285 April 16 1934

Dean Mother

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[Arabah el Madfunah] April 16th 1934.

Dear Mother.

I think my last letter told you about my journey & stay at the village in the Gebel Haradi^{sic} {Haridi}. my return was along the strip of desert that lies between the cliffs of the high desert & the cultivation. out there I passed several villages, the people were of the fine desert type of Arab, quite different to the peasant people who work in the fields.

In the first village called Galaweyia {= el-Jalawiyah} I met my old friend Mahommed Kheir, I had heard from the Ombashi that he was stationed there this month, & by some means news had reached Mahommed that I was coming, for he was waiting out in the desert on the look out for us. there were hearty greetings all round. & of course I had to return to Galaweyia with him & drink coffee, & after that he came quite a long way with us & was very reluctant to say good-bye. or in their language. "go in peace." I had lunch that day under a clump of trees

the sheeht of the village came & offered me refreshment I accepted coffee which was delectors. In had a regular barquel spread for my man, Sanchi tells me, he has a sheep killed for him every day. I which he cals what he requires for himself I am questo a gives the rest to the poor proph is the village, my visit was widerty a very great occassion of hope I made all the proper replies 16 the enemonious gicelings deonpliments, It was very hot Travelling along the disul as the fut cliffs cut of the herge so my progress was slower than I had calculated on. I had intended sponding the night at some caves about three miles beyond Swamah which is Sheiht Salik home but it was getting near sunset when we segliced Swamah, + we decided to camp out in the desert there, after getting food , water for the donkers , the camel. before reaching our camping ground we met three of the Soudances camel patrol, they had had instructions to look out for me + pufor any service I might require of them

the sheikh of the village came & offered me refreshments I accepted coffee which was delicious. he had a regular banquet spread for my men, Sardic tells me, he has a sheep killed for him every day. of which he eats what he requires for himself & any guests & gives the rest to the poor people in the village. my visit was evidently a very great occassion & I hope I made all the proper replies to the ceremonious greetings & compliments.

It was very hot travelling along the desert as the hil cliffs cut off the breeze so my progress was slower than I had calculated on. I had intended spending the night at some caves about three miles beyond Swamah {= el-Sawamah Sharq} which is Sheikh Sarbits^{sic} home but it was getting near sunset when we sighted Swamah, & we decided to camp out in the desert there, after getting food & water for the donkeys & the camel. before reaching our camping ground we met three of the Soudaneese^{sic} camel patrol, they had had instructions to look out for me & perform any service I might require of them

they were mounted on splendid while camels I looked magnificent, I asked a few questions about the disub there & they advised me as to a good camping place fice from Scorpions + snakes. They came with me as far as the well when we wanted the animals + Sanchi made tec for every body, & then they rode off again & we went out into the descet for the night. I was so tred that I turned in at once, puparations for bed were very simple. The Onbashi measured out what he thought was my longth & width on the sand, (I must say he was not flattering as to width) I ha & Sandie loosened up the sand o removed any stones. & I scooped out holes for my hip & shoulder. Then the saddh bag was spead over the sand, my hold all rolled for a boulstee & The custion for a pillow & my my for a cook, my sunshade was opened + the mosqueto net draped over it + all was ready. Sandie & the Enbashi relied to them own selected spot som yands away · I just removed my shows & stockings, pulled of my

they were mounted on splendid white camels & looked magnificent, I asked a few questions about the desert there & they advised me as to a good camping place free from scorpions & snakes. they came with me as far as the well where we watered the animals & Sardic made tea for every body, & then they rode off again & we went out into the desert for the night.

I was so tired that I turned in at once, preparations for bed were very simple. The Ombashi measured out what he thought was my length & width on the sand, (I must say he was not flattering as to width) & he & Sardic loosened up the sand & removed any stones. & I scooped out holes for my hip & shoulder. then the saddle bag was spread over the sand, my hold all rolled for a boulster & the cushion for a pillow & my rug for a cover. my sunshade was opened & the mosquito net draped over it & all was ready. Sardic & the Ombashi retired to their own selected spot some yards away & I removed my shoes & stockings, pulled off my

pock & put my nightie our my unductother which were of the scarliest possible. Then I slipped my just into one pochet of the saddle bag. pulled the rug over me, & the mosquelo net down , I was as cosy as anything, I think I must have Jaller asteep at once for I don't remember a thing until some time later Sandie roused me by Telling me that Shihl Soubit had ridden out to enquire if there was any thing he could do for me, I sent a missage to thank him + say I had whything Inequired + that I was too Tued to see him that night, but hoped To say good by entrifore I departed in the morning, I have no idea what the time was then, but the stars were all out & the moon was stining, the men were setting in a little group challing with the visitors. I do not lenow how long they stayed for Isoon went to steep again. but I found is the morning that Shahl Sanlit had hought out a lovely old Pusian rug, some custions + a quiet. (The combashi was a lovely sight woodled up in a pah blue quilt) wer in the disert one cannot

