

# ASTENE

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

# BULLETIN



**NOTES AND QUERIES**

**NUMBER 69: AUTUMN 2016**

# Bulletin: Notes and Queries

## Number 69: Autumn 2016

Editor: Cathy McGlynn

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### Bulletin 70: Winter 2016

Submissions for the next Bulletin must be received by **15 November 2016**. We welcome articles, queries, replies and other related matters from members and interested readers. Please send contributions to the Editor, Cathy McGlynn ([bulletin@astene.org.uk](mailto:bulletin@astene.org.uk)).

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[www.astene.org.uk/membership/subscriptions/](http://www.astene.org.uk/membership/subscriptions/)  
Please send all membership correspondence by email to: [membership@astene.org.uk](mailto:membership@astene.org.uk).

Cover: Harriet Martineau, public access allowed.

# ASTENE NEWS AND EVENTS

## ASTENE Biennial Conference 2017: Call for Papers



### Twelfth Biennial ASTENE CONFERENCE – NORWICH

Friday 21 – Monday 24 July, 2017 at the University  
of East Anglia and Norwich Castle Museum  
and Art Gallery, Norwich

#### Preliminary Call for Papers

The Association for the Study of Travel in Egypt and the Near East will hold its twelfth biennial conference at the University of East Anglia and Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery, Norwich, from Friday 21 July to Monday 24 July, 2017.

Until the Industrial Revolution Norwich was the second City in England after London. At different times Norwich could boast having 52 churches, 365 ale-houses and 7 cinemas. Today Norwich is recognised as a UNESCO City of Literature, one of seven worldwide.

Contributions to the ASTENE Conference are welcome from a wide range of disciplines and interests connected with travel to and from the Near and Middle East. It is envisaged the conference will cover many themes – including, but not limited to:

- Harriet Martineau, an original thinker, traveller & writer, born in Norwich
- Travel as education
- Arabian Peninsula travels and travellers
- Travellers in both directions: visitors from the

Middle East to Europe and America, and visitors from Europe and America in the Middle East

- European farmers visiting the Middle East to learn about new crops
- Travelling artists
- ... and more.

Preliminary offers of papers should be sent to [conference@astene.org.uk](mailto:conference@astene.org.uk) with a working title, a brief abstract of not more than 250 words, names of authors and their affiliations. We also welcome the offer of pre-organised panels of up to 4 speakers per panel on a specific theme.

A full call with further details (i.e. conference bursaries; Plenary sessions; and the accompanying programme in Norwich) will follow later in winter 2016/2017.

**The deadline for submitting abstracts is Sunday, February 19, 2017.**



*‘What office is there which involves more responsibility, which requires more qualifications, and which ought, therefore, to be more honourable, than that of teaching?’*

Harriet Martineau (b. 1802, d. 1876)



# TRAVELLERS IN OTTOMAN LANDS THE BOTANICAL LEGACY

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### A TWO-DAY SEMINAR

**Saturday May 13–Sunday 14, 2017**  
**Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh**

Presented by the Association for the Study of Travel in Egypt and the Near East (ASTENE) in conjunction with the Centre for Middle Eastern Plants, part of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.

**Deadline for submission of abstracts:**  
**Sunday 15 January 2017**

Presentations should be rigorous and accessible. They should take around thirty minutes, with ample time allowed for discussion and debate. The event will be recorded with the intention to publish final versions of the papers.



Contributions are welcome from a wide range of disciplines and interests. It is envisaged that the Seminar will cover many fascinating subjects on (though not restricted to) the following main themes:

- *Travellers' accounts related to the botanical legacy of any part of the former Ottoman Empire (e.g. present-day Turkey, the Levant, Egypt, the Balkans, Arabian Peninsula etc.)*
- *The flora of the region, including their heritage, preservation and medicinal uses*
- *Bulbs of the region, especially tulips, and their cultural significance; Tulipomania*
- *Ottoman garden design and architecture*
- *Floral and related motifs in Ottoman art, including textiles, ceramics etc.*
- *Culinary aspects of the botanical legacy of the region*
- *Literary, pictorial and photographic depictions of any aspect of the botanical and horticultural legacy of the region*
- *Orientalism as applicable to any of the seminar's main themes.*

Please email your offers of papers to [ottomanlandsastene@gmail.com](mailto:ottomanlandsastene@gmail.com) together with a working title, a brief abstract of not more than 250 words, and the names of authors and their affiliations. We also welcome the offer of pre-organised panels of up to four speakers on specific themes. Participants will be informed about the acceptance of their paper by 15 February 2017. Seminar Bursaries are also offered: please contact [treasurerastene@gmail.com](mailto:treasurerastene@gmail.com) for information.

*The Seminar Booking Form and the Draft Seminar Programme will be available on Eventbrite in early January 2017 with the deadline for bookings being 15 April 2017. Tickets will also be available at the event. In the meantime, any enquiries should be addressed to [ottomanlandsastene@gmail.com](mailto:ottomanlandsastene@gmail.com)*



Royal  
Botanic Garden  
Edinburgh



Centre for  
Middle Eastern  
Plants

ASTENE



CORNUCOPIA  
TURKEY FOR CONNOISSEURS



## PEF FREE LECTURE SERIES 2016

EVANS MEMORIAL LECTURE, JOINTLY WITH  
ASTENE IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE BRITISH  
MUSEUM DEPARTMENT OF MIDDLE EAST

### 'Lawrence and the Arab Revolt: Archaeology of a Desert Insurgency 1916-18'

Prof. Nick Saunders, Great Arab Revolt Project



image courtesy of Nick Saunders'

Between 2005 and 2014, Bristol University's 'Great Arab Revolt Project' investigated the archaeology and anthropology of the Arab Revolt of 1916-18 in southern Jordan. The discoveries were extraordinary. Expecting to find only the ruins of Hejaz Railway stations destroyed by T.E. Lawrence and the Arabs, a vast conflict landscape of guerrilla actions and counter-insurgency tactics unknown to anyone except the Bedouin was discovered instead. Ottoman Army camps, railway ambushes, Rolls Royce armoured car raiding camps, hilltop forts, machinegun strong-points, and a long-forgotten

Royal Flying Corps landing strip all emerged from the desert where modern guerrilla warfare was forged. Ten years of fieldwork investigated the archaeology of conflict produced in less than 18 months, from August 1917 until November 1918.

Professor Nicholas Saunders is in the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Bristol, U.K. His main research interests are the archaeology and anthropology of landscape, material culture, and cultural memory of 20th and 21st-century conflict in Europe and the Middle East. He is co-director of the 'Great Arab Revolt Project' in southern Jordan, and 'The Isonzo Valley 1915-1918: Conflict Landscapes on the Slovenian-Italian Border' project.

**4pm, 1st December, 2016, BP Lecture Theatre,  
Clare Education Centre, British Museum.  
To book, contact the British Museum Box Office:  
020 7323 8181 or [www.britishmuseum.org](http://www.britishmuseum.org)**

### **Christmas is Coming! Call for Bulletin Contributions.**

In last year's Winter bulletin, there was a special section on the theme of 'Travel at Christmas'. This was quite successful so we hope to repeat it this year. Contributions are welcome from all members on any aspect of travel during Christmas in Egypt and the Near East. Please send to the bulletin editor before November 5: [bulletin@astene.org.uk](mailto:bulletin@astene.org.uk)

### **Bulletin Correction**

In Bulletin 68, Philip Mansel's name is misprinted as 'Manses' on p. 8. The editor offers an apology for this.

## OTHER NEWS AND EVENTS

### **Art Macabre at The Petrie: Mata Hari and Lawrence of Arabia**

Date: 20 October | Time: 6-8.30pm | Location:  
The Petrie Museum | Price: £15 includes a glass of  
wine and materials

Booking at <https://telawrence.eventbrite.co.uk>  
Age group: 18+

Find your inner Mata Hari and dashing Lawrence as  
you are transported back to the time of intrigue and

mysterious dealings at the turn of the last century.  
Sketch after dark amongst the museum's artefacts.  
Be inspired by the Art Macabre life models, bringing  
back the lure and glamour of this enticing pair. An  
atmospheric soundtrack of music will play as we  
share tales and tableaux revealing the dramatic  
stories enshrouding these two historic figures.

To book please go to [telawrence.eventbrite.co.uk](https://telawrence.eventbrite.co.uk)  
0207 679 4138 | [events.petrie@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:events.petrie@ucl.ac.uk)



The Levantine Heritage Foundation | 2nd International Conference

## **The Levant and Europe: Shipping and Trade Networks of People and Knowledge**

London | 2-4 November 2016

### **REGISTRATION:**

*Speakers do not have to pay registration fees, only dinner fees*

Please RSVP at <https://lhf-2nd-international-conference.eventbrite.co.uk>

Full conference fee: £60

LHF members: £50

Student Fee: £30 (Please email a copy of your Student Card or official letter by the university)

Dinner: £50 (LHF members £45)

### **VENUES:**

Europe House, 32 Smith Square, Westminster, London SW1P 3EU

The Hellenic Centre, 16-18 Paddington Street, London W1U 5AS

The Oriental Club, Stratford House, Stratford Place, London W1C 1ES

The Vincent Rooms, The Victoria Centre, Vincent Square, London SW1P 2PD

**CONTACT:** [lhf2016@levantineheritagefoundation.org](mailto:lhf2016@levantineheritagefoundation.org)



THE HELLENIC CENTRE

## Archaeology and Espionage volunteer lunchtime talks

Date: Thursday 13 October 2016 | Time: 1.15-1.45pm | Location: Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology | Price: FREE | Age group: ALL

Ability to decipher codes, understand cartography, mastery of other languages and live simply in the desert landscape are all skills which can be applied to being an archaeologist but also are useful in war time for the purposes of espionage. Join one of our community volunteers from our Heritage Lottery Fund project, Different Perspectives: Archaeology and the Middle East in WWI, for a lunchtime talk on Archaeology and Espionage in WWI in the Middle East. Using Flinders Petrie as our main point of connection, you'll be introduced to the emerging research on Petrie's war and the links between archaeology and the intelligence services during WWI.

