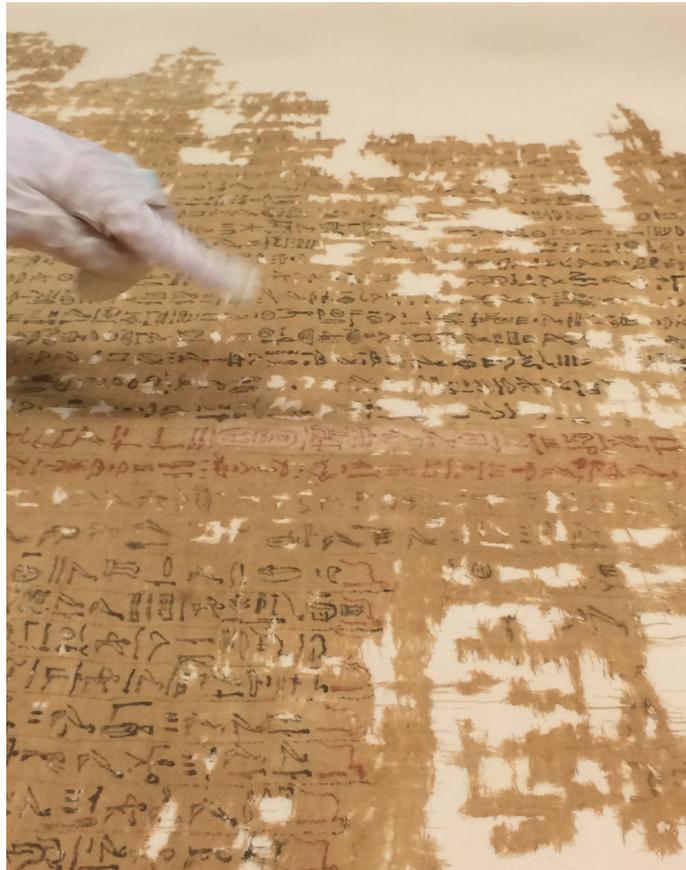


# ASTENE

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

## BULLETIN



**NOTES AND QUERIES**

**NUMBER 73: AUTUMN 2017**

# Bulletin: Notes and Queries

## Number 73: Autumn 2017

Editor: Cathy McGlynn

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### Bulletin 74: Winter 2017

Submissions for the next Bulletin must be received by **1 December 2017**. 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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Cover photo: The Norwich Shroud, image courtesy of Emmet Jackson

# ASTENE NEWS AND EVENTS

## ASTENE Conference Report

This year's conference at the University of East Anglia in Norwich took the locally born Victorian traveller, Harriet Martineau, as its thematic role model. Martineau, who is often cited as the world's first sociologist, developed her interest in society and social beings during her trip to Egypt in 1845. Martineau was a traveller who embodied many of the qualities that represent the ASTENE's widespread interest in travellers to Egypt and the Near East. She was a woman driven by curiosity, a strong intellect, a sense of justice and reform, and perhaps most importantly, the willingness to travel in open dialogue with the country she visited. The papers from this year's conference represented an array of those qualities – and so much more – by providing a unique overview of the exciting developments in this field of study.

One of the most enlightening aspects from a full-to-the-brim three-day programme were the ways in which the papers expanded and reflected on ideas of what or who a traveller could be. Mladen Tomorad told us the story of George Huz, a Croatian man, who was captured as a slave and therefore forced to travel as a prisoner and Ottoman soldier. Sarah Shepherd also considered the idea of travellers as soldiers and the altered experience of Egypt being a theatre of war. Tessa Baber played with ideas of class and gender in her paper in the perceptions of 'tourist' versus 'traveller', utilising travel diaries held in the Thomas Cook Archive.

Travellers, of course, acted not only in the interest of their own experience but also in service to a number of professions and institutions. They were scientists, such as George Maw, who compiled his sumptuous crocus monograph while travelling through the Ottoman lands, and members of the Royal Geographic Society, who David Kennedy explored in his paper on the 1872 BAAS expedition, not forgetting artist travellers including Thomas Hope, Frederic Leighton, John Frederick Lewis and Jean-Baptiste Vanmour.

The strength of the research into visual culture of the Near East was apparent throughout the conference, and also in the trip to Norwich Art Gallery where

members were introduced to watercolours by the Rev Edward T Daniell. John Frederick Lewis was once again a predominant interest for delegates. Charles Newton's papers on Lewis' strength as an animalier opened up new avenues to think about the human-animal relationships in his paintings and as Charles put it – a way to consider a Lewis' canvas as a space where there is "an equity of beings". Briony Llewelyn's paper on one of the most enigmatic Lewis paintings – *A Frank Encampment* – brought to light new archival evidence and a fresh understanding of how Lewis negotiated with patrons and the nature of his commissioned work. My own paper on Frederic Leighton's 1867 trip to Bursa focused on the transcultural nature of artist's trips to Egypt – highlighting the importance of examining what these travellers brought back with them. Leighton purchased Iznik tiles and Ottoman textiles in great quantities after seeing the Green Mosque and Yeni Kaplica hammam in Bursa in order to furnish his London home. This theme emerged again in Lobke Geurs' paper on Thomas Hope and his hybrid Oriental-Regency interiors at his home in Duchess Street, London. Caroline Williams also brought out this idea in her examination of Cairo as an 'artefact' using an array of visual examples to question an artist's memory of the city as opposed to its living reality.

Once again, evoking Harriet Martineau, female travellers were a frequent topic of discussion during the conference proceedings. A panel on Day 2 entitled 'Women Travellers' introduced women who had a range of different experiences. Emmet Jackson's paper covered five fascinating Irish women, all of whom deserve a stand-alone paper, but his insight revealed the political tensions between these women's national identities and their self-perception as 'British' travellers. Sarah Ketchley's work on the patron Emma B. Andrews was revelatory in its application of digital humanities on to the field of Egyptology. Ketchley has digitised Andrew's diaries and is creating a database from the text of people and places central to travellers in the early twentieth-century. The discussion following this paper revealed a wealth of previously unknown connections between Andrews and other travellers and the future of this project seems exponential and vital to the next step in ASTENE research.

This year's conference was a testament to the depth and breadth of research amongst the ASTENE community. As a bursary holder for this year's conference and current postgraduate student, I am immensely grateful to ASTENE and the committee for the opportunity to share and develop my own research and in the process, gain a whole host of knowledge which will prove so important to my doctoral work. No two papers were the same and the discussions that arose offered delegates new and novel ways with which to consider travel to Egypt and the Near East. This scholarly community that is ASTENE thrives on sharing knowledge, discussing ideas, and revelling together in new discoveries. As Harriet Martineau so neatly put it, 'Readers are plentiful; thinkers are rare.'

*Madeline Boden*

PhD Candidate, History of Art, University of York



The Vintage Bus, photo by Hélène Virenque

## Norwich Castle and Art Gallery visit, Monday July 20th

The day after the ASTENE conference, members were treated to a trip to Norwich Castle and Art Gallery, and How Hill with a visit to wherry 'The Hathor' with John Ash, Chairman of the Wherry Trust

At Norwich Castle the group received a lecture from Faye Kalloniatis, on the Colman family (of Mustard fame), their visit to Egypt, and their collection of ancient Egyptian artefacts that now reside at the museum. This was followed by a second talk from Charlotte Crawley about the Reverend Edward T. Daniell and his watercolours of the journey he made in 1840 to Egypt and Palestine. Faye gave a lively and

engaging talk on the Colmans and we also learnt that the museum is in the final stages of publishing their Egyptian catalogue. Charlotte's talk presented the wonderful Daniell watercolours with their untypical perspectives which led to an energetic discussion about the complex compositions of many of the images.



Charlotte Crawley, photo by Emmet Jackson



Daniell Watercolours, photo by Emmet Jackson

Following the talks, the group had an opportunity to experience at first hand some of the objects discussed during both talks. In relation to the Colman talk Faye gave the group a very special opportunity to view the 'Norwich Shroud' in a private setting. On viewing the shroud the group was rendered speechless. Faye gave an introduction to the object, its provenance, historical importance and restoration. The shroud fragment was acquired in Egypt in February 1897 by Jeremiah Colman, the manufacturer of Colman's Mustard. When donated, the shroud was in a bad state of conservation having been crumpled into a pile. Following a

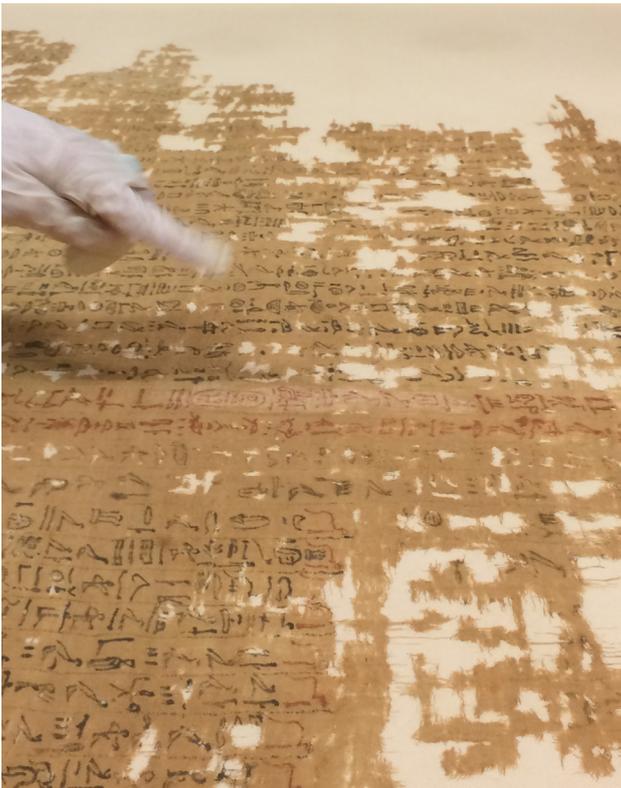
joint conservation project between Norwich Castle Museum and the British Museum the textile was painstakingly unrolled, conserved and fixed to a large display board. Painted in black and red, the texts on the shroud are spells from the book of the dead with one special area of text being placed over a base of gypsum. The textile is rare, dating from the early Eighteenth Dynasty most likely from the Theban necropolis. The shroud's owner was a lady called *Ipu* and sister fragments of her shroud were subsequently found at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo. After Faye's introduction, there was a barrage of questions until finally the crowd had to reluctantly leave.

