Anabah il Madfunah 41616=1930.

Dean Mother & Lather.

I am going to try To give you some little account of our exceling journey. I expect you will be able to find the Gasis of Khanga on the map, it is a place very seldon issiled by Tourist's breause of the difficulty of getting there. it is possible to reach it in one day by a single trolly line which was laid across the direct of the casical. approach some long way down the line from Baliana about 20 years ago. They run a little train part way + a trolly the rest of the journa, once a week, the only other way To get there, is as or went by camel. Our our old quide Teld us that as fan as he knows we are the first Europeans to lake the old came trail for 25 years, I never has he known a heard of solutary women attempting it as we did. It's I people tried To discourage us. when Hiss 6 was in bano she mentioned it to D' Junka, the head I the Guman Institute * M. Baraise the hench inspecting Honuments, With did there both to disuade hur. They said it was a most danquous undistaking to Travel arross a caterless country without only a native guide o sovants. They told his all the aufel things that might happen i she came back from his used feeling very depresent about it, especially as she had suggested that Some of the rocky formations on the high desert remind one of pictures of lunar landscapes –

Arabah el Madfunah Feb 16th 1930.

Dear Mother and Father.

I am going to try to give you some little account of our exciting journey, I expect you will be able to find the Oasis of Kharga on the map, it is a place very seldom visited by tourists because of the difficulty of getting there. it is possible to reach it in one day by a single trolly line which was laid across the desert at the easiest approach, some long way down the line from Baliana about 20 years ago. they run a little train part way & a trolly the rest of the journey once a week. The only other way to get there, is as we went by camel. Our Our old guide told us that as far as he knows we are the first Europeans to take the old camel trail for 25 years, & never has he known or heard of solitary women attempting it as we did.

Lots of people tried to discourage us. when Miss C was in Cairo she mentioned it to D^r Junker, the head of the German Institute & M. Baraise^{sic} {Baraize} the French Inspector of Monuments, both did their best to disuade^{sic} her. they said it was a most dangerous undertaking to travel across a waterless country without only a native guide & servants. they told her all the awful things that might happen & she came back from her visit feeling very depressed about it, especially as she had suggested that

a great friend of hers should join us & she had jumped at the opportunity. However we talked it over & then had Sardic in & told him of all the dangers that had been pointed out to us. he said Oh yes certainly such things might easily happen if suitable camels were not taken or if certain precautions were not arranged properly but he would see we had proper camels & everything required. So we cogatated sic, on one side, a Frenchman & a German, both excellent men, knowing the country for many years, but also having decided ideas about a womans^{sic} limitations, on the other side, a Bedawin Arab, a trusted servant & willing & eager to take all the risks with us, & with a firm belief that the English ladies could do anything they attempted, & we finally decided to take an Arab's word & go; Then preparations began; Miss Alexander arrived a few days before our proposed departure, she is charming, a young fo<u>rty^{sic}, very jolly, a writer, making a leisurely journey round the world, to visit all sorts of queer places, she proposes going to India via Persia, after leaving Egypt & expects to take 3 or 4 years over her travels, so you can see she was an ideal companion & delighted to have such an unusual opportunity. she had taken several camel rides in Cairo so as to get hardened for the longer journey

I told you in a former letter how the Harmer let us down over the police saddles o water carries he had promised to lend us. a howight the village confertion to convert 3 pack saddles into riding saddles, we have good reason to believe this failure on the Marmon's pack was a ruse to stop us. he thought in would not go without the proper saddles. I he know there were no Thus To be had, the were about the Turbulent village was mostly trunkern as camels would'it be used in a local rising. With converted saddles, petrol Tins In our water + Two water skins In the men in thought all was prepared. but of channo. The afternoon before we started our guide such word to say he had a belly ach I could not come . propably The belly ache was also provided by the Marmer). Ist Sardic knew of another quide from a further interes, so ve sut to him, o the sporting old boy said he would come, o promised to mech us at the artiance to the wady soon after days the next day. By six o'clock on Sunday morning our cavalcade had assembled, there were yearnels of men. we carried our our presonal effects, rugs to a sack of camel food on our camels, o the four their Took food provisions, our little Tent & the rest of the carnel food , & the men

