THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Feb 20 # 1930.

PT EXPLORATION SOCIETY'S CAMP ARABAH EL MADFUNAH BALIANA, UPPER EGYPT

Dear Mother & Father

I am going to try to describe our day in the casis . I told you how we got as for as Ishanga but were too Tired to attempt the celia 5 titos to the rest house. In the morning we did not rise as early as we did on the trail. it was past sizen when we crawled out of our rugs, we made a hasty toilet had beak fast saw the came's loaded + set off. The Soverment Rest House is built on a little hill close to an old boptic burial place; the quands were looking out for us & they showed us all the accomodation, a firing room. Tall + chains 2 hed worms each with two bods, chans & was hard + pages to hang clothes on. Table appointments of a solid nature were also provided. Our camels all sat down out side som goods were carried in. Gen first demand was for helpeater, we had a glinious wash all over, & got ins mal clean clothes & fell like giants repeated. Our first apedition was to a boptic Monastry. it was hill of mud licks, & inside was a mass of tiny allo, each with a vaulted root; It was on a high hill . The view from it was superb. when we looked across the plain + sand duries to the distant mountains it was difficult to believe be had made such a journe, in one day. After the monastry we insided the boptic Tombs. They wan like Tiny chapels. square with a dome. The inside was painted with conventional designs & some inblicat subjects. Thus was the setting next to St Police + a few other dignified ded gonthemen. There were very shange pretines of the Ark , the flood the . We append sunch of these

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY. TEMPLE OF SETI I. ABYDOS EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY AND THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.

#### EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY'S CAMP ARABAH EL MADFUNAH BALIANA. UPPER EGYPT.

## Feb 20<sup><u>th</u></sup> 1930.

Dear Mother & Father.

I am going to try to describe our day in the oasis, I told you how we got as far as Kharga but were too tired to attempt the extra 5 kilos to the rest house.

In the morning we did not rise as early as we did on the trail, it was past seven when we crawled out of our rugs, we made a hasty toilet, had breakfast, saw the camels loaded & set off. The Government Rest House is built on a little hill close to an old Coptic burial place; the guards were looking out for us & they showed us all the accomodation<sup>sic</sup>, a living room, table & chairs, 2 bedrooms, each with two beds, chairs & washstand & pegs to hang clothes on. Table appointments of a solid nature were also provided. Our camels all sat down out side & our goods were carried in. Our first demand was for hot water, we had a glorious wash all over, & got into real clean clothes & felt like giants refreshed. Our first expedition was to a Coptic Monastry<sup>sic</sup> it was built of mud bricks, & inside was a mass of tiny cells, each with a vaulted roof; it was on a high hill, & the view from it was superb, when we looked across the plain & sand dunes to the distant mountains it was difficult to believe we had made such a journey in one day. a/<A>fter the Monastery we visited the Coptic Tombs, they were like tiny chapels, square with a dome. the inside was painted with conventional designs & some biblical subjects, there was Eve sitting next to St Peter, & a few other dignified old gentlemen, & there were very strange pictures of the Ark & the flood etc. We exploled/<explored> several of these

Tombs , then came down the hill + walked a short distance to a fine timple built by Darius the Pusian it was in the usual Egyptian style of anchitecture, but the walls use decorated with sund shange gods, bisides the usual groups of Osicis, Isco, + Hous, cTr. We decided to pay a politic call on the goonne of Khanga need to donkeys were procened. & of we Trated, back own the 5 latos we had come in the morning. The governor recieved at us most politely + regaled us with coffee inquired about our journey a copussed regul at the shortness of our stay in his domain. he said we must be sure To visit the ancient part of Khanga, + The kindly gave one of the quards instructions to show us consthing of interest. so, after a decent introat we made our adices & set of sight seeing once more. The quard took us down lots of quainel old sheets & along curious dark Tunnets that Tunsied & Tunned with other darke Tunnel's leading of for them, only here " there a shaft cut in the roof To admit a faint gleam I light. The whole place is like a rabbet warren. The walls built of mad snoofed own with the trunks of palm trees & houses built above Show. The place was built in this curious way as a protection against invading bands of buinshis, Senusi etc. the proph would take upings in these underground places & block them against their incrises, the last raid took place in 1914. since this it has been fairly praceable. I the underground streets are used more for protection from the heat than anything else. Gen guard Took us to see a mat weaver, a most premetice affair of ropes , sticks. I bought a jolly rush praying mal for 11 PT, it looks so the hanging on the walk of my woon hus. We reached the outskuts of the old village , shere the grand showed us one of the springs, it was a large food with the water bubling up in the centre, they call it the type of the Sheekel.