The group was then given the opportunity to view the Daniell watercolours. This reinvigorated debate about the unique perspective and location of some of the watercolours, especially the view of inside St. Catherine's monastery. After a hurried visit to the Museum gift shop the crowd returned to the vintage bus to continue their trip, looking much like a group of characters from an Agatha Christie TV adaptation.

*Emmet Jackson*

**Bibliography**

Monique Pullan, Janet Ambers, Caroline Cartwright, John H. Taylor and Faye Kalloniatis. (2012). The Norwich shroud: conservation and investigation of a rare Eighteenth Dynasty shroud. *The British Museum Technical Research Bulletin*. Vol. 6 pp 13-24.



'The Norwich Shroud', introduced by Faye Kalloniatis, photo by Emmet Jackson

The Colman Family wherry and its Egyptian interiors, photos by H el ene Virenque

## **ASTENE event at the Royal Geographical Society**

### **'Travellers to the Near East and the Great War'**

5 March 2018, 9.00 - 4:00pm

Royal Geographical Society, Kensington Gore,  
London

Fee: £40 (including sandwich lunch)

Professor Malcolm Wagstaff is organising this event on behalf of ASTENE. This fascinating day-long seminar will include presentations on some significant British travellers to the Near East in the years before the First World War, their travels and their roles during and immediately after the war. Dr. Robert Fleming will speak on 'The First World War, Philby and the Fate of the Near East'; Dr. Mark

Jackson will speak on Gertrude Bell's experience as an archaeologist in her later intelligence and political work; Dr. John Fisher will talk about trailing John Childs across Asia Minor; and Professor Malcolm Wagstaff will talk on 'David Hogarth: From Wandering Scholar to Acting Director of the Arab Bureau'. Relevant manuscripts and published material from the RGS archives will be arranged in the Foyle Reading Room.

Booking for this event should be made through Eventbrite at the following link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/travellers-to-the-near-east-and-the-great-war-tickets-37386983474>

For further information please email Professor Wagstaff at [jm\\_wagstaff@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jm_wagstaff@yahoo.co.uk)

## **OTHER NEWS AND EVENTS**

### **Exhibitions and Talks**

Hélène Virenque has helpfully compiled a list of exhibitions in Paris that might be of interest to visiting ASTENE members:

#### **Institut du Monde arabe**

“Chrétiens d’Orient”

26 Sept 2017 - 14 Jan 2018

[www.imarabe.org/fr/expositions/chretiens-d-orient](http://www.imarabe.org/fr/expositions/chretiens-d-orient)

#### **Musée du Louvre**

“Eugène Delacroix”

28 Mar 2018 - 23 Jul 2018

[www.louvre.fr/expositions/eugene-delacroix-1798-1863](http://www.louvre.fr/expositions/eugene-delacroix-1798-1863)

#### **Musée du Louvre**

Sept 2018 - Jan 2019

“Le royaume de Napata : fouilles archéologiques au Soudan”

Other nice places to visit or to have a cup of tea in Paris:

- Musée Delacroix: [musee-delacroix.fr/en/](http://musee-delacroix.fr/en/)
- Musée de la Vie romantique: [museevieromantique.paris.fr/en](http://museevieromantique.paris.fr/en)
- Mosquée de Paris' café : [www.restaurantauxportesdelorient.com/index.html](http://www.restaurantauxportesdelorient.com/index.html)
- Cinéma le Louxor's café: [www.cinemalouxor.fr/bar-du-louxor/](http://www.cinemalouxor.fr/bar-du-louxor/)

### **Turkish Tulips Exhibition**

July 29, 2017 – November 5, 2017, 10am–5pm daily

The Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, Co Durham  
DL12 8NP, UK

Entry £14 (concessions £12, students £6)

This exhibition delves into the complex and paradoxical history behind this iconic flower. Follow the trail of tulips through the Museum this summer for an enlightening insight into our relationship with Europe and the Middle East brought to you through the eyes of over 30 contemporary artists including Damien Hirst, Cornelia Parker, Gavin Turk and Sir Peter Blake.

This is also a story about migration and about how much is owed to the East – a land steeped in culture, mathematics, science and philosophy – but now the war-torn lands from whence the refugees flee. It is also a romantic story set in 17th-century Europe, a fable about social inequality and extravagance. As well it is an allegory of aesthetics and science – about beauty and obsession.

The Bowes Museum is located in the historic town of Barnard Castle in Teesdale. The magnificent building houses internationally significant collections of fine and decorative arts.

## **BFSA visit to the Palestine Exploration Fund**

Tuesday, November 14th 2017, 2:00 – 4:00 pm.

There are still a couple of places left for the Special BFSA Visit to the Palestine Exploration Fund. Executive Director and Curator Felicity Cobbing will give a tour of the PEF's historic premises in Hinde Mews, London W1, with an introduction to the collections and the opportunity to see at first hand some objects with an 'Arabian' connection.

The cost of the visit is £10 per person, payable on the day, and includes a donation to the PEF. Please email [contact@thebfsa.org](mailto:contact@thebfsa.org) to reserve your place.

## **BFSA Lecture Series**

### **'The Travels and Plant Collections of Aucher-Éloy, Oman, 1838'**

February 15th 2018, 5:45 pm

MBI Al Jaber Building, London Middle East Institute

Dr. Shahina Ghazanfar, Honorary Research Associate, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, will talk about Pierre Martin Remi Aucher-Éloy, who was the first person to make a comprehensive collection of plants from northern Oman (then called the Immatat of Muscat). He collected mainly in the northern mountains during March and April 1838. These, and his other collections from the Orient, provided a major source of material for the eminent Swiss botanist, naturalist and explorer, Pierre Edmund Boissier. Several plants which Aucher collected in Oman were new to science. Boissier's voluminous work, *Flora Orientalis*, remains to this day a standard reference on floras of Southwest Asia. Aucher's plant collections from Oman are present in herbaria at the Laboratoire de Phanerogamie, Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, Conservatoire et Jardin Botaniques, Genève and some at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, UK. His personal field book is preserved in Paris, and his note-book *Relations de Voyages en Orient de 1830 à 1838* was published posthumously in 1843.

The lecture is free, but please email [info@mbifoundation.com](mailto:info@mbifoundation.com) to reserve a place.

## **Call for Papers**

### **The British Foundation for the Study of Arabia (BFSA) Call for Papers**

The BFSA publishes an annual bulletin (formerly the Bulletin of the Society for Arabian Studies) in the spring giving information on current research, publications, field work, conferences and events in the

Arabian peninsula in fields ranging from archaeology and history to natural history and the environment. It also carries feature articles and book reviews.

Submissions for short notices of ongoing or forthcoming research are welcome, as is information on interesting conferences, exhibitions and events relating to the study of the Arabian Peninsula.

Notices are intended to raise awareness of the range and scope of current research in the Arabian Peninsula. They should be short abstracts or summaries, between 300-700 words, followed by bibliographic references to recent publications and links to relevant department or project websites. Photographs would be welcome, too, and should be at least 300 dpi; please indicate the copyright in each case. Research notices published by the Bulletin constitute an excellent means to raise the profile of your research amongst peers and provides a platform for cross-disciplinary collaboration. Email your contribution to [current\\_research@thebfsa.org](mailto:current_research@thebfsa.org).

## **BRISMES 2018: Call for Papers**

### **"New Approaches to Studying the Middle East"**

Deadline: December 1st, 2017

25-28 June 2018 | Department of Middle Eastern Studies, King's College London

The British Society for Middle Eastern Studies and the Department of Middle Eastern Studies at King's College London invite proposals for the 2018 Annual BRISMES Conference on the theme of 'New Approaches to Studying the Middle East'.

BRISMES 2018 offers an opportunity to take stock of, celebrate and foster innovations in the field. We encourage proposals that take up the theme in original ways, exploring not only new approaches, but bringing different new approaches into dialogue with each other, including across disciplines and across regions. We similarly encourage proposals reflecting on the ethical and political challenges facing research in and on the Middle East.

In addition, we warmly invite proposals on any topic related to Middle Eastern Studies, regardless of their fit with the conference's main theme. Our aim is to foster dialogue between scholars studying the Middle East and North Africa from all disciplines.

Proposals for complete panel sessions are particularly welcome. See [www.brismes.ac.uk/conference/call-for-papers/](http://www.brismes.ac.uk/conference/call-for-papers/) for more details.