To book please go to:  
[archandesplunchtimetalk13oct.eventbrite.co.uk](http://archandesplunchtimetalk13oct.eventbrite.co.uk)

020 7679 4138 | [events.petrie@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:events.petrie@ucl.ac.uk)

## Reminder: Freemason Study Day

There is still time to register for this PEF-ASTENE-LMF Joint Study Day!

“EXPLORER – RESEARCHER – FREEMASON: TRAVELLERS TO OTTOMAN PALESTINE”

SATURDAY 29TH OCTOBER 2016, 1.30 – 5.30PM,  
FREEMASON'S HALL, 60 GREAT QUEEN  
STREET, LONDON WC2B 5AZ

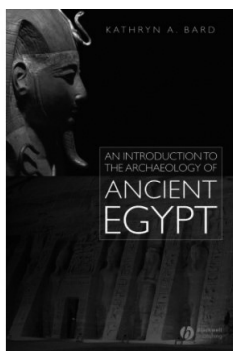
This Study Day will explore the contribution of 19th century Freemasons to the western world's exploration and understanding of the Holy Land, and in particular Jerusalem, in ancient and more modern times. Held in the historic Freemason's Hall in central London, the ticket price includes tea/coffee, and a tour of this unique building and its collections.

To book, please download the poster and booking form from The Library and Museum of Freemasonry website (<http://www.freemasonry.london.museum/events/explorer-researcher-freemason-travellers-ottoman-palestine/>), complete and return to:

The Administrator, Palestine Exploration Fund,  
2 Hinde Mews, Marylebone Lane, London W1U 2AA

# BOOKS AND REVIEWS

**Bard, Kathryn A., ed., *An Introduction to the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt*, 2nd edition, Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2015, soft cover, pp. xxii+454, 35 plates, 113 figures & 24 maps, ISBN 978-0-470-67336-2, £25.99.**



This volume represents an update of a work first published in 2008 and is intended to be a basic textbook for students of courses of study involving ancient Egypt – indeed, the author states that

it had its origins in her own teaching notes at Boston University. As such, it follows a typical structure for teaching the subject, beginning with the rediscovery of ancient Egypt (with very brief discussions of methods and theory), before moving on to the Egyptian language (with a short excursion into chronology), the environmental background (including resources), and then providing a chronological account, running from Prehistory to Roman times, built primarily around material culture.

This latter focus is to be seen throughout the volume, which is both its strength and weakness. On one hand, it provides the reader with detailed information on key sites, monuments and material, but on the other it gives them only a basic synthetic view of the events surrounding them, without exposing some of the important underlying problems regarding questions of chronology and history. While one might argue that this is inevitable

in view of the book's explicit focus on *archaeology*, the symbiotic nature of material culture and the writing (and re-writing) of history in a culture such as that of ancient Egypt means that these need to be presented to the reader, if only for methodological reasons. This 'history-gap' can be seen in the extensive bibliography, where there seems to have been less effort made to sweep up important new history-based works than those on material culture, with the result that a number of obsolescent or obsolete interpretations are to be found in the historical narrative.

There are extensive illustrations, in monochrome and colour photographs and in line-drawings, of sites, objects and monuments, which cover all the key areas, although of course there are places where a reviewer might have suggested alternates. One point to be noted is that Fig 8.1, showing the Colossi of Memnon, has been reversed.

The bibliography is extensive, and is arranged by chapter, split between 'Suggested Readings' in English, and 'Additional Readings' in French, German and Italian. While understandable, in the context of what is fundamentally a textbook for Anglophone students, this division is regrettable in its implication that the English sources will themselves give adequate coverage, and that non-English books and articles are 'just for interest': in an number of important areas there continue to be no up-to-date treatments in English at all. A list of websites is also included but, curiously, omits one of the most useful, 'Egyptology Resources' (<http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/er/>), which is perhaps the best gateway to the world of cyber-Egyptology.

The book closes with summaries of each chapter, with a list of discussion questions for each, the latter very useful for anyone using the book as a teaching aid.

In spite of the reservations expressed above, this volume is certainly an excellent source-book for anyone wanting a primer to Egyptian material culture, and can be recommended as such.

*Aidan Dodson*

**Brotton, Jerry, *This Orient Isle: Elizabethan England and the Islamic World*, Allen Lane, London, 2016. xiii + 378, maps, illustrations, ISBN 978-0-241-00402-9, £20.**



ASTENE members may find scant mention of Egypt here, but there are many other reasons why Jerry Brotton's new book, *This Orient Isle: Elizabethan England and the Islamic World*, should fascinate enthusiasts of later travellers to Cairo, Alexandria and the Nile. Several times in his Introduction, Brotton notes how the relations between Elizabeth and the English with Muslim rulers and peoples were 'unique,' yet the aim and achievement of the book is to offer a broader vision of why these encounters and exchanges are of much more general importance. 'Those involved,' he writes, 'did not seem to believe they were playing out some profound clash between civilizations. It is a subtle and complicated history that illuminates the Elizabethan period, and also our own' (16). Since many of 'those involved' were the earliest English travellers into the Islamic world, their adventures alone should attract ASTENE members, while the larger history of which they are a part, the decades of the 'amicable relationship that prospered briefly under Elizabeth'(9), is urgently timely, instructive and related with great narrative flair.

*This Orient Isle* reveals the remarkable story of how, during Elizabeth's reign, England was signally and profoundly shaped by encounters with, and borrowings from, the Islamic world of the Moroccans, Ottomans and Safavids. In this, Brotton is pursuing a more general argument he initially proposed back in 1997 in his first book, *Trading Territories: Mapping the Early Modern World*. Here he 'argued for the importance of what could be called the presence of the East in defining early modern European understanding of travel, commerce and geography,' and that it was in relation to this 'presence' that 'sixteenth-century Europe increasingly came to define its own social and geographical identity' (180). In the two decades since then, Brotton has extensively shown how European commerce, culture and civilization during and after the Renaissance have been heavily indebted to influences – material, artistic, intellectual –



owing to both direct and mediated contact with the increasingly nearby Near East. His *The Renaissance Bazaar: From the Silk Road to Michelangelo* (2002) followed his collaboration with Lisa Jardine, *Global Interests: Renaissance Art Between East and West* (2000), and these studies remain definitive works – among many early-modern cultural and literary historians at least – in an academic field that has boomed during the twenty-first century into a lively area of research and publication. The case that the early-modern English came to define their own social identity as a result of increased global encounters with the goods, styles and ideas of eastern and Islamic nations has come to be widely accepted and elaborated by many scholars. Here, focussing on the decades of Elizabeth's reign, Brotton synthesizes recent research, together with a good deal of his own original archival findings, to show how relations with 'Islamic kingdoms ... affected how Elizabethans travelled and conducted business, what they ate, how they dressed and furnished their homes, how they understood religion, and how they acted on a stage that was graced by some of the world's finest playwrights, including Shakespeare and Marlowe' (8).

Written in a style and idiom directed at general readers, *This Orient Isle* compellingly tells the story of how Elizabethan England was transformed by encounters and exchanges with the Islamic world. The book opens in November 1600 with an evocative visual description of ceremonies being held that day celebrating the anniversary of Elizabeth's accession in 1558. Amidst thousands of Londoners, the dignitaries in attendance this year included a striking figure, one Abd al-Wahid bin Muhammad al-Annuri, the first ambassador from the kingdom of Morocco. Brotton invites us to imagine how the very public presence of a Moroccan nobleman that day, and on other public occasions during his six-month embassy to London, constantly excited the attention of those already fascinated by the figures of Moors and Turks on the London stage. What the public could not see and did not know was that al-Annuri was in England to negotiate a military alliance with Elizabeth against the Spanish, a plan the queen was eager to pursue.

How such 'diplomatic, commercial and military' links between Protestant England and Muslim powers came about is, Brotton writes, 'the subject of this book' (7). At the centre of the story throughout is Elizabeth herself, consulting with – and sometimes thwarted by – her ministers, courtiers

and ambitious merchants, all seeking wealth, power and international prestige through commercial and political alliances with Morocco and the Ottomans in defiance of the Catholic powers of France and Spain.

The first chapter glances back to the reign of Catholic Queen Mary and the European contexts – political and religious – in which ideas about Islam were central to Reformation debates, thereby setting the scene for Elizabeth's accession to the throne in chapter two. From here, chapters follow the forty-five years of her reign chronologically, each chapter covering several years of her personal involvement with diplomatic and commercial initiatives involving Muslim rulers in the struggle against Catholic Spain, the emergence and rise of the Barbary and Turkey (later Levant) Companies, the intrigues of her ministers and regular misadventures of enthusiastic captains-turned-pirate, all set amidst the steadily increasing cultural influences of these encounters back home in England, largely through theatrical representations of Muslim characters on the stage and the ideas about Islam they generated. In the last chapter, Brotton reaches 1600 and returns to al-Annuri's embassy and the final years of Elizabeth's reign to report how the military alliance with Morocco came to nothing while direct trade with the Ottomans flourished and continued to make many of Elizabeth's subjects very wealthy.

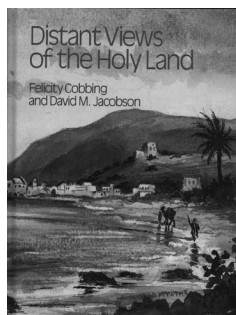
Along the way, *This Orient Isle* is packed with remarkable characters such as Anthony Jenkinson, the twenty-four year old merchant from Leicestershire who happened in 1553 to be in Aleppo where he bumped into the Ottoman Sultan himself, Süleyman I, and promptly secured an unprecedented licence allowing him to trade inside the Ottoman Empire. This astonishing feat brought Jenkinson to the attention of Elizabeth, who sent him off in her name to explore possible markets among the Russians and Safavids. We also learn about William Harborne, Elizabeth's earliest representative at the Ottoman court from 1581, who single-handedly established formal agreements for all English merchants to trade in Ottoman ports throughout the Eastern Mediterranean. In 1583, Harborne enthusiastically appointed the first English consul to 'Cairo, Alexandria, Egypt and other places adjacent' (122), but the attempt was unsuccessful (a full account can be found in A. C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* [1935], pp 32-5, available online as a Googlebook). We learn about a Muslim converting to Christianity in London; about the Englishman Samson Rowlie who converted to Islam

and became an important government minister in Algiers; about English mariners held captive by Muslim powers; and about Thomas Dallam, the young engineer from Warrington whose clock-work organ astonished Sultan Mehmed III when he presented it in the Topkapi Palace as a diplomatic gift from England's 'Lutheran' Queen. We learn about the notorious Sherley brothers and their attempts to forge a pan-European alliance with the Safavids against the Ottomans, and we learn how Marlowe, Shakespeare and other dramatists of the time translated the effects of these various encounters with the Islamic world onto the London stage. We learn that trade invariably trumped religious difference and that personal encounters most often engendered respect and admiration, not hostility or contempt.