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Tombs. & then came down the hill & walked a short distance to a fine temple built by Darius the Persian, it was in the usual Egyptian style of architecture, but the walls were decorated with several strange gods, besides the usual groups of Osiris, Isis, & Horus, etc. We decided to pay a polite call on the Governer<sup>sic</sup> of Kharga next, so donkeys were procured, & off we trotted, back over the 5 kilos we had come in the morning. The Governer<sup>sic</sup> received up us most politely & regaled us with coffee, inquired about our journey & expressed regret at the shortness of our stay in his domain, he said we must be sure to visit the ancient part of Kharga, & he kindly gave one of the guards instructions to show us everything of interest. so, after a decent interval we made our adieus & set off sight seeing once more. The guard took us down lots of quaint old streets & along curious dark tunnels that twisted & turned with other dark tunnels leading off from them, only here & there a shaft cut in the roof to admit a faint gleam of light. the whole place is like a rabbit warren, the walls built of mud & roofed over with the trunks of palm trees & houses built above them. The place was built in this curious way as a protection against invading bands of Dervishes, Senusi etc, the people would take refuge in these underground places & block them against their enemies, the last raid took place in 1914. since then it has been fairly peaceable, & the underground streets are used more for protection from the heat than anything else. Our guard took us to see a mat weaver, a most primitive affair of ropes & sticks. I bought a jolly rush praying mat for 11 PT, it looks so jolly/<fine> hanging on the wall of my room here.

We reached the outskirts of the old village. & here the guard showed us one of the springs, it was a large pool with the water bubbling up in the centre, they call it the Eye of the Sheikh.

#### EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY'S CAMP ARABAH EL MADFUNAH BALIANA. UPPER EGYPT.

The quand who was showing us round invited us into his house we want up stans (outside) to a room where his wife , another woman were sitting, there were just must mets or the flom. I had a very pleasant convertion, we admined their dusses , they offered is daily uplied that ours were much nice. They offered as dails & manged, & what we did not eat them we were Striged to Take away with us.

due to trave trange the following morning, is had timed our insit so as is be able to return that way, as we could not space the Time from our work to make the joinney by camel both ways. The station was out three miles from our Real House, but the rail passed above by it soon quide said puhaps they would stop the train specially for us. so on our return ride we stopped to see the station master, we asked if it would be amanged us to get on the Train man the said house . The said of just that it was quite impossible 15 stop the Train . he inquired when we came to khange as he had not seen us the prontoes week An the train came in . We replayed that we had arrived the previews mght by camels from Bahapa: In held up his hands in engener + said . It her artainly the hair shall be stopped for you so we bought our tickets there a pranged to be waiting by the sail a little before you back the following morning. We had a very mee suppor of snambled eggs. liscuts, nanges & date. & went to led carly, it was strange to be in a real bed again but I did'it steep he'll as well as orthon. The doub. (I forgot to tell you in my task letter how my nice did same man used to sing chabric songs to me by moonlight

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The guard who was showing us round invited us into his house we went up stairs (outside) to a room where his wife & another woman were sitting, there were just rush mats on the floor, & we were invited to occupy the finest of these, so down we squatted, & had a very pleasant conversation, we admired their dresses & ornaments & they politely replied that ours were much nicer. they offered us dates & oranges, & what we did not eat then we were obliged to take away with us.