frock & put my nightie over my underclothes – which were of the scantiest possible – then I slipped my feet into one pocket of the saddle bag, pulled the rug over me, & the mosquito net down & I was as cosy as anything, I think I must have fallen asleep at once for I dont^{sic} remember a thing until some time later Sardic roused me by telling me that Sheikh Sarbit had ridden out to enquire if there was any thing he could do for me, I sent a message to thank him & say I had everything I required & that I was too tired to see him that night, but hoped to say good bye <to him> before I departed in the morning, I have no idea what the time was then, but the stars were all out & the moon was shining, the men were sitting in a little group chatting with the visitors. I do not know how long they stayed for I soon went to sleep again. but I found in the morning that Sheikh Sarbit had brought out a lovely old Persian rug, some cushions & a quilt. (the Ombashi was a lovely sight wr/<ro>lled up in a pale blue quilt) even in the desert one can not

quite escape Onale hospitality. I did not wake until the sun rose over the cliffs + shone full in my face, the men brielding a camp fine to boil the water for the Ica for heatfast, so I laged for a little white, then emerged from my saddle bag , slipped my dussing gown on , called Sandu to hing me washing water. adlutions in the disert are rather amusing. Sardic hought the water is an cathun pilla (borrowed from the well) . spound it in a little Trickle while I stoucked my hands + aums I face I as much of my neck as such publicity permitted, I had just finished drying myself , was combing out my hair when Sheekt South shis unch arrived on donkeys To wish me good morning. There was nothing itse I could do but receive them is my nightie , dussing gown!! but fortunately I had on one of my ma long punk silk nightico + my bretean dussing gown, so probably my visitors thought I was wearing my robes of state in their honour. after greating me they went to say how do you do to the men, so I sirred the opportunity & quickly got into my pack

quite escape Arab hospitality.

I did not wake until the sun rose over the cliffs & shone full in my face, the men <were> building a camp fire to boil the water for the tea for breakfast, so I lazed for a little while, then emerged from my saddle bag & slipped my dressing gown on & called Sardic to bring me washing water. ablutions in the desert are rather amusing, Sardic brought the water in an eathern^{sic} pitcher (borrowed from the well). & poured it in a little trickle while I slouched my hands & arms & face & as much of my neck as such publicity permitted, I had just finished drying myself & was combing out my hair when Sheikh Sarbit & his uncle arrived on donkeys to wish me good morning – there was nothing else I could do but receive them in my nightie & dressing gown!! but fortunately I had on one of my nice long pink silk nighties & my Cretean sic dressing gown, so probably my visitors thought I was wearing my robes of state in their honour. after greeting me they went to say how-do-you do to the men, so I siezed^{sic} the opportunity & quickly got into my frock

+ completed my latet behind my sunshade, then joined the party round the camp fix isat or a cushion or the Presian my & cal two pishly boiled 1995 that Shihl Soulit had hought specially for my hearfast. During conversation I heard there was a boptic church of the Roman pariod quite near. so when we had all finished our meal. (Shuhl Soulis , his unch had healfast with us) we went to visit it it was a dingy little church very arcient, with a manuelous old metal studded don which the priest opened with a curious wooden kay, the lick work was undoubtedly Roman , it was well worth a uset, of course I had to take where with the priest & there was a regular sort of reception in the little countyand . I many miniations To visit the places in the neighbourhood, but Shiht South protected me from too much importantly on the part of aspiring hosts. I finally I iscaped back to my camp. where I superintended the packing , then said good by a To my kind friends . I stanted of or my return to Sokaq