Within weeks of publication, *This Orient Isle: Elizabethan England and the Islamic World* was featured as Book of the Week on BBC Radio 4 – read by Derek Jacobi – and has been widely and justly admired by reviewers in the London press. Public notice of this kind is especially encouraging since one of the book's major achievements should be making sure that television script writers, popular historians and biographers no longer ignore the defining 'presence of the East' and of Islam in early-modern England. And more importantly, what *This Orient Isle* shows is that conflict is not the inevitable result of religious difference, nor have East-West relations always resulted in some 'clash of civilizations.'

Gerald MacLean

**Cobbing, Felicity and Jacobson, David, *Distant Views of the Holy Land*, Equinox Publishing, Sheffield and Bristol, CT, 2015, 308 pp., ISBN 9781781790618, £125/ \$200.**



2015 marked the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF), thus this book was well timed as a celebratory review of the

early research accomplishments of the Society. The handsome, large format book is illustrated with 350 early photographs, paintings and drawings of the Holy Land, including maps and plans: the pearls from the images in the archives of the PEF. The back cover suggests that the book is of interest to travellers to the Holy Land for its scholarship and for the early photographs and art that 'capture the opposing undercurrents of scientific enquiry and piety characteristic of nineteenth-century European society.'

The Palestine Exploration Fund was founded in 1865. It is the oldest society in the world for the study and exploration of the Levant, particularly Israel, the Palestinian territories, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. The introduction provides a summary of the early history of the PEF and its picture archives. The PEF was established as a non-sectarian scientific society dedicated to the study of the Judaeo-Christian heritage in the Holy Land. Its goal was objective research, using modern scientific methods of exploration and documentation. The PEF attracted members from a wide variety of sources and disciplines. Its founding Committee members were prestigious and very highly placed, drawn from the aristocracy, academia, the clergy and business. An early priority of the PEF was to have a reliable map of the region. Central to the success of early research and documentation were the connections of Sir George Grove and Major General Sir Charles Wilson: both had access to surveyors and cartographers of The Royal Engineers for the purpose of exploring and mapping Ottoman Palestine.

The contributions of Royal Engineer Lieutenant Charles Warren are highlighted, starting with his daring and dangerous tunnelling exploration of underground Jerusalem in 1867 to find the foundations on which the city was built. Warren was accompanied by photographer Henry Phillips and visited by the artist William 'Crimea' Simpson, whose works figure throughout the book. (ASTENE members will learn more about Charles Warren and William Simpson, both Freemasons, in our joint venture study day with the PEF and the Library and Museum of Freemasonry on October 29, 2016.)

Warren's exploration in Jerusalem ended in 1970, after which the PEF began the Survey of Western Palestine, which entailed seven years of fieldwork. The resultant publication is thought to be the most comprehensive documentation of the geography of

late Ottoman Palestine. In 1890, the PEF initiated archaeological excavation southwest of Jerusalem, led by Sir Flinders Petrie and Dr. Frederick Bliss. Further excavations under Bliss and his assistant Robert Stewart Macalister were followed by the work of Duncan Mackenzie 1910 – 1912 at the site of Ain Shems. After World War I, the PEF resumed exploration. PEF excavations were documented by photography of the sites and the associated landscape. The work of artists and photographers engaged by the PEF formed the early basis of its image archives, many of which are reproduced to great effect in this book.

The introduction includes a section about pilgrims and other visitors to the Holy Land, which ASTENE members would find of interest. Historical photographs, maps and prints of views the travellers would have seen in the 19th century, with some examples from works of earlier travellers and pilgrims, accompany the text.

Having set the context for detailed consideration of the three geographical regions that comprise the Holy Land, the book continues with chapters that provide geographical 'tours' of Galilee, Samaria, and Judea. The core elements of the geographical chapters are identical for all regions, containing an introduction, historical outline and pictorial survey of the sites. The sites have been numbered and are located against a relief map of each region. The survey is presented through historical photographs, art, maps and plans and accompanied by captions, with no further explanation. The captions are often quite detailed, including Biblical contexts, brief history of excavations, etc. Because of the beauty and fascination of the visuals that reveal the Biblical landscape of the past, the reader may also enjoy this publication simply as a catalogue of the highlights of the PEF picture collections.

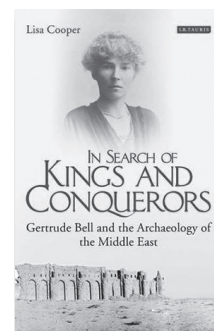
Samaria has extended coverage to include information about the Samaritans, Samaritan Ivories, and the Hellenistic and Roman City of Samaria. The chapter about Judea and Philistia (excluding Jerusalem & Bethlehem) contains the core elements for both areas, supplemented by consideration of whether Joshua's conquest of Judea is history or legend, followed by a section about the Philistines. The major sites of interest, Jerusalem and Bethlehem, are covered in the final chapter, which is followed by a useful appendix: Biographies of Photographers, Artists and Illustrators. *Distant Views of the Holy Land* contains an extensive bibliography.

The authors of the book have impeccable qualifications: Felicity Cobbing is the Executive and Curator of the PEF, and David Jacobson is the Editor of the Palestine Exploration Quarterly. Felicity Cobbing has for several years offered a tour of the Holy Land for Martin Randall Travel. Her experience with leading tours in Jerusalem and the West Bank may have been the catalyst for selecting the format of a pictorial travel guide for the commemorative book. For travellers interested in historical exploration and discoveries of the PEF, *Distant Views of the Holy Land* would be an indispensable reference in one authoritative yet extremely readable book for planning a visit. The hard cover book with the dimensions 29 x 22.5 cm and weight of 1.25 kilos, however, could be a little heavy to travel with.

Considering the not insignificant cost of *Distant Views of the Holy Land*, I should make potential readers aware that I found the absence of an index and footnotes to be disappointing – despite the very thorough Biblical concordance. This lacuna makes it difficult for academics to use the book generally. I know this is not a policy of the PEF, as the last work I reviewed in Bulletin number 61 – *Tourists, Travellers and Hotels in Nineteenth-Century Jerusalem* – was indexed and meticulously footnoted.

Cathie Bryan

**Cooper, Lisa, *In Search of Kings and Conquerors: Gertrude Bell and the Archaeology of the Middle East*, I.B. Tauris, London & New York 2016, xxii, 314 pp., numerous photographs and other illustrations, ISBN 978 1 84885 498 7, eISBN 978 0 85772 896 8, £20.**



I am sure Miss Bell would have welcomed this account of her life. Lisa Cooper is well qualified: she teaches Near Eastern archaeology at the University of British Columbia (at Vancouver), has carried out fieldwork in Iraq and in Syria and

visited the Gertrude Bell archives now housed at Newcastle University. She is quite right to observe that previous accounts of Gertrude Bell's life have concentrated on the political side at the expense of her contributions to architectural history and archaeology. Perhaps that is because she herself left us a variety of vivid first-hand accounts, which biographers understandably do not wish to appear to plagiarize or diminish. Not only do we have her two outstanding travel books, *The Desert and the Sown* (about Syria) and *Amurath to Amurath* (parts further east), but we have her often lengthy letters home, and her major publication of the fort or palace of Ukhaïdir which she virtually discovered. For most of the book, Lisa Cooper takes us in the tracks of Bell's itineraries during the years preceding the Great War, especially her route in 1909 from northern Syria down the Euphrates and then northwards up the Tigris via Assur and the other Assyrian capitals. The straightforward narrative of her travels is accompanied by Cooper's running commentary on what she saw and what she wrote. When it comes to individual sites and monuments, we are given many of Gertrude Bell's high quality photographs from the Newcastle archive, and in some cases these are set alongside the author's own photographs, taken more or less a century later. The comparison reveals the dilapidations resulting from a hundred years' wear and tear. Mentioned, but understandably not documented in photograph, are the appalling desecrations which some monuments have suffered at the hands of the self-styled Islamic State. At the same time we are given an appreciation of Bell's academic judgements, both by placing her verdicts on architectural traditions and chronology alongside those of her contemporaries – principally Herzfeld but other continental scholars too – and by reviewing them in the light of opinion from more recent architectural historians.

What emerges from this survey is the unique niche she carved out for herself in the first decade of the 20th century. There was really no-one in Britain researching the architectural history of the early Islamic period and of its Sasanian and Parthian forerunners. Her pursuit of these subjects brought her into communication, whether in person or by correspondence, with continental scholars such as Reinach, Strzygowski, and Herzfeld, and Cooper very helpfully tells us who they were and how their academic work interacted with Bell's own. Moreover, when she finally reached the great capital cities at the heart of Mesopotamia, Babylon and Assur, she found there German scholars, led by Koldewey and

Andrae respectively. She recognized and respected their exemplary approach, which appealed to her own quite austere academic instincts. For there is no doubt that she considered herself, and should be considered by us as a true professional. If her Oxford history degree was not sufficient training for the research she undertook, she constantly strove to improve her qualifications. She was already learning Classical Arabic in 1896, enabling her to use the Arab historians (rather than to master the contemporary dialects with which she struggled in Jerusalem); while before her journey to Ha'il she gets "instruction in surveying and astronomical observations" from Mr Reeves of the Royal Geographical Society, who later wrote to her mother that "her mapping has proved of the greatest value and importance" (*Letters of Gertrude Bell*, I, 253).