We made inquiries about the weekly train which was due to leave Kharga the following morning, we had timed our visit so as to be able to return that way, as we could not spare the time from our work to make the journey by camel both ways, the station was over three miles from our Rest House, but the rail passed close by it, & our guide said perhaps they would stop the train specially for us. so on our return ride we stopped to see the station master, we asked if it could be arranged for us to get on the train near the rest house, he said at first that it was quite impossible to stop the train. he inquired when we came to Kharga as he had not seen us the previous week when the train came in. we explained that we had arrived the previous night by camels from Baliana, he held up his hands in amazement & said, "Oh then certainly the train shall be stopped for you" so we bought our tickets then & there & arranged to be waiting by the rail a little before 7 o'clock the following morning.

We had a very nice supper of scrambled eggs, biscuits, oranges & dates, & went to bed early, it was strange to be in a real bed again but I did'nt<sup>sic</sup> sleep half as well as out on the desert. (I forgot to tell you in last letter how my nice old camel man used to sing Arabic songs to me by moonlight

& judging by the Twenkle in his are I fancy they were love songs. ted to was so very nice orespectful that I am since they were quet proper sall shy ought To be. To had a heartight deep win I sang very softy as he walked along. Some of the men made up songs as they vert along, the this. Of the way is long. the desut is her a thirsly a ve que for our homes. they use the same words over a over again he ways he ways of singing - bit to continue mystory -We were up a packed in time to calch out train which stopped inth many snorts prefts. It was a furny little affair more like a tram that a train & had sengers is get it up to the high deach. The pass we went up by was a more gradual ascent , had been blasted out of the rocks in places to make way for the rail, the scener was lovely but did not compare in any way with the gorg was pass we came in by the risk of the journey was dull a univer full. at 3.30 we left the train + continued by trolly car. the line ended a letter way from Nag Hammandi, & our fiends the Ellesons had wint accu To meet us, so we paid them a issil for a belated The rearlined on year to Baliance aniving about so ocheck at night. At break fast the next day we had a used from Ahmed thatin to congratulate as on our safe ration , in the wining the Omder + sweet thus called, the village had widently been in a great state of anxiety during our absence. The following Tuesday our camel's came back & the men all came for their monay, we gave then 21 PT aday to 10 days + 50 PT as backsheesh. The old quick had 25 PT a day + 100 PT (21) as his backsheest. he made long calculations & looked his who us PT note our carefully & remarked. This will not go very far. as ! have to contrain the Omdeh call my village to alchate my return ." We were amused at this. but did it stimp up any more, he was nally very phased with his pay. is not very oftin the gets the chance

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& judging by the twinkle in his eye I fancy they were love songs, but he was so very nice & respectful that I am sure they were quite proper & all they ought to be. he had a beautiful deep voice & sang very softly as he walked along. Some of the men made up songs as they went along, like this. Oh the way is long. the desert is hot & thirsty & we are far from our homes. they use the same words over & over again but vary the ways of singing – but to continue my story –

We were up & packed in time to catch our train which stopped with many snorts & puffs. it was a funny little affair more like a tram than a train & had 3 engines to get it up to the high desert, the pass we went up by was a more gradual ascent & had been blasted out of the rocks in places to make way for the rail, the scenery was lovely, but did not compare in any way with the gorgeous pass we came in by. the rest of the journey was dull & uneventfull<sup>sic</sup>. at 3.30 we left the train & continued by trolly car, the line ended a little way from Nag Hammardi<sup>sic</sup>, & our friends the Ellisons had sent a car to meet us, so we paid them a visit for a belated tea, & continued on by car to Baliana arriving about 10 o'clock at night.

At breakfast the next day we had a visit from Ahmud Ibrahim to congratulate us on our safe return. & in the evening the Omdah & several others called, the village had evidently been in a great state of anxiety during our absence. The following Tuesday our camels came back & the men all came for their money, we gave them 21 PT a day for 10 days & 50 PT as backsheesh, the old guide had 25 PT a day & 100 PT (£1) as his backsheesh. he made long calculations & looked his extra 100 PT note over carefully & remarked. "This will not go very far, as I have to entertain the Omdah & all my village to celebrate my return." We were amused at this, but did'nt<sup>sic</sup> stump up any more, he was really very pleased with his pay, its<sup>sic</sup> not very often he gets the chance

