each side of the pylon, and in the center was a glass panel showing the face of a clock, complete with pendulum beneath. When I suggested to the visitor that he was in the wrong department, and that he show the object to the Department of Decorative Arts, for it appeared to be of French manufacture, probably of the Empire Period, he exclaimed "Oh, no! I am sure you are mistaken. Surely this is Ptolemy's clock, and it is made of Rosetta stone!"

These tales may perhaps give the reader an idea of the visitors to the Egyptian Department. Our encounters can be unusual and sometimes full of humor.

With an account of the most singular of these encounters I bring these memoirs to a close. One day a well-dressed elderly gentleman came into the office, handed me an Egyptian scarab, and asked me if I could read the inscription carved into its base. When I told him that it was the name of King Tuthmosis III of the Eighteenth Dynasty, one of the commonest inscriptions found on scarabs, he replied "You are quite wrong!" I was naturally somewhat taken aback by this rather abrupt rejection of my answer, but I simply said to him "I am quite sure I am right, but since you doubt my opinion, why don't you show it to the people at the Metropolitan Museum in New York and see if they agree with me." He said he would do that and put the scarab back in his pocket.

The visitor then produced a piece of paper on which had been penciled a few Egyptian hieroglyphic signs, and he asked if I could read them. "No, they do not make sense," I replied. "The signs are quite clear, but the combination cannot be read. It is as if you had written *M*, *X*, and *R* at random and expected me to tell you what they mean." Again he announced, almost with scorn, "You are quite wrong!" This time I must have shown signs of annoyance, for he looked at me very hard and said "I am afraid you don't know who I am," and when I replied "No Sir, I don't," he announced "I am Amon-Re, and I know!"

Now Amon-Re was the great god of ancient Egypt, and I suddenly realized that I was dealing with a madman. I thought rapidly, wondering how I should handle him, for although he appeared to be quite harmless, I realized that there would be no use in arguing with him. Then I began to flatter him. I told him that it was a very great honor to have the privilege of meeting him in person, an honor I had never hoped to have in this life; that his vast knowledge of ancient Egypt was so much greater than any I could hope to acquire, despite the many years I had devoted to the study of his country; that I was quite overwhelmed. "We Egyptologists," I went on, "have studied your language and think that we can read it, however imperfectly, but we have never heard it spoken and have no idea what it sounded like. Now," I said, "you have provided me with an unforeseen opportunity to hear it spoken, and I should be tremendously grateful to you if you would be so kind as to read aloud to me a little of your own language." I then took down a book, and placing in front of "Amon-Re" a page of hieroglyphic text, I asked if he would please read me a little of the inscription aloud. He stared at the page for a full minute without saying a word. Then, with a charming smile, he looked up and said "You know, it's so long ago I've forgotten."

The visitor and I parted presently on quite friendly terms. I asked him to come and see me again when he had time, but he never did, and I have not seen or heard of him since that day.

Postscript

As I look back nearly sixty years to George Reisner's offer to try me out as an assistant with the Harvard–Boston Expedition, I am more than ever impressed with my good fortune. It has been a privilege and a source of endless interest and pleasure to be intimately associated for more than a decade with field work, much of it leading to new discoveries in the history of the Nile Valley, and then to be involved until my retirement with the care of a great collection at the Boston Museum. Now, still blessed with good health, I am able to continue, after the relinquishment of official responsibilities, with the pursuits I love. There is much to be done. Although the publication of Reisner's work in the Sudan has been accomplished, a substantial part of the voluminous records of the expedition's forty-odd years of excavation in Egypt still remains to be prepared for the printer — a task that will keep me busy for the rest of my days. I have escaped the boredom of useless retirement and am absorbed in an undertaking that will, I hope, be of some value to my younger colleagues and to future generations of Egyptologists.