**2018 Joint Conference of the Hawai'i, California and Northwest Affiliates of the World History Association: Call for Papers**

**“Travels and Travelers in World History and World History in the Digital Age”**

A Conference on World History at Seattle University, Seattle, Washington, February 16-18, 2018

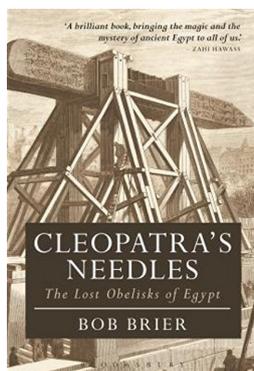
The California, Hawaii and Northwest Affiliates of the World History Association are pleased to announce their Sixth Joint Conference to be held February 16-18th, 2018 at Seattle University in Seattle, Washington. Seattle University is located in the heart of the city; just up the hill from the downtown district with close access to the Pike's Place Market, the Space Needle and the beautiful waters of Puget Sound. Come join us for an exciting program featuring new research and pedagogy in World History. The conference will highlight two

themes: Travel and Travelers in World History; and World History in the Digital Age. Papers and panels (typically three presenters) on any topic related to world history are welcome. We encourage papers and panels that address these two themes. Individual papers will be accepted, and conference organizers encourage panels as well.

To submit an individual paper proposal, please send a 250-word abstract of the paper with a title, and a short CV (1-2 pages) including contact information. A panel proposal should include individual paper proposals (250-word abstracts with titles and 1-2 page CVs including contact information), a title and short abstract (100 words or less) for the panel, and contact information for the panel organizer/chair. The chair can be one of the paper presenters in the panel. The deadline for paper proposals is November 1st 2017 Send paper and panel proposals to Dr. Tom Taylor, [twytaylor@seattleu.edu](mailto:twytaylor@seattleu.edu).

## BOOKS AND REVIEWS

**Brier, Bob, *Cleopatra's Needles: The Lost Obelisks of Egypt*, Bloomsbury Academic, 2016, 248pp, ISBN 9781474242936, £19.99.**



In his latest work Dr. Bob Brier, a Senior Research Fellow at Long Island University (USA) and well-known Egyptologist, mummy-specialist and successful author of several best-sellers including: *Egyptian Mummies: Unraveling the Secrets of an Ancient Art* (1996), *The Murder of Tutankhamen* (1998) and *Egyptomania: Our Three Thousand Year Obsession with the Land of the Pharaohs* (2013) presents a topic which has long captivated the public imagination: the removal of Egypt's ancient obelisks to the Western World.

Brier focuses on the removal of Egypt's most famous obelisks 'Cleopatra's needles' which were transported to London, Paris and New York between the years 1831 and 1881. His book presents an up-to-date history of the needles, building on both modern sources such as Labib Habachi's *Obelisks of Egypt* (1977) and *Obelisk: A History* (2009) by Brian A. Curran et. al. as well as those provided by early travellers, scholars and Egyptologists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, such as: *Cleopatra's Needle: With Brief Notes On Egypt and Egyptian Obelisks* (1877) by Erasmus Wilson, *Cleopatra's Needle: A History of the London Obelisk with an Exposition of the Hieroglyphics* (1883) by James King, *The New York Obelisk, Cleopatra's Needle: With a Preliminary Sketch of the History, Erection, Uses, and Signification* (1891) by Charles Edward Moldenke, *Cleopatra's Needle: An Account of the Negotiations Leading Up to Its Gift to The City Of New York By The Khedive of Egypt* (1908) by Elbert Eli Farman and E. A. Wallis Budge's *Cleopatra's Needles and Other Egyptian Obelisks* (1926).

Appearing at a time when obelisks are re-captivating the public imagination, and coinciding with publications by authors including Dorothy U. Seyler's *The Obelisk and the Englishman: The*

*Pioneering Discoveries of Egyptologist William Bankes* (2015) and John S. Gordon's *Washington's Monument: And the Fascinating History of the Obelisk* (2016), Brier's work provides a useful overview of the history and significance of these important monuments.

Consisting of seven chapters, the book begins by providing some background for the reader. The first chapter provides information on how ancient Egyptian obelisks were quarried, carved, and their relationship to other great monuments (both architectural and sculptural) of Egypt's ancient past. Here, Brier makes mention of Reginald (Rex) Engelbach's (1888-1946) early excavations of the Aswan quarry in the 1920s (the site of the famed 'unfinished obelisk'), and his interpretations of how these colossal monoliths were created, reminding the reader of the part early travellers and proto-Egyptologists played in the discovery, study and exposition of Egypt's ancient wonders.

The subsequent chapters offer an account of the earliest fascination with and removal of obelisks by visitors to Egypt; Rome's early removal of these colossal monuments during the reign of Emperor Augustus (27 BC-AD 14) and their later rediscovery and conservation by the papacy in the 16th century AD), establishing that the Western World's desire to collect these impressive monuments originated well before the Victorian era.

The first obelisk to leave Egypt (c. AD 10) now stands in the Piazza del Popolo in Rome. Commissioned by Seti I and his son Ramesses II and originally erected at Heliopolis, it was transported via a special ship to Rome where it was installed with an inscription which claimed the monument as a war trophy for the emperor Augustus. A second obelisk from Heliopolis, one of the last obelisks ever to be commissioned by an Egyptian pharaoh (Psamtek II) was also brought by the emperor to Rome. Erected in the Campo Marzio, it served both as a war trophy and rather interestingly, a sundial, and remained in place until the 11th century AD: making it the longest standing of all the Roman obelisks. After falling into disrepair and becoming lost to the world around them, both obelisks were later rediscovered in the 16th century and the first was re-erected by Pope Sixtus V in 1587. The Campo Marzio obelisk would however not be restored until 1647, when it was rediscovered for the second time by workmen extending the Acqua Vergine. At this time, famed

polymath Athanasius Kircher (1602-1680), who was fascinated with ancient languages and who had recently published his 'Lingua Aegyptiaca Restituta' (1643) in which he claimed (erroneously) to have deciphered Egyptian hieroglyphics, was called upon to examine it and subsequently published the earliest known work on obelisks: *Obeliscus Pamphilius* (1650). Kircher was recalled to excavate the obelisk in 1666 but it remained in its prone position until 1748, when it was re-erected by Pope Benedict XIV. Today, a plaque above No. 3 Piazza del Parlamento commemorates the place in which it once stood.

Brier goes on to describe Rome's other obelisks: (Esquiline, Quirinale, Capitoline, Piazza della Rotonda, Trinità dei Monti, Monti Picino, Viale delle Terme, Bernini's elephant obelisk and Bernini's fountain), each of which comes with its own fascinating story, reminding us that these monuments inspired a great many people after they left Egypt, and aided us to develop our knowledge of the fascinating and ancient civilisation which once inhabited the land of the Nile.

Brier spends the remainder of the book focusing on the most well-known obelisks, the famed 'Cleopatra's Needles,' which he considers in chronological order relative to the date in which they arrived in the Western world.

The first obelisk to leave Egypt, 'Napoleon's Obelisk' or 'l'iguille de Cléopâtre,' arrived in Paris in 1831. Originally erected by Rameses II (c. 1303-1213 BC) outside Luxor Temple at Thebes (where its twin stands to this day), the Paris needle was presented as a gift to France in 1826 by Pasha Muhammad Ali (1769-1849) and in 1833, King Louis-Philippe I (1773-1850) had the 'Luxor obelisk' erected close to the spot where Louis XVI (1754-1793) and Marie Antoinette (1755-1793) had been guillotined in 1793.

In this chapter, Brier reminds us that the savants of the Napoleonic Expedition (1798-1801) were the first to conduct a scientific study of Egypt's obelisks, the results of which were published in the *Description de l'Égypte*. Brier also provides information on the negotiations made over the acquisition of the obelisks acquired by both America and Europe; surprisingly, it appears as though initially Egypt found it difficult to gift her obelisks. The British were first offered one in 1811, but had little interest in acquiring one at the time. The Pasha renewed his offer of one of the 'Alexandrian' obelisks, originally erected at Heliopolis by Thutmose III (1481-1425 BC), in 1820 and

again 1831 but the estimated transportation cost of £15,000 appears to have continued to dissuade them. The French on the other hand, immediately accepted an Alexandrian obelisk when offered one, but on the advice of Jean-François Champollion (1790-1832), bartered instead for one of the Luxor pair, as having observed them during his recent travels (1828-29), Champollion deemed these to be in superior condition. In 1829, the French Naval Minister, Baron d'Haussez (1778-1854) wrote to Pasha Ali to request one of the Luxor obelisks and a ship (fittingly named *The Luxor*) was designed for its transportation to France.

The account published by Apollinaire Lebas (1797-1873), the architect responsible for bringing the obelisk to France, along with the account published by Lieutenant Léon de Joannis (1803-1868) (second-in-command aboard the *Luxor*), reveals that this was far from a straightforward operation. Hampered by difficulties with transportation logistics, the disappointing discovery of an unexpected crack in the obelisk and the workmen being struck down with cholera, it would take the needle five years to reach Paris. However, on account of this delay, Lebas and Joannis were able to spend time exploring their surroundings, making trips to Abu Simbel (where Lebas made measurements of the colossi) and other sites rarely visited by travellers at the time, such as Dandur in Nubia. These additional nuggets of information on contemporary figures and their involvement with the acquisition and removal of these obelisks from Egypt, are a delight for those with an interest in early travel in the East.

In 1833, when the needle finally reached Paris, Lebas, with the help of 120 men, erected 'L'aiguille de Cléopâtre' in la Place de la Concorde in front of 200,000 spectators. Its twin remained in Luxor, whilst the Alexandrian needles (also a pair) were later to arrive in London and New York. The first of these needles was presented as a diplomatic gift to the British in the early 1800s. However, it would remain in Egypt for almost sixty years, having been deemed too difficult (and far too expensive) to transport to England. In time, a group of benefactors and engineers were able to put together an expedition to bring the obelisk to London. Funded by William James Erasmus Wilson (1809-1884), James Edward Alexander (1803-1885) would prove to be the driving force behind getting the obelisk to England, though it was Waynman Dixon (1844-1930) who was responsible for the

physical operation of transporting the needle from Alexandria to London.

