

ASTENE

ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF TRAVEL
IN EGYPT AND THE NEAR EAST

BULLETIN



NOTES AND QUERIES

Number 83: Autumn 2020

Bulletin : Notes and Queries

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Editor: Robert G. Morkot

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Cover Illustration:

An Irishman in Egypt. See article by Emmet Jackson

Bulletin 84 : Spring 2021

We welcome articles, queries, replies and other related matters from members and interested readers. Please send contributions to the Editor Robert Morkot: R.G.Morkot@exeter.ac.uk

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Library membership £35 with hard copy of the Bulletin and Bulletin as e-mailed PDF.

ASTENE NEWS AND EVENTS

ASTENE AGM September 2020

The virtual AGM was held on 6 September via Zoom.

In the meeting Dr Jaromir Malek was confirmed as President; Dr Elizabeth French and Mr Neil Cooke as Vice-Presidents.

Lee Young and Jacke Phillips had both completed two consecutive terms of three years and stood down from the Committee: our thanks to them for their work during the last six years.

Dr Hana Navratilova has completed six years as Secretary, *plus* an additional year to ensure a smooth transition. We are enormously thankful to Hana for her dedication to ASTENE, and hope that she now has more time to do other things!

The following Committee Members and Trustees were confirmed for another year:- Paul Starkey (Chairman), Gemma Masson (Treasurer), Carey Cowham (Membership Secretary), Tessa Baber (WebMaster), Robert Morkot (Bulletin Editor), Emmet Jackson, Rosalind Janssen, Ines Aščerić -Todd and Madeline Boden.

Lauren Bruce was nominated and elected as Secretary; Aidan Dodson and Daniele Salvoldi were nominated and elected as a Committee Member.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are due in January: forms for renewal, standing order, and gift aid are enclosed.

Study Day November 2020

The EES, ASTENE, and the Friends of the Petrie Museum hosted a Study Day by Zoom on 21st November 2020. The subject was Artists and Egypt in the mid- to late-Nineteenth Century. The speakers were Briony Llewellyn on the paintings of John Frederick Lewis; Stephanie Moser on the sources used by Alma-Tadema, especially the artefacts in the British Museum; Robert Morkot on Poynter's *Israel in Egypt*; and Rachel Mairs on Orientalist Landscapes. Over 150 attended from UK, Ireland, Europe, Egypt, Australia, USA, Canada, and

Brazil: some had to get up very early, and others stay up late! It was a great success, and we hope will be followed up by more similar events.

Bulletin

Many thanks to the contributors to this issue. Please continue to send articles, reviews, and notes and queries. The next Bulletin will appear when we have sufficient contributions: so do please send them in.

ASTENE Events and news are now circulated regularly via e-mail. If you have any problems please contact Tessa Baber.

ASTENE Online Lectures 2021

A programme of online lectures has been arranged: they will all last for one hour and begin at 8.00 (20.00) pm.

Thursday 21 January 2021 1 'Virtual' book launch for ASTENE papers from York Conference: *Pious Pilgrims, Discerning Travellers, Curious Tourists*

Thursday 4 February 2021 2 Aidan Dodson. 'Early travellers' contributions to the first reconstructions of Egyptian history.'

Thursday 18 February 2021 3 Madeline Boden. 'Monument to Men Massacred in the Sinai Desert (1882): Gods, Countries, and Empires at St. Paul's Cathedral.'

Thursday 4 March 2021 4 Janet Starkey. 'Travel accounts by Marco Polo, Odoric and Mandeville as Natural History: strange plants, animals, and monsters.'

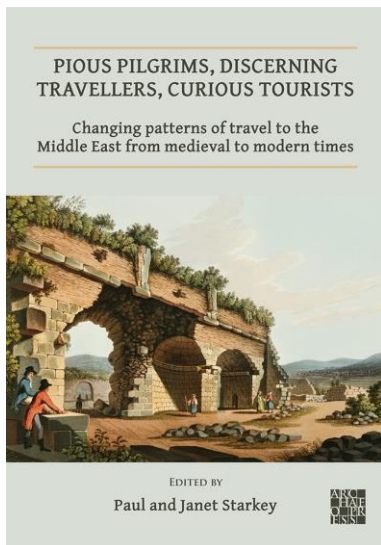
Thursday 18 March 2021 5 Paul Starkey. 'Visiting the Cedars of Lebanon: from Gilgamesh to Edward Lear.'

Thursday 1 April 2021 6 Gemma Masson. 'British Diplomatic Travellers in Eighteenth-Century Istanbul.'

Details of how to join the sessions will be available on the ASTENE website and Facebook page from the beginning of January 2021.

ASTENE New Book

The first in the series of online lectures will be the launch of the new ASTENE collection of papers from the York Conference edited by Paul and Janet Starkey: *Pious Pilgrims, Discerning Travellers, Curious Tourists: Changing patterns of travel to the Middle East from medieval to modern times.*



The material presented ranges widely, from Ancient Egyptian sites through medieval pilgrims to tourists and other travellers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The papers embody a number of different traditions, including not only actual but also fictional travel experiences, as well as pilgrimage or missionary narratives reflecting quests for spiritual wisdom as well as geographical knowledge. They also reflect the shifting political and cultural relations between Europe and the Near and Middle East, and between the different religions of the area, as seen and described by travellers both from within and from outside the region over the centuries.

ASTENE Bristol Conference

At the meeting in November, the Committee reviewed the situation in relation to the Bristol Conference planned for July 2021 and decided, with regret, to postpone the on-site conference. With uncertainties remaining about how the world-wide Covid situation is going to change, and possible reluctance from members to travel – along with

issues of distancing, this was deemed the best course of action. ASTENE would have had to commit to the Conference in January and inevitably issues around expenditure were involved.

The new dates for the Conference are, provisionally, 22-24 July 2022.

The implications of these changes for the TIOL2 Conference planned for 2022 in Sarajevo are still under discussion. Further information will be circulated as it becomes available.

ASTENE Virtual Conference

To replace the Bristol Conference ASTENE will host a shorter virtual Conference. This will take place in July 2021. Further details will be announced in the New Year, but it has been suggested that a Saturday and Sunday afternoon, on the dates of the original planned conference (17-18 July), would be appropriate. The choice of afternoon should make the event accessible without too many time issues to the largest number of members.

Robert Hay Seminar Duns Castle

The Robert Hay Seminar, like so many other events, had to be cancelled due to Covid. It was felt that as the location was the crucial element, there was little point holding an on-line event. It is now planned to take place next year, with a provisional date of 6-7 September, but is obviously dependent on the situation.

Postgraduate Research Competition

In a new initiative, ASTENE is inviting proposals for a Postgraduate Research Competition. This competition is intended to reward the most promising and engaging research in the interdisciplinary and cross-period fields of Near Eastern studies and travel history.

This competition is open to all researchers currently studying towards a postgraduate degree from anywhere in the world. Abstracts and papers must be delivered in English. Papers must relate to

ASTENE's research interests and can include (but are not limited to):

- Accounts of travellers (of any origin point) to the Near/Middle East and North Africa
- Travel writing including fiction, memoirs, diaries, guidebooks, and journalism
- The visual culture of travelling including painting, drawing, photography, and other artistic ephemera
- Critical approaches to Orientalism & postcolonial, indigenous and feminist perspectives on travel to MENA
- Histories of mobility, migration and diaspora
- Digital and other new media projects for understanding the history of travel

Candidates will be selected to present a 20-minute paper at a virtual day of research, debate and networking. They will be judged on the following criteria: An interesting, original subject relating to ASTENE's research interests, the future potential and impact of the research and research delivered in an enthusiastic and engaging presentation to an audience made up of academics and informed members of the public (i.e. ASTENE members). The event will take place on Saturday 15 May 2021 11:00-16:00 via Zoom. Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be submitted by Monday 1 February 2021 to: -
postgraduatecompetition.astene@gmail.com

1st prize - £200; 2nd prize - £150; 3rd prize - £100

Please circulate to any potential students. All details may be found on the ASTENE website.

Madeline Boden
University of York

ASTENE on Social Media: Reminder to be Social!

You may or may not be aware that ASTENE has several social media accounts which are a great way to share information about our own events and news as well as information on other relevant organisations. We have nearly 1,200 followers on Twitter, 800 on Facebook and our new Instagram account is slowly gaining members. These social

media platforms are a great way for members to keep in touch with ASTENE to see smaller bite-sized informative posts and for the association to reach out and connect with other organisations and the public. As an example, our recent posts about Amelia Edwards's Nile journey reached over 6,000 people on Facebook with over 400 actively engaging with the post. The accounts are also a great way to reach out to other experts with queries. Recently, a Twitter query we posted for Faye Kalloniatis on Egyptian coffin fragments resulted in a great online discussion and provided some interesting research leads. If you are on any of the following platforms, please follow us and keep in touch!

- Twitter: @ASTENE1997
- Instagram: astene1997
- Facebook: ASTENE1997

ASTENE Book Sale/Donation

Helen Hughes-Brock has recently approached ASTENE with a number of 19th - mid-20th c. books of interest to ASTENE members+ that she would like to donate to anyone who would like any of them or would find them useful. She writes:

“Members of ASTENE are invited to ‘pay’ for these books by donating to Iraqi Christians in Need (ICIN). This is not a missionary society. It is a UK Registered Charity (no. 1119427) founded in 2007 to give help to a specific minority, like aid being given to the Rohingyas of Burma at present. It is run from the UK by its foundress, Dr. Suha Rassam, a medical doctor living in Surrey, and her husband Dr. Faiz Tappouni. The administration is largely voluntary and the work is done at the Iraq end by local people within their own communities of refugees, Christians displaced to ‘Kurdistan’ in northern Iraq. Their programme includes medical and educational aid, housing, and care and training of people with special needs.

The books are offered by Helen Brock and her husband Sebastian (retired Reader in Syriac Studies at Oxford University). We are personal friends of Dr. Suha Rassam and her husband and of other people involved, including one of those active in managing the programmes in Sulaimaniyah in

northern Iraq. This is a worthy cause and little known about in Britain.

ICIN has an informative website: <Info@icin.org.uk>. If anyone not interested in the books would like to make a direct donation, the ICIN address is:

Iraqi Christians in Need, 43 Queen's Drive
Thames Ditton, Surrey KT7 0TJ

The books above are held by the ASTENE Treasurer <treasurerastene@gmail.com>, to whom all enquiries and payments should be made. Apart from postage costs, all monies received will be collated and forwarded directly to the ICIN. If you wish to donate a specific sum to ICIN, please add postage costs to your payment.