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY. TEMPLE OF SETI I. ABYDOS EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO. ARABAH EL MADEUNAL of carning more that to PT a day & his tip was Equal to 5 days pay . but of course it is very seldon an Anab will admit he is satisfied. my old camel man was the aception, he was dely hird with his pay + said so with many May god marcase your goods" "Allah pussion your creeklencys" de The old quick was a wonder ful cheractic. he knows all the arcient names & folk love of the desert. we got him To Tell us all the different nomes for the places we went through & Sandie wole them down in analic. & then we get Mannie to translate into English, As we went along this dd quide used To relate thrilling fairy Takes to the mon. Hiss & get a sort of idea of what he was telling, but the analie the old takes are told in a rather different to that used a ordinary discourse & not carry for an Emopean To Jollow. One day he was remarkally basy. in saw him squat down , high sudicting about in the sand + this come unning with a bundh of something in this scarf. the did this sweet Times , I sa finally discovered he was collecting ancient dired come ldung . In word this to make a file when we camped at night. I made a splendid blage, oth online lasted a long time afterwards, it was a worder fel fricture. the group round the fire a the flomes lighting of the circle of sutting come is + the strange bestero back ground of Tumbled weeks. it did it seen like not life at all is seemed to be living some wonderful romance in another planch

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of earning more than 20 PT a day & his tip was equal to 5 days pay, but of course it is very seldom an Arab will admit he is satisfied. my old camel man was the exception, he was delighted with his pay & said so with many "May God increase your goods" & "Allah preserve your excellencys<sup>sic</sup>" etc

The old guide was a wonderful character, he knows all the ancient names & folk lore of the desert. we got him to tell us all the different names for the places we went through & Sardic wrote them down in Arabic, & then we got Nannie to translate into English, As we went along this old guide used to relate thrilling fairy tales to the men, Miss C got a sort of idea of what he was telling, but the arabic<sup>sic</sup> the old tales are told in is rather different to that used in ordinary discourse & not easy for an European to follow. One day he was remarkably busy, we saw him squat down & begin scratching about in the sand & then come running with a bundle of something in his scarf. he did this several times, & we finally discovered he was collecting ancient dried camel dung. he used this to make a fire when we camped at night. it made a splendid blaze, & the embers lasted <red> a long time afterwards, it was a wonderful picture, the group round the fire & the flames lighting up the circle of sitting camels & the strange backaro background of tumbled rocks. it did'nt<sup>sic</sup> seem like real life at all, we seemed to be living some wonderful romance in another planet

Thank you so much for the nice little stunder cap + hikday isster. I think I would like to want until Iget tom for the nel celebration

I am not in need of note paper or cruckspis welly as there is always a good supply of this paper for way body. I found my block handy as it is as ruled, a I would write with it on my lonce in any old place.

Strong. I tope they have nailed night through into the oppus as lasterid.

We are to contration royalty need week. In Junes of Romanie is visiting Alydos. I he shall have to essent in entintaining in. storing the chavings the . we have been practicing on contrays not carry in high boots . The Suren of the Bulgians is the To come in March. date not yet fixed. I must be of To bed now

appleed at night , it made a splinded blage, oth controm colid a long time aprecipas. It was a worde fet friction.

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suiting canch + the shange deaton had ground of Tumbled morties. it does not seen tike and life at all in accounted to the

litting some worderful roman in anthe plance

lets of love to you both. Tom affectionale daugelie Mystle.

**BROOME LETTER 65** 

Thank you so much for the nice little slumber cap & birthday wishes. I think I would like to wait until I get home for the real celebration.

I am not in need of note paper or envelopes really, as there is always a good supply of this paper for everybody, I found my block handy as it was ruled, & I could write with it on my knee in any old place.

My new boots are very comfortable & look nice & strong, I hope they have nailed right through into the uppers as I asked.

We are to entertain royalty next week. the Queen of Romania is visiting Abydos, & we shall have To assist in entertaining her, showing the drawings etc. we have been practising our courtseys, not easy in high boots.

The Queen of the Belgians is due to come in March. date not yet fixed.

I must be off to bed now lots of love to you both.

Your affectionate daughter Myrtle.