

Thebes Hotel
Luxor
Upper Egypt.
Dic 15th 1927.

Dear Mother & Father.

Here I am in Luxor at last.
I am not quite sure how far I had got with my adventures in my last letter. I am sure I must have told you of my thrilling ride on Hassan, the black arab horse. Well the next morning Gerzawy sent him round for me again in the charge of his drill sergeant, a glorious old arab of 75 who had served with Kitchener in Khartoum, & who is ready to worship the ground I walk on because I am the only woman he has ever seen who can sit a horse like the mounted police. I mounted & rode out towards Qan el Kebir where Gerzawy met me & we rode into the desert again with the Omdah's son as guard of honour. On our return Gerzawy had to attend to some quarrel between

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Omdah's of different villages, so he sent me home ^{on Hassan} in charge of his personal servant.

We were to have visited the village of the tall man the following day - but we could not go because Gerzawy had to arrest a man who had stabbed another in the neck & half killed him so we got on with our packing, & the next morning got up at 3.AM in order to get all the camp goods & our own luggage packed on 3 camels with the help of half the village to the sound of the most violent arguments I have ever heard. all shouting at once.

One camel load fell off & had to be refixed on. but we arrived at the river without further mishap. our donkeys were taken across with us, but fresh camels were waiting on the other side. It was market day ^{at Tema} & there was a crowd waiting to cross, there were sheep, goats, donkeys, chickens, kids, calves, on board with us. & the boat was so laden that it stuck twice & two of the men stripped naked & jumped over the side & pushed to help get it off again.

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We arrived at Tema in good Time ^{9/2} & called
 at the Post Office where I found a letter
 from you. it was the one where you say
 you have just received my first letter
 from the tomb. it seems so funny
 to read your remarks on things that
 seem to have happened so long ago.
 We had the camp outfit despatched to
 Gairo. but all our baggage went on the
 train with us. it is 7 hours from Tema
 to Luxor, but we got off the train at
 Baliana to visit the Temple of Sety I
 & the Osirion at Abydos, & continued
 by a later train arriving at Luxor
 about 10. by the time we got to bed
 we had been on the go for 20 hours.
 & I was not so tired as I am after a
 days shopping in Town. that is
 the wonder of this climate. I have
 not had a single headache, or ever
 been more than lazily tired & yet
 I have never done more (except at hay
 making time) in my life before.

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This is quite a comfortable hotel
& so far we seem to be the only people
staying here. it is bungalow style
& cool & airy. & not at all posh. we
do not change for dinner.

When we come in there is a little arab
boy to dust our shoes on the mat.
& we are waited on by arabs

There are the most gorgeous roses everywhere
I have two huge pots of them on my wash-
stand. in the garden there are enormous
poinsettias, plants as tall as I am.

Our first visit the morning after our arrival
was to Luxor where I drew out £10 without
any fuss at all. Then we explored the temple
of Luxor in the morning. & visited Karnak
in the afternoon. They are both on this
side of the river so we were able to reach
them on foot. & the special permits that
the Imp provided worked like magic. gates
were flung open by bowing arab guards & we
went where we liked.

Dec 16. Today we crossed the Nile & on the
other side engaged a carriage for the day.
this was rather a snag. because the 4 of us
wanted donkeys. but Mr Risdén would not
ride a donkey because he said the one
he rode part way to Tema - had made him

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sore - it was the same animal I had^{9/3}
 ridden all the way to Tema & back again
 3 times the distance he rode. & although it
 took the skin off my sitting arrangements
 I was able to ride in a hard Arab saddle at
 full gallop across the desert the following day.
 so I felt he was making rather a fuss.
 especially as the hire of a sand carriage cost
 250 piastres (£2.10.6.) to be divided among
~~four~~ five of us. then-as donkeys would have
 only cost 25 piastres each. but apart from
 that it was a wonderful day. We visited
 the great Colossi of Memnon the Temple of
 Medinet Habu. the Ramesseum at Thebes
 & the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings. we saw
 the outside of Tut's tomb, but it will not be
 opened until later in the season. we
 visited the Tomb of Sety I. while we were
 there the electric light went out & we had to
 wait in pitch darkness while the guide got
 a lamp. We saw the Tomb of Amenhotep II
 where he still lies in his sarcophagus. also
 the Tomb of Mer-em-Ptah. the King who was supposed
 to have been drowned in the Red Sea.
 We had our lunch outside in a shady spot.
 & a very wild looking dog hovered round
 we coaxed it near with food & finally got it
 to eat out of our hands. it was a wonderful
 thing to see the look of fear fade out of its
 eyes & give place to the look of dog adoration.

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at the feel of a caressing hand. At the conclusion of our visits down these deep tomb shafts we felt rather done, so we asked the Arab guard if we might have coffee. he brought us the most delectable coffee I have ever had. it really tasted like it smells when fresh ground. we drank with noisy sippings much to his delight. Then drove back to the river visiting ~~the~~ the Temple of Hatshepsut on the way. we crossed the Nile in a lovely little dahabie & so back here.

I am sending some of my photos. they do not print them very well here, but I have the negatives & can have better ones done at home. Hope you can read this scribble my pencil has got blunt & my knife is some where deep in my trunk.

I will write to Jack as soon as I get a little time. so far we have been up before seven & not in till dinner time & I have only had time to scribble to you at odd moments.

Love to you both & all friends.

Your loving daughter

Myrtle

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