Haggard, H. Rider, 1904. *A Winter Pilgrimage being an Account of Travels through Palestine, Italy and the Island of Cyprus, Accomplished in the Year 1900*. London: Longmans, Green.

Kinglake, A. W. 1904. *Eothen*. New edn. London: Wm. Blackwood. Leather bound. Front cover detached.

de Lamartine, M., 1949. *Souvenirs, impressions, pensées et paysages pendant un Voyage en Orient 1832–1833 ou Notes d'un voyageur*, Vol. VII (only). Paris: Charles Gosselin-Furne et C^{ie} — Pagnerre.

Lukach, H.C. 1930. *The Fringe of the East: A Journey through Past and Present Provinces of Turkey*. London: Macmillan.
Also: Cronin, A.J. 1957. *The Last Migration*. London.

Sonia Anderson

Members will be saddened to hear that Sonia Anderson died of cancer on 8 September aged 76. Two reminiscences appeared in *Salon*, the regular newsletter of the Society of Antiquaries.

Those members who joined the ASTENE tour to Turkey in 2011, will remember our visit to Sediköy, some 12 km (6-7 miles) south of Izmir (Smyrna), where the consuls had their out-of-town residences. One of those consuls, and a name that recurred throughout the tour, was Sir Paul Rycaut. Sonia

delivered a fascinating lecture on Rycaut at the mini conference in Izmir. Rycaut, had been the subject of her BLitt at Oxford in 1970 and was later the subject of her book, *An English Consul in Turkey: Paul Rycaut at Smyrna 1667–1678* (1989), published by OUP. It was reprinted in 2001 and later issued in an on-demand version, with a binding that she did not care for, as she said, emphatically.

Sonia worked initially for the Society of Antiquaries, later moving to the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, where she became Assistant Keeper. She contributed entries to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, including Sir Peter Rycaut and Sir Paul Rycaut, Heneage Finch (ambassador in Istanbul), and Andrea Morosini. The focus of much of her writing and volumes for the Commission was the 17th century.

Sonia was Assistant Editor of the *Journal of the Society of Archivists* for 16 years, and it is Reviews Editor for ten. As Elizabeth Danbury wrote in *Salon* 455, on her retirement as Reviews Editor in 1992, Sonia left a letter for her successor, Philippa Bassett, filled with excellent advice. This can be accessed ...

Andrew Pike recounted how, on a walking holiday in the Cairngorms in Scotland, Sonia invited him to stay at her parents' house in Fife on his return south. Her family home turned out to be a very large country house: Pittormie Castle near St Andrew's, dating to the 15th century (it had once been the seat of the Dukes of Fife).

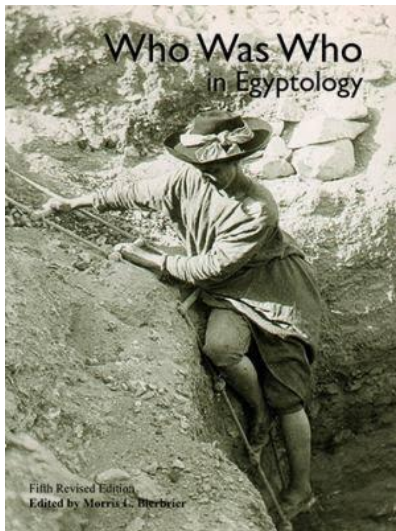
Sonia was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and of the Royal Historical Society.

John Chapman

Another loss to the Association is the recent death of John Chapman. John had served on the Committee and members will remember him from Conferences, where he was a lively and engaging companion. John had a particular interest in Mani and ran a highly regarded and deeply informative website on the region. He had intended to accompany the ASTENE tour along with Malcom Wagstaff, but was unable to do so because of ill health. A longer obituary will appear in the next Bulletin.

REVIEWS

Who was who is Egyptology. Fifth Revised Edition, by Morris L. Bierbrier. London: Egypt Exploration Society, 2019, 510 pp, illustrated, £35.00. ISBN 978-0- 85698-242-2. Distributed by Bloomsbury Publishing.



The first version of *WWW* was the work of Warren Dawson. Published in 1951, it was a slender volume devoted largely to what are now vogueishly called ‘dead white men’. But if Dawson had not pursued a slightly dilettantish obsession would anyone have considered creating such a volume at all?

The second edition (1969) was edited by Eric Uphill – who, alas, now has his own entry. It corrected and considerably expanded on Dawson’s, but still lacked the contribution of Egyptian Egyptologists.

The third edition of 1995, the first to be edited by Morris Bierbrier, had numerous contributions and information supplied by ASTENE members. It was also the first to include pictures, albeit rather small, black and white, and not always of the best quality.

The fourth edition of 2012, also edited by Bierbrier, was considerably enlarged, and had, rightly, many more entries devoted to Egyptian scholars and archaeologists, as well as Chinese and Japanese, alongside the arrays of western practitioners.

This fifth edition is the third, and last, to be edited by Morris Bierbrier, and he deserves our thanks and congratulations for the considerable time and effort he has put into those three versions, which have seen a radical change from Warren Dawson’s volume. There are new entries of colleagues who have died since 2012, and those can provoke memories and a sense of loss; but there are also new entries from the more distant past. Amongst them are non-academically trained workers who have hitherto found no place: the most obvious example is Ali Suefi, on whom Petrie was so reliant.

A volume such as this will reflect trends in research, broader contemporary issues, and the interests of the compiler. Here we have many new entries for collectors. It should be noted that the editor has encouraged contributions – and received many – so omissions are not to be blamed on him.

One notable lack is scholars from the African-American and Afrocentric areas. They, and some of their ideas, may be controversial – but probably no more so than some writers who do have entries. Uncontroversial, and from the purely mainstream academic world, surely Frank Snowden is worthy of a mention? W.E.B. Du Bois and Leo Hansberry, two major figures from the preceding generation, deserve a place also. More controversial, Cheikh Anta Diop has had an enormous influence, even if we might now regard some of his ideas as classic hyper-diffusionism. I am not sure that I dare propose Sir Alan Gardiner’s grandson, Martin Bernal, as fitting, despite the storm generated by *Black Athena* in 1987. But there have been African-American writers on Egypt since the 19th century, working with the standard historical and archaeological sources, an appropriate line of research at the present time. Their omission lies with an attitude within academic Egyptology which has failed to engage as much as it should with this branch of the discipline.

There are also many early European writers on Egypt who are not included and some inclusions that one might question. Why does James Traill (483) in

charge of the gardens of Ibrahim Pasha merit an entry? Interesting for an ASTENE meeting yes, but for Egyptology? There is another short entry for someone who saw a mummy unwrapped (I forgot to note the name, and haven't had time to go through all 509 pages to relocate it) – in what way is their contribution to Egyptology more significant than that of Scaliger who does not get an entry? Given the veneration in which Egyptologists still hold Manetho, surely the scholar who was responsible for producing the first modern edition should be enshrined here. Equally, what was Gustave Flaubert's contribution to Egyptology? His racy account may amuse, but hardly has much of value for the discipline. His travelling companion Maxime du Camp does merit a mention as one of the first to publish photographs of Egypt, even if he did make 'bitter and grossly false statements about his contemporaries.' Well, he is not the only person in Egyptology to have done that!

This edition is the last print version of a standard work of reference for the discipline. The future is digital, which allows ever greater expansion. Perhaps that change should also be marked by a modification of the title? Since the 1980s, museum departments have changed their names to 'Egypt and Sudan': here we have some Sudanese archaeologists and many European archaeologists who worked in Sudan as well as Egypt, along with Meroitic scholars who generally have an Egyptological background. It is impossible to separate Egyptology, Nubian, and Meroitic studies for historical, practical, and geographical reasons, even though some attempt to slough off anything to do with Egyptology. Could we have a new edition that is *Who Was Who in the Archaeology of Egypt and Sudan*?

As we approach the bi-centenary of Champollion's *Lettre à M. Dacier*, announcing his first attempts to decipher hieroglyphic, histories of Egyptology are flourishing. Many of them tread very familiar ground – indeed, some could be said to be little more than expanded biographies that follow a very conventional format and vision of the development (if that is an appropriate term) of the discipline. Chris Naunton's new volume is reviewed below. Toby Wilkinson's recent *A World Beneath the Sands: Adventurers and Archaeologists in the Golden Age of Egyptology* – a title that does not

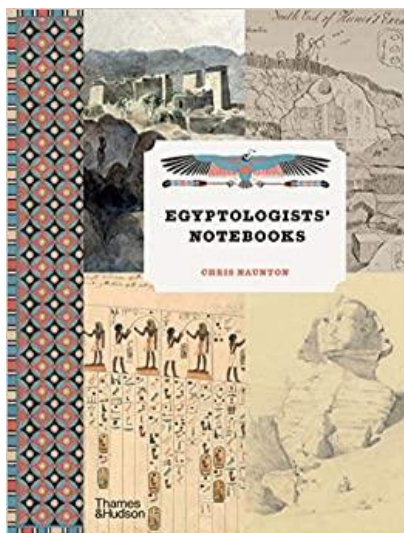
suggest a radical approach – has had some praise, although the judgement of Christina Riggs is also well worth considering (*London Review of Books*, 22 October 2020, accessible online). The long-announced volume edited by Andrew Bednarski, Aidan Dodson and Salim Ikram has also just appeared ("spanning 150 years and global in purview"). *WWW* is not a history of Egyptology, although it does contain much raw material for such volumes: it is a biographical dictionary, with all of the fascination, but equally the weaknesses and frustrations, of the genre. It is one of those books that, once pulled off the shelf to check something, compels the reader to spend far longer following up the links (such as the Crowfoot and Hood connections), or to be informatively distracted by an entry on someone known or unknown.

William Carruthers in *Histories of Egyptology. Interdisciplinary Measures* (5) commented on the 'usefulness' of *Who Was Who*, but proposed that it "co-opts various individuals for the discipline's purposes, and in the process, it makes the discipline more real as a unified entity." One could ask whether the volume really has the power? It might, possibly, lend legitimacy to individuals included (and lead to a negative attitude to the excluded), but the extraordinary range of entries surely points to a lack of unity in any strict sense of an academic discipline. The – dare one say – eccentricity of the collection (not to mention some of the individuals) displays the enormous attraction – and relevance – of ancient Egypt (and Sudan) to a world-wide population over a very long period of time.

There are far more images than in the previous editions, albeit of variable quality. Occasionally I wondered, unkindly, why a particular individual merited a picture. Champollion still presides as the frontispiece, linking us to Dawson's original vision of the discipline: a vision still being reinforced. Time for a change? The covers shows us Hilda Petrie on excavation. The possibilities for a future digital version are exciting, if daunting: but Morris Bierbrier has left us with an edition that will keep us occupied during the long wait – thank you, Morris!

Robert G. Morkot

Egyptologists' Notebooks, by Chris Naunton, London: Thames & Hudson, 2020, 264 pp, illustrated, £32 (hardback), ISBN978-0-500-29529-8



In recent years, Chris Naunton has assumed the role of the somewhat public face of Egyptology. Entertainment programmes such as *King Tut's Last Mission* (Blink Films for Channel 5, 2020) and *Egypt's Lost Pyramid* (Lion Television/AtLand for Channel 4, 2019) have introduced Naunton to audiences who might have a general interest in ancient Egypt as a relaxing way to spend a Sunday evening in front of the box.

As well as a sparkling television presenter, Naunton is also an Egyptologist and author. His newest publication, *Egyptologists' Notebooks*, takes its cue from his television work to deliver a celebrity-focused, visually appealing and generalist approach to the discipline of Egyptology and the generations of European travellers that brought it into being.

Egyptologists' Notebooks is introduced as a volume on the material culture of Egyptology, highlighting “notebooks...maps, plans, drawings, paintings, sketches, doodles, letters and telegrams.” (11) As a Thames & Hudson publication, it is no surprise that the book is lavishly illustrated. There are nearly 250 colour illustrations which are distributed throughout the text. Credit here goes to picture researcher, Sally Nicholls who meticulously combed archives across the UK and abroad to source a wealth of material including delicate pencil drawings, watercolours, and ephemera such as notebook covers and

evocatively crumpled papers. They are reproduced to great effect and therefore, could be used as a useful starting point for researchers interested in knowing more about the contents of these archives. Disappointingly, while the image captions include contextualising information, they lack basic primary information such as dates, object numbers and current locations.

The book is organised into encyclopaedic entries on notable Egyptologists and grouped by themes such as “Artists, Expeditions and National Competition” (40) and “Tombs, Mummies, Treasures” (168). Each group is introduced with a primer on the political, social and disciplinary contexts during which these travellers made their journeys. The subjects highlighted in this book will be of no great surprise to academics or those who study Egyptology closely. The celebrities of this world: Pococke, Lane, Hay, Wilkinson, Belzoni, Edwards, and Carter are all given an ample word count to explore their accomplishments and legacies in the field. As an introductory volume, it is comprehensive moving from early-eighteenth century travellers through to mid-twentieth century university-trained archaeologists. Each entry is prefaced with a neat summary which describes the person's main accomplishments in less than 100 words – another useful reference tool. In the extended entries, excerpts from the Egyptologists' significant publications are inserted, thereby illuminating the journeys described and revealing first impressions, private frustrations and amusing anecdotes.

An entry on Amelia Edwards, one of only three women included in the book, references the work of the present-day Egyptian Exploration Fund (172), which she co-founded in 1882. Similarly, the book references archaeological digs from recent decades that provide an update or epilogue to the work of historical travellers. These forays into the present-day highlight Egyptology as an active, ongoing discipline. The book also takes on the criticisms levelled at Egyptology by post-colonial theory, indigenous scholars from the Middle East and North Africa, and those who see Egyptology as a discipline inextricably linked with its colonial origins.

With several key ethical issues, *Egyptologists' Notebooks* seems to talk the talk of self-reflection

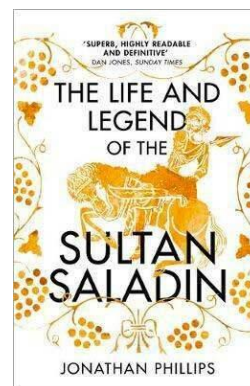
and change, but ultimately doesn't want to walk the walk. At the outset, the book points to the fact there are non-European travellers of great significance to the history of Egyptology, but then carries on with entries exclusively dedicated to Europeans. In the single entry on a non-European, Hasan Effendi Hosni, the deliberate exclusion of Egyptians from Egyptological histories is lamented as an unfortunate cornerstone of the discipline. However, the entry on Hosni is brief and unfulfilling owing to, according to the author, a recently uncovered archive that hasn't yet been fully explored. The entry tantalisingly hints at Hosni's teacher, Ahmed Kamal and "seven graduates" (238) in Hosni's class at the Egyptology School, but doesn't do the leg work of a research text to uncover more about these figures or include them in this major publication.

Of more significant consequence is the book's approach to slave owning Egyptologists. Three slave owners are profiled: James Burton (76), Robert Hay (88), and John Gardner Wilkinson (112). The actions of these men, which in some cases included forced marriage (79), are justified as the unavoidable custom of the time, despite the fact these men also came from the same period when the abolition of slavery was one of the most important social issues in British political discourse. In the present-day, as campaigns such as Rhodes Must Fall and the removal of the Colston statue in Bristol are fresh in the minds of many, this relativist argument reads as a tired and insufficient scholarly argument. It instead raises the question, mirroring current debates over monuments, of how Egyptology as a discipline should earnestly begin critical discussions over its most lauded figures. The book claims that at the outset of the twentieth century Egyptology was "heading in the right direction" (135). However, by its deliberate inclusions and omissions this book signals that Egyptology's proudest accomplishments still lie with the people – and attitudes – of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Egyptologists' Notebooks reveals the rich material history that underpins the study of travellers and the public's enduring interest in the supposed golden age of discovery in Egypt. This volume might ultimately find its audience amongst those interested in this subject as a casual viewer – much like finding

a shiny history documentary on telly for a rainy evening.

Dr Madeline Boden



The Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin, by Jonathan Phillips, London: Vintage, 2020, xvii + 481 pp, illustrated, £10.99 (paperback), ISBN 978 0 099 57274 9.

Salah al-Din ibn Ayyub (Saladin) was born in Takrit in 1137 to an important Kurdish family. He was in a good position to become a unifier of the Islamic world as he was not allied with any Arab tribe nor a Turkish invader mistrusted by the Arab peoples. His world was in a state of great turmoil. In 1099, the Crusaders had taken Jerusalem, set up Christian states and the Islamic world was fragmented and torn by struggles between Sunni, Shi'ite, Turk and Arab.

This absorbing biography of Saladin by Jonathan Phillips traces his emergence and rise to power, describes his victorious Battle of Hattin in 1187 to liberate Jerusalem and relates his conflict with the armies of the Third Crusade. Saladin died in 1193 and the rest of the book explores his subsequent reception in the West and the Near East.

The book starts with an overview of the complex geopolitics of the Muslim Near East in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The Muslim political landscape was split between the Sunni Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad and the Shi'ite Fatimid caliphate in Cairo. The death of the ruler of the vast Seljuk Empire in 1092 provoked de-centralisation and attempts at autonomy by cities and small Sunni Turkish states in Syria. In this environment, the ambitious Ayyubid Kurds rose to prominence.

Skilled as mounted warriors, they joined the forces of Zengi, a powerful Turkish warlord. Zengi called for “anti-Frankish jihad” which Phillips dubs the “counter-crusade” (xv). Zengi’s son Nur al-Din succeeded him in 1146 and continued the conflict with fellow Muslims and Franks. He took Damascus in 1154 which then became the theological centre for the jihad.

In 1166, Nur al-Din sent his military commander, Shirkuh, and his nephew, Saladin, to take control of Egypt. Saladin became the Vizier of Egypt in 1169 and ruler in 1171 upon the death of the last Fatimid caliph. Egypt’s state religion became Sunni and thus, Saladin united the Muslim caliphates under Baghdad.

While previously unappreciated, Phillips argues that Saladin’s experience in Egypt was formative in establishing a model for the operation of his empire. Clan loyalty and reliance on close family members were the main planks of his strategy. He generously rewarded his supporters including family, emirs, officials and court poets. Saladin’s cabinet of key administrators and officials provided skills and counsel and were considered “a hallmark of his entire career” (63). Saladin supported religious institutions which contributed to his success. Phillips highlights political acumen and diplomacy as Saladin’s greatest strengths which he employed in negotiation with allies and enemies alike.

In the second section of the book, Phillips relates that initially Saladin was demonised in the West for the capture of Jerusalem, evidenced by an illustrated text where he features as one of the heads of the Beast of the Apocalypse. Conversely, William of Tyre’s history of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, widely circulated in Europe, presented a more balanced view. Saladin quickly acquired a positive image as a noble Muslim opponent who showed mercy to Christians at Jerusalem and as “a man of generosity, integrity, faith and culture” (318). By the 1250s a myth circulated that Richard the Lionheart and Saladin fought one another, although they never met. Medieval writers such as Dante, Boccaccio and Petrarch respected Saladin and centuries later Voltaire and Gibbon likewise admired him. Sir Walter Scott’s *The Talisman* (1825) presented the most influential view of Saladin, and his description of Richard and Saladin reversed the stereotypical

perceptions of the Orient and the Crusader West (328).

Phillips argues that a “collective public memory” (377) of Saladin and the crusades persisted in the Near East until the late nineteenth century (330). Early proponents of Saladin include the historian Ibn Kaldun, Evliya Çelebi and the Ottoman historian Naima.

In 1858, an Arabic language newspaper reprinted an admiring thirteenth-century history of Saladin’s counter-crusade and other medieval accounts soon followed. Saladin featured in early Arab nationalism through theatre and books with both Arabs and Kurds claiming him as their own. During and after World War I, the disclosed objectives of the Sykes-Picot Agreement led to “new ways in which Saladin’s legacy was reimagined” (357).

Gamal Abdel Nasser viewed Saladin’s recapture of Jerusalem as the foundation of Arab unity, comparing the short-lived United Arab Republic to his empire in Egypt and Syria. Saladin was prominent in Saddam Hussein’s cult of personality, in part because both were born in Takrit.

Phillips is an historian and academic who specialises in the history of the Crusades, having published extensively on the subject. This biography of Saladin is authoritative, well written and appeals to a wider audience beyond academia. Phillips draws upon primary sources, poems, letters, newspapers, plays, films and novels to tell the story. He has brought to light Saladin the skillful diplomat and the role his early experience in Egypt played in shaping his successful leadership style. The well-researched reception study compliments and goes beyond biography to explain the Sultan’s enduring positive profile. The Battle of Hattin, the recovery of Jerusalem from the Crusaders and a reputation for generosity and mercy are Saladin’s heritage, although, as Phillips reveals, it is vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation.

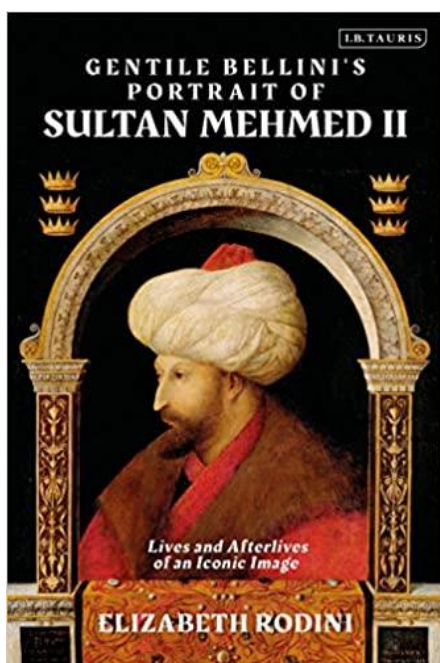
The book is appropriately and intelligently illustrated, well indexed and amply footnoted with an extensive bibliography and seven relevant maps.

Cathie Bryan

Gentile Bellini's Portrait of Sultan Mehmed II, Lives and Afterlives of an Iconic Image, by Elizabeth Rodini, London: Bloomsbury, I. B. Tauris 2020, xiv-207 pps, Illustrated 8 colour plates, 149 black and white figures.

£21.99 (paperback) ISBN 978-0-7586-1661-9
£45.50 (hardback) ISBN 978-1-6386-0481-3

A portrait painted in 1480 by a major Venetian artist Gentile Bellini (active 1470-1507) of an Ottoman ruler Sultan Mehmed II (r. 1451-1481) who conquered Constantinople in 1453, seemingly disappeared from view until it appeared again in Venice in 1865. There Austin Henry Layard (1817-1894), discoverer of Nimrud and Nineveh, and later British ambassador to Turkey 1877-1881, bought the portrait for his collection of Italian paintings which eventually arrived in London in 1916 as a bequest to the National Gallery where, apart from a loan to Istanbul in 1999, it rests temporarily in the Victoria and Albert Museum.



Bellini's portrait is grave and formal, a three-quarter length view in profile of Mehmed II dressed in the turban and robes of Ottoman court custom and seated within an elaborately decorated arch. Latin inscriptions identify both the Sultan and painter, and also record the date of completion – 25 November 1480. Although much restored this dated painting is

a visual witness to the political, economic, and cultural impact of the Ottoman Empire. Mehmed II had centralised a state through administrative, military, legal and commercial reforms, and had also established diplomatic relations with European powers such as the Republic of Venice.

There are several approaches to this striking image of Mehmed II. He can be viewed within the conventions of late fifteenth century portrait painting, where despite the later restoration it is still possible to discern the quality of Bellini's work in the contrast between the sharply delineated outlines of the Sultan's features and the subtle brushwork of the facial hair and fur collar of his robe. Additionally, he can be placed within the context of Ottoman figural painting which evolved during the sixteenth century into a well-established tradition of stylised portraits of formally dressed sultans which illustrated chronological narratives of their reigns. Mehmed himself, for example, featured posthumously in a chronicle of 1579. Immaculately clothed in both Venetian and Turkish paintings he also has a role in the study of Ottoman court dress. Elizabeth Rodini, a specialist in Italian Renaissance painting, has chosen a cultural approach. She first saw Mehmed II's portrait in London in 2003 and has since followed him for many years of research in Venetian and British archives from Constantinople back to Venice and London and in Istanbul in 2018. Her book is a stimulating cultural biography in nine chapters which with some editorial adjustment could each function as an independent article. For ASTENE readers I have chosen two topics – the portrait in Venetian -Ottoman relations and its later iconic role in the Neo- Ottomanism of Turkey in the twentieth to twenty- first centuries.

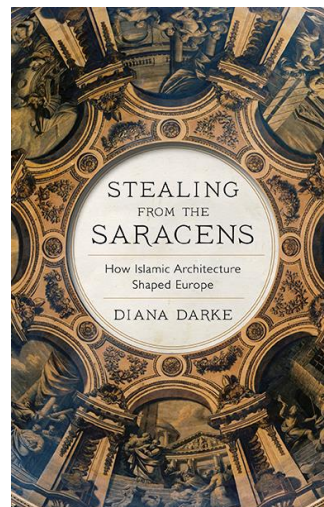
Mehmet's portrait is secure within the complex network of relations between Italy and the Ottoman regime which was practical and cultural and usually mutually convenient. Mehmed, who both admired and needed Italian expertise in architecture, optics, weaponry, metalwork and textiles, had encouraged qualified immigrants from Florence and Genoa to settle in the Galata quarter of Constantinople where there was already a large Venetian community. The Italians needed good relations with the Ottomans for continued access to the profits of the east west trade routes in spices and luxurious textiles. Rodini has

skilfully traced the commissioning of the portrait combining contemporary archival and published sources; Venetians were sophisticated connoisseurs of technical treatises, catalogues of collections and a flourishing art market. Gentile Bellini's involvement with Mehmed II began with a letter from the Sultan brought on 14 May 1479 to the Doge of Venice requesting a good portrait painter. Bellini departed for Constantinople on 3 September 1479 taking gifts for Mehmed including an album of his father Jacopo's paintings. He was well treated in the Topkapi Palace and personal contact with Mehmed for sittings which raises interesting questions. Mehmed was a good linguist who spoke in Arabic, Greek and Latin with the scholars who discussed ancient history with him. What language did Bellini speak with him? Did Mehmed also speak Italian, or did they use interpreters? Did they discuss European techniques of painting? Bellini returned to Venice in 1481 his work completed. Thereafter the painting disappears until its arrival in Venice in 1865.

Rodini concludes her exploration of Mehmed II with a survey of his current symbolic status. Turkey from the 1980s has seen the emergence of Neo-Ottomanism, a nostalgia for the grandeur of the sultans and their empire which stresses the ideal of Mehmed the Conqueror as a reaction to the modern secular Republic. The present Turkish government favours traditional values in religious and family life, sponsors the building of mosques in classic Ottoman style, the restoration of Mehmed's tomb and has declared 29th May 1453 an annual celebration with presidential speeches, displays, parades. Mehmed's portrait in 1999 was lent to a popular exhibition in Istanbul and since has provided an image for official propaganda, films, TV programmes, and a range of tourist souvenirs.

An excellent bibliography of primary and secondary sources, detailed notes and index are an indispensable resource for further research.

Jennifer Scarce



Stealing from the Saracens by Diana Darke
Published by C. Hurst and Co (Publishers), Ltd.
London, 2020. 480 pages, illustrated, Hardback
£25. ISBN 97817873050

If sales are anything to go by, this book is already a runaway success. This is partly due to a podcast by the author, Diana Darke, on Dan Snow's *History Hits*.¹ It has been well-reviewed and captures a mood to understand better what Western and Middle Eastern cultures have in common. The Council for British Research in the Levant organised a webinar around the book which can be viewed on the Council's Facebook page.² The book is handsomely produced on glossy paper with 151 beautiful illustrations. The glossary, bibliography, index, and reference notes are useful but not intrusive, while the eastern influences visible in some of the most iconic buildings of the West are revisited at the end with clear markers on the accompanying photographs. The only thing missing which might be useful for readers is a timeline.

Darke is an Arabist who knows the Eastern Mediterranean well. She began her writing career with guide books to *Oman, Jordan, Syria* (Chalfont St Peter: Bradt Travel Guides, 2013) and *Eastern Turkey* (Chalfont St Peter: Bradt Travel Guides, 2014) among others. Her post-graduate studies in Islamic Art along with the joys and griefs of owning and restoring a "courtyard house" in Damascus have culminated in this latest work, bringing together the expert groundwork of earlier specialists.

The word Saracen in the title refers to the Crusades. An example is this quote from Christopher Wren Jr's compilation of his father's thoughts: "The Holy War gave the Christians, who had been there, an idea of the Saracen works, which were afterward by them imitated in the West; and they refined upon it every day, as they proceeded in building churches." (36)

He might have added that the Crusaders learnt as much from the Holy Land about building castles as churches. The Crusades were the height of the enmity between Islam and the Christian West and the provocative word 'stealing' may have contributed to book sales for mischievous reasons, though the title also pokes fun at a competitive approach to what each civilisation has learned from the other.

To say that architectural influences have come from the Eastern Mediterranean, does not necessarily make them Islamic. Conversely, westerners who mistook the Dome of the Rock for the Temple of Solomon and a Christian building (or perhaps wished it were so) made a serious error. Wren used Arab geometry and measurement skills for building the Dome of St Paul's, but the Hagia Sofia in Constantinople existed before Islam; Wren was familiar with it as was the great architect of Istanbul's mosques, Sinan who worked to rival the former basilica (277-308). Thus, the book's subtitle, "How Islamic architecture shaped Europe", is also a tease since the actual text rightly ranges across the pre-Islamic Hellenistic and Byzantine, even Persian, influences, as well as the Islamic.

The Umayyad Dome of the Rock, which became a visual symbol for Jerusalem because of its beauty and prominence, was likely the original source of the Gothic pointed and trefoil arches. The ideal of the dome, whether in the Roman Pantheon, Hagia Sofia, St Peter's, the Süleymaniye Mosque or St Paul's was a common theme of man's reaching for the heavens. But the techniques of the Near Eastern builders produced the best results.

The two introductory chapters on Wren correlate to what Vaughan Hart covers in *Christopher Wren: In Search of Eastern Antiquity* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2020) which is not listed in Darke's bibliography, though Hart's *St*

Paul's Cathedral: Christopher Wren (London, Phaidon, 1995) features. The following chapters are in roughly chronological order, packed with information and anecdote, surveying the buildings and building techniques of the pre-Islamic era and of successive Islamic dynasties in Damascus, Andalusia, Baghdad, Cairo and finally the Seljuks and Ottomans. The architectural innovations of the 100-year Umayyad supremacy over the Mediterranean basin are mirrored in the architectural masterpiece of the two hundred-year rule of the rump of the Umayyad dynasty in Andalusia: the *Mezquita* of Cordoba. In 'Gateways to Europe', Darke then explores the oriental opulence of Venice, and its glass industry, which she explains derives from its long trading relationship with Eastern Mediterranean entrepôts, rather than from conquest (225). The chapter highlights other examples of Islamic artistic influences in Ravenna, Amalfi, Monte Cassino and Sicily, with Cyprus and Rhodes as way-stations.