The enigma is that although her research is fully professional she is not a "pure" academic, as demonstrated by her two highly enjoyable travel narratives. Cooper comments on her "romantic" side, and indeed there is a danger that she might be dismissed these days as a wealthy dilettante. Her published work is sufficient proof that mixes the romance of Near Eastern travel with her academic undertakings. I imagine that she would have concurred that her travel experiences were the inextricable consequence of her academic enquiries, but that these provided the rationale for travel, and that neither outweighed the other. The sentence Cooper quotes (p. 220) from *The Desert and the Sown* does not say it all, but it says half of it: "To those bred under an elaborate social order few such moments of exhilaration can come as that which stands at the threshold of wild travel".

As years passed, her devotion to visiting and recording old buildings seems to have strengthened, and this is perhaps encapsulated in the titles of her two travel books, of which *The Desert and the Sown* (1907) alludes to the contemporary Near East, while *Amurath to Amurath*, four years later, emphasises the historical procession of dynasties. One might suppose that her excursion to Ha'il in 1913 was primarily a "romantic" exercise. It seems at times that she visits inaccessible places with the same spirit of "adventure" (a word she uses herself of herself) as she scaled Alpine peaks – in each case because the goal, like Everest, is there. Yet when she is deep in the desert, and writing to her beloved Doughty-Wylie, she bemoans the difficulties of travel as a woman ("It's a bore being a woman when you are in Arabia") and tellingly comments "What

do ineffective archaeologists want with battle!" (E. Burgoyne, *Gertrude Bell from her personal papers 1889-1914*, 297), so classifying herself even in this unique "adventure" as an archaeologist, and that means an academic. And she had the instincts of an academic: in her own books, *The Palace and Mosque at Ukhaidir* (of course) but also in the less austere *Amurath to Amurath* she consistently writes the diacritic dot under the d of Ukhaidir to render the correct Arabic phoneme, and on p. 155 Cooper cites a letter of hers to *The Times* describing the German excavations at Assur, where she writes "From the summit of the *zigurrat* the god could survey the cradle of the race that did him service", so correctly giving the Akkadian word its doubled *rr*. Unlike most authors today, even those who are familiar with the language.

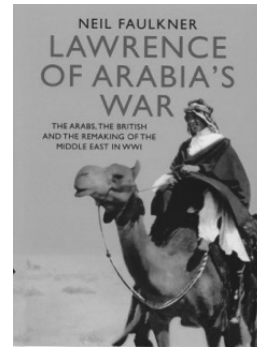
The final phase of Bell's engagement in Mesopotamia came in 1922 when she was appointed to head the new country's antiquities service. This is covered in the final chapter, but reading it one does not learn much about her work here. Mostly we hear about the administration of western expeditions (to sites like Ur and Kish), and the delicate matter of dividing the antiquities discovered. There is virtually nothing to be said about the Iraq Museum under her direction, and one gains an impression that she was not unduly bothered about the finds. As an architectural historian at heart, perhaps this was indeed the case. Interestingly, there is little documentation surviving from these years in the files of the Iraq Museum today, as research by Dr Lamia al-Gailani-Werr has shown.

There is little to carp at in the presentation of the book, which has all appropriate bibliography and indices. Footnotes are at the back of the book; they are mostly references for citations, but from time to time there are interesting extra details buried there. The photographs are an essential part of any account of Bell's work. Unfortunately the problems of pagination have meant that some of them are located a few pages after the relevant text.

Gertrude Bell was an important political figure, and an intrepid traveller, rightly honoured by the Royal Geographic Society, but she was also a pioneer in the field of early Islamic and pre-Islamic architecture. Her academic work has been eclipsed by her significant role in the formation of Iraq, but Cooper's excellent book has now redressed the balance and given it the attention it deserves.

*Nicholas Postgate*

**Faulkner, Neil, *Lawrence of Arabia's War: The Arabs, the British and the Remaking of the Middle East in WWI*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2016, 528 pp., ISBN: 978 0 300196832, £25.**



The publication of *Lawrence of Arabia's War* is timely for the centennial of the start of the Arab Revolt. It joins numerous biographies of T. E. Lawrence, each with its own take on the man and his world. This book is intended as "an archaeologically and anthropologically informed politico-military history" of World War I in the Levant, featuring T.E. Lawrence in a central role. Not as detailed as a stand-alone biography, here Lawrence's life and psychology intertwine with military history. Faulkner's military history is not only the classical analysis of high level strategy and battles, it also provides information about Turkish and British soldiers.

World War I in the Middle East was fought on two jarringly different fronts: a modern mechanised army to the west of the River Jordan and a tribal revolt of camel-mounted guerrillas to the east. The parallel campaigns, which together resulted in the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, are usually written about separately. Faulkner's account considers both campaigns together, with all their complexities, including maps of key battles, which is meant to give a better understanding of the conflict and its outcome. Faulkner uses the interdisciplinary approach that underpins modern conflict archaeology theory: traditional sources of evidence are supplemented by archaeology, archival material, satellite imagery and reconnaissance. The interdisciplinary approach was also the academic basis of the Great Arab Revolt Project (GARP), 2006-14, of which Faulkner was the co-Director. Evidence unearthed by the GARP has shed new light upon the ephemeral Bedouin guerrilla and on the Turkish posts along the Hejaz Railway that attempted to contain the threat from the desert.

Lawrence is briefly introduced in the first chapter, covering his archaeology days in Carchemish, mapping and reconnaissance of the Sinai with Leonard Woolley and his appointment to the new intelligence service in Cairo in 1914. There are five chapters – nearly 200 pages – of background to the Great War in the Middle East in both the British and Ottoman Empires to read and digest before the book moves on to the Arab Revolt and the Palestine Campaign. The background chapters are well worth reading to understand the Big Picture, and for reference.

The British Empire learned much from its experience of the Indian Mutiny in 1857 and wanted to lessen the risk of further nationalist revolts. Part of the remodelling of the administration of India included reforms to the Indian Army of *sepoys* recruits, which traditionally guarded the frontier of India. In the run-up to the war, four divisions of the Indian Army were sent abroad, including to Mesopotamia and Egypt.

Britain was aware of the risk of a Holy War in the Middle East, possibly stirred up by Germany, and also wanted to prevent any religious unrest in Egypt that could destabilise the Protectorate. (The importance to Britain of Egypt was paramount, since it guarded Britain's access to India via the Suez Canal.)

The background chapters also provide information about the Young Turks and the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), who found themselves at the head of an antiquated Ottoman Empire. Turkish infrastructure was inadequate and deficient in rail transport – a handicap during what was a railway – supplied war. Faulkner enlightens us on what the Turkish army was like for officers and the ranks. An overview of the anthropology and political structure of Arabia explains what gave rise to the Arab Revolt in 1916.

Almost halfway through the book, we are on more familiar territory with what Lawrence wrote in *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, starting with his role in selecting Feisal as the leader of the Arab Revolt. Initially the job of damaging the railway was the work of H. Garland and S. Newcombe, but all was to change once Lawrence was appointed as the British liaison officer and adviser to Sherif Feisal, serving with Feisal's Army. Lawrence's successful first raids on the railway with a highly mobile guerrilla force became the new way of war: "We might be a vapour, blowing where we listed". Faulkner

identifies 15 principles of modern guerrilla warfare found in Lawrence's writings, which establish him in Faulkner's eyes as a "seminal military thinker". Those who don't know their Clausewitz from their Saxe may miss the finer points of the military inspiration behind Lawrence's military thinking for the Arab Revolt, although Faulkner provides some guidance.

The author discusses Lawrence's struggle with the contradictions of his role and his growing distress with war in the desert against the Turks as revealed in his writing and letters. At the height of his assaults on the Hejaz Railway, Lawrence wrote a *Boy's Own* account of the Hallat Ammar ambush to one acquaintance. In a more honest letter from the same period to a friend from Oxford, Lawrence describes the war as a nightmare from which he hopes that he will wake up, and confides his horror at the death of so many Turkish soldiers as a result of his actions. Lawrence's style exhibited a reckless streak: he had become "a deranged action-hero possessed by a death-wish". Throughout his account of the war, Faulkner makes us aware of Lawrence's increasingly tortured psychology over the violence of the war, deaths he caused as a British serving officer and his guilt over betrayal of the Arabs.

The battles of both campaigns are described in detail, exciting and very readable. Descriptions of the battles include many comments from those who participated, beyond what has been written by Lawrence, which engage the reader with the soldiers and their commanders. The British Army serving in the Middle East included the imperial Indian Army, mentioned earlier in this review. It was interesting to read about some actions of the Arab Revolt and of the Palestine Campaign in which the Indians took part. The expedition to the oases of Jefer, Bair and Azrak on the way to attack the bridge at Tell Shehab included a company of Indian soldiers with machine guns. Not surprisingly, the Indian soldiers could not keep up with the Bedouin, and reduced the speed of the raid.

On the Turkish side, we learn of the great privations of the soldiers, who by the end of the war were so poorly clothed that their main source of clothing, underclothing and footwear was from the dead Indian and British soldiers. It was possibly due to the success of the Arab Revolt and the damage to the railway, that supplies and produce were so scarce, compounding the effect of the impoverished reserves of the Ottoman Empire.

Although Faulkner and his GARP co-Director Nick Saunders have published information about the archaeology of the Arab Revolt, this is not included here in detail. Saunders' forthcoming book will report and analyze the archaeology and anthropology: a companion piece to the military history of *Lawrence of Arabia's War*.

Neil Faulkner is an academic archaeologist and historian, and editor of *Military History Monthly*. Given these credentials, along with his role as co-Director of the GARP, he is supremely qualified as author of this book. In addition to his credentials, Faulkner is a Marxist and revolutionary socialist. The Marxist understanding of history colours some of Faulkner's views and conclusions, although these are fairly obvious when they arise and do not detract from the broad appeal of the book. He sees Lawrence as "the metaphor for the imperialism, violence and betrayals that tore the region apart a century ago". Although Lawrence suffered life-long anguish and guilt for the violence he unleashed during the war and for his part in the betrayal of the Arab cause, it seems inappropriate to make of Lawrence a socialist symbol for British imperialism, violence and betrayal in the Middle East.