& completed my toilet behind my sunshade, – then joined the party round the camp fire & sat on a cushion on the Persian rug & eat two freshly boiled eggs that Sheikh Sarbit had brought specially for my breakfast. During conversation I heard there was a Coptic church of the Roman period quite near, so when we had all finished our meal. (Sheikh Sarbit & his uncle had breakfast with us) we went to visit it. it was a dingy little church very ancient, with a marvelous old metal studded door which the priest opened with a curious wooden key. the brick work was undoubtedly Roman & it was well worth a visit, of course I had to take coffee with the priest & there was a regular sort of reception in the little courtyard. & many invitations to visit other places in the neighbourhood, but Sheikh Sarbit protected me from too much importunity on the part of aspiring hosts. & finally I escaped back to my camp. where I superintended the packing & then said goodbye to my kind friends – & started off on my return to Sohag

after an hours ride I reached the caves where I had originally intended To camp, I snambled up the cliff & sport a good time investigating, some of the tombs had reliefs & inscriptions + some paintings on the walls, & there were mun mis all over the place, some whole I some in fagments I found a nice piece of mummy wrapping to take back to the clows outlon boy who returns to England to school the end of this month. I had my lunch that day in the shade of a hidge our a dy canal, this is the afternoon or to allmin when I saw the weavers again, they are working hand , I hope will complete ou order before the end of the month, I cannot get odd longths. They sell only by the piece that comes from the boom, & they make the lengths about 5 or 6 metus, as required for the native garmonts. but I have bought som pieces that they weave for Landkuchiefs + you would give Mas Penton Two of them. I mached Sohag in time for Tea , I did onjoy the luxury of a bath.

After an hours^{sic} ride I reached the caves where I had originally intended to camp, I scrambled up the cliff & spent a good time investigating, some of the tombs had reliefs & inscriptions & some paintings on the walls, & there were mummies all over the place, some whole & some in fragments I found a nice piece of mummy wrapping to take back to the eldest Oulton boy. who returns to England to school the end of this month.

I had my lunch that day in the shade of a bridge over a dry canal, then in the afternoon on to Akhmim when I saw the weavers again, they are working hard & I hope will complete our order before the end of the month, I cannot get odd lengths, they sell only by the piece that comes from the loom, & they make the lengths about 5 or 6 meters, as required for the native garments. but I have bought some pieces that they weave for handkerchiefs & you could give Mrs Pinton two of them. I reached Sohag in time for tea & I did enjoy the luxury of a bath.

The next day I spent mostly with the Ouctons, I went in the morning to drunk coffee with the Onbashi, she showed me various curios from the Sondon. I gave me some to for there also a little botth of sweet smelling oil exhacked for sandle wood, The following day Inclining To camp. M. Gullon drove me ove o'h o Hany had funct with us a amice amonged a little calular ment in the afternoon in horour of he birthday, we had the nature players, + dazens. & camel riding the. Now I am settling down to the yol again, feeting much better for the change. I very much enjoyed my trip on my own. it was not too long of did not feel Inceded a companion as I should for a longer Time, It was very good for me to have to depend entirely on my knowledge of making for these whole days, for in that time I did not mech a single preson who could speak anything ERE of really got on quite well. though I still find it difficult to follow all that they

The next day I spent mostly with the Oultons, I went in the morning to drink coffee with the Ombashi, & he showed me various curios from the Soudan. & gave me some tea from there also a little bottle of sweet smelling oil extracted from sandle wood {sandalwood}, The following day I returned to camp. Mr Oulton drove me over & he & Harry had lunch with us & Amice arranged a little entertainment in the afternoon in honour of her birthday, we had the native players, & dancers. & camel riding etc.

Now I am settling down to the job again, feeling much better for the change. I very much enjoyed my trip on my own. it was not too long & I did not feel I needed a companion as I should for a longer time, It was very good for me to have to depend entirely on my knowledge of Arabic for three whole days, for in that time I did not meet a single person who could speak anything else & I really got on quite well. though I still find it difficult to follow all that they

say To me as they use so many words outside my vocabulary a a slight difference in pronuncination makes a known word unrecognizable. This is the man difficulty, analic is consists of consonants only. The vowel sounds are put in according to the case or times the one privily grammatical, the unedated fild get them rather mixed up + one word may be pronounced these or four different ways in alfacel villages.

This fetter scens to have run to great longth & I must close it for the post today. I expect in shall close camp Len the end of this most of I shall try to get a boat the first week in May

John offictionale daughter Mystle.

P.S. The suret peas have nown arrived. I cepted the customs tagged them.

say to me as they use so many words outside my vocabulary & a slight difference in pronuncination makes a known word unrecognizable. this is the main difficulty, Arabic is consists of consonants only — the vowel sounds are put in according to the case or tense etc & are purely grammatical, the uneducated get them rather mixed up & one word may be pronounced three or four different ways in different villages

This letter seems to have run to great length & I must close it for the post today. I expect we shall close camp here the end of this month & I shall try to get a boat the first week in May.

Lots of love to you both. Your affectionate daughter Myrtle.

P.S. The sweet peas have never arrived. I expect the customs bagged them.