The impetus for the book was the rebuilding of Notre Dame cathedral after the fire, though the research and intimate knowledge of the greater Syria sites had been accumulated by the author over many years. In the context of cathedral re-building after fires, I remember Ken Follett's hugely popular *The Pillars of the Earth*, (London: Macmillan, 1989) and the building of Kingsbridge Cathedral. The protagonist, Jack Jackson, a stonemason, spends time working in exile in Spain. In Toledo, Jackson is befriended by the Arab scholar 'Raschid AlHaroun' (echoing the name of the great Abbasid Caliph Haroun Al-Rashid). Jackson studies the geometry of Euclid, rediscovered by the scientists of the Abbasid Court, and then works in Paris. He is inspired by the great cathedral of Saint Denis, the first cathedral where pointed Gothic arches, rib vaulting and rose windows filled with stained glass were seen in the West, as Darke explains (47). This part of *The Pillars of the Earth* was grounded in fact as we see reflected in Darke's book which gives us a new understanding of the cathedrals of the West. Read this book and you will never go into a Western church or secular Gothic revival building without spotting some of the motifs she describes. The chapter on revivals will help a wanderer understand some of the familiar sights in Britain and France whose origins we rarely question (309). Similar, and

perhaps less familiar, is Gaudi's Sagrada Familia in Barcelona which takes the story through to 2026 when that Cathedral should be completed.

Some of the claims for influences to be Arab or Islamic rather than a function of Mediterranean geography may be hard to prove. But this work is a useful synthesis of the exchanges between the West and the historical lands of the Arab, Islamic and Ottoman Empires through the flow of artistic, cultural and in this case primarily architectural paradigms. Several travellers other than pilgrims are mentioned including: Rev. Edward Pococke (18-20), John Chardin (26-27), Count Melchior de Vogüé (80), Charles Barry (316-8), Owen Jones (323 & 336), and various others in the chapter on the Gothic revival (309-340). The book's success indicates a thirst for accessible analysis of the architectural and artistic influence of the Near/Middle East in Europe. It is a strong endorsement of ASTENE's objectives when among many distinguished commentators on the book, a former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, notices the power of this shared heritage and applauds it.³

Sheila McGuirk

¹ <https://podcasts.apple.com/ch/podcast/stealing-from-saracens-islam-european-architecture/id1042631089?i=1000488406778>

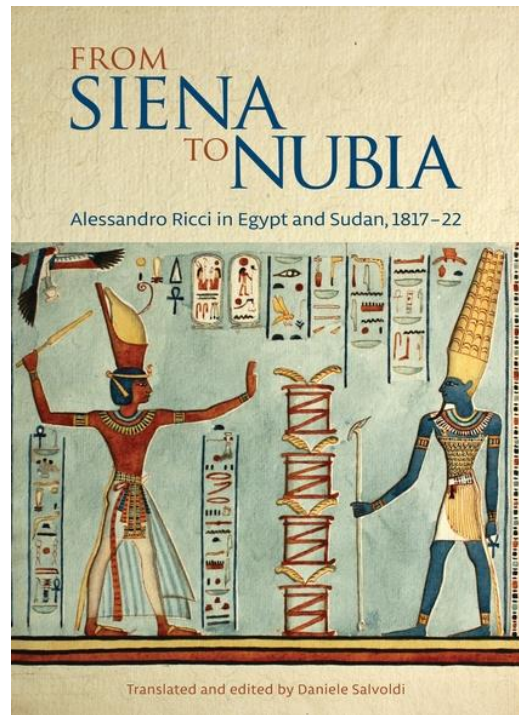
² <https://www.facebook.com/584368051713252/videos/3805094299519692>.

³ Comment on the book's back dust-cover. The author has confirmed on Twitter that the former Archbishop had read the book "from cover to cover".

From Siena to Nubia. Alessandro Ricci in Egypt and Sudan, 1817-22. Translated and edited by Daniele Salvoldi, 2018, The American University in Cairo Press, 480 pp. ISBN 9789774168543 (Prices vary: RRP £50.00 but can be cheaper)

We are all increasingly aware of the one-sidedness of our knowledge about the decades following the British-French conflict of 1798-1801 and the rise of Muhammad Ali Pasha. The focus has so frequently been on the 'golden age of collectors', or what some prefer to term the 'rape' narrative. The problem for

most of us who might like to explore alternative perspectives is the practical aspect of dealing with the languages of the original manuscripts in the Cairo Archives: this is an area for Egyptian scholars – there must be a vast amount of material including Egyptian views of the Europeans and their



behaviour.

To describe this volume as 'translated and edited' is to seriously undervalue the enormous amount of work and scholarship involved. Ricci's original manuscript (in Italian) is in Egypt, but exactly where is currently unknown. Salvoldi details the complex history (69-71). Going from Italy to France in 1827 (specifically to Champollion-Figeac), the manuscript disappeared for about a century, then passed through an antiquarian bookshop in Paris, resurfacing in a bookshop in Cairo in 1928. It was acquired for the King Fuad I, and probably entered the library of the Abdin Palace, a collection now split between Abdin, Asyut University and Aswan University. Fortunately, during its time in Abdin, it was copied by Angelo Sammarco, with the intention of publishing it. This did not happen, but the typescript, with corrections, was lodged with Sammarco's papers in the National Archives of Egypt in Cairo. In 2008, Daniele Salvoldi began work in the Archives, looking for new material on early Egyptologists. He

was directed to the Ricci manuscript which then formed the focus of his doctoral dissertation. This was followed by work on the Bankes Manuscripts, held in Dorchester, and in other relevant museum and archive collections. All of this is brought together in this very handsome, and very heavy, volume.

Alessandro Ricci is well known from his association with the British consul general Henry Salt, and with William John Bankes of Kingston Lacy. He also visited and documented Siwa (1820) with Drovetti, Frediani and Linant de Bellefonds; and Sinai (1820), again with Linant. Ricci made a second journey upstream as far as Sennar in 1821–22, as physician to Ibrahim Pasha, during the military campaign that resulted in Egypt's conquest of Sudan. During that campaign Ricci saved Ibrahim's life. Ricci returned to Italy in 1822 but went back to Egypt as an essential member of the Franco-Tuscan Expedition of 1828-30. He served the expedition as physician, and draftsman, but was also the team member who had years of experience of Egypt and Nubia which, of course, neither of the leaders had.

Ricci, like Bankes and others, failed to publish any account of his travels. He was skilled as an artist, working for Bankes, Salt and for Belzoni in the tomb of Sety I. He produced a set of ninety plates (some 324 separate illustrations) that were to accompany his narrative – they too, were never published. If he had produced the work it would have the first individual illustrated narrative on that scale since Denon's, and in accuracy would have probably surpassed the *Description*, still grinding through the presses.

The whole volume is divided into three main parts. The first (Chapters 1-6) gives, succinctly, the historical background, the biographical information that we have about Ricci, his travels, and phases of his life out of Egypt. Chapter five discusses the Archaeological, Anthropological, and Natural History Collections now held in Dresden and Florence Collection. (Ricci appears to have keen on shooting things.) The history of the manuscript (Chapter 6) has already been outlined. Part two is devoted to the plates. The Third part is the translation and discussion of the typescript copy, with extensive footnotes. The plates are reproduced

at the end of the volume (not always in numerical order), with all of the appropriate footnotes, bibliography and index.

Salvoldi has identified, and reconstructed, the 90 plates as originally planned. Chapter 7 gives details of the present whereabouts of the original drawings, paintings, and epigraphic copies that make up the plates: some of which have up to eight separate original images (hence the order issue noted). We are also given the accession numbers for each collection, and a considerable amount of additional material. The present location of the manuscripts ranges from the Museo Egizio, Florence; the Bankes archive in Dorset History Centre; the British Museum; and the University of Pisa. The plates are all beautifully reproduced and include now destroyed temples and scenes. Of particular importance, are the images of the Amenhotep III temple on Elephantine, later totally destroyed (plates 51-56). These served to create a digital reconstruction of the temple by Salvoldi and Simon Delvaux. Also important is the stela in the Buhen temple (plate 14,3) and the procession of royal women in temple B700 at Gebel Barkal (pl.66, 4). The map on plate 90 looks remarkably beautiful – possibly deserving a folio of its own or (if I dare criticise) some larger detailed plates. The majority of the recorded monuments are New Kingdom and later, with remarkably few from the Old Kingdom. There are some of the earliest copies of Meroitic monuments although, unpublished, they had no great impact at the time. Ricci's artistic and epigraphic skills are variable – some are extremely accurate with excellent copies of hieroglyphic. Others are rather less perfect.

This is, in all ways, an exemplary publication of an important narrative. It fits with so many other journeys and individuals to help build a more complete and complex account of European activities in Egypt and Sudan in the years around 1820.

But it is far too heavy to read in bed, or even in an armchair!

Robert G. Morkot

ARTICLES

LEONARDO DA VINCI'S LEGENDARY VISIT TO CYPRUS IN 1481 A.D.

The reputation of Leonardo da Vinci (1452 – 1519) today extends in all ways far beyond anything he or his contemporaries could ever have imagined in Renaissance times. In 1952, on the quincentenary of his birth, the Royal Academy of Arts in London held an exhibition of his works and in the accompanying booklet Cecil Gould described him as “perhaps the most prodigally- gifted human-being produced by any age”. And in 2019, which marked the 500th anniversary of his death in France, there were a substantial number of exhibitions and other events devoted to his illustrious memory. His painting of the ‘Mona Lisa’ is the most recognisable work of art in the world, rivalled only by ‘The Last Supper’ in the Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan, and the crowds that normally throng the Château du Clos Lucé in Amboise, where he spent his last years, alone attest to his undiminished international appeal, even though there is little authentic to show of his passage. The subject of innumerable studies, it might have been thought that there was little new to say about any aspect of Leonardo's life or achievements, but the one footnote that has been academically

overlooked and under-researched is his alleged involvement with the island of Cyprus.