Took Turns Toride. By Toilock we were on the wad

Jegensetvely specking)

I told you in a former letter how the Marmur let us down over the police saddles & water carriers he had promised to lend us. & how <we> got the village carpenter to convert 3 pack saddles into riding saddles, we have good reason to believe this failure on the Marmur's part was a ruse to stop us. he thought we would not go without the proper saddles. & he knew there were no others to be had, the excuse about the turbulent village was mostly bunkum as camels would'ntsic be used in a local rising. With converted saddles, petrol tins for our water & two water skins for the men we thought all was prepared. but oh dear no. the afternoon before we started our guide sent word to say he had a belly ache & could not come. (probably the belly ache was also provided by the Marmur). but Sardic knew of another guide from a further visit/<village>, so we sent to him, & the sporting old boy said he would come, & promised to meet us at the entrance to the wady soon after dawn the next day.

By six o'clock on Sunday morning our cavalcade had assembled, there were 7 camels & 7 men. we carried our own personal effects, rugs etc & a sack of camel food on our camels, & the four others took food/<water> & provisions, our little tent & the rest of the camel food, & the men took turns to ride. By 7 o'clock we were on the road (figuratively speaking)

4 . is had a Tromendous escort for the first a mile, all the rest Jour sevants, quands friends of the camel men cte came with us. At the entrance To the wady our quide was waiting for us with his camed a superscillions lady who an amusing, though nother troublesome member of The upedition, as she was a dreadful flick, o two of our gentliman carnels fell in love with her, It was a great hisiness getting the camels up the wady, you have seen the photos so you can imagine what it was like getting up to she top. Here we back good bye to our escent with many blessings a good croster for our safety seel out or the guest adventure. our caragan consisted of We the finales, Sardie, our quide, Inch' +8 camets. we amanged our going thus. during the morning treck in walked In about Two hours, I made the men ride our camets, we had rather a job to make them inde while is walked of first but we insisted. at 11 o'clock we stopped for a drink o hiscuits, then on tell 1 oclock when we had lunch. started again 2.30 n 3. & kept on the till 8,30, right through sumset on by hilleast moon light; is had Timed our truck for the full moon of

we had a tremendous escort for the first 4 miles, all the rest of our servants, guards, friends of the camel men etc came with us. At the entrance to the wady our guide was waiting for us with his camel, a superscillious lady who proved> an amusing, though rather troublesome member of this expedition, as she was a dreadful flirt, & two of our gentlemen camels fell in love with her. It was a great business getting the camels up the wady, you have seen the photos so you can imagine what it was like getting up to the top. Here we bade good bye to our escort with many blessings & good wishes for our safety & set out on the great adventure. our caravan consisted of we thre[e] females, Sardic, our guide, 7 <other> men & 8 camels. we arranged our going thus. during the morning treck^{sic} we walked for about two hours. & made the men ride our camels, we had rather a job to make them ride while we walked at first but we insisted. at 11 o'clock we stopped for a drink & biscuits, then on till 1 o'clock when we had lunch. started again 2.30 or 3, & kept on stil[?] till 8,30, right through sunset & on by brilliant moon light; we had timed our treck^{sic} for the full moon of

Ramadan Com men got exemption from fasting during the journey.) The first part of the journey was across stony disect, in parts there was quicke a definite track but there were vart areas where then was no sign of any path cough here & there a fur stones were filled on each other to quide thus, thus II. we also made lith cains as we went, the afternoon heck was the most Trying, we were going due west & the sun shows right in our faces, we work sun glasses, & soon found LE had to cover our nous a mouth's with a handking as our lips a nostrils get so dry a cracky. It was during the full attention spell that is just saw the minage, we would see the sparpting water uppting own the disub sand a few miles ahead of us. the Onals call it Bahn Shailan . 16. sea of Satan. It made one native the mocking one lig of the desert I think we all felt our expedition had a grom side to it. Then came the glory of the sun set, the direct Hooded will golden light the purkest maure. + as the sem dipped below the hoison our sheddows came from behind us a valked in front + we were going by more light, + what a change in the landscape. The golden sand gleaned pately

Ramadan, (our men got exemption from fasting during the journey.) The first part of the journey was across stony desert, in parts there was quite a definite track but there were vast areas where there was no sign of any path except here & there a few stones were piled on each other to guide as we went, the afternoon trecksic was the most trying, we were going due west & the sun shone right in our faces, we wore sun glasses, & soon found we had to cover our noses & mouths with a handkerchief as our lips & nostrils get so dry & cracky^{sic}. It was during the hot afternoon spell that we first saw the mirage, we could see the sparpling water rippling over the desert sand a few miles ahead of us. the Arabs call it "Bahr Shaitan", ie. sea of Satan. It made one realize the mocking cruelty of the desert & I think we all felt our expedition had a grim side to it. Then came the glory of the sun set, the desert flooded with golden light, then pinkish mauve, & as the sun dipped below the horizon our shaddows^{sic} came from behind us & walked in front & we were going by moon light, & what a change in the landscape, the golden sand gleamed palely

I the happatches of limestone were like snow drifts. The first night is camped near the tidley rail. you will see I have marked it on the letthe stell map I have made, We had a meal of work chiefen head, Tomalos, + a slab of nice + deli pudding, + Sardie made us hot Tea (no milk) never have lappined Tee so much before. Then we removed our books + jumpus, crawled into our the bags, our little tent was just sufficient to sheller our heads hom The moon light & give us a simblance of privacy & we stept & stept. no complaints about hard hads a anything. At first thinky we were up. The camets packed, & on the way soon often six. The second days journey ligh us across an immense plain junged wh low sand hills. I seemed as year sport an etunity gossing it but at last er go, into more hoten up winty, it was here we made a discovery. We had noticed lits of hohen pots as we went along. but this place was evened with them, we ramined the area carefully is came To he conclusion it had been a Toman Gamps + that this camel Track was really the remains of an arcust Roman wed from the Gases to the The vally & that they notably had water dumps at

& the big patches of limestone were like snow drifts. The first night we camped near the trolly rail, you will see I have marked it on the little sketch map I have made. We had a meal of roast chicken bread, tomatoes, & a slab of rice & date pudding, & Sardic made us hot tea (no milk) never have I appreciated tea so much before. Then we removed our boots & jumpers, crawled into our flea bags, our little tent was just sufficient to shelter our heads from the moon light & give us a semblance of privacy & we slept & slept & slept. no complaints about hard beds or anything. At s/<f>ive thirty we were up, the camels packed, & on the way soon after six.

The second days^{sic} journey took us across an immense plain fringed with low sand hills, it seemed as if we spent an eternity crossing it but at last we got into more broken up country, & it was here we made a discovery. we had noticed lots of broken pots as we went along, but this place was covered with them, we examined the area carefully & came to the conclusion it had been a Roman Camp & that this camel track was really the remains of an ancient Roman road from the Oases to the Nile vally^{sic} & that they probably had water dumps at