ASTENE members may recall a fascinating paper presented by Dr. Ian Pearce at the 2011 biennial conference in Oxford: 'Waynman Dixon: In the Shadow of the Needle' (which was subsequently published in *Souvenirs and New Ideas: Travel and Collecting in Egypt and the Near East* (2013)). Pearce's paper detailed Dixon's involvement in the removal of the London Needle to the banks of the Thames which was transported on a specially-designed floating cylindrical barge named *Cleopatra*, which was towed to England by the British steamer, *Olga*. Although as Pearce has stated, this remarkable journey has already been described in the past by authors such as Noakes (1962) and Hayward (1978) (both books entitled: '*Cleopatra's Needles*'), Pearce offers additional insight into the tale of how this needle made it to British shores, through making use of archival information on Dixon's time spent in Egypt (e.g. in the Metropolitan archives: Q/CN/8&9). As Pearce mentions, Brier is himself in the possession of 27 letters written by Dixon to his family in England between 1872 and 1876 (Dixon, W. 1872-76) (which Brier has previously discussed in *ASTENE Bulletin* 47 (2012: 15-16)). In his chapter on the London needle, Brier promotes Dixon's involvement (with the aid of his brother John) in the successful removal of the needle out of Egypt and details the logistics of its transportation to England. It is fitting that these men and those who took part in the operation, are discussed in detail here, for as Brier puts it: 'the Dixon brothers would bring Britannia her obelisk,' and the tale is a fascinating one.

Just like the French, the British also encountered difficulty in transporting their needle back to England, but despite the arduous and perilous journey which beset the *Olga* and *Cleopatra*, including a hurricane and a capsizing, it finally came to rest on London's Victoria Embankment in 1877. Now that these two nations had successfully transported and installed these majestic monoliths, it appears that the Americans were spurred on in the acquisition of a needle for themselves.

In the same year that its twin reached London, the remaining Alexandrian needle was secured for America by the United States Consul-General, Elbert Eli Farman (1831-1911). The New York obelisk (which Brier charmingly deems 'the oldest skyscraper in New York') was the last needle to reach Western shores, and was erected in Central Park in 1881.

Although the Americans appear to have made no attempt to acquire a needle until London received hers in 1877, they had in fact been offered an obelisk as early as 1869. During the unveiling of the newly completed Suez Canal, William H. Hurlbert (1827-1895) (editor of *The New York World*) was approached by the Pasha and offered the monolith in what appears to have been some attempt by the Egyptian government to try and recoup some of the costs of its recent construction.

Hurlbert had been informed at this time by John Dixon that he was willing to transport the remaining Alexandrian obelisk to the U.S. for £15,000. Wealthy American philanthropist William Vanderbilt (1821-1885) offered to foot the entire bill and he contacted Dixon to arrange the delivery of the obelisk. The newly appointed consul Farman was contacted about acquiring the promised obelisk for the Americans but he soon discovered that no such offer existed 'officially.' Undeterred, he began the process of negotiating the acquisition of one of Egypt's five remaining large obelisks himself. In 1878, Farman officially propositioned the Khedive over the possibility of obtaining an obelisk for New York, arguing that as a larger and more populated city than London or Paris, such a gift would benefit Egypt's tourist industry by encouraging tourists to visit the land of the Nile.

Despite changing attitudes at the time towards the acquisition of ancient artefacts (the Khedive warned Farman that the locals had already fiercely protested against the removal of the obelisk's twin to London and figures such as Heinrich Brugsch (1827-1894) and Auguste Mariette (1821-1881), were opposed to the removal of any more significant artefacts from Egypt), in 1879 the remaining Alexandrian obelisk was offered to the Americans and arrangements were made for its transportation to New York. Dixon, following his difficult experience of transporting the London needle, had increased his fee for the operation and so a new 'man for the job' was sought. Henry Honeychurch Gorringer (1841-1885), a lieutenant-commander in the American navy, answered an advertisement in the June edition of *The World*, asking for a brave volunteer to retrieve the obelisk using Vanderbilt's funds. He was chosen to remove the obelisk from Egypt, and sail it across the Atlantic (no mean feat) to New York. Gorringer would make use of a self-powered ship this time, the *Dessoug*, and took inspiration from Count Caraburi (who transported a colossal bronze statue of Peter the Great (1672-1725) across mainland Russia)

for its journey from the New York's docklands to Central Park.

Following a long sea-journey and after overcoming the difficulties of transporting it over dry land, the obelisk was erected using a specially designed device onto the foundation pedestal, which had previously been unveiled during a ceremony presided over by the Masons on the 9th October 1880 (attended by some 30,000 spectators and more than 8500 masons). On 22nd February 1881, an official welcoming ceremony for the needle was held at the Grand Reception Gallery of the newly-built Metropolitan Museum of Art and in excess of 20,000 people attended the event. Unfortunately, Gorringer did not have long to enjoy his achievement as he died following a fall only a few years later; his eulogy is forever immortalised on the north face of the obelisk's pedestal.

Although these tales about the needles and the figures responsible for their removal from Egypt are fascinating, Brier's postscript reminds us that it is often the case that these important artefacts taken from Egypt and which now stand in cities around the world are not fully appreciated by many of us today. This book goes some way towards reigniting the original enthusiasm and appreciation felt for these rare and unique monuments.

Accompanied by numerous illustrations throughout, this book is a pleasure to read, but a minor quibble is the use of sensationalist wording throughout, such as the emphasis on 'mania' which cannot always be substantiated. To use the term in the context of the obsession which the Western World seemingly had with Egypt and her ancient dead in the Victorian period ('Egyptomania' and 'mummymania' respectively) seems appropriate, however, to claim that the Old Kingdom saw a period of 'pyramidmania,' or indeed, that the removal of obelisks from Egypt in general can be deemed worthy of the label 'obeliskmania,' is perhaps a bit of an exaggeration. Of course, this might be an attempt to captivate the reader's interest, but at times it feels like an over-endorsement of a topic which is already inherently fascinating.

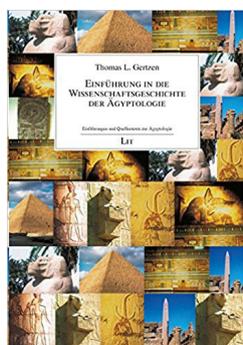
That said, Brier's account of the needles is well informed and is a successful general interest work on a fascinating subject, providing perhaps for the first time a well-written and approachable introduction to the world of the obelisk. This work illuminates the captivating tale of the 'second life'

of these monuments, which though 'lost' to the ancient land from whence they came, have fostered an enthusiasm for Egypt's ancient past in their new installations in London, Paris and New York.

For ASTENE members with an interest in the acquisition and removal of these important remnants of Egypt's ancient past to the Western world, this book provides a new insight into the history of these monuments and adds an additional measure of wonder to the remarkable modern cities in which they now stand.

*Tessa Baber*

**Gertzen, Thomas L., *Einführung in die Wissenschaftsgeschichte der Ägyptologie*, Lit Verlag, Berlin, 2017, ISBN 978-3-643-13650-3, pp. xii+433.**



The Lit Verlag series 'Einführungen und Quellentexten zur Ägyptologie' (Introductions and sourcebooks to Egyptology) has so far included mainly introductions and up-to-date sourcebooks to different areas of interest within Egyptology, such as Egyptian literature, or Demotic studies.

With the reviewed title by Thomas Gertzen, the series adds to the growing number of publications that address the history of Egyptology. Despite differences in detail, there is an increasing tendency in international Egyptology to reflect on the history of an endeavour concerned with a concentrated effort to gather and present knowledge on an ancient civilization, and on a subsequent application of that knowledge in its modern context. Gertzen reasonably includes Egyptology as one of disciplines of scholarship under the aegis of the history of science (Wissenschaftsgeschichte). Anglophone readers will notice slight differences in terminology used in German and in English, differences the author himself is aware of (Wissenschaft includes both sciences and humanities, for instance).

As will be shown further, Thomas Gertzen often focuses on the German-speaking areas and their history, but his approach and sources are of a more general interest. He does not evade difficult questions, beginning with 'Why disciplinary history?', noting that the history of Oriental studies (including Egyptology) long stood for a somewhat easy option in one's scholarly career, which it would have been, had it consisted only of chronologies and brief biographies. Approached with consistency, this area of study has been anything but. If the ability to reflect on one's professional formation, approach, goals and context is a sign of a certain maturity of the subject; one might suggest that Egyptology has just grown old enough to be capable of this endeavour. Although Egyptology addressed its own conceptualization and practices previously, it was often a selective effort, whereas recent approaches are more comprehensive.

The volume is divided into two main parts. The first one is concerned with German-speaking Egyptology as a case study, with excursions into international Egyptology, and with an enclosed outline of a methodology and of different approaches to disciplinary history, from biographies to institutional history. Sources - primary in archives and editions, and secondary in publications, are also outlined. The author has not omitted oral history and autobiography. In the first part, the author also presents a number salient features of Egyptology and its history, including, but not limited to:

- The peculiar character of the discipline that does not possess a specific or exclusive system of methods, but rather a geographical and chronological agenda.
- Periodisation of Egyptology is often organised not on the basis of milestones in Egyptological paradigms (although this approach has been applied as well), but in connection with political history (pp. 20-21).
- Despite a strong connection to national and nationalist histories, the international character of Egyptological scholarship needs to be addressed (p. 25).
- The history of Egyptology may be taken further into the past, although the conventional view starts with J.-F. Champollion as the decipherer of hieroglyphs. One might, however, take the view closer to Umberto Eco and tackle the beginnings of Egyptology with Athanasius Kircher and his Baroque coevals, or indeed already with their Renaissance predecessors.

- Another good point is a recognition of other contributors to the decipherment of hieroglyphs, besides Champollion.

A latter part of this first portion of the volume is dedicated to an instructive introduction in 'how to do' disciplinary history. However, a large part of this is in fact a standard introduction for students of modern history. Listing of a general typology of primary and secondary sources, modern palaeography, and their respective application is, or should be, a standard part of a historian's training. No doubt, students of archaeological and philological ilk will benefit from the instant introduction to writing of modern history, whereas those trained in the historian's craft will use it as a brief cheat sheet.

There is a large introduction to the use of archives and archival material, focused on continental archival practices and it has the same advantages and hitches as the above introduction to history writing; that is, it is very useful to those who did not include a historian's training in their curriculum, and a rather brief vade mecum for those who did. The attention paid to oral history methods and their practical application is particularly helpful, though.

By and large, Gertzen presents a good case for a consistent history of the discipline and its promotion as part of a professional formation of students of Egyptology. History of any research provides a large area of interest; beyond an overview of discoveries or major publications, it answers details of establishing and practicing Egyptology in context. Older publications may be read with more attention and better understanding, opines the author, if they are read in an appropriate perspective ranging from professional formation of individuals to shared paradigms of the discipline. This is certainly so. What is not necessarily the case is an ability of young practitioners of the discipline, also advocated by Gertzen, to be more astute observers of its history and development than experienced researchers (p. vi). Beginners are often informed by a momentary bias of a preferred methodology, not to mention the understandable lack of experience. That being said, it is certainly often the case that a well-researched dissertation may be a great resource listing interesting primary and secondary material, from archives to forgotten early publications. Also, the author should be commended for his plea to give a voice in the debate to different generations within the discipline. It might be advocated that students

and acolytes become less prone to manipulability by a selective methodological approach, if they experience respect for and openness to their opinion, with a resulting debate being hopefully less-biased and less prone to easily politicised outcomes. Even so, though, the presence of politics in historiography is largely inevitable, and 'many well-established historical specialisms today have their origin in an explicit political need: one thinks of labour history, women's history and African history' (John Tosh, *In the Pursuit of History*, 2009, p. 22).

Generally, the first part of Gertzen's book is a well-rounded introduction into history writing of a discipline. Gertzen does a useful work for students and indeed other practitioners in history of science, showing its complexity, alongside some of its latest developments.

The second part of the book is a collection of resources that are of utmost importance for different aspects of disciplinary history, beginning with full texts of Egyptian antiquities legislature. These are followed by excerpts from major publications that formed Egyptological methodologies in different contexts.

Finally, the author includes an exposé on the 'Steindorff-liste', a list of Egyptologists included in a letter by Georg Steindorff to J. A. Wilson concerned with German Egyptologists, and naming and shaming or exonerating them according to their perceived relation to the Nazi regime. A balanced assessment of perspectives on current study of the list is enclosed.

Generally, there is much to recommend this publication as a reminder of and a concise introduction to history of Egyptology. However, the book is relatively reliant on a social constructionist method, and does not always balance this approach sufficiently. Ancient Egypt has not been invented by Egyptologists, though sure enough it is read, observed, classified, and interpreted by them.

One may want to recall on this occasion Bruno Latour, who remarked that '*the danger would no longer be coming from an excessive confidence in ideological arguments posturing as matters of fact—as we have learned to combat so efficiently in the past—but from an excessive distrust of good matters of fact disguised as bad ideological biases*' and furthermore '*a certain form of critical spirit has sent us down the wrong path, encouraging us to fight the*

*wrong enemies and, worst of all, to be considered as friends by the wrong sort of allies because of a little mistake in the definition of its main target. The question was never to get away from facts but closer to them, not fighting empiricism but, on the contrary, renewing empiricism.* (“Why Has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern”, *Critical Inquiry* 30, 2004, p. 227 and 231, emphasis by Latour).

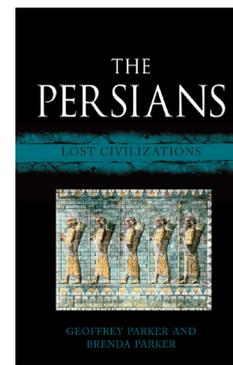
The history of Egyptology runs just this risk at present, and needs to get back to the facts and their context in all its complexity, preferably not in service of one research paradigm - this time one research paradigm of our own contemporary making. Gertzen, it must be recognized, tries to avoid this risk earnestly, despite the above caveat. There are, for instance, hints that the author was aware of the constructionist pitfalls, especially of Said's Orientalism and post-Orientalist approaches (e.g. on pp. 165-167), and a detailed debate on the character of complicity with, versus survival in totalitarian or authoritarian regimes (passim, esp. pp. 178-187).

Summing up, the positives of the book include its well-structured contents, informative introduction to history writing for non-historians, and an excellent selection of sources that are sometimes glossed over in the histories of the discipline. It is a book to be recommended to students, but its appeal is certainly wider - it is a good outline of major happenings in Egyptology, and especially a good starting point for more complex researches, especially in continental Oriental studies. Considering the ASTENE audience, the volume will be a welcome helper to those interested in travellers connected with Egypt and Egyptology.

The format is handy, and quality of the paperback decent. The quality of facsimiles and other illustrations is understandably limited by the offset-type print, but the materials are well legible and achieve their purpose. There is one technical drawback - a sourcebook of this type would definitely benefit from an index, which has not been included.

*Hana Navratilova*

**Parker, Geoffrey and Parker, Brenda, *The Persians* – lost civilizations, Reaktion Books, London 2017, pp 209, black and white and coloured illustrations and some maps and charts, ISBN 978-1-78023-650-6, £15.**



Persia, now Iran, has always attracted interest among neighbours in the Middle Eastern, Mediterranean and European lands and increasingly beyond to the Americas and Pacific regions, deservedly for its impressive and complex history, and rich cultural achievements especially in literature, architecture and visual arts. This interest has generated a constant stream of publications to cater to all tastes – authoritative surveys of history, specialist monographs, archaeological reports, topographical gazetteers, lavishly illustrated coffee table books, travel guides and general handbooks such as the work under review. This book seems to be aimed at the general reader who is able to visit Iran on expensive tours following well-established itineraries of such highlights as Persepolis, Shiraz, Isfahan and Tehran for the spectacular Crown Jewels.

The book follows a basic chronological plan from the Achaemenids of the sixth century B.C. to the Islamic Republic in sixteen chapters with such titles as Persepolis: city, throne and power (5), Paradise of bliss: the Persian legacy in India from the Timurids to the Mughals (12). The authors have no professional involvement in Iranian studies but have been lecturers in English literature, creative writing and general urban studies, which is reflected in their approach. They have produced a quantity of information gathered from secondary sources and visits to Iran which they have aimed to shape into a universal theory of civilization relying on the pre-Islamic dynasties of the Achaemenids and Sassanids as evidence. This is basically unsatisfactory and misleading as it adapts the facts to the theory. The supporting material is very uneven – for example a chronological table which completely ignores the Safavids, who ruled Iran from 1501 to 1723, united the country under Shi'ism and created the brilliant capital of Isfahan. Maps are small and do not indicate the mountain ranges of the Elburz and Zagros so fundamental to Iran's urban and economic development and only show the names of pre-Islamic settlements. Illustrations vary from full

page colour images of selected Achaemenid reliefs to small photographs which inexplicably omit the architecture of Isfahan.

For a more balanced and honest view of Persia/Iran I would direct the reader to the following books:

Roger Stevens, *The Land of the Great Sophy*. Methuen, London, 3rd edition 1979, a beautifully written survey of Iran's history, religion and art with a fully annotated gazetteer of the main archaeological and historical sites.

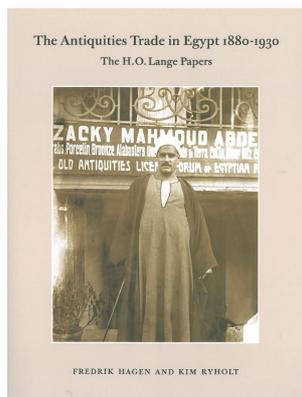
Ali M Ansari, *Iran - a very short introduction*. Oxford University Press 2014. Clear account of Iran's history and politics.

Homa Katouzian, *The Persians, Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern Iran*. Yale University Press 2009. Expert analysis of Iran's history, constitutional development and politics.

Ronald W. Ferrier (ed), *The Arts of Persia*. Yale University Press 1989. Fully illustrated survey with chapters on pre-Islamic art and also on specific topics including carpets, textiles, metalwork, painting, ceramics, tilework and glass.

Jennifer M. Scarce

**Hagen, Fredrik & Ryholt, Kim, *The Antiquities Trade in Egypt 1880-1930: the H.O. Lange Papers*, Scientia Danica Series H, Humanistica, 4 - vol. 8. Copenhagen: Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2016. Pp. 335, Figs. 169. DKK 300 (ca. €40) + VAT, paperback (ISBN 978-87-7304-400-1).**



Every once in a while comes along a new publication taking an old but well-known topic and turning it around on its head by looking at it from an entirely different perspective. Hagen and Ryholt have done

just that, for the first time, and the results are not only well-presented but have the necessary detailed data and documentary evidence to support their statements. And that evidence often is very different than modern researchers generally believe.

Hagen and Ryholt begin with the travel diaries of H.O. Lange, an early Danish Egyptologist, and his wife Jonna, recording their two working visits to Egypt in 1899/1900 (nearly a year) and 1929/30 (five months) and their other archival material. Although spending the majority of their time in Cairo, they met most early Egyptologists and many acquisitive buyers who either stayed in or passed through the city. Lange also acted as a collections buyer for the Glyptotek and other museums in Copenhagen, and so interacted with many Cairene and other dealers sometimes in competition with other buyers from elsewhere. The diaries, some thirty years apart, illuminate the different players and atmosphere of the Egyptian antiquities trade. Although not yet published in full - although this is planned - relevant excerpts (written in Danish) are quoted in English translation by the authors. All the many other direct quotations also are in English translation, excepting French and German. Many of the Langes' photographs of people, scenery and objects also are published for the first time.

From this underlying thread, they examine the mostly legal and (from 1912) licensed antiquities trade over the fifty years of their title, concentrating on dealers with physical stores or shops and those acting as their go-betweens. Scattered throughout are many contemporary travellers' and academics' comments on both the reliability/ethics of individual dealers and the likely authenticity of their stock. About one-third of the volume is a single lengthy chapter providing a 'Who's Who' of antiquities dealers - Egyptian, non-Egyptian and the occasional Westerner - operating in Egypt during the half-century of its title and later (although note the caveats on p. 183-4). Photographs, biographies and genealogies of many are included, collated by the authors from multiple sources including their descendants. Their bibliography, which includes two ASTENE publications, is an incredibly valuable resource for members' research.

The authors investigate the dealers' personal and business relationships with each other, with foreign and Egyptian buyers, and with down-the-line middlemen, consular officials and fellahin who supplied them. And so not only the legal but

also semi-legal and illegal trade, as circumstances adapted over time under successive government legislations (see Table 5 and Appendix 1). Some dealers were given official licences to excavate and, to the frustration of archaeologists, did so. The Egyptian Museum itself incorporated a sale de vente, in both the Giza and Tahrir Square buildings, where surplus antiquities were sold to visitors under official auspices until the 1950s or 1960s. A surprising number of government Antiquities officials (including the Directors) and archaeologists such as Howard Carter also doubled as dealers; these are not included in the 'Who's Who'. Major and minor antiquities markets are examined individually, from Cairo and Luxor through to Medinet el-Fayum and Qena. Dealers' premises also have been identified, many with interior and exterior photographs, and their relative groupings mostly near tourist centres such as Shepheard's Hotel and Luxor Temple. The authors

also have tracked down the modern perambulations and present locations of certain artefacts, especially statuary and papyri, handled by various dealers and buyers, to their present whereabouts.

In short, this volume is an invaluable addition to the ASTENE circle, enabling us to identify the antiquities dealers with whom our travellers interacted and the circumstances under which their purchases were obtained and exported. It provides a fascinating view of the Egyptian antiquities trading world over its heyday, both close-up and in overview, drawing from a plethora of contemporary documentation to remove the rose-coloured glasses of our own complacent black-and-white belief of the past. A must for everyone's library.

*Jacke Phillips*

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## ARTICLES

In Bulletin 72, Daniele Salvoldi gave a fascinating account of Sinai Travel in the 19th and 20th century. Part 2 of Daniele's substantial article is below:

### **Pilgrims to Tourists: Evolution of Travel in South Sinai in the 19th and 20th Century**

#### **Part 2**

#### Commercialised hospitality and early business

If we look at tourism, according to one of its definitions, as "commercialised hospitality,"<sup>1</sup> it is clear that the business relating to pilgrimage was in fact tourism, and that both stakeholders, i.e. the Bedouins and the monks, benefited from it. As Burckhardt states: "The conveying of pilgrims is one of the few modes of subsistence which these poor people possess, and at a place where strangers are continually passing, gratuitous hospitality is not to be expected from them, though they might be ready to afford it to the helpless traveller. The two days excursion to the holy places cost me about forty piasters, or five dollars."<sup>2</sup>

Travellers had to pay from the beginning of their pilgrimage: first at the Greek convent in Cairo to receive a written permission that would grant them

entrance at the monastery of St. Catherine.<sup>3</sup> Secondly, in the first stop of the pilgrimage at Matariyya, where they had to pay to access the garden where the Holy Family was believed to have rested during the flight to Egypt.<sup>4</sup> The garden had miraculous plants that oozed a fragrant balsam, also for sale. After 1585, travel accounts warn that a fake balsam was sold for profit to the inexperienced pilgrims.

Escorting travellers from Cairo to St. Catherine was part of the business and for reasons of safety nobody could actually venture alone in such a trip. As previously pointed out, the Tuwara Bedouins of the Peninsula had the exclusive right to guide caravans from Cairo to Suez and thence to the monastery. Guidebooks warn about the necessity of checking that the animals were properly loaded to avoid hiring too many camels, a trick that Bedouins were accused to play in order to raise the engagement price. Wilkinson warns also against concerted attacks against the caravan by friends or relatives of the shaykh, who would later share in the boot.<sup>5</sup> A traveller, he says, should know that a Bedouin tribe would not be attacked by a friendly tribe in its own territory.

Having reached the monastery, the Jabaliyya tribe would take care of the pilgrims as their "exclusive

right.”<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, pilgrims’ care was somehow subjected to the monks’ control; according to Burckhardt, “for though [the Bedouins] pay little respect to the priests, yet they have some fear of being excluded from the gains accruing from the transport of visitors to the convent.”<sup>7</sup> It could actually happen that the monks themselves would guide the pilgrims around in the holy places nearby the monastery; so it was reported as late as 1943.<sup>8</sup>

The 15th century pilgrim Felix Fabri, who had quite a biased opinion of the monks, reported: “Whatever they do for us, they do for money.”<sup>9</sup> Among the services bestowed by the monks he recalled: entering the church, hiring personnel for a visit to the mountain, and filling goatskins at the monastery well. In 1820, Ricci reported that the monks used to sell wine,<sup>10</sup> while Baedeker warns that “among [the monks] are also a tailor and a shoemaker who charge exorbitantly for their primitive workmanship.”<sup>11</sup> Hospitality to the monastery was granted for free, as testified by this passage of a letter by John Hyde, who was travelling in 1819: “The last visitors who preceded us were three Italians [and] after inflicting themselves upon the poor monks for a week or ten days they took their departure without leaving a Parât for the Convent, they even left the Convent the charge of paying the Arab guides who accompanied them to the neighbouring mountains.”<sup>12</sup>

This was not the case anymore in 1885, according to Baedeker: “If the dragoman has undertaken to provide for the party throughout the whole journey, he must make his own bargain with the monks, to whom the traveller may afterwards present a gift on his own account. Those who have to pay their own expenses, are generally charged at least 5 fr. a day each for lodging alone [...] The traveller will find it more independent and less expensive to camp in some suitable spot in the lower Wâdi Shu’aib, and thence to visit the monastery.”<sup>13</sup>

Although most services had to be paid, gifts were often exchanged and hospitality practised; almost all travellers reported giving presents to the monastery and receiving presents. In 1807, Seetzen even recalls having received bots of manna from the monks.<sup>14</sup> An ancestor of the modern souvenir selling practice is already attested in Baedeker in the third half of the 19th century: “On the route to the Wâdi Fîrân the Bedouins frequently offer for sale large, but worthless, turquoises at exorbitant prices.”<sup>15</sup> Bedouins still engage in such business in the very

same area, but the bits of turquoise are small and relatively cheap.<sup>16</sup>

### Sites development overview

#### *‘Ayun Musa and Hammam Phara’un*

Being very close to Suez, ‘Ayun Musa was sometimes visited by tourists who did not want to venture further into Sinai. Since it is on the way to St. Catherine, it was an almost obligatory stop anyway, both for its Biblical link and as a source of (rather brackish) water. The site was poorly developed over time. When Ricci visited in 1820, the springs were muddy holes in the ground; only one was accessible for drinking.

Further south on the coast, Hammam Phara’un was not often visited by travellers and pilgrims, because it was not directly on the route to St. Catherine. Beside the Biblical value of the site – underlined in Baedeker with a large number of legends about the drowning of Pharaoh (cfr. Ex 14, 28) – the place was famous for its hot springs. A scientific survey was made during the French campaign and published by Monge in 1809.<sup>17</sup> Ricci in 1820 confirmed the temperature, which has since been stable, and adds a rather prophetic note: “L’arte ha concorso in addietro a rendere praticabili quelle sorgenti, le quali potrebbero ridursi anche attualmente, con tenue spesa, a vero profitto dell’umanità;”<sup>18</sup> the hot springs were used by the Bedouins to treat various sicknesses, especially skin diseases. Ricci states that the Bedouins would camp right outside of the caves and spend inside twenty to forty days continuously, coming out only to rest in their tents. The caves were constantly used by the Bedouins to treat rheumatism, as reported again in Baedeker and are still frequented by locals nowadays. A relatively recent attempt at building a large resort failed, leaving a sad legacy of concrete skeletons around the site.

#### *Wadi Mukattab, Maghara and Sarabit al-Khadim*

The large number of ancient inscriptions in different languages proves that Wadi Mukattab was possibly a main access point to the St. Catherine’s area. The place was of great interest in the first place for scholars, especially those interested in the Nabataean scripts such as Bankes.<sup>19</sup> The site really did not change over the time, except that a few more contemporary inscriptions have been carved in Arabic and Hebrew.

The ancient mines of Maghara, on the contrary, had a different destiny. The inscribed rock-stelae had been copied repeatedly by different scholars, especially Ricci and Linant in 1820. At the end of the 19th century, a British mining company resumed activities and, by the force of dynamite, destroyed all the ancient mines, leaving but a few inscriptions.<sup>20</sup> Mining activity was abandoned shortly after and what remained of the inscriptions was cut away and shipped to the Cairo Egyptian Museum, where they still lie. Nowadays, only the wide open mines and a couple of graffiti are left; one, found only in 1973,<sup>21</sup> is a good occasion for the tourist to make a twenty minutes' hike on the mountain with his or her Bedouin guide.

In the same area lies the most important pharaonic ruin of the entire peninsula, i.e. the sanctuary of Sarabit al-Khadim. It is definitely one of the most interesting attractions in terms of archaeology, even if its state of preservation is not comparable to other similar monuments in the Nile valley. Early travellers were puzzled by the uncommon shape of the stelae and for decades Sarabit was interpreted as a cemetery.

#### *The Holy Monastery of St. Catherine, Jabal Musa and Jabal Katrina*

There is no doubt that the monastery of St. Catherine is the historical site that has witnessed the most radical changes in the entire peninsula. Even if architecturally and artistically is still close to its original shape, in its fifteen-century long history it endured reconstructions, additions, restorations and adaptations for different purposes, not least tourism. For example, the entire southern wall was completely pulled down and re-built in the 1940s to house the library of the monastery.<sup>22</sup>

Upon construction in the 6th century, Emperor Justinian provided it with a monumental gate. This was shut for security reasons sometime in the history of the monastery. The famous winch that for centuries represented almost the only possible access to the monastery is mentioned only starting from 1512.<sup>23</sup> A "Patriarchal Gate" was used in the case of guests with a special *firman* from Cairo and at the accession of the archbishop, a rare sight during the whole 18th and 19th century. In 1861, a side gate was opened in the west wall, and the door is now used to deliver goods coming from Cairo and for the monks to receive private guests. Only recently a third gate was opened (while the Patriarchal one was

completely walled up) to resist the massive flow of tourists, who at a rate of many hundreds a day flock the monastery, especially in the summer season.

As for the areas around the monastery, most of the features that still attract tourists are part of old traditions that can be traced through travellers' and pilgrims' accounts over centuries. Some of them have changed: the stone struck by Moses is nowadays pointed out in the garden of the small monastery in Wadi al-'Arbayin, while in the past it was described in different locations. The "golden calf" is described by Burckhardt in these terms: "It is a stone half-buried in the ground, and bears some resemblance to the forehead of a cow;"<sup>24</sup> this could hardly be the 'golden calf' shown nowadays to tourist, which is high on a hill and resembles the profile of the full body of a calf.

Jabal Musa and the chapel on its top was the ultimate goal of the Christian pilgrimage. Beside the staircase of repentance – the typical pilgrim access way to the top – another road (*sikkat al-Basha*) was reportedly opened by Khedive Abbas I (1849-1854) in the mid-19th century, even if a second path leading up is described already in 1547.<sup>25</sup> The characteristic visit to the mountain was from early in the morning to before sunset: Baedeker suggests starting at 5 am and staying until the 'magnificent spectacle of the sunset.'<sup>26</sup> Sir Frederick Henniker spent from 8 am to 7 pm wandering in the mountain around the monastery, and so did Alessandro Ricci in 1820. The same author reports that according to an old tradition sleeping on the sacred mountain was taboo. This is in striking contrast to the current touristic practice of leaving for the mountain late at night to see the dawn from the top, or even to sleep waiting for it. At the same time, this pushed a business development in the very heart of the pilgrimage: Bedouin tents are substituted by metal-sheet huts, kiosks for tea and snacks, and a quite lucrative business of blankets and mattresses. Nevertheless, for the delayed traveller, according to Baedeker, spending the night on the mountain was not impossible: "The pilgrims' steps should on no account be descended at night. If necessary the night may be spent in the chapel of Elijah, in which case the monks provide blankets."<sup>27</sup>

#### *Al-Tur and Hammam Musa*

Even if the sea route from Suez to St. Catherine passed through al-Tur, the town was seldom visited. Ricci and Linant passed by the site only in the hope

of getting guides able to take them to Aqaba. The old town was in full decay, but archaeological remains would attract an explorer every now and then. Baedeker lists al-Tur as “a place of some importance, inhabited by Arabs,”<sup>28</sup> in contrast with what only twenty years before was a small town inhabited by few Greek families only. The city monastery was rebuilt only in the second half of the 19th century and described as “uninteresting” in the same travel book; nowadays it is visited mostly by Russian tourists on their way to St. Catherine.

Al-Tur is definitely an underestimated site, with a rich archaeological heritage (an ancient Coptic monastery, an early Byzantine fortress, and a large archaeological area) and two precious natural resources: a hot water spring and constant wind, which makes it perfect for sea sports. In the mid-19th century Sa‘id Pasha (1854-1863) built a shelter and a basin at the site of Hammam Musa, a small oasis a few kilometres north of the old town. The site used to be a dependency of the Greek monks, who administered the land through a *kathisma*, a small monastery. It has since then been expropriated by the Government.

*The East Coast: Sharm al-Shaykh, Dahab, Nuwayba, Taba*

The most unexpected development in the touristic history of Sinai is definitely that of the east coast; in most of the accounts, if ever mentioned, sites like Nuwayba, Taba, Dahab, and Sharm are not even settlements, but only geographical names on the road to Aqaba. Viaud calls Sharm a “new town” built in 1968<sup>29</sup> and Dahab a “new tourist site.”<sup>30</sup> In Nuwayba, actually there is an 18th century Ottoman castle, but still the town is qualified as “with few facilities.”<sup>31</sup> Following the 1906 British-ruled border between Egypt and the Ottoman Empire, which ran between Rafah and Taba, the latter city was finally re-assigned to Egypt after a long period of Israeli occupation.

*A Quick View of the Situation in the 21st Century*

Until the 1960s, the number of tourists in Sinai was limited, and the eighty yearly pilgrims calculated by Burckhardt is a quite optimistic guess compared to the thirty a year in the 1960s.<sup>32</sup> In the period 1897-1925 the monastery registered 367 guests only.<sup>33</sup> Numbers have since the 1970s increased greatly, an average of 50,000, falling down to 30,000 in periods of political crisis or lack of security.<sup>34</sup> At

the beginning of the current century, no less than 300,000 visitors were recorded.<sup>35</sup>

These huge numbers raise an important concern about sustainability,<sup>36</sup> regarding not only the preservation of the historic and natural heritage of the region against environmental threats, but involving the role of Sinai Bedouins in sharing the revenues of the vacation industry, along with a series of social issues such as prostitution, crime, poverty,<sup>37</sup> and the possibility for the religious community to maintain a monastic lifestyle.

It must be noted that the modern concepts of Ethnic-tourism<sup>38</sup> – i.e. the marketing of the exotic, such as villages, local artefacts, ceremonies – and Eco-tourism, which both stress in the relationship between guest and host, represent a sort of going back to the origins, where these features were normal, if not necessary. Nowadays, the contact with the monks is very limited; real pilgrims and scholars only can approach them for research or during prayers. On the other side, Bedouins are trying to cut a role for themselves in the touristic business, somehow coming back to their traditional role of guides and “protectors,” proposing an alternative way of experiencing Sinai, i.e. through tent camping in the desert and trekking on the high mountains region.

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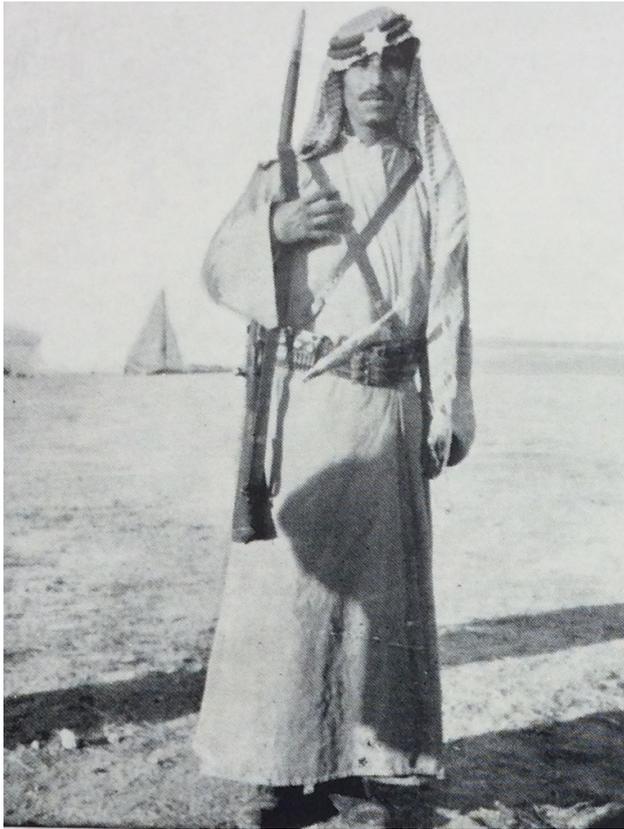
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- 13 *Egypt, handbook for travellers*, 503.
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- 26 *Egypt, handbook for travellers*, 510.
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## Footnotes

## A Night in the Syrian Desert

*The following piece is from 'the Log', the school magazine of Pangbourne Nautical College. It appeared in the issue for the winter term of 1939, but was clearly written some months earlier. The writer only identifies himself by his initials and the contents page of the magazine makes it clear he was neither a present nor a former student at the college; at a guess, he was an older brother of one or the other. The first paragraph now rings with a tragic poignancy....*



In these days, when, as the newspapers never fail to remind us, "the storm clouds are hovering over Europe" it may be comforting to turn for a moment to a corner of the world which is as yet ... dare I say it? ... untouched by wars and rumours of wars, and where fighting, when it comes, still preserves something of the glamour and romance of the medieval vendetta. "Far are the shades of Arabia, where the princes ride at noon." Little less remote are the sands of Syria; and it is of a night in the Syrian desert, spent in the course of a motor journey to India, that I wish to write.