The Republic of Cyprus has had no hesitations on this score. On 15 June 1981, to mark the 500th anniversary of Leonardo’s purported visit to Cyprus, its Department of Postal Services issued a set of three postage stamps showing a self-portrait of Leonardo, ‘The Last Supper’, and Lefkara lace with the Cathedral of Milan in the background . In the accompanying blurb it explained that : “Although there does not exist any historical evidence for the visit of Leonardo in Cyprus, the description given in that note about the beauties of the island, allows us to presume that Leonardo has indeed visited Cyprus. This presumption is enforced by sources according to which the visit took place in 1481 (500 years ago) during the reign of Katherine Cornaro, queen of Cyprus, who entertained the famous painter. It is said that Leonardo was so much impressed by the Lefkara laces that he took with him one which he offered to be used on the Altar of the Cathedral of Milan”. Not one to miss an opportunity for capitalising on some historical attraction in and to the island, the Cyprus Tourism Organisation has taken advantage of this story to declare : “Legend has it that the famous painter, Leonardo da Vinci, himself visited the village [of Lefkara] in 1481 and



bought a lace altar cloth, which he donated to Milan Cathedral”. There is, however, no proof of any kind that the visit actually took place or that Leonardo ever acquired any Cypriote cloth and donated it to the Duomo in Milan. Nevertheless, when no less a well-informed writer than Rupert Gunnis (1899 - 1965), celebrated author of *Historic Cyprus*, could unequivocally state in 1936 that “Leonardo da Vinci when he visited the Island in 1481, purchased lace made at Lefkara for the altar-cloth at Milan Cathedral”, the claim has to be taken seriously, even if Gunnis quoted no evidence or source for this assertion. Of even more recent vintage but no less suspect is the fake news that during his alleged visit Leonardo also had a hand in the redesign of some architectural features in Famagusta, including Othello’s tower.

That Leonardo was aware of the existence and location of Cyprus is not in dispute. Explicit reference to the island is contained in his notebooks, where he writes under the heading ‘Sito di Venere’ that “From the southern sea-board of Cilicia may be seen to the south the beautiful island of Cyprus, which was the realm of the goddess Venus; and many there have been, who, impelled by her loveliness, have had their ships and rigging broken upon the rocks which lie amidst the seething waves. Here the beauty of some pleasant hill invites the wandering mariners to take their ease among its flowery verdure, where the zephyrs continually come and go, filling with sweet odours the island and the encompassing sea. Alas! How many ships have foundered there! How many vessels have been broken upon these rocks! Here might be seen an innumerable host of ships; some broken in pieces and half-buried in sand; here is visible the poop of one, and there a prow; here a keel and there a rib; and it seems like a day of judgment when there shall be a resurrection of dead ships, so great is the mass that covers the whole northern shore. There the northern winds resounding make strange and fearful noises.”

These and other descriptive annotations, written around 1508 – 1510 A.D., were accompanied on the same sheet by the sketch of a square, fortress-like palazzo, leading some authorities to claim that ‘Sito di Venere’ meant “Site for [a Temple of] Venus”. However, neither the topographical specifications

nor the drawings in the notebook have anything obvious to do with a temple of Venus/Aphrodite or for that matter Cyprus, and indeed the only authentically factual reference in these extracts from Leonardo’s writings is the geographical position of Cyprus south of Cilicia. Certainly Mediaeval chroniclers and Western travellers were aware of the association of Aphrodite/Venus with Cyprus and particularly Palaepaphos, modern Kouklia, in the south-west corner of the island, but there is no evidence that Leonardo used the name of Venus for anything other than its symbolism for beauty, fertility and gardens. Furthermore, despite the modern appropriation of the names, Aphrodite Gardens, Venus Gardens and even Palaepaphos Gardens for commercial accommodation in the south-western corner of Cyprus today, no garden is known to have been associated with the worship of Aphrodite/Venus in Greek and Roman times at Old Paphos, though Mediaeval chroniclers and Western travellers thought otherwise. In any case ‘Sito di Venere’ does not mean ‘garden/shrine/temple of Venus’ but simply ‘place of Venus’.

The beauty of Cyprus lies in the eye of the beholder, of which Leonardo cannot have been one – he must have gleaned this impression from travellers’ tales – and the description of shipwrecks littering the north coast of the island would appear to be a flight of his creative imagination, inspired perhaps by stories he heard and read of storms and shipwrecks in the Levant. These were commonplace in the Mediterranean during the era of the sailing vessel, especially in winter, which mariners and travellers for obvious reasons sought if possible to avoid, and there exist any number of accounts of the violence of nature on maritime traffic in the eastern Mediterranean in the 15th and 16th centuries A.D. Shipwrecks there certainly have been since time immemorial around Cyprus but the primary cause was storms, not underwater rocks. According to the Royal Collection Trust Website, “a cataclysmic storm was one of Leonardo’s favourite subjects during the last decade of his life, in both his drawings and his writings....There exist several long passages in which he describes with relish a huge storm overwhelming a landscape, and the futile struggles of man and animal against the forces of nature.”

In addition to Leonardo's description of Cyprus, it was included in the rough sketch map of the eastern Mediterranean which appears on folio 832 r. of his *Codex Atlanticus* dating to around 1493 - 1494 A.D. It can be identified as a horizontal, elongated, sausage-shaped island correctly sited in the north-eastern corner of the Mediterranean below Turkey. Making allowance for the fact this is a sketch, the map is a tolerably accurate reproduction of the region, of which this was not the only drawing he did without naming the features. Furthermore he has been credited with the composition of a *mappamundi* now amongst his papers in the Royal Library, Windsor, dated to after 1514 A.D., and two small globes, the first of which was made of ostrich egg shells around 1504 A.D., and the second of which was made of copper a little later and today called the Lenox Globe, which is housed in the Rare Book Division of the New York Public Library. All three depict Cyprus, properly located, in the same oblong but less schematic manner. In none of these three is the island specifically named.

Where did Leonardo get his geographic information about Cyprus from? He does not give his sources, and there is no independent record that he wrote of Cyprus from first-hand experience. No known surviving account of the time outside Leonardo's own writings contains any hint that he embarked on an overseas trip to the Levant at the end of his residence in Florence and before he settled in Milan in the early 1480's. This factoid appears to have been generated and sustained by the assumption that his references to Cyprus were based on personal observation and not on secondary data. In fact, there can be little doubt that Leonardo owed the essentials of his information about Cyprus to contacts he made and documents he consulted in Italy. The paucity of hard facts about Cyprus in his notes and the lack of references he quotes for his knowledge make it impossible to specify the most likely sources he drew on, but descriptions of Cyprus were certainly available. Leaving aside what he may have picked up in conversation, there are two printed works in Italian to which he could have had access, and one that he certainly did. The first and the most significant one was the first edition of Santo Brasca's pilgrimage to the Holy Land which was published under the title *Itinerario alla santissima città di Gerusalemme. Memoria degli castelli e terre*

grosse che sono sopra il Po in Milan in 1481 A.D., the same year Leonardo is alleged to have gone to Cyprus.

Santo Brasca (1444–1522) was the head of the Ducal Chancellery of Galeazzo Sforza in Milan and made his voyage from Milan to the Holy Land and back between 29 April and 5 November 1480 A.D. He kept a diary during the trip and promptly on his return to Italy wrote up and had printed a day-to-day account of his travels, which included two stop-overs in Cyprus, a short one in Limassol on 14 July going east and a longer one from 15 to 24 August on the way back. There were three other reports written on the same pilgrimage, one by a French priest, Pierre Barbatre, another by the German Dominican, Felix Fabri, and the third by an anonymous French priest in *Le Voyage de la sainte cyté de Hierusalem*. In his *Itinerario* Santo Brasca recorded the ruins of a 'Palace of Venus' near Paphos, which he actually visited, and Rossi-Osmida has commented that: "He [Santo Brasca] then went to Paphos, to see the ancient ruins of the Temple of Papha Aphrodite, which the islanders claimed were the remains of a palace once belonging to the mythical goddess. Here Brasca witnessed some strange antique dealings, by then a customary practice among gallery captains. On the trip from Venice to the ports of the Middle East, the galleys carried fairly heavy cargoes (salt, leather, fabrics, tinder, etc.) stowed in the hold to the point of overflowing....On arrival in the Middle East, the merchandise was traded, mainly for spices, which were considerably lighter than the previous cargo.... Obviously this was a handicap on the return journey, since the vessel was too light and tended to list and drift. Initially, the problem was solved by weighing down the vessels with a ballast of sand and stones. But realising there was a shortage of building stone in Venice, the captains began to load blocks of marble or Istrian stone to be sold to the city's building sites. In the Fifteenth Century, when the patricians vied with each other in showing off their riches, the most sought-after stones were columns, capitals, and general architectural elements from ancient Greek-Roman constructions (even from the Parthenon!) used to embellish the churches and palaces of Venice. Brasca saw one of these cargoes of stone taken directly from the ancient temple of Aphrodite at Paphos. The chronicler from Milan simply recorded

this fact without any further comment, which suggests it was a common practice at the time.”

Another source for Leonardo’s knowledge of Cyprus but evidently not for the map of the eastern Mediterranean, may have been the *Isolario* compiled originally on vellum around 1480 A.D. by Bartolommeo dalli Sonetti, a Venetian navigator who claimed he had based his maps of the Greek Islands in the Aegean Sea, together with Cyprus, on his own observations. This manuscript, in the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, consists of 60 maps painted in colour, with Cyprus at the end, and descriptions of the islands written in the form of sonnets. While there is no mention of Santo Brasca’s or Bartolommeo’s works in the annotated list of Leonardo’s library drawn up by Reti, there is, in fact, one instance where Leonardo is known to have had access to, and may even have had in his possession the copy of a book which he evidently drew on for his own fictional adventure to the East, that is, Sir John Mandeville’s *Travels*. This work, described as “a carefully crafted fiction, pieced together from a wide range of sources by an erudite and often entertaining author of unknown identity”, first came out in early French in manuscript form around 1356 A.D. and went on to become one of the most widely read and influential travel books in Europe during the Renaissance period. It was subsequently translated into numerous other European languages, and the first Italian edition was published in Milan in 1480 A.D. There is, however, nothing obvious in this account which might have given rise to Leonardo’s reflections on the island. In fact Mandeville, whoever he was, no more visited Cyprus than did Leonardo. Much of what Mandeville wrote about the island was taken from the account composed by Wilhelm von Boldensele in 1336 A.D.