ugalar intervals , always man some out standing rock or to mound. The country grow more & more shange I was like Thousands of Tombs, in orther The quide sand it was called Zigga gat. & from of old the people said immense Treasure was himed leneath the mounds. but the place was dangerous, no man would live in it long crough to steel the Treasure, it was a Tenible country, here not only cours marked our way, but skeletons I carnels our quide printed to one & said it had been his 22 years ago. It had gone mad in the direct + had died show to prain to ballah. I had another. It was sunset before we got strongt The Zigga gat & the effect of the long shaddows card by the mounds was wind, it gave one a hourd Jeeling that something inhuman of materotent was lying in wait wathing. We called it the land of the gods who were dead. we had a very strong feeling that is had no hisiness there what wer. The next part we came to we called the land of The Brontosami, here the mounds were yourseld with attodinary cracked works, wastly like grant putustone monsters that had your to stub

regular intervals & always near some outstanding rock or hi mound. The country grew more & more strange, it was like thousands of tombs, in outline like this.

The guide said it was called Zigga Gat, & from of old the people said immense treasure was buried beneath the mounds, but the place was dangerous, no man could live in it long enough to steal the treasure, it was a terrible country, here not only cairns marked our way, but skeletons of camels our guide pointed to one & said it had been his 22 years ago. it had gone mad in the desert & had died there, but praise be to Allah, he had another. It was sunset before we got through the Zigga Gat & the effect of the long shaddows^{sic} cast by the mounds was weird, it gave one a horrid feeling that some thing inhuman & h malevolent was lying in wait watching. We called it the land of the gods who were dead, we had a very strong feeling that we had no business there what ever.

The next part we came to we called the land of the Brontosauri, here the mounds were crowned with extraordinary cracked rocks, exactly like giant prehistoric monsters that had gone to sleep

Buyond the pelieful sea in came to the land of Wale Milons. This was a vast sandy plain

there & got turned to stone. This is the sort of outline as far as I can remember

[₹]

We camped among these rocks. They were weird & alarming, but one did not feel they were malevolent like the Zigga Gat. That night we had bully beef for supper & the rest of the rice pudding. Our breakfast consisted of hot tea, 2 hard boiled eggs each & an orange & bread.

The outstanding feature of the 3rd day's treck^{sic} was the petrified sea, (our name for it) it was exactly like a rough foamy sea turned to limestone & stretched as far as the eye could see, it was rather rough going for the camels as the surface was all cut into ridges by the sand. it was something like this.

 $[\Re]$

Beyond the petrified sea we came to the land of Water Melons. This was a vast sandy plain

covered by truge round black stones just like giant water metons. where they came from or what they were we have no idea, all the servicing ing works the white timestone we thought of meteoritis. but we examined a chip from one. + it was not heavy enough Towards evening the 30 day we sighted an extra large mound a Tell with a very high port sticking up. The quide did not know it's history but said it had been pet up there To point the way to the gothway of the discent. That night un camped on a rocky plain like a sea show that the lide had left a forgetten to return. the moon was so light that I attempted to take a photo by its light, I havink much hope of any result but thought it would be fun to ting. The 4th last day was the most thritting our quide had soud we should see the gateway lie way down to the vasis) by noon, so all eyes were strained on the horizon at 10:30 we nached a stope (of the songs that were sung the Tales that) we made a short stop for our mid morning repestment or sitting on the ground I noticed the letth flat pellle when of uniform size & shape I puched one up & found

covered by huge round black stones, just like giant water melons, where they came from or what they were we have no idea, all the surround ing rocks where/<were> white limestone. we thought of meteorites, but we examined a chip from one, & it was not heavy enough

Towards evening [on] the 3rd day we sighted an extra large mound or tell with a very high post sticking up. The guide did not know its history but said it had been put up there to point the way to the gateway of the descent. That night we camped on a rocky plain like a sea shore that the tide had left & forgotten to return. the moon was so bright that I attempted to take a photo by its light, I hav'nt^{sic} much hope of any result, but thought it would be fun to try.

The 4th & last day was the most thrilling, our guide had said we should see the gateway (ie way down to the oasis) by noon, so all eyes were strained on the horizon, at 10.30 we reached a slope like this

[🎘]

(Oh the songs that were sung & tales that were told on the journey.

