

BROOME LETTER 33

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I liked the picture of the dog & the news of Charlie Barnard very much.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY, TEMPLE OF SETI I. ABYDOS
EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY
AND
THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.

EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY'S CAMP
ARABAH EL MADFUNAH
BALIANA, UPPER EGYPT.

Oct 21st 1929.

Dear Mother.

Just received your letter dated Oct 11th. We are now settling down to work. I have started near the roof & have to climb up a huge erection which feels very wobbly but has a good wide platform. room enough for a trestle a chair & wooden box. Sardinian our head man carries my drawing board & materials aloft for me, & sharpens all my pencils. This is our daily programme. we get up 5:30. breakfast 6 o'clock. we are at the temple by 7. & work till 12, then our donkeys are brought round, & we mount & scamper back to the house for lunch. after lunch we have an hour's rest. at present it is still too hot to do much work in the afternoons. the heat makes the pencils smudgey.

Yesterday was Sunday, when we came in for lunch our Carpenter was making some new measurements so I complimented him in my best Arabic on the way he had fitted up my room, he beamed all over his face, & fumbled in the innermost recesses of his garments & produced a very small loaf of bread which I had to accept & eat. he is a Copt, & this was the sacramental bread that he had brought from the church specially for me, it was quite a nice little loaf, about the size of a bun, & had a lot of little crosses stamped on it.

Today we went to tea with the police officer at Arabah el Madfunah. he is a very young officer, rather shy & self-conscious but most polite and anxious to be friendly. he gave us a very nice tea. with bread, butter, jam, cheese, biscuits, melon, & grapes. & entertained us with Arabic records on his gramophone. it was quite dark when we left, our servants were waiting for us with a lantern to light us across the sand hills. it was glorious to see the stars, we learnt some of the Arabic names for them from one of our guards.

My mosquito boots are a source of great admiration, all the others are very envious of them, my clothes seem very suitable & comfortable.

Today all the new things for the house that we had purchased in Cairo arrived on two camels. Oh the fuss & excitement, I took a snap of the camels with their loads & attendants & then came the fun of unpacking. all the servants their relations & friends rushed to help

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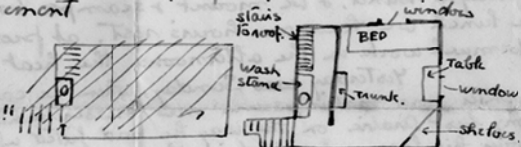
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Oct 21

they all got in each others way, they just hawled^{sic} something out. dumped it down anywhere & rushed back again to see what the others had discovered - imagine the confusion. plates & pots & pans jugs & slop pails - china for the table (& for the floor also) all over the place mixed up with mattresses & pillows & mosquito curtains & bits of packing cases. Every one talked at once, the dogs barked, the donkeys brayed, the camels grunted & poor old Nannie waved her arms & screamed directions & abuse in fluent Arabic & every one did their various jobs according to their own ideas on the subject. We just stood aloof & watched. & wondered how it was that nothing was broken except one lemon squeezer. Eventually things found their way to the proper places.

My room is now complete & I am to sleep in it for the first time tonight, it is so cosy & pretty. I will draw you a little plan of the arrangement

my table cover & curtain over the shelves are in blue & white cheque & I have grass mats on the floor.



I hear there is a native rug weaver here who will be very thrilled to make me a mat out of goats hair. I think I would like to have him make me a strip for our passage upstairs; when I have got the measurements, I can select the wool for it, dont^{sic} you think it would be rather nice to have one specially made out here. Or if you dont^{sic} care about the idea of a long strip for the passage how about a large mat for my bed room? my rush mat is getting very torn & these native rugs are very strong & easily shaken. let me have the size for a mat for my room or any other place where one would be useful, I might^{see} a nice hanging weave glorious striped camel cloths. If I have all these measurements I could take advantage of any opportunity that came along. I dont^{sic} want to buy things that dont^{sic} fit or are unsuitable, but it would be a pity to miss the chance of getting things we want direct from the native craftsmen here.

Bed time now. Love to you both - also to Pat. Myrtle.

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(stairs / to roof. - BED - window

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wash / stand - trunk. - table window shelves.)

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