

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.

Feb 27<sup>th</sup> 1930.

Dear Mother.

I made my curtsey to royalty today. Queen Marie of Rumania was charming. she talked to Miss Calverley & me for quite a long time & was delighted with our drawings. she is very beautiful, & was dressed in dove colour. I think it was a very heavy dull crepe de chene. but enough of Queens we find them rather dull & boring & much prefer our nice people here.

Our hospital parade is going strong just now. we have a most attractive patient, a young man whose profile would be worth a fortune on the films, a delicate aquiline nose, perfect shaped mouth & chin, & black eyes & eyelashes that are simply sinfull to be wasted on a man, of course these features are shown to perfection by his picturesque national costume! & his manners are as charming as his face. we have been having a very anxious time with him. he came to us with the most ghastly hand I have ever seen. he had been working with a native spade & got a blister at the base of his little finger & the next, this got septic, & gathered, & spread for 20 days. then someone told him about the English people at Arabah, & he came 8 kilos to see if we could do anything for him. it was dreadful. the outer skin of the palm had rotted, the other skins were all separated & the tendons exposed. & the stench nearly made us sick. Miss C. told the man he ought to go to the doctor & he said "I am a poor man - & the doctor will do nothing unless he receives money - I cannot pay him"

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We knew this was true. local doctors are not friends of the poor by any means. so we wondered what we could do. Miss C had some hospital training during the war so she has a good general knowledge. She washed this dreadful hand in hot lysol water & tried to remove the rotting skin. then I suggested a bread poultice. we made this with boiling water slightly salt. Tied it all over the mans hand & told him to return early next morning. When he came again he offered us a bundle of beans from his little bit of land. it was so pathetic, we thanked him but could not accept. to take any sort of payment even in kind would get us into trouble for illegal practicing. We got the poultice off & it had softened the skin & drawn out a lot of bad stuff & made it easier to wash, but we were both frightened at the look of it. Miss C was afraid of gangrene. So she told the man he must go to the doctor at Baliana straight away & she would pay the doctor's fee. she wrote a note for him to take asking the D<sup>E</sup> to look at the hand & send written instructions how to treat it. So the poor man had to go another 11 miles there & back & he was weak & ill with the pain of this hand. but we didn't know what else to do. however at sunset he was back, he was quite done up, as it was Ramadan & he was fasting. they are allowed to drink & eat a little at sunset, so we told Sardic to take him into the kitchen & see he had a meal, we had quite a job to make him accept food. he said all he came for was to beg us to save his hand. however we said our house would be shamed if he left us hungry. so he ate a few dates & some bread. he brought a letter from the doctor to say it was a bad case. & had better be washed with lysol twice a day. treated with iodine & antiseptic gauze dressings, which was exactly what we had done. so we have been dressing this hand night & morning & it is really getting better it is now clean & healthy looking, & after a weeks treatment shows signs of growing flesh over the tendons. One day we had a bad fright, there was fresh inflammation & the whole hand & arm was hot when we took the dressing off. we both agreed a good dose

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was needed, but the problem was how to make a Muslim drink in Ramadan. To wait till sunset would mean spread of inflammation. so we got Nannie to talk to him & explain that he must take medicine at once to drive the poison from his blood. the poor man had an awful mental struggle, for he firmly believed that if he drank he would be eternally damned. We quoted the Koran which gives exemption to travellers, to women with child & the sick. & we told him his hand had made him a very sick man indeed. so he said, "It shall be as you say Oh Excellencies" so we prepared the Father of doses of Epsom Salts, & he took it & prayed to Allah to forgive him for his great sin & then swallowed the beastly stuff. he was given hot tea an hour after, the next day the hand was cool & much better so we said it was a sign that he had not sinned but had obeyed the Law of the Prophet. It will be a long time before the hand will be fit to use again. & probably the little finger will be always stiff, but he is wonderfully patient, he never even winces, & once Miss C. had to cut away a bit of the tendon that was forming proud flesh, & he always says "It does not hurt" when we dab iodine on. He is always here at dawn & we get up a little earlier to attend to him before we go to the Temple, & at sunset when we return he is squatting outside the garden gate. We shall be glad when he is quite cured, but ~~we~~ we shall miss our nice Mahomet.

We are being very holy this evening a man has come to sing the Koran to us. in a few days Ramadan will be

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be over & then they will all eat a tremendous meal at the great feast & get bad indigestion & Eppy will be in great demand.

I am so glad to hear Mr Childs is so much better, please give my best wishes to both.

I received your letter with the invoices from Miss Collins. Thanks so much for packing up the wool & everything. There will be great excitement when it arrives. Will Miss Collins want the sample of Australian wool returned?

This seems a very hospitable letter but I know you are interested in our cases so thought our Mahomet of the beautiful face might interest you.

Bed time again.

Lots of love  
Your affectionate Myrtle.

Hope to write to Miss Collins in a few days.

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