It had been a hot, tiring, monotonous day, and we had driven far .... From beyond Rutbah, an isolated fort in the middle of the desert. There the size of

our party had increased to five, by the addition of a member of the famous Camel Police Corps; and it was he who acted as interpreter when, as the sun went down, we came upon the encampment of an Arab tribe. We were courteously received by the Sheik, a man who introduced himself as 'Amir' ..... tall, thin, and worn-looking; he had great dignity and presence.

We pitched our tents not far from Amir's, and while we were unpacking he and two or three others took our enamel mugs and soon returned them filled with delicious tea, milkless and syrupy. It was nectar to us, since we were suffering from an un-assuagable thirst. The Arabs sat with us on our empty petrol tins while we drank it. I shall always remember that scene (though more startling ones were to come presently): the oil lamp in the middle, lent by Amir, threw its yellow light on the circle of faces. We sat near the stove on the right; next to me was Amir, a man of few words, who spoke English with very good accent, but no fluency. Next to him sat a youth in European dress, with a sallow face and dark, curly hair; he seemed a little out of his element. The circle was completed by Said, Amir's watchman, a nice, cheerful lad, and our rather sharp-featured policeman – a Saudi Arab – his khaki cartridge-belted tunic stretching to his ankles. Within the circle, near the lamp, lay a great vulture which fSaid had shot, and brought along to be admired. The spread of its wings must have been six or seven feet.

Our hosts had had their meal earlier, and, with a consideration which was quite new to us on this journey, left us while we ate ours, which was shared, of course, by the policeman. Amir later returned, and sat with us alone for a while, before the real fun of the evening started. He told us that he had been to India before the "Four Years" War, and that during the War he had been an agent of the British Government in Mesopotamia and Syria; he had known and admired T.E.Lawrence, and refused to believe that he was dead. Some day, he says, Lawrence will re-appear in the Desert.

Said and the others presently re-joined the circle, and we returned the compliment and made them some tea. Then, one of my friends played one or two Scottish airs on a recorder which we had with us, after which we asked Amir if they would play and sing to us. Thereupon Said produced a comic-looking stringed instrument, a sort of stocello – the sound-box consisting of a battered tin, and the bow (of horse-hair) more like a bow for shooting

than a cello bow. He played a tune or two, but was obviously rather inexpert, and soon handed it to the policeman, who played and sang weirdly attractive desert sagas with considerable skill, as was obvious even to our uninitiated ears. His voice was husky without being ugly. The Arabs seem to sing entirely from their throats.

Other men kept dropping in and, after a courteous salaam to Amir and to us, quietly took their places in the circle, which swelled continuously until there were thirty of us in all. Said's instrument was pronounced inadequate, and one of the others produced another better one, of the same design, but with a sound-box made of goat-skin. This new player seemed a good performer, too, but the policeman was the acknowledged master, and obviously held the attention of the ever-increasing circle. Soon, a grimy-faced lad started playing a wind-instrument – twin reed-pipes, from which he produced a strident, continuous, rhythmic volume of sound. Suddenly, to our delight, a dance was organized. It looked a primitive, tribal kind of dance, like those African tribal dances about which one reads. The piper stood in the middle, playing like mad, while the dancers, locked together in a grotesque caterpillar, wove patterns round him. The rhythm was ruthless, produced not only by the music but still more by the thud of the dancers' feet on the ground – now

alternately, now both together. The movements were directed by a sort of 'maître de ballet', who himself executed a more elaborate 'pas seul' in front, shouting and waving a handkerchief in either hand, with which, the course of his gyrations, he would now and again pat the heads of the guests. We were passed (sic) being embarrassed. It was obviously symbolic; but of what, remained a mystery.

There was a discipline unanimity about every movement, but it was the discipline of ecstasy. At the bidding of the leader, the locked, tattered dancers, half enveloped in clouds of dust, would now leap into the air, now raise a shout of triumph deafening in its suddenness the whole scene, in the dim yellow light thrown by the lamp, seemed weird and primeval. I was amused to notice that Amir – like us, a spectator – kept looking anxiously to see how we were reacting to what he knew was a novel and strange sight to us. He need not have worried...

The policeman, when the dancers had at last dispersed, and when Amir, with grave courtesy, had bidden us good-night, lay down beside the car. I slept, fitfully, in the little Tinker tent, the frenzied pulsations of the dance still drumming in my ears.

T.J.H.H.

Peta Ree

## RESEARCH RESOURCES

### References to Egypt in *Engineering* magazine during the second half of the nineteenth century

Although I have been a member of ASTENE for some years, my contacts with you are somewhat intermittent. Some of you may recall that my research interests are the three Dixon brothers: John Dixon (1835-1991) Raylton Dixon (1838-1901) and Waynman Dixon (1844-1930), all engineers. The Egyptian connection comes from John and Waynman who brought Cleopatra's Needle to London and Waynman who discovered the so-called ventilation passages in the Great Pyramid.

Recently I have been going through old copies of *Engineering* magazine in search of John Dixon's contracts and came across many articles on Egypt.

As ASTENE members may not think of *Engineering* as a source of information on Egypt in the second half of the nineteenth century, I thought it would be worth bringing the magazine to their attention. Some of the articles are listed below, but there are more, for example on the Suez Canal. It is quite laborious trying to track down articles on a specific topic, and I found the index for each six-month period not particularly helpful, so resorted to scanning through each issue of the magazine.

- John Hawkshaw's improvements to the River Nile (13 August 1869, pages 101-2)
- English engineers living and working in Egypt (22 December 1871, page 432 and 19 January 1872, page 42)
- Sugar making machinery supplied to Egypt (29 November 1872, pages 372-3)

- Editorial on the Soudan Railway (24 January 1873, page 63)

A lengthy series of articles describing the journey up the Nile by John Fowler's surveyors. These articles contain a good deal about life along the Nile and feature many engravings.

- 28 February 1873, pages 146-7:

Outline of the route of the railway up the Nile, across the Bahiuda desert and on to the terminus at Shendy. The surveying party of eighteen, led by Mr F Graham, left Cairo in four dahabeahs. There is a description of the traditional 'dahabeah' with two engravings.

- 7 March 1873, pages 162-4:

Journey from the pyramid at Rigga to the First Cataract. Engravings of the Pyramid at Rigga, the Nile between Rhoda and Siout, the First Cataract, and the island and ruins of Philœ. Description and engraving of a dahabeah built of iron.

- 14 March 1873, pages 185-6:

Annual changes in depth of the Nile with an accompanying chart. The quarrying of stone.

Irrigation using the 'zakieh' driven by two oxen, with engravings showing the contrivance in operation and a plan view of its layout.

- 21 March 1873, pages 200-1:

The journey from the First Cataract past Wady Halfa to Kohé. Description of the 'shadoof' for irrigation with an engraving. The proposed route of the railway from Wady Halfa to Kohé. Two engravings of the Cataracts of Ambigole.

- 28 March 1873, pages 225-7:

The journey from Kohé, with an engraving of the site of the railway bridge at Kohé. Detailed description of the 'noggur' (sailing vessel) used above the Second Cataract, including its construction, method of sailing up and down river, and the men operating it, with an engraving and plans of a noggur.

- 11 April 1873, pages 249-50:

Continuation of the journey on camels and donkeys to New Dongola where they re-boarded the noggurs. Two engravings of Handak.

- 18 April 1873, pages 275-6

Crossing the Bahiuda desert and on to Wady Halfa. Engravings of the Nile from Mount Fogo, the Bahiuda desert.

- 23 May 1873, page 353

Water supplies for the railway, with engraving of the wells of Gakdoul and a plan.

- 5 November 1875, pages 361-2

Editorial on overview of the present state of Egypt

Seven rather technical articles on the barrage constructed by M Mougel across the Nile twelve miles below Cairo:

- 21 January 1876, pages 40-42

Part I. Description of works and effects on irrigation. Map and engineering drawings.

- 11 February 1876, pages 101-2

Part II. History of proposed barrages.

- 25 February 1876, pages 143-5

Part III. Continuation of history and construction of present barrage.

- 17 March 1876, pages 281-9

Part IV. Sluices and water levels above the barrage throughout the year.

- 31 March 1876, pages 245-6

Part V. Discharge measurements and downstream aprons.

- 28 April 1876, pages 338-9

Part VI. Geology and foundations, permeability and comparison with Indian barrages.

- 12 May 1876, pages 379-82

Part VII. Comparison with other barrages and conclusions.

The relevant issues of Engineering magazine are all on the Grace's Guide website as PDF files. Log onto Grace's Guide (Google will find it straightaway) and go to Home and select Engineering. Go to Bound

Volumes, select the six-month period you need and then select the individual issue. You may need to register as a user in order to gain access to the PDFs, but it is a simple process. Happy reading!

*Dr Ian Pearce  
(ianandsuepearce@btinternet.com)*

# FOOTPRINTS

ASTENE members may be interested in this epitaph in the church of St Mary Abbots in Kensington, of Joseph Liddle Fairless, an originally Newcastle-based printer, publisher, and joint founder of the well-

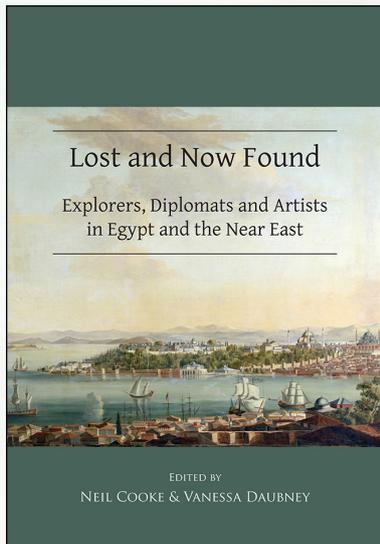
known Doré Gallery in London, who died in the Mena House Hotel at the foot of the Great Pyramid at Giza in 1891.

*Aidan Dodson & Dyan Hilton*



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