

Address is -
 c/o Post Office
 Tama Girgawya
~~Suez~~ Egypt.
 Tomb of Khenti Ka¹
 Lunch time.
 Nov 28th 1927.

Dear Mother & Father.

There is so little time to write when we get home in the evenings that I am scribbling during our lunch interval. The first night after we arrived in camp I had a most unhappy time. I developed the Egyptian tummy Miss Murray told me about which feels like every sort of bilious^{sic} attack rolled into one general discomfort, & to improve matters I had a slight touch of the sun as well. so in the morning I took the dose of castor oil in my coffee & spent the rest of the day fasting in bed & have since been quite all right.

We rise at dawn, collect our drawing materials & set out for this Tomb which is 2 miles further along the cliff from the one we sleep in. our arab^{sic} bearer Hofny follows with the basket containing

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4/2

our lunch & the two water filterers.
 our way lies along the edge of the cultivation
 each morning we meet the camels &
 bullocks going to work in the fields
 carrying the great wooden ploughs on
 their backs. There is one camel that
 we meet that has a baby camel following
 & it jumps about like a little kid
 & performs the most absurd antics.
 All the animals are so very unafraid
 & docile, the goats brush right against
 one when passing a flock of them, & the
 cows & buffaloes do not move as much
 as a step aside when one passes them.
 Our sleeping quarters are in the cliff,
 facing us lies the whole width of Egypt
 with the Nile running through it.
 behind us beyond our cliff there is
 nothing but desert until one comes to
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[₹] (cliffs. - our tombs - cultivation - Nile)

4/3.

Quite near to the tombs when we are working there is an Arab village just mud houses & palms & a well, every evening the women with their water pots on their heads, tall figures draped in black from head to foot wait by the path to greet us as we go by. Since Miss T & I arrived M^r Harding has risen tremendously in their estimation, as they are convinced we are his two wives -

Yesterday they had a funeral, & from our ^{erie} in the cliffs we were able to watch the whole ceremony unobserved, the hired ~~mourners~~ mourners made the most extraordinary noises, more like yelps than wails.

On our return this evening we are all going to sing 3 blind mice as we go along, for the edification of the villagers.

To-morrow we are giving a dinner

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4/4

party. the head of the local native police is invited. I am told it is polite to make awful noises as one drinks coffee to show ones appreciation. so the visitor ought to be very amusing. I believe we have to make noises too.

Nov 29 I think the work here will last another fortnight. we arrive at about 7 o'clock & work until about 4 o'clock. our bearer Hofny comes with us to carry the things & comes to fetch us. Mahomed stays in camp all the time. He is doing my washing to-day. I presented it to him this morning in my tin basin with a chunk of my lifeboy soap & he beamed with delight. He cooks us the most wonderful dinners each night. we always have glorious soup, some sort of meat or fish, & a sweet. his plain boiled rice is wonderful all light & flaky not sodden at all

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4/5

one day we had chops from a buffalo,
very nice & tender.

A wild cat visited Mr Harding in the
night & drank his washing water,
had a jackal in our dining room
one night, but Mr Ridsen heard it
& chased it out before it could steal
anything.

We walked to work this morning
with an arab^{sic} driving a camel, he told
us she was a very good trotting camel
& could go from here to Cairo in 2 days.

He walked beside us & Miss Camel
ambled on in front quite free. no lead
or bridle or anything on her. she looked
round once or twice to see if we
were coming. we met the baby
camel who seemed inclined to join
our cavalcade, but finding it wasn't
the right mama gave a squeaky^{sic}
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4/6

& tore after its legitimate maternal relative.

We are a very jolly little party & have the most ridiculous fun. one day we were practicing making goat noises in our working tomb

& Harding happened to look out & saw Hofny coming up the cliff to fetch us simply doubled up with mirth. The Arabs all love a bit of fun.

I really must finish this scribble as tomorrow Hofny takes the letters into Tema.

Love to you both.

& all friends

Your affectionate
daughter

Myrtle

Your letter of the 17th
just arrived.
Letters from home
are a joy.

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4/7

Nov 29. Continued.

Such an amusing evening -
 as we were returning from our working
 tomb & passing through the village
 we were informed the Chief of the Police
 was there & craved permission to
 accompany us. we of course expressed
 our delight & were introduced to a
 very dapper little man, in uniform
 & fez very good looking & spoke
 English in a most amusing way.
 we set out in grand style. These
 armed arabs in front scattering the
 people with their flocks of goats
 camels etc out of our path. even
 removing any big stones that might
 be in our way. Then we came with
 the Chief of the Police on foot, & behind
 his personal servants led his two
 arab horses. we proceeded to our
 living tombs & took it in turns to

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4/8

entertain our ~~guest~~ guest while the others got tidied up. Had a very jolly meal. nearly exploded when he sloshed over his coffee.

He is having a special parade in our honour on Thursday & has asked us to breakfast. so am looking forward to a very interesting time. He had got a bunch of prisoners in the village, I suggested using them to make a special path for us. to our work, but as we are not staying here long we declined the honour.

I must close now as it is bed time & Hofney starts off with the mail early in the morning.

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