[₹]

we made a short stop for our mid morning refreshments & sitting on the ground I noticed the little flat pebbles were of uniform size & shape, I picked one up & found

After de<s>cending the slope we had another long plain to cross & then quite suddenly topping a slight rise came upon the most marvellous view, we were standing on the edge of a great chain of mountains, below us great clefts & tossed up rocks & beyond a great sandy plain with wonderful dunes & two beautiful isolated mountains standing like sentinels guarding it. r/<M>iles away in the centre of the plain were wee green dots which were the Oasis's sic. Then came the descent, at first it was like a mountain pass winding in zig zaggs^{sic}, the three of us were possitively^{sic} drunk with the beauty & wonder of it, we jumped from rock to rock like mad things, the men too were impressed, down we went the men leading the camels, down & down until we thought we had reached the end, then the guide said he knew a short way, a little rough at first but would save an hour & a half. so we said very good we will go. well we did go!! the very ground seemed to fall away from our feet. it was a sheer sand

about 60

slope, dotted about with rock & boulders; this sketch is <u>not</u> an exageration^{sic}. our guide led the [₹] way, & he & his camel went down like mountain cats. it was simply amazing we were struggling down & there we saw him like a little ant far below & the old devil stopped his camel at the foot & calmly reclined at his ease in its shaddowsic & laughed at all of us. for sheer impudence I think it beat everything. he was a grand old boy

& absolutely tireless, he could do more than any of the younger men. They were furious with him for taking such a dangerous way & he just laughed at them, there was very nearly a scrap up, but fortunately there had been no miss haps & it blew over.

We had really got to the level of the plain at last & there was the promise of water at our next stopping

place - refore we came to it we passed through very wild country as of I had been mangled a rent by carthquakes. Then plan again . then before is a Track hading to a runed bother Moneshy + a WELL. It was manly I o'clock, + Lx had been going with only by hours buck since 6.30. What a joy it was to flop down in the shade of the great well & see our poor shirsly carnels led of to be watered . I how glad we were to drunk our own water ofeel we need not heasure every chop, We had not meanly nached on join mys ind the guide said we had is miles to go a should much thange by & o'clock. after 1 1/2 hours rish we set of again through worderful sanddunes like giant puff balls, very where was sheer branty. The plan, the dunes, the sentine mountains of the qual range that made a chain round us. as the sum set so the colours changed + the shaddows made new forms o orllines. It was a track. at yo'clock we said when is I though ? I the quick said. It is still a little further on. it was. The 15 miles from the Honosty stretched out to 20 + In horn I arrival was 10:30 instead of 8. We had got a pumilt to use the Toverment Park Hors

place, before we came to it we passed through very wild country as if it had been mangled & rent by earthquakes, then plain again, & then before us a track leading to a ruined Coptic Monastrysic & a WELL. it was nearly 2 o'clock, & we had been going with only ¼ hours break since 6.30. What a joy it was to flop down in the shade of the great wall & see our poor thirsty camels led off to be watt/<e>red, & how glad we were to drink our own water & feel we need not treasure every drop. We had not nearly reached our journeys end, the guide said we had 15 miles to go & should reach Kharga by 8 o'clock. after 1½ hours rest we set off again through wonderful sand dunes like giant puff balls. Everywhere was sheer beauty, the plain, the dunes, the sentinel mountains & the great range that made a chain round us. As the sun set so the colours changed & the shaddows^{sic} made new forms & outlines. It was a treck^{sic}, at 7 o'clock we said "where is Kharga?" & the guide said, it is still a little further on. it was, the 15 miles from the Monastrysic stretched out to 20 & the hour of arrival was 10·30 instead of 8. We had got a permitt^{sic} to use the Government Rest House