Faulkner's writing style is objective, meticulously referenced, and extremely readable. He is sympathetic towards Lawrence and also the soldiers who took part in Lawrence of Arabia's war. The book is illustrated by 26 maps of the region and of military actions for both campaigns, with photographs and illustrations. A timeline from the late 19th century through 1924 covers key events in the Wider World, the Ottoman Empire and the Middle East, Egypt/Palestine, Syria and Arabia. In this reviewer's view, Faulkner succeeds in his attempt to deliver a holistic view of World War I in the Middle East, with a special focus on T.E. Lawrence's role.

Cathie Bryan

**Malcolm, Noel, *Agents of Empire: Knights, Corsairs, Jesuits and Spies in the Sixteenth-Century Mediterranean World*, Allen Lane, 2015, 604 pp, ISBN 978-0-241-00389-3, £30.00.**



This remarkable book presents a picture of the history of the early modern eastern Mediterranean through a close focus on the fortunes of the members of two families, closely linked by marriage alliances, the Brunis and the Brutis, who came from Ulcinj, a port on the south coast of the country now known as Montenegro. Malcolm's detailed account of these families covers a period of around a hundred years, from the early sixteenth century until the 1590s. The careers of these men, who served as interpreters, merchants, churchmen, diplomats and soldiers, epitomised the complexities of an area with many different linguistic, religious and cultural traditions. Such men as the Albanian heroes of this book, who lived on the peripheries of first Venetian and then Ottoman rule, learned how to survive and flourish in a most impressive way.

It is clear from Malcolm's book that many of the Christian states of Western Europe viewed the Muslim Ottoman empire as their avowed enemy and that there were violent military encounters between them, ranging from raids to outright war. Chapter 8 is the most exciting part of the book. It gives a splendidly full and graphic account of the build-up and actual course of events at the famous Battle of Lepanto, immortalised in G.K. Chesterton's poem. This naval engagement took place on 7 October 1571 at sea off the coast of south-western Greece; it was fought between the allied Christian forces of the Holy League and the Ottoman Turks who were aiming to conquer Cyprus, then ruled by Venice. Malcolm's account of this momentous battle, which marked the first important defeat of an Ottoman fleet, is memorably dramatic and enriched with graphic details. In particular, he draws with great effect on an almost unknown account of Lepanto, written in Ottoman Turkish by a Persian poet called Zirek al-Husayni. Later in his account of Lepanto, Malcolm describes the tragic death of Archbishop Giovanni Bruni, enslaved, humiliated, forced to row in a galley, and finally killed after the battle, not by Ottoman troops, but by Spanish soldiers who refused to believe him when he told them he was a Christian and a bishop.

It would, however, be too simplistic to concentrate simply on the adversarial aspects of the relationship in the eastern Mediterranean between Western European Christendom and the bastion of Sunni Islam at that time, the Ottoman Turkish empire. And Malcolm is at pains to point out the nuances of this relationship and to give examples of peaceful, pragmatic contacts between both sides.

Trade interests were never overlooked for long in the complex web of Christian-Muslim and inter-European rivalries; Malcolm notes, for example, that Queen Elizabeth I of England favoured the Ottomans and provided them with tin for the weaponry they needed to fight against her enemy, King Philip II of Spain.

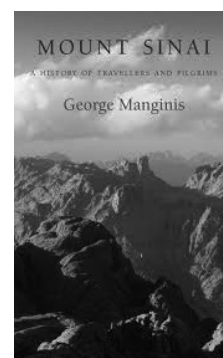
This is a monumental book in many ways. It is written on a grandiose scale and it displays deep erudition on diverse topics. It is, however, not a book to read in a hurry. When dealing with its detailed evidence about unfamiliar topics one must digest it slowly and carefully and with intervals between the chapters. If that is not done, one is apt to be overwhelmed by an *embarras de richesses*. This feeling of being overburdened is even more acute when consulting the book's seventy-six pages of lengthy endnotes. These are a *tour de force*, packed with abstruse and esoteric references to material tucked away in a range of archives across Europe and written in languages that are little known in Western Europe, such as Serbo-Croat, Albanian, Rumanian, Vlach, Turkish and many others. Moreover, the bibliography covers 38 pages.

This book is valuable and timely not just because of the mountain of unfamiliar data that it presents but because of its particular vision of the early modern past. The emphasis on what happened in the sixteenth century, in Albania in particular, and in the Balkans and south-eastern Europe, adds up to a profoundly unexpected picture of events and one that is uninflected by the version of the Mediterranean world that has dominated western scholarship over the last sixty years, a version that gives pride of place to the doings of Spain, France and Italy. What a welcome change! Of course, the Western historians dealing with the Mediterranean world in this period accept that the Ottomans were the major power in the eastern Mediterranean; but to acknowledge is not the same as to understand. Here at last is a book that grapples with the fine detail of a polyglot and largely eastern Christian Mediterranean world that knew the Muslim Ottomans not as a distant threat but up close and personal. Malcolm has familiarised himself with the daunting array of languages, of traditions, of political entities from city-states to principalities to petty kingdoms, of conflicting religious loyalties and of perpetual squabbles, whether tribal, ethnic or merely local, that together go to make up the complex mosaic of south-eastern Europe at this time. This is a very different world from that of

Western Europe, where the great nation-states were already exerting their sway. And so it presents the Ottoman empire, not as the familiar bogeyman from the east, as it were perpetually at the gates of Vienna, but as the power to be reckoned with on the spot in south eastern Europe, advancing inexorably. The book shows that it did so not just by sheer military strength – hard power – but also by soft power, by its ability to accommodate, to compromise, and to rule with a light touch. The Ottoman empire was a state that willingly accepted difference rather than a bloodthirsty colonial regime of the kind that the Spaniards were introducing into Central and South America at this very time. There is much to ponder here; this is a book that long resonates in the imagination.

Carole Hillenbrand

**Manginis, George, *Mount Sinai. A History of Travellers and Pilgrims*, Haus Publishing Ltd, 2016, 308 pp., b/w illustrations, ISBN 978-1-910376-50-8, £20.**



This is a *serious* book, honoured by dust-cover comments from Richard Chartres, the Bishop of London; Vincent Nichols, Cardinal of Westminster; and Anthony Sattin, among others. Of its 308 pages, 114 are devoted to endnotes, bibliography, index, and perhaps most interesting to Astene members, a list of travellers to the region and the date that they were either at Mount Horeb or Jabal Musa, as the 'geographic' Mount Sinai is called in the text. Separating the western name of the mountain from its physical presence means that Manginis can discuss Mount Sinai as a concept rather than just as a place. It is the "Mountain of the Law" the source of the Ten Commandments, for Christians and anchorites a place of devotion for millennia, a recurrent goal of pilgrimage from the fourth century AD through the early and middle Islamic years and then again after a hiatus in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.



Although Manginis is originally an archaeologist, the book relies more on textual analysis than on pure “digging”. Manginis has subsequently expanded his academic credentials into Art History. His detailed descriptions of the basilicas and chapels of the site are easy to follow. The historical timeline is continuous and informative. The conflicting theological approaches to and proprietorial claims made on Mount Sinai are explained. Each of Manginis’s chapters is like a well-crafted lecture: the sources are cited and examined; their reliability and contradictions are assessed and resolved; the narrative is determined; the conclusions are summarised. (Although all Greek words are spelled out in Latin script some assumptions are made of the reader’s prior knowledge of these words, whereas an actual glossary would be useful for the layman.)

Starting with the earliest records provided by either documentary or archaeological evidence, Manginis describes all the buildings which are known to have existed on the summit and in the surrounding wadis of the site. He also gives us a picture of the Bedu of Sinai more sympathetic but not altogether dissimilar from the one propagated today, that they are the usual suspects in all terrorism problems in the area. The fortifications which Justinian built for the first Monastery in the sixth century bear witness to this.

Manginis covers the accounts of pilgrims to Sinai from the 4th century AD; next he gives an overview of continuing pilgrimage by Muslims and Christians from the date of the Muslim conquests to the annexation of Egypt by the Ottomans in 1517, when there was a drop-off in pilgrim numbers. Meantime, the relics of St Catherine were spread westward when fragments of her remains, translated from Alexandria to Sinai and “rediscovered” in the area by the monks, were carried off to Western Christendom. By the 12th and 13th centuries St Catherine had superseded Elijah and Moses as the pull factor to Mount Sinai. All along, the monks of the monastery had to balance the interests of the Crusader kingdoms and the many denominations of Christianity in the Holy Land against those of their political overlords, Fatimid, Ayyubid or Mamluk – a delicate exercise!

The patterns and rites of pilgrimage remained almost unchanged until the nineteenth century. Memoirs proliferated with the advent of printing, though many were derivative rather than eyewitness accounts. Such as they are it is probable that Manginis has noted them all in either bibliography

or footnote, so comprehensively has he mined the literature, (including the anthology *Travelling through Sinai from the Fourth to the Twenty First Century*, by Deb Manley and Sahar Abdel-Hakim). The travellers of the 19th century – many such as Burckhardt very familiar to Astene – provide most of the quotes for the book and the subject matter for the final chapter. A minor quibble with the table of travellers is that they are listed alphabetically. I would have liked a chronological listing also.

The 19th century arguments are between the Christian denominations rather than between Christians and Muslims. This was the period when the candidacy of other sites as “The Mountain of the Law” was fiercely contested, often by writers who had never visited Sinai at all. Finally the Palestine Exploration Fund survey of 1868-9 (that mixture of piety, imperialism and adventure) ruled definitively in favour of Jabal Musa. Almost simultaneously the first Cook’s tourists arrived. Artists such as David Roberts and Miner Kellogg and later photographers such as Francis Frith provided illustrations which placed the biblical sites firmly in the present. The Protestants relied on the Bible as their source, coupled with a pseudo-scientific authentication via topology and inscriptions. They dismissed the traditions and practices of the Eastern monks as superstition. Roman Catholic visitors were more respectful, but only Orthodox writers recognised the miracle of the preserved art in the monastery, long before it became widely known in the West. By the 20th century scholars were concentrating on the manuscripts in the Monastery library (the best having already been whisked away to Russia in 1845). And prejudices had softened so that when C.S. Jarvis wrote in 1931 of his time as governor of Sinai, his chapter on the Monastery was positive and sympathetic.

