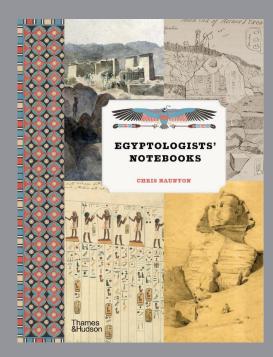
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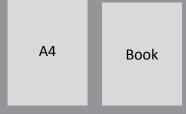


# Egyptologists' Notebooks Chris Naunton

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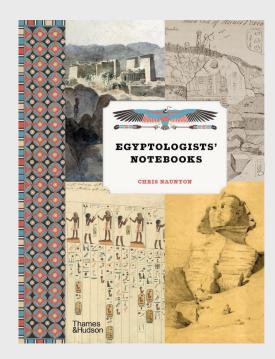
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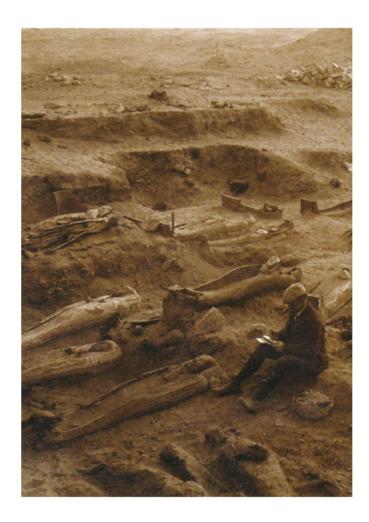
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#### INTRODUCTION

# These Rough Notes



'These were the graves of the ancient Aegyptians .... Under every one ... descents are discovered like the narrow mouthes of wells ... some wel-nigh ten fathoms deepe; leading into long vaults... hewne out of the rocke, with pillars of the same. Betweene every arch the corpses lie ranckt one by another, shrouded in a number of folds of linnen, ... the brests ... being stained with Hieroglyphicall characters.' GEORGE SANDYS

← Ematinturem nam, anihilia intissi ncipsam estiatia cus, earit eveliquae debis segui untotat aceatem adit, sit asimusa quundicil es entio quo beaque dolupit iatusciunt omnis endi aut ium remqui simin poreiusam, sequisqui te nos sequam, sint. Uci doles enest, erionsequas corumquas nimilib ersped eveliquam fugias volorer ferioriandia ipsam fuga. Nam qui a sunt. Ecum is sin rem quam et volupta tureperti utenis.

Vast, agricultural plains and canals criss-cross the Delta; rocky wadis rule the high desert. Silent boats drift gently down the Nile, while travellers make their way across pristine desert sands on foot or on a camel's back. Ubiquitous sunshine and baking heat give way only at the rapid and spectacular setting of the sun to the crisp cool and crystal clarity of the night skies. Hear the distant chanting of the holy man; the braying of a mule; the lapping of the water at the river's edge; the crunch of the loose limestone scree as the adventurer ascends into the mountains where the dead are buried.

This is Egypt, as it has been for thousands of years. And nowhere are its natural beauty and man-made wonders captured better than in the private scribblings and sketches of the travellers who first set out to explