

155 1
Arabah el Madfunah

العرابا المدفون

Dear Mother.

I am once more "Lady of all I survey" with a body guard of three coal black soldiers all my very own. Amice has gone with Linda Holey to Chicago House at Luxor to use their dark room with enlarging lantern etc so as to make some enlargements from the plates that Linda has been taking, they will be away about 4 days & in the meantime I am carrying on on my own.

I had to drive Joey all the way from the station at Baliana by myself (except for Sandic in the back seat) & shall have to go in to meet them again on Thursday to meet them. I think Sandic had doubts as to my capabilities as driver over this bad bit of desert, for when we had successfully mounted a specially difficult sand hill he uttered a heart-felt "Praise be to Allah!" I really felt I ought to be congratulated instead of Allah!

Arabah el Madfunah

[mid-December 1931 or perhaps 20 December 1931
(= letter misplaced, should be between 157 and 158)]

[۴]

Dear Mother.

I am once more "Lady of all I survey" with a bodyguard of three coal black soldiers all my very own. Amice has gone with Linda Holey to Chicago House at Luxor to use their dark room with enlarging lantern etc so as to make some enlargements from the plates that Linda has been taking, they will be away about 4 days & in the meantime I am carrying on on my own.

I had to drive Joey all the way from the station at Baliana by myself (except for Sandic in the back seat) & shall have to go in to meet them again on Thursday to meet them. I think Sandic had doubts as to my capabilities as driver over this bad bit of desert, for when we had successfully mounted a specially difficult sand hill he uttered a heart-felt "Praise be to Allah!" I really felt I ought to be congratulated instead of Allah!

155²

Arabic lessons are still going strong. The poor schoolmaster often wears a very worried look, I am afraid we ask such very unreasonable questions such as. "what would it mean if that sign was not there? or why do the letters sometimes lie down flat & sometimes stand on their heads" or why has it a long tail here & no tail at all there" he pours forth rapid & quite ununderstandable technical replies, until he realizes we can't understand a word of it. & then just shrugs his shoulders & waves his hands & says. "but either way it is just the same" or else "such a thing is not possible" Nannie, who can follow both sides of the conversation is convulsed with mirth & has to be rebuked for unseemly giggling in front of the schoolmaster as of course our dignity has to be preserved what ever happens. still in spite of these difficulties we are getting on. yesterday I wrote Amice a letter entirely in Arabic (with Nannie's help). Sardinia was overcome with admiration at the address on the envelope when I gave it to him for

Arabic lessons are still going strong. the poor schoolmaster often wears a worried look, I am afraid we ask such very unreasonable questions such as. "what would it mean if that sign was not there? or why do the letters sometimes lie down flat & sometimes stand on their heads" or why has it a long tail here & no tail at all there" he pours forth rapid & quite ununderstandable technical replies, until he realizes we can't^{sic} understand a word of it. & then just shrugs his shoulders & waves his hands & says. "but either way it is just the same" or else "such a thing is not possible" Nannie, who can follow both sides of the conversation is convulsed with mirth & has to be rebuked for unseemly giggling in front of the schoolmaster as of course our dignity has to be preserved what ever happens. still in spite of these difficulties we are getting on. yesterday I wrote Amice a letter entirely in Arabic (with Nannie's help). Sardinia was overcome with admiration at the address on the envelope when I gave it to him for

155³
 the post. he examines all the letters now to
 see where they are going, & is very upset if
 we hav'nt^{sic} written anything in Arabic
 he has asked me to write him a letter when I return
 to England.

Lots of love to you both also
 to Pat & Mrs Childs

your affectionate
 daughter
 Myrtle
 [R]

the post. he examines all the letters now to
 see where they are going, & is very upset if
 we hav'nt^{sic} written anything in Arabic
 he has asked me to write him a letter when I return
 to England.

Lots of love to you both also
 to Pat & Mrs Childs
 your affectionate
 daughter
 Myrtle
 [R]