

Arabah el Madfunah
April 23rd 1930

Dear Mother

This is the first week I have missed writing to you on a Market day. I am hoping this will not be too late to catch the mail after all. Yesterday we went over to visit the Ellisons at Nag Hammardi^{sic} & I was absolutely tired out when we got back. & before we left here we had rather a bad case to attend to, so there was 'nt^{sic} any time to write. I will tell you the history of our day of Rest!!!?

In the morning directly after a disgracefully late breakfast at 6.30, we tidied up the big box of drawing materiels^{sic} & put away all the finished signed drawings, this was rather a long job. then a patient came. he was a poor old man with a dreadfully burnt arm. from wrist to shoulder & part of the torso round the arm pit. we got Sardic to cut the sleeve right out of his galabia as it was in scorched rags & undescribly filthy, he'd been in that ~~condition~~ condition two days before he came to us. so you can perhaps imagine the sort of job we had. there was no chance of getting the dirt off. so all we could do was to pack the poor old chap up in cotton wool soaked in carron oil & trust to the dirt coming away when the dressing is removed. This is how it happened. - I think I explained to you how the peasants live out in the fields after the flood water has quite gone down. they build little enclosures

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with the long straw called bouse. these straw stalks are about 7 or 8 ft high so they make splendid enclosures. the family live there while they work in the fields, & at night the cows, the goats sheep etc all are quartered inside with the people. the Egyptian government in its wise forethought? have made a rule that these straw enclosures must be built side by side instead of each mans shelter being in the centre of his own little bit of land. the Gippy official considered massed grouping was a protection from robbers but his mind never considered a worse evil - fire. as a result, a woman lighting a fire for her evenings cooking in a high wind set fire to the straw wall. the wind carried the flames & not one enclosure, but 10 were burnt. this poor old man has lost his cow & two calves & all his grain - & got severely burnt himself trying in vain to save his beasts. We wanted to take him in to Bahiana with us on our way to Mag H - & get the doctor to look at him. but the mention of the fire reduced him to abject terror. & we were afraid the jolting in the car would perhaps be too much for him. so we called on B Abbas on our way & gave him a polite invitation to tea this afternoon & hope to produce the old man afterwards later. The D came & had tea with us & was very pleasant, we asked him if he would look at our poor old patient. when he saw him he said his only hope was to go to the hospital at Sohag first thing tomorrow morning as irrisipulis (cant spell it) was already setting in & unless he had the necessary injections

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and treatment he would be dead in four days - so we have arranged for a car to take him into Baliana & the D^r will see he is sent straight to the hospital by the first train. (Sohag is about 2 hour journey by train from Bahere)

It is the best we can do. there is no proper treatment to be had nearer. but we are both feeling very sad & depressed about it

I will have to tell you about the visit to Naj^{sic} H - in my next letter

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

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