

Arabah el Madfunah.
March 4th 1936.

371
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Dear Mother.

We are safely back from our visit to the Red Sea had a simply gorgeous time. We started Feb 21st as soon as we could get all the baggage packed on to Joey. we took out the back seat & put our bedding in its place, then there was our bags, food, water, petrol & oil for Joey & chicken wire in case we stuck in the sand. Sardic sat in the midst of it with his gun. (Have made a copy of our map here.) If you look at the map you may be able to follow our route. I expect Badaker would give the names of the various places, we drove South along the Nile valley as far as Qift (this is spelt various ways) there we left the cultivation & struck into the Arabian desert, we had to stop at the camp of the Frontier Police & they looked over our equipment, enquired about our destination etc They also asked us to deliver some letters to the sheikh of the tribe of Bedouin who are living beside the well on the route

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2
367

To Quisier, our outward journey started along the way we went on our first trip to the Red Sea. We camped for the first night on some nice fine sand a little way off the track, we eat our supper. cold chicken & rice pudding by star light, then curled up in our blankets & slept until dawn. Then Sardic made hot tea for breakfast, & we eat our hard boiled eggs & bread (no butter) & drank our tea & started off on our journey. we came to the old Roman Well that we had seen before but had no time to examine, this time we explored it thoroughly & climbed down the circular stair case that runs all round it till we reached the water level. the water was quite clean & warmish. it looked so strange to look up the shaft of the well & see Sardic looking down at us. we seemed such a very long way down. & we were both very much out of breath when we reached the top.

We stopped at the Bedouin encampment and

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3

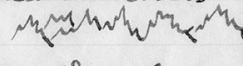
delivered the letters to the sheikh & had a little chat with some of the men. Then once more on our way, about 20 miles from Jussein we left the route we had followed formerly & took the track that branched off to the left. This passed along the foot of a range of mountains. They were decorated in horizontal stripes of red & orange rocks. I took a distant photograph of them the first trip perhaps you remember it. We noticed this time that there was quite a lot of the curious desert herbage growing in the wadys. We crushed some of it under our wheels & could smell its aromatic perfume. How these plants survive with only the moisture from the air & perhaps an occasional sprinkle from a rain cloud in the early spring is more than we can understand. There seems to be no earth, only stones, rocks, & sand.

A few miles along this new track we had a great thrill. Two gazelle sprang up in front of the car & went leaping over the rocks until they were out of sight, it was amazing to see how they


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4

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 & watched until they had disappeared.
 shortly after this we stopped for lunch. eggs.
 bread & dates & oranges this time. We rattled &
 bumped along the rough track the rest of the
 day, passing through wild mountainous country,
 their outlines are not the gentle swelling curves
 of our mountains, but rough crags like the
 rocks on our Cornish Coast magnified hundreds
 of times. you get a sky line like this 
 the highest being over 2 thousand feet. The colours
 seen close are, the red of jasper, pink of granite
 yellow & orange of sandstone, the silt from them
 forming the floor of the wadis, & in the distance
 paling to mauves & blues. after 53 miles from
 the point where we left the Qusseir track we
 came to the Phosphate mines. There were a
 few bungalows for the European engineers &
 some native dwellings, we did not stop as the
 dust from the mine was horrid & we were eager
 to reach the sea which was only a few miles

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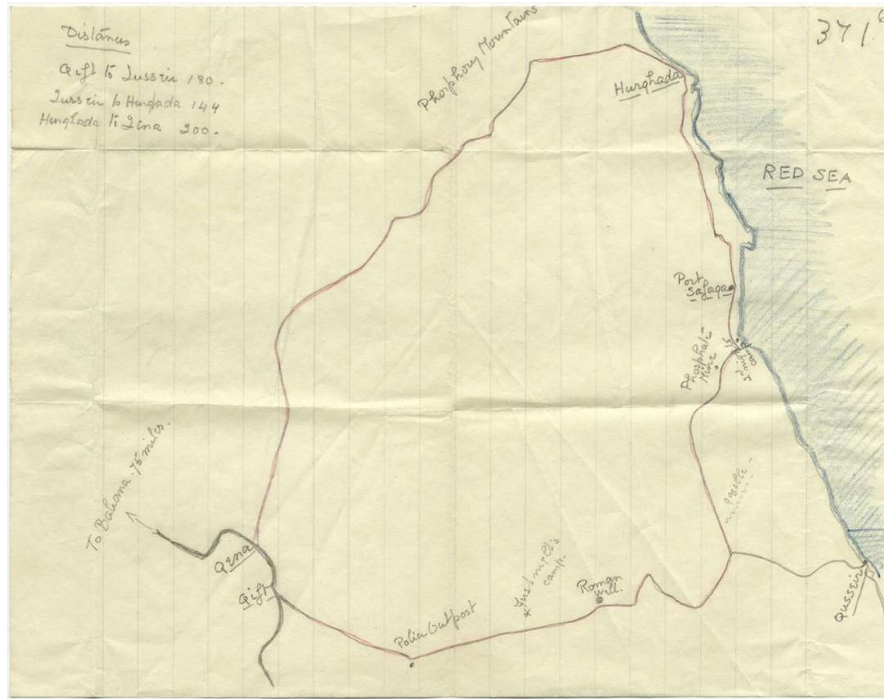
off. we were on the sea shore at 4:30. & by 4:35
 we were in the sea. it was wonderful. warm
 sea. shelly beach ~~was~~ surrounded by a
 fringe of rugged mountains, it did not seem
 like a terrestrial landscape we felt we must
 be in the moon or Mars. we played about
 on the shore till dusk collecting shells, coral
 etc also some sharks teeth. (we did not venture
 out beyond 3ft) then we made our camp among
 some sand dunes & were soon asleep.
 Now it is post time & I will continue our adventure
 in my next letter

Lots of love to you & father
 your affectionate daughter
 Myrtle.

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Distances.

Qift to Qusseir 180.
 Qusseir to Hurgada 144
 Hurgada to Qena 200.

Phosphory^{sic} Mountains

Hurgada

RED SEA

Port
Safaga

Phosphate
 Mine

2nd night's
 camp

To Baliana. 75 miles.

Qena

gazelle –

Qift

Police Outpost

First night's
 Camp.

Roman
 Well.

Qusseir