To say the book is serious does not mean it is uninteresting or unreadable – just that the book is a work of scholarship, not a record of personal encounters and anecdotes of the sort we have come to expect and enjoy from say William Dalrymple, whose book *From the Holy Mountain* (1996) I read in tandem with Manginis’ book for context and comparison. Dalrymple’s *Holy Mountain* was Mount Athos and Sinai was not on his 1994 itinerary. Manginis refers to the 7th century narrative of John Moschos, *The Spiritual Meadow*, as the best-known collection of stories about the early eastern saints and anchorites. For Dalrymple, travelling in the footsteps of Moschos was the impetus for and the heart of his book.

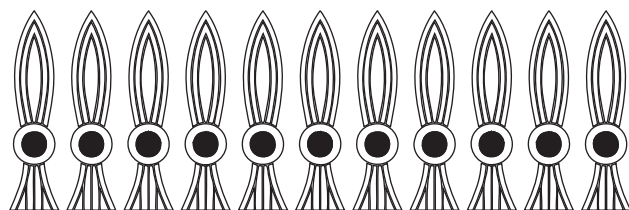
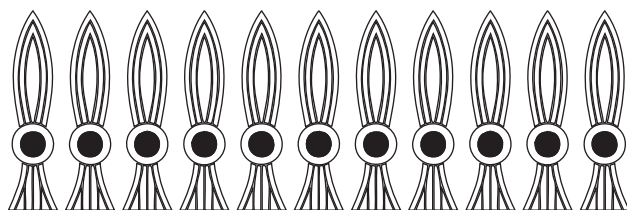
After regular visits to Egypt my husband and I finally visited Sinai from Cairo in May 2002 by local bus, minibus and taxi (via Taba before the Hilton was blown up). We had developed a dictum that in Egypt if a thing was good, the government and entrepreneurs would automatically assume that more of it must be better. And so it was with the large government tourist motel a few miles from St Catherine's monastery in Sinai; there were just four of us staying there. So it was also with our exaggerated departure for the visit to the Holy Mountain, having been persuaded by the manager to rise at 1 am to be sure to reach the summit in time for sunrise. We should have known better. Having just completed in 2001 our first pilgrimage walk from Le Puy to Santiago de Compostella we were fit and quickly overtook the other hikers and tourists, and especially those inveigled into mounting donkeys, mules or camels to avoid the climb up the steps built in the rock nearer the summit.

The moonlight was magical, but we had several hours to wait at the top and it was bitterly cold. We joked that the whole exercise was organised to enable the bedu to rent out dirty blankets to the pilgrims. We huddled under those blankets for hours – possibly also buying a hot drink from the inevitable kiosk. In that mood and those conditions our visit to the current chapel and mosque were perfunctory and the sunrise somewhat underwhelming, in spite of the dramatic rosy rock formations all around us. Our first sight of the Monastery as we descended into the warmth was some compensation, shortly marred by the hordes

arriving by bus from Sharm el-Sheikh to tick off in the short morning opening hours the one tourist “must-see” available from the Red Sea Resort.

The Astene travellers who visited the Monastery of St Catherine in March 2006 (See Bulletin 27) had the good fortune to stay in the guest house, attend Vespers and be shown round the famous library. In 2002 we were merely herded to the Burning Bush and allowed a glimpse of the basilica. But six years later the Royal Academy of Arts staged a blockbuster Exhibition on *Byzantium*. There were fears that the last room would remain empty, because there had been problems getting permission for the great Icons from the Monastery of St Catherine's to travel. But the few less fragile Icons which did make it, probably the oldest in the world, were the highlight of the Exhibition – the precursors of western portraiture and religious art, timeless and, because they were saved from the eighth century iconoclasts through being in the Moslem imperium, unique and irreplaceable. And that is the spirit George Manginis has captured in his book. All the conceptual and spiritual accretions of the centuries to the myth or reality of Mount Sinai are distilled into the final sensitive Epilogue of what this place/ name means and has meant to so many people over those centuries. If you have been to St Catherine's and Jabal Musa/Mount Sinai, this book will frame your memories. If you haven't been to St Catherine's and Jabal Musa/Mount Sinai, read this book; it may be the closest you get for some time.

*Sheila McGuirk*



# ARTICLES

## John Lowell

In his latest piece, Roger de Keersmaecker describes the life of John Lowell Jr.



## John Lowell, Jr

Born: 11 May 1799, Boston, Suffolk county, Massachusetts.

Death: 4 March 1836 Bombay, India.

Married Georgina Margaret Lowell Amory

Born: Massachusetts, March 1806

Parents: Jonathan Amory 1763-1820 and Lydia Fellows 1765-1807

Death: 27 November 1830, Cambridge, Middlesex, County, MA

## Children

Georgina Margaret Amory Lowell, Jr

Born: 3 May 1827 Boston, Suffolk, MA

Died: 1832

Anna Cabot Lowell, Jr

Born: 2 December 1829 Boston, Suffolk, County, MA

Died: 1831

John Lowell, Jr, was born on the 11th of May, 1799, and after receiving his earliest education at the schools of his native city, was taken by his father to Europe, and placed in the high-school of Edinburgh. He accompanied his father on his return to America, and in 1813 attended Harvard College. In 1816 and 1817, he made two voyages to India, the first to Batavia, returning by Holland and England, the second to Calcutta. In the years 1830 and 1831, he had the misfortune to lose, in the course of a

few months, his wife and two daughters, his only children. Desirous of extending his acquaintance with his own country before going abroad, he passed a considerable portion of the summer of 1832 touring the Western States. He sailed for Europe in November, 1832, never to return. The following winter and spring were passed in Paris, and the summer and autumn of 1833 in England, Scotland, and Ireland. Early in December, 1833, he again passed over to the continent, taking the route of Holland and Belgium to Paris. Leaving France, Italy, and Sicily he was in Malta by the middle of April. From Malta he wanted to make a short visit to the Pyramids, by the way of Alexandria and Cairo, and from there to go to Jerusalem, by the way of the desert of Suez boarding ship at some port in Syria or Palestine. He wanted to follow the coast to Smyrna and he visited Greece before he went to Smyrna. He then proceeded to Constantinople, and from there to Trebizond on the Black Sea, then from Xenophon, Teflis, the capital of Georgia. His next stop was Teheran, the capital of Persia. When he was back in Paris, he went Florence Italy in February, 1834. At Rome, he made an agreement with Swiss artist Marc Charles Gabriel Gleyre (1806-1874), highly recommended to him by Horance Vernet, as an excellent draftsman and painter, to accompany him, for the purpose of taking sketches and designs of scenery, ruins, and costumes, throughout the whole of his tour.



Gleyre – *Trois Fellahs*, 1835. Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne

In Sicily he devoted a month to the tour of the island. Then he was in Malta. On the 9th of December, he sailed from Smyrna in a Greek brig, the Bellerophon, chartered by him for the conveyance of his party and baggage, via the coast of Mitylene, Samos, Patmos, and Rhodes, and after a voyage of eighteen days, arrived at Alexandria.



Gleyre, *The Nubian*

Among Lowell's letters to his friends at this period, is one written from the summit of the great pyramid on the 12th of February 1835.

*"The prospect," says he, "is most beautiful. On the one side, is the boundless desert, varied only by a few low ridges of limestone hills. Then you have heaps of Sand and a surface of sand, reduced to so fine a powder, and so easily agitated by the slightest breeze, that it almost deserves the name of fluid. Then comes the rich, verdant valley of the Nile, studded with villages, adorned with green date-trees, traversed by the*

*Father of Rivers, with the magnificent city of Cairo on its banks, but far narrower than one could wish, as it is bounded, at a distance of some fifteen miles, by the Arabian desert and the abrupt calcareous ridge of Mokattan. Immediately below the spectator lies the city of the dead, the innumerable tombs, the smaller pyramids, the Sphinx, and, still farther off, and on the same line, to the south, the pyramids of Abou Seer, Sakârà, and Dachoor".*

(Everett 41)

After a short sojourn at Cairo, Lowell commenced the ascent of the Nile. He had found the temptation to visit Thebes too strong to be resisted.



Gleyre, 1840. *Thebes - The Ramesseum.*  
Oil on canvas. Musée cantonal des beaux-arts, Lausanne

At Thebes, in the spring of 1835, he fell ill, and it was there that he completed his will with the testamentary provisions for the founding of the Lowell Institute of Boston. In June he set out for Nubia, was in Meroë in September, in Khartum in November, and finally embarked from Massowa for the coast of Arabia on December 22, 1835. But his small party was shipwrecked in the Red Sea, and he did not reach Mocha until January 1, 1836. A few weeks later he left for Bombay, where he arrived in the middle of February. On 4 March 1836, he died in Bombay.