at thange & we were tothing forward to getting out of all our clothes & having a real wet wash the thought of that wash spund us on. but alas. The guide missed the near entrance as A was at night, I had to Take us all round The Dasis To the main contrares or the further side, it is like a fintified town, on has to go in by special entrances. There we made inquiries. & learnt the rest house was 5 talos of. this was the limit is camped then I there we had nached Khanga which is fell was in itself a great trumph o were content to postform the joys of washing till the neet day. I am going To leave the stry of our day in Khanga Till another letter, then are lets of things I have forgotten to mention in this account, for instance on one part of the trail was a mound that the quide pointed out I said it was the nave of a man In had died on the way, tall our mes each took a stone & cast it on the mound, the idea tring had if each man who passes, adds one stone, in time it will grow to a great monument. We also noting that our camels wor med little estion bags Tied on To Shim hidles then contained

at Kharga & we were looking forward to getting out of all our clothes & having a real wet wash the thought of that wash spurred us on, but alas. The guide missed the rear entrance as it was at night, & had to take us all round the Oasis to the main entrance on the further side, it is like a fortified town, one has to go in by special entrances, here we made enquiries, & learnt the rest house was 5 kilos off. this was the limit, we camped then & there. we had reached Kharga which we felt was in itself a great triumph & were content to postpone the joys of washing till the next day.

I am going to leave the story of our day in Kharga till another letter, there are lots of things I have forgotten to mention in this account, for instance on one part of the trail was a mound that the guide pointed out, & said it was the grave of a man who had died on the way, & all our men each took a stone & cast it on the mound, the idea being that if each man who passes, adds one stone, in time it will grow to a great monument.

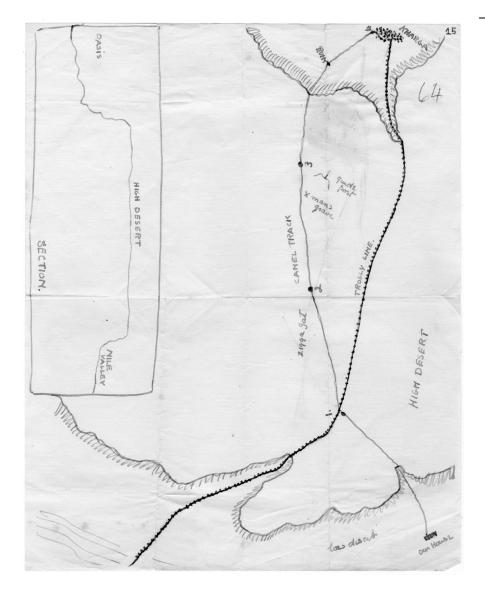
We also noticed that our camels wore neat little cotton bags tied on to their bridles, these contained

little texts from the Koran that Sheikh Abdu Wahid had written specially to protect us all on this journey. they were most effective.

Now for general news. My boots & shoes have arrived, & are most satisfactory. the hair nets also are to hand & Nannie is delighted. I am also glad to hear the wool will soon be ready. I had a letter from Miss Collins a day or two ago, but the one about the Exhibition must have gone astray. I am enclosing a few local snaps. I hope to have the photo's I took on the way to Kharga in about a weeks time. I used 5 rolls of films, I do hope they will be good ones.

I do hope you do not very much mind my staying later than I at first anticifatated^{sic} {anticipated}, we do so want to get the material for the first volume ready. & Beazleys^{sic} failure has thrown a lot of extra work on our hands. I am afraid my letters may give you an idea that we have more play than work, but I assure you it is not so, we have lots of fun, but we do work very hard. Oh the tales I shall have to tell on my return.

All my love to you both also love to friends & please thank Pat & Miss Collins for their letters.



BROOME LETTER 64

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[inset map]	[main map]	
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OASIS	KHARGA	
	RUIN guide post x mans grave 3 guide	
HIGH DESERT	post x mans grave	
SECTION.	CAMEL TRACK	
	2	TROLLY LINE.
NILE VALLEY	Zigga Gat	HIGH DESERT
	low desert	
		Our House