Leonardo’s maps of the eastern Mediterranean, including Cyprus, in the notebooks and globes could have been based on any number of sources, especially portolans, from the 15th century A.D. Nowhere, however, does he specify the originals of the maps he copied, and the purpose of their inclusion in the notebooks at least is now difficult to fathom, particularly since amongst the surviving instances he did not name any of the places or features represented. By this time the general configuration of the eastern Mediterranean was

already well and on the whole accurately established, and for most of the 15th century A.D. Italy was the centre of production or at least the source of inspiration for the best world maps. Venice itself played a preeminent role in portolan chart production at this time, and Bartolommeo dalli Sonetti’s *Isolario* was first published in Venice in 1485 A.D. In 1493 - 1494 A.D., when Leonardo drew his sketch in the *Codex Atlanticus* of the eastern Mediterranean with the outline of Cyprus, he was based in Milan but far from isolated through his contacts and journeys in Italy. The only references in his notebooks to a world map concern one said to be in hands of Giovanni Benci, though their precise significance is ambiguous.

As for the claim that Leonardo da Vinci gave some Lefkara lace to the Cathedral in Milan, presumably some time during or after 1481 A.D., available data do not allow us to establish with confidence the genesis of this historical myth. Nothing daunted, on 19 October 1986, the Mayor of Lefkara presented the Duomo, in honour of the 600th anniversary of its foundation, a new altar cloth on which three lace makers from his village had worked full-time for six months in 1981. As we have seen, the Cathedral figures on one of the commemorative stamps issued by the Republic of Cyprus in 1981, with a piece of Lefkara lace underneath. According to the Cyprus Post Website, “it still adorns the main altar to date”. It is difficult to establish when Leonardo’s alleged involvement with Lefkara and its lace first entered the mainstream of modern Cypriote folklore. As we have already seen, Gunnis had by 1936 given popular currency to the story of Leonardo’s purported visit to Lefkara in 1481 A.D., and Sir Ronald Storrs (1881 - 1955), Governor of Cyprus from 1926 to 1932, for whom Gunnis worked as his private secretary, followed Gunnis’ lead in his autobiography, *Orientalisms*, first published in 1937. There Storrs wrote : “The women of Lefkara are still weaving the lace of which Leonardo da Vinci, in 1481, bought panels for the altar of Milan Cathedral”. It was not in fact until after 1945 that the story began to be picked up in other publications and media dealing with the island.

In the 1930s there was a dearth of guidebooks and potted histories for popular consumption about Cyprus. Tourism was scarcely developed, a

deficiency which Storrs recognised and sought to remedy, and indeed no less than three published introductions to the island bore his imprimatur, the now extremely rare twelve page booklet, *Cyprus The Garden of the Near East*, published between 1926 and 1928; *The Handbook of Cyprus* he co-authored with Bryan Justin O'Brien in 1930, and *A Chronology of Cyprus*, also published in 1930. To these should be added Gunnis' *Historic Cyprus* of 1936. *Cyprus The Garden of the Near East*, which contains "A Short History of Cyprus", makes no references to Leonardo da Vinci or to Lefkara, and *The Handbook of Cyprus* mentions the lace from Lefkara but not Leonardo. The 1940s saw the first appearance of more visitor oriented publications about the island, but all were silent on the topic until Reno Widson baldly stated in his *Cyprus in Picture* of 1953 that "Leonardo da Vinci bought lace made at Lefkara for the altar cloth at Milan Cathedral when he visited the Island in 1481". Jean and Franc Shor also reproduced this story in their article on "Cyprus, Idyllic Island in a Troubled Sea" in *The National Geographic Magazine* of May 1952. Their guide in Cyprus was none other than Reno Widson, who was also responsible for publicising the mythological association of Petra tou Romiou with the birthplace of Aphrodite. Not all modern guides have, however, taken up this theme, but a noteworthy exception is Ian Robertson's *Blue Guide to Cyprus*, the first edition of which, published in 1981, spouted the usual trope, without specifying the source, only to recant in the third edition of 1990 with the unexpected remark that "there is no evidence that he [Leonardo da Vinci] visited the island in 1481."

Gunnis was not, however, the first to have placed Leonardo's alleged visit to Cyprus in 1481 A.D., as this was mentioned by Storrs in his work on *A Chronology of Cyprus* of 1930, without reference to Lefkara or Milan. Just where Storrs got his information from is unknown – his personal library and papers were all destroyed in the fire which burnt down Government House in Nicosia in 1931 – but one possible source of inspiration was Edward MacCurdy's *The Mind of Leonardo da Vinci*, first published in London in 1928 and still being re-issued. He shared the view that Leonardo could have visited the East, including Cyprus, but also avoided specifying the date, merely noting that Leonardo was

present in Florence up till 1481 A.D. and in Milan in 1483 and 1487 A.D. Though Leonardo's movements cannot be precisely tracked during the period between September 1481 A.D. and April 1483 A.D., it has been stated over the years that Leonardo left Florence for Milan in 1481 A.D., which may have been the origin of the belief that he went to the Levant, with a stopover in Cyprus, in that year. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Storrs adopted the prevailing academic opinion that Leonardo da Vinci travelled to the Levant, including Cyprus, in the early 1480s A.D., not out of Storrs' desire for historical veracity but to enhance the attractiveness of Cyprus as a tourist destination.

(This an abridged version of an article due to appear in France in the *Cahier du Centre d'Études Chypriotes* 49, 2019) Robert S. Merrillees

An Irishman in Egypt

In the history of Irish travel to Egypt there are many notable characters with esteemed résumés in the areas of travel writing, antiquarianism, art and archaeology. These range, at least in terms of social status, from Belzoni's 'Irish Lad', James Henry Curtin, to Lord Belmore, with a host of others in between including Lady Harriet Kavanagh, Lord Charlemont, Robert Wood, Eliot Warburton, Frances Power-Cobbe and Lady Augusta Gregory to name a few. Along with these illustrious travellers there are also more frivolous accounts of travel to Egypt. Though frivolous, these narratives are also useful in assessing Ireland's engagement with Egypt. One such oddity, which is initially amusing, is that of an 'Irishman' and his visit to Egypt in April 1876.

The narrative, 'An Irishman in Egypt' is published in a small pamphlet (16 pages) by M.H. Gill and Sons and was found in the University College Dublin's Special Collections library 19th century Pamphlet Collection (35.F.2/5). While the title page of the pamphlet gives the author only as H.E. it is attributed to a H. Edge (H.E.). It is described as a report "in which aspects of Egyptian life are observed and described, including Egyptian bazaars, lighthouses and certain manners and customs".

The pamphlet is also noticeable for the sarcastic tone of the subheading to the pamphlet which reads 'not

embellished by a portrait of the author' which is directly followed by this figure:

had turned their attention to poor Egypt, and [it was his duty] to report as to the probability of their



The picture is set in an imagined landscape with pyramids, palm trees and a pillar (possibly a version of Pompey's pillar?). In the foreground is a jovial looking man in 18th century western livery, donning a fez and sharing a bottle of stout and an elongated clay pipe with a sphinx sitting on a plinth with wheels. Below the picture is a frieze of pseudo-hieroglyphs.

So often as researchers of western travel narratives to Egypt and the Levant we are met with lofty reasons for travel, such as the search for the biblical Egypt, the search for pharaonic Egypt, and the search for the Orientalised East. There is no such pretention with Mr Edge's work. He opens with a full confession of his ignorance to dispel any notions that his work is of importance: 'I DO not put forward this little work as a thoroughly reliable and exhaustive account of Egypt, her history, antiquity, and resources...Missionary enterprise had nothing whatever to do with my visit to Egypt; neither was I tempted thither by a desire to read history backwards in the pyramids, or in the tombs and monument of ancient Thebes. Whether the Nile has its origin in the Victoria Nyanza or in Lough Dan was a matter of the most profound indifference to me.' The fact is, as he tells us himself, he was 'sent to Egypt by a body of Dublin financiers and stockbrokers...who

success in that old land'.

While the opening pages are amusing for the witty prose it quickly turns into a near Xenophobic description of Egypt and its people. The railway lines and tourist directors are described as 'unrolled mummies...unable to take in any modern ideas', the Nile is objectionable and 'the ignorant people use [it] as their main sewer, modern Egyptians did not impress him and 'are worse than their forefathers', and modern Egypt is 'hardly ever free from some plague or other'. After waiting several days, he gets an audience with the Khedive to present his prospectuses of which he recommends the Imperial Land Co. of Marseilles and in particular the Lundy Granite Co. The meeting comes to an abrupt end with our Irishman turning down an invitation to the Cairo Four-in-hand Club. The narrative ends with him informing us that he intends to establish a factory for 'producing condensed camel's milk'.

The account is an oddity. Its purpose is questionable and at time the author's sarcasm stretches into possible parody to the point that its authenticity comes into question. In particular he tells us that during the negotiations with the Khedive that 'he would think the matter over after consulting the Sphinx'.

Emmet Jackson

NOTES AND QUERIES

Request for information on Sawing up Coffins

Faye Kalloniatis, whose excellent volume on the collection at Norwich Castle Museum was reviewed in the last Bulletin is seeking information. Faye writes: I am currently working on a yellow coffin fragment which was rediscovered last year in one of our Norfolk museum storerooms. I'm interested not only in its date and iconography but am also very keen to investigate the known practice of travellers, and dealers, of sawing coffins into fragments. Travellers apparently did this in order to make transport easier (but perhaps it also allowed them to remove items from the country without the knowledge of the authorities). For dealers, such a practice could make it easier (and possibly more lucrative) to sell.

I wonder if anyone has come across written records by travellers (or dealers) which shed light on this practice?

Faye emphasises that it is the practice of sawing coffins up that she wants the information on, *not* yellow coffins! Please send any information to the Bulletin Editor or direct to Faye:

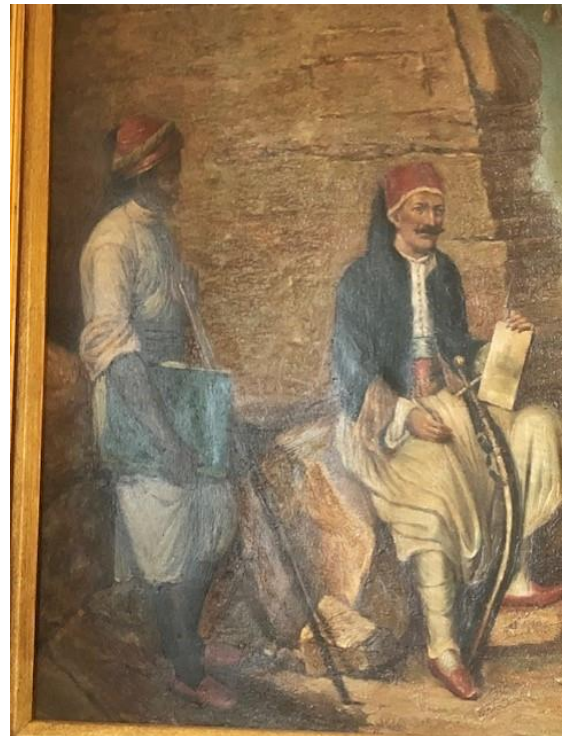
Faye Kalloniatis <faye.kalloniatis@gmail.com>

Help in identifying the sitter in a Painting

Bob Brier writes:

In the 1990s I bought, second hand, a Chinese copy of a painting showing someone who looks like he could be Robert Hay. Does anyone know where the original is? Like all these Chinese copies, the signature of the original artist has not been copied.

Two larger colour images of the painting are in the web version of the Bulletin. If anyone recognises this, please write to the Editor.



John Fuller: the final word?

Answers pop-up unexpectedly. Having accumulated a lot of circumstantial evidence that John Fuller who travelled extensively in Egypt and the Near East was to be identified with a member of the family that made its way into the *Landed Gentry* in the edition of 1894 as 'Fuller of Hyde House, and Germans'. This John Fuller, born Chesham 13 Jan 1787, was the eldest son of non-conformist minister, Rev John Fuller and Mary Stratton daughter of Samuel Stratton of the Gage (also the Gaze), Little Berkhamsted. This John Fuller was living in one of the sets of rooms in Albany, Piccadilly, in 1837 (given as the owner of Hyde Heath, Chesham). The detail was given in an article in *Bulletin* 65, 19-21.

John Fuller, the traveller, was proposed as a member of Travellers Club in 1823, but not elected. Mr John Fuller of Chesham was elected to the Society of Dilettanti 1834.

An e-mail from John Simpson, Fellow of Kellogg College, Oxford, and former Chief Editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, was prompted by the article in *Bulletin* 65. Thanks to additional information provided by John Simpson, we now know that John Fuller was elected to the Athenaeum in 1836 and was a resident of Albany. He was proposed by Terrick Hamilton and W.M. Leake – two of his proposers for the Travellers' Club and both members of the Society of Dilettanti: this surely confirms the identity.

Fuller became a Special Commissioner of Income Tax in the 1840s (perhaps his funds were running low) and appears in the 1861 Census as a resident of 9 Vere Place, Portman Square: John Fuller born at Chesham, Commissioner of Income Tax unmarried, aged 65, lodging with Frederick Ross, Homoeopathic chemist and his wife.

John Simpson thinks that Fuller died 10 March 1869 at White Waltham, Berkshire.

My thanks to John Simpson for the information.

Robert G. Morkot

The Guest Book of Shepheard's Hotel

Andrew Oliver writes: Some months ago I came into possession of seventy-five typewritten pages of names copied from the so-called "Golden Book" of Shepheard's Hotel, copied in 1951 for Michael Bird for him to use in his 1957 biography, *Samuel Shepheard of Cairo*. In 1952 ... an angry mob burned Shepheard's and the registry book was lost. Some of the later years are first, followed by earlier years. The first two pages are missing. It is apparent that the staff member had difficulty reading 19th-century handwriting. Many of the Englishmen were on their Passage to India, or returning, and did not go up the Nile.

Andrew has kindly sent a pdf of the manuscript which can be added to the ASTENE collection of Who Was Where When. There are many, many names, but obviously a large number were in transit. What follows is some random gleanings, to give a flavour of the people and information contained in this fortunate survival. We are very grateful to Andrew for sharing the pdf with us.

The typescript has names of numerous individuals, mostly with their destinations, ships and dahabiyahs. There is other supplementary information on 'private flags'. Some of the 'boats' have rather forbidding names like "Condor" and "Crocodile", although the Buchanans, heading for the Second Cataract in December 1856 had a rather more homely "The Forth" and the von Leasons, at the same time, an appropriately Germanic "Loreley" (they and their companions were travelling with the Sandahls, who were on the "Necken").

Also travelling in December 1856 were "Mr and Mrs W. Frankland Hood and Mr Rhind". William Frankland Hood (c. 1825-1864) was a collector who lived at Nettleham Hall near Lincoln. His granddaughter, Grace married John Crowfoot: they and their daughters Elisabeth Crowfoot, and Joan Crowfoot Payne, all have entries in *Who Was Who*, as do Hood and Rhind.

Shortly afterwards Mr Lawrence Peel and Mr I. Theobald sent south on the "Infidel"!

The later pages contain additional comments by guests. One had spent several months in the hotel and was, as all others, perfectly satisfied. One resident arrived “Sometime in December” from “Constantinople”; departure “not yet”; where to? “God knows” followed by the enigmatic “Would recommend to be built as Indian children are unmusical”.

H.M. Kennard who left Dec 1st 1853 for the Second Cataract must be the collector Henry Martyn Kennard (1833-1911), later a supporter of Petrie and donor to the Ashmolean, British and Manchester museums.

Some comments reflect a distinctly colonial attitude. “A dreadful country – wonderful Pyramids and excellent hotel”. “Think waiter Pedro ought to wear tail coat every day at dinner decidedly not shirt sleeves. Leave for Madras Sept [...]”- lucky Madras!

Nile Cruising 1860-1861

Andrew Oliver has also kindly sent further researches into American travellers, and others they encountered. This is for the season of 1860-1861. There are representatives of the American Bible Society, missionaries, and various members of the clergy with their families. Some of these wrote their various works on their return, notably Rev. David

Austin Randall (1813-1884), from Ohio, who arrived in Alexandria February 1861, then went on to Suez & Sinai. His *The Handwriting of God in Egypt, Sinai, and the Holy Land* was published in 1862.

Of Europeans encountered, several wrote accounts. Mrs. M. L. M. Carey, travelled with a cousin & daughter, publishing *Four months in a Dahabëéh*, in London, 1863.

A far-better known traveller is George Alexander Hoskins (1802-1863), who was returning to Egypt, having spent 1832-1833 in Egypt, with Hay and others, and travelling as far as Meroe (see R.G. Morkot in *Souvenirs and New Ideas*). His return was for health reasons. The result was another book, *A winter in Upper and Lower Egypt*, 1863, criticised for its ponderous style and lack of descriptions of monuments, but complimented for practical information. He had left his wife and daughters in Southport, but perhaps they preferred the bracing air and quicksands to sunshine. Hoskins started up-river on November 17th. He was seen at Luxor in mid-February. Andrew Oliver suggests that he was probably the Mr. H___ cited by Carey. Hoskins died at Rome later in 1863.

There were many others. Of particular note, is the tragic incident of drowning, an event noted by many of the travellers. Daniel Cave, Jr (1835-61) of Cleve Hill, Gloucestershire, drowned trying to swim down



the first cataract on January 30. He was travelling with Walter Morrison (1836-1921 educated at Eton, and Balliol, Oxford, BA 1857).

The Guest Book of Shepherds contains an entry for Mr and Mrs Stephen Cave, and Mr Charles D. Cave of Cleve Hill “in the Country of Gloucester” (presumably a mistranscription by the Shepherds staff member struggling with the writing). They ‘Sailed. Nov 17 for the Second Cataract in the “Greyhound” with a Nile Dingy yclept “Ye Pup” and a Thames Dingy. Returned Febry 12 1857. Left for Jerusalem via Petra. Febry 22”. They were brothers and sons of Daniel Cave of Clifton, Bristol. Daniel Jr was possibly their brother, although there is no record of him as a student at Oxford.

Many thanks to Andrew Oliver for these contributions: there is much to explore in them, and much research that could be done. There are numerous interconnections between manuscripts, published travel accounts, and individuals and families over more than one generation and set of travels. We need to find ways of achieving this, and enthusiasts to do the work!

Charles Warren – ‘Jerusalem Warren’

Kevin Shillington has written to announce that his biography of Charles Warren is now published. He writes:

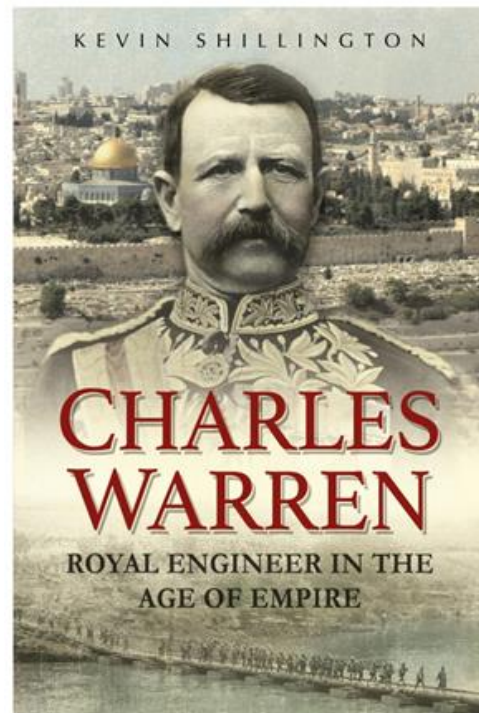
The life of Charles Warren Royal Engineer (1840-1927) is a compelling story, full of action, conflict, triumph and disaster, with reputations gained and lost. All set against the background of an expanding British Empire. It is a tale of secrecy, Freemasonry and pioneering archaeology as the young Lt Warren, still only in his twenties, tunnelled under the Holy City of Jerusalem in search of evidence of the Temple of Solomon and Herod the Great.

A man of high principle and dogged determination, Warren thrived on a challenge: searching for lost British spies in the desert of the Exodus, or publically calling out the rapacious colonialism of Cecil Rhodes. Later, in different circumstances, he ordered the arrest of Winston Churchill.

Although thrice knighted for his many achievements, Warren is most widely remembered as the Metropolitan Police Commissioner who failed to catch ‘Jack the Ripper’. In the end he faced the supreme challenge in the Anglo-Boer War, becoming the scapegoat for one of Britain’s greatest military disasters, the Battle of Spion Kop.

The biography – 496 pages – has numerous illustrations. It is published by Brown Dog Books at £20.

Kevin Shillington, an independent historian and biographer, is a graduate of Trinity College Dublin who holds a PhD from SOAS, University of London. His recent books include History of Africa, 4th edition (2019) and Patrick van Rensburg: Rebel, Visionary and Radical Educationist (2020).



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