### Some of Lowell's Graffiti

LOWELL

RDK 581  
Temple of Dendara, Propylon

LOWELL

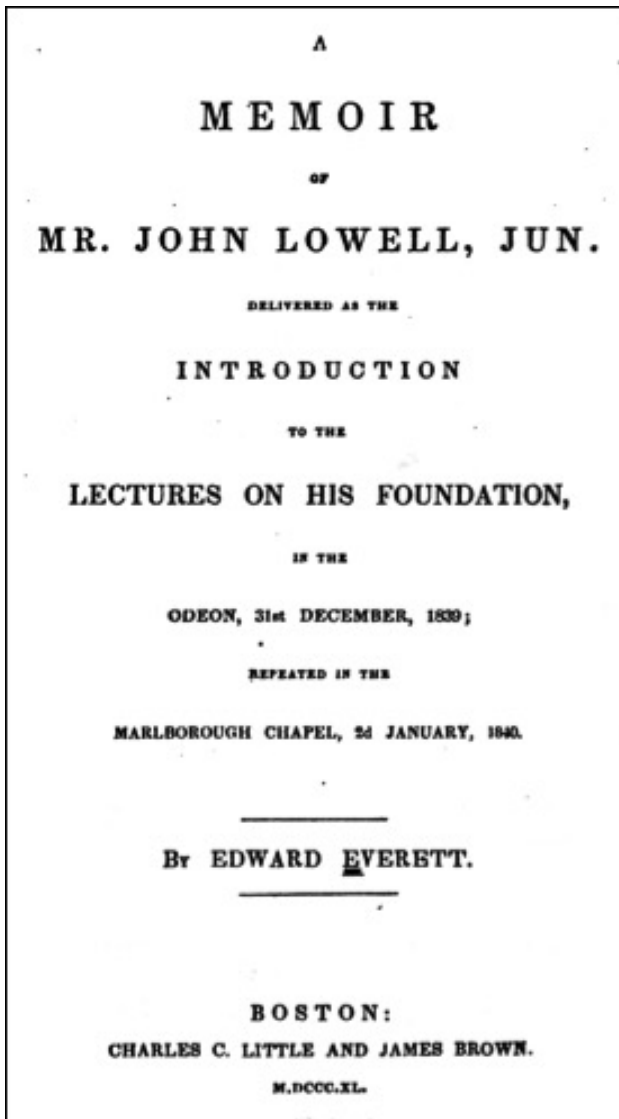
RDK 846

Temple of Luxor, First Pylon, roof, right side

LOWELL

RDK 618

Temple of Medînet Habu, great temple, portico, column



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Roger O. De Keersmaecker

## James Shaw

At the ASTENE Conference in 2013 I gave a paper on the identities of the ninety or so people mentioned in Waynman Dixon's many letters from Egypt in the period 1871 to 1877. One of the individuals who eluded me at that time was 'Mr. Shaw'. Subsequently I have been able to track him down.

James Shaw (1836-1883) was born in Aberdeen. He was in partnership in Queen Street, Glasgow, trading as the iron merchants Messrs Shaw and Thomson, from 1858 to 1866. Shaw and Thomson then moved to London, where they continued as iron merchants in offices at 150 Leadenhall Street.

James Shaw developed extensive business interests in Egypt, and claimed the Khedive among his friends. He supplied the iron rails for 150 miles of railway in Egypt, and also obtained the stores-contract from the Egyptian Government. In 1870 the Egyptian government awarded a contract to Messrs Shaw and Thomson for a bridge to replace the dam in the Nile channel on the west side of Geziret Boulak, which was used as a river crossing. James Shaw engaged John Dixon (1835-1891) as their contractor for the construction of the bridge, which became known as *Le Pont des Anglais*. It is probably that John Dixon carried out most of the design work himself, which

was approved by John Fowler (1817-1898) who was advising the khedive on civil engineering matters. Messrs Shaw and Thomson supplied the iron work for the bridge. Construction was managed on-site by John Dixon's younger brother, Waynman Dixon (1844-1930).

Waynman Dixon remained in Egypt after completion of *Le Pont des Anglais*, living in the house known as *Kom el Dikkeh* in Alexandria. James Shaw gave him contracts for 'fairly profitable' engineering projects, including construction of the iron lighthouse at Berberah. Waynman worked with Fred Dixon (no relation) on many of these projects. Fred Dixon married Mary Ellen McKillop in 1875. She was the daughter of Henry Frederick McKillop (1822-1879), a British naval officer and later Admiral of the Egyptian navy and, usefully as regards obtaining contracts, he was in charge of harbours and lighthouses in Egypt.

By 1874 James Shaw could claim that he had made no less than nineteen visits to Egypt and that every difficulty had been met cordially and honourably by the Khedive's government. At the same time he was supplying iron rails to many foreign governments and carried out some other extensive contracts. He became very wealthy, and was elected Sheriff of London and Middlesex in 1874. Then in 1875, with the collapse in the iron trade following the introduction of steel rails, James Shaw faced serious financial difficulties. He largely settled with his creditors at home, but his situation in Egypt was more troublesome.

In December 1875 Waynman Dixon complained about James Shaw's behaviour in a letter to his mother. He had received some unpleasant letters from Shaw, but Waynman excused his behaviour since 'he has had much to try his temper and upset his equanimity, so I make many excuses for him but at the same time have written my sentiments pretty clearly.' Waynman was hoping to see Shaw before Christmas to find out his intentions for settling with his creditors in Egypt. There were moves in Egypt to have Shaw declared bankrupt, but Waynman managed to head these off. Shaw's bankruptcy would have had serious implications for Waynman as he held, jointly with Shaw, some £20,000 stock of engines and machines.

Waynman survived this crisis and remained in Egypt. He designed the vessel used to transport Cleopatra's Needle to London, managing its

assembly around the obelisk and the launch into the Nile, finally accompanying it on the voyage to England in 1877. When the obelisk was feared lost in the Bay of Biscay, a distraught Waynman turned his back on Egypt and, in 1878, started working for his other brother, Raylton Dixon. Raylton had a large shipbuilding business at Middlesbrough, and Waynman became his managing director. Waynman retained an interest in Egyptian matters until his death, not least through his close friendship with Selima Harris.

Needless to say, if anyone has come across James Shaw and can add anything to the above, I would be greatly pleased to hear from them.

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### More on Clubbable Gentlemen

In *Bulletin* 65, 21-23, I wrote briefly about the Literary Fund Club, and about the development of the Geographical Society of London (now Royal Geographical Society) from the original Travellers Club. Apart from the many political clubs, there were other Societies to which early 19th century travellers in the ASTENE region could be elected.

The Society of Dilettanti was founded in 1734. The waspish Horace Walpole observed that it was "a club, for which the nominal qualification is having been in Italy, and the real one, being drunk" going on to comment that one of its prime movers, Sir Francis Dashwood, had seldom been sober the entire time he was in Italy. It has always been one of the most exclusive societies, with sixty members elected by secret ballot and meeting in one of the equally

exclusive Clubs in St James's. For many years in the 18th and 19th centuries the Society met at Thatched House Tavern in St James's Street, moving to the Conservative Club in 1842/3. Sir Lionel Cust wrote a *History of the Society of Dilettanti* (1898: a second edition was edited by Sir Sidney Colvin, 1914) which includes lists of members elected. These include many familiar names, here listed by date of election:

1795 Sir Robert Ainslie Bart., Ambassador to the Ottoman Porte

1799 J.B.S. Morrith, of Rokeby Hall, traveller in Albania and Greece

1800 William Drummond, minister at Naples and Ambassador to the Porte

1800 Thomas Hope of Deepdene

1805 George Hamilton-Gordon Earl of Aberdeen (1784-1860), who travelled in Greece and collected antiquities, Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary etc

1807 (Sir) William Gell

1811 William Richard Hamilton (1777-1859), Secretary to Lord Elgin, MP, Undersecretary for foreign affairs, Minister to the court of Naples 1822-24, Secretary to the Society of Dilettanti 1830-59. He travelled in Egypt and was author of *Ægyptiaca*.

1814 William Martin Leake (1777-1860)

1816 Col Thomas Legh of Lyme Park, MP

1817 John Nicholas Fazakerly (1787-1851) of Stodley, Devon and Burwood Park Surrey, MP

1817 Henry Gally Knight (1786-1846) MP

1821 William John Bankes (later of Kingston Lacy)

1826 Sir Archibald Edmonstone

1828 George Augustus FitzClarence

1830 Terrick Hamilton (1781-1876), younger brother of William Richard and closely involved with the Travellers Club

1831 Bartholomew Frere (1766-1851)

1834 Algernon Percy, Lord Prudhoe, (1792-1865)

1835 Mr David Baillie

1837 Charles Richard Fox (1796-1873)

1839 John Cam Hobhouse MP

1858 Charles Robert Cockerell

The Dilettanti met about four times a year. They funded publications, notably those of Stuart and Revett on Athens, Wood and Dawkins on Palmyra, and Cockerell on Bassae; they were also instrumental in the foundation of the British Schools at Athens and Rome, and the Society for Hellenic Studies.

Now noted as a professional body for leading scientists, from its foundation until the later 19th century, the Royal Society also included archaeology and antiquarian interests. Many of the 'usual suspects' were elected as Fellows: – I list a few of them with election dates. The Royal Society website gives full details of the individuals and alphabetical lists can be easily accessed through wikipedia.

William Richard Hamilton 8 Apr 1813

John Cam Hobhouse 19 May 1814

William Martin Leake 13 Apr 1815

Thomas Legh 12 June 1817

George Augustus FitzClarence 13 Jan 1820

William John Bankes 18 Mar 1822

Frederick William Beechey 23 Dec 1824

James Mangles 20 Jan 1825

David Baillie 11 Feb 1836

Henry Gally Knight 20 May 1841

Charles Barry 7 Jun 1849

Most of them were also members of the Travellers Club, the various manifestations of the (Royal) Geographical Society, and some of the Literary Fund Club – not to mention the Society of Antiquaries and the political clubs. So these are not 'more clubbable gentlemen', just the same gentlemen in more clubs.

*Robert Morkot*

## Once again, the elusive John Fuller: a mystery solved?

Having pursued John Fuller relentlessly, and fruitlessly, he finally decided to pop up unexpectedly.

In perusing the lists of members of the Society of Dilettanti, a 'Mr John Fuller of Chesham', was elected in 1834. No further details are given, but this must be the same John Fuller who, in 1837, was resident in one of the sets of rooms in Albany, Piccadilly and given as the owner of Hyde Heath, Chesham. I have, for a long time, proposed that John Fuller, owner of Germans and Hyde Heath, Chesham is to be identified with the John Fuller who travelled through Italy, western Turkey, Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Greece between 1818 and 1821, and published *Narrative of a tour through some parts of the Turkish Empire* in 1829. There has never been any conclusive evidence for this hunch (see *Bulletin* 65, 19-21).

When the traveller John Fuller was nominated for election to the Travellers Club in 1823, it was by W.J. Bankes (they met in Nubia), Bartholomew Frere (they met in Athens), Terrick Hamilton (with whom he had become friendly in Constantinople), and Capt. Charles Richard Fox. Fox, an avid collector of Greek coins, was travelling in Asia Minor and Greece in the later part of 1820 and early 1821, so Athens was probably where he and Fuller met. On Fox ("he's like a palm tree, it may well be said, having always a cluster of dates in his head") see <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/fox-charles-1796-1873>.

When John Fuller of Chesham was elected to the Dilettanti in 1834, the first three were already members: Charles Richard Fox was elected in 1837.

Unless something explicit emerges, this is perhaps as near confirmation as possible that John Fuller of Chesham is the same as the traveller of 1818-21 and author of the *Narrative*.

*Robert Morkot*

## Belzoni, Freemasons, and the Sarcophagus of Sety I

In March 1825, the architect John Soane sent out 890 invitations for three open evenings at his house in Lincoln's Inn Fields in London (Darley 1999, 275). Although not yet completed, the house (actually three combined) contained Soane's enormous collection of architectural fragments and casts,

paintings and numerous small objects. The focus was 'the crypt' and Soane's newly installed acquisition, the sarcophagus of 'Psammis' (or Psammethis) from his tomb in the Valley of the Kings at Thebes. The highpoint of the evening events was the placing of lighted candelabra inside the translucent Egyptian alabaster sarcophagus, to show up the carved and painted figures and texts which cover its exterior.

Discovered by Belzoni in 1817, the sarcophagus had been offered by Henry Salt, along with his first collection of antiquities, to the British Museum in 1821 (Darley 1999, 274; Manley and Rée 2001, 197-212). The Trustees had deliberated, lengthily, and finally, in 1824, refused to pay the asking price for the sarcophagus, which was then bought by Soane for £2000. Belzoni, meanwhile, had died in December 1823 on his journey to find the source of the Niger, claiming that he had a purchaser who would give £3000 for the sarcophagus: this would have left £500 to the widowed Sarah Belzoni who needed the money. Soane generously offered to give up the sarcophagus if such a purchaser appeared within two years, but none did. Neither Belzoni's friend, the Cambridge academic the Rev George Browne (see Wilson 2002), nor Sarah Belzoni had any knowledge of who this person was supposed to be: Salt and others that he or she did not exist.

Soane's evening openings can be read on several levels: firstly, as the celebration of his acquisition of one of the most stunning Egyptian antiquities to arrive in Britain, and one that the BM had snubbed; it also gave a viewing of the remarkable museum he was in the process of displaying (it continued to change and develop until his death); but, on another – esoteric – level, it linked with the Eleusinian, and perhaps Masonic, Mysteries that Soane and his friend James Christie corresponded about.

On the first evening, Sarah Belzoni was a guest: she and James Curtin were just about to open a new version of the Exhibition that had been such a great success in 1821 at the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly and later in Paris. The new exhibition in Leicester Square opened on April 3, but was far less popular. It left Sarah Belzoni in financial straits and also led to Curtin's premature death in May (see *Bulletin* 56 (2013), 16-19).

Saturday, 26 March, was the grandest of Soane's evenings: the principal guest was the King's brother, Prince Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex. The Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, and his wife attended



along with the portraitist Sir Thomas Lawrence and the 'arbiter of taste' Sir Charles Long. Artists J.M.W. Turner and Benjamin Robert Haydon were also there. Haydon noted in his diary (Pope 1963, 12):

"Went to see the Belzoni Sarcophagus at Soanes (*sic*), and spent a very delightful evening... The first thing after 17 years absence [was] to see Coleridge with his hair quite white looking into the Sarcophagus, opposite were some Ladies of Fashion dipping their lovely faces into an old fusty Aegyptian Coffin."

The presence of the Duke of Sussex was not simply a social coup: both Sussex and Soane were freemasons. Sussex had been enthroned as Grand Master of the premier Grand Lodge in May 1813 in succession to his brother, who was then Prince Regent. Soane was elected to the same Lodge in Nov 1813 and subsequently designed the new temple. Soane's library contained many works on freemasonry, and his portrait in Masonic regalia was painted by John Jackson in 1828. The Duke of Sussex was also a member of the Lodge of Antiquity along with the Salt's former employer, the Earl of Mountnorris and Soane's friend, the portraitist Sir William Beechey (father of Salt's 'secretary' Henry Beechey, who had been more actively engaged working alongside Belzoni).

Significantly, Sussex also had direct connections with Belzoni who called him 'il Duca di Sussex' 'my Patron and friend'. Belzoni dedicated his last work to Sussex in 1822. This was a series of coloured engravings entitled *Hieroglyphics found in the tomb of Psammis, discovered by G. Belzoni ... Copied from the originals in the said tomb and presented by the author to his Royal Highness Augustus Frederick Duke of Sussex*. The connection went back at least to the previous year when the Duke had visited the Egyptian exhibition in Piccadilly. Benjamin Haydon's diary notes that on 28 April 1821, he 'stood last night in the midst of a conversazione of celebrated men' that included Soane, Sussex and Belzoni: unfortunately, where and what this was, is not stated (Pope 1963, 323). The same year, Belzoni became a Freemason of the Royal Arch Chapter of St James. This, rather striking, social advance by Belzoni is surely explained by his connection with the Rev George Browne. Browne, a Fellow of Trinity College Cambridge, was an 'ardent' freemason and deputy acting Provincial Grand Master for Cambridgeshire and Huntingdon. Penny Wilson (2002) has detailed the support that Browne gave to Belzoni, and the funds raised in Cambridge for the ill-fated final expedition to Africa. The result of the friendship was

Belzoni's gift of the sarcophagus lid of Ramesses III to the newly created Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge in 1823, and of various antiquities to Browne himself. Browne also served as Chaplain to the Duke of Sussex, and this no doubt effected the introduction and, presumably, Belzoni's induction into the Lodge.

At the time of Belzoni's discovery of the tomb and sarcophagus in 1817 it was ascribed to 'Psammis' or 'Psammethis' (on the basis of Thomas Young's reading of the cartouches), not to 'Sethos' (i.e. Sety I). Therefore, no direct connection can be made between Soane's acquisition of the sarcophagus and the Abbé Terrasson's literary work *Sethos* (1731) which was a major influence on the ritual and symbolism of Enlightenment Freemasonry (Darley 1999, 273-4). Nevertheless, Soane's Masonic interests almost certainly played a key role in his decision to purchase the sarcophagus and display it in the way he did.

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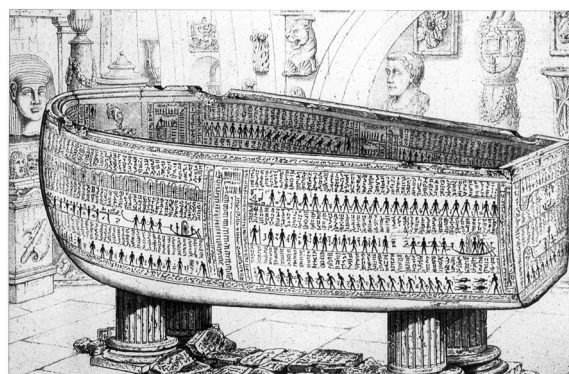
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Robert Morkot



The Sarcophagus of Sety I in the Soane Museum. Source: *General Description of Sir John Soane's Museum*. 1827

# QUERIES AND REPLIES

**From Zbigniew T. Fiema :**

I am conducting an archaeological survey in northwestern Saudi Arabia and collecting all information related to the early explorations in the area. Specifically, I am trying to ascertain the location of the original photos taken by Richard F. Burton during his travel to Midian in the 1870s. He mentioned taking photos but published only drawings ("on wood and by chromo-lithography") in his *The Land of Midian (Revisited)*, London 1879. I am particularly interested in the photos of the site of al-Qusayr (which he calls "a classical temple by Wady Hamz/Hamd," described in vol. II, pp. 220-232, note on photos on page 231). If anyone possesses information as to the whereabouts of his

photo archive related to these travels, I will be deeply grateful.

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In bulletin 68, Cassandra Vivian offered a copy of the Palace Cookbook dating from the reign of Abbas Hilmi. Happily, Edmund Wyatt, author of *In the Paths of Dangerous Fame The Life and Travels of the Explorer WG Browne* (reviewed in Bulletin 68), replied: 'My Egyptian/Sudanese wife and I are very interested in cookery. We would love to receive the photocopied of the Palace Cookbook that Cassandra Vivian has offered, and would be more than happy to pay for the postage.'

# FOOTPRINTS

## **Tutankhamun Drama**

'The past isn't a game. It tells us who we were, and who we are. It's all of human endeavour and truth and beauty hidden and waiting to be discovered.'

ASTENE members can look forward to a new epic four-part mini-series *Tutankhamun*, coming this Autumn to ITV. *Tutankhamun* is based on the story of Howard Carter (played by Max Irons) and his discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb. Sam Neill takes the role of the dashing and eccentric Lord Carnarvon who keeps faith with Carter and continues to back his expeditions when no one else will. For more details and a short preview see <http://www.itv.com/firstlook/preview-tutankhamun>.

## **Gertrude Bell museum?**

Gertrude Bell is another intrepid traveller whose story recently hit our screens in *Queen of the Desert*, starring Nicole Kidman (2015). A recent campaign has been launched to purchase her old family home – Red Barns in Redcar – and to convert it into a Gertrude Bell Museum. Bell's father, Hugh, commissioned architect Philip Webb, who

was inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement so prevalent at the time, to build Red Barns, in 1868. William Morris was of course a close friend of Webb, and decorated the interior of the mansion with blackbirds on a bright blue sky. Gertrude Bell would spend most of her young life there.

Like many wealthy families at the time, the Bell family lost much of their fortune following the First World War, and lost most of their properties. Red Barns eventually became a hotel and is now closed, and in danger of falling into disrepair. A newly-formed group calling itself Friends of Red Barns, which includes Redcar MP Anna Turley, is campaigning to save the building from decline, or worse, from being turned into an apartment block. ASTENE members will know that 'The Extraordinary Gertrude Bell' exhibition is currently housed at Kirkleatham Museum in Redcar, and runs until the end of the 2016. It is hoped that Red Barns might provide a potential permanent home for the exhibition.

[https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2016/aug/09/gertrude-of-arabia-gertrude-bell-home-museum-redcar?CMP=share\\_btn\\_tw](https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2016/aug/09/gertrude-of-arabia-gertrude-bell-home-museum-redcar?CMP=share_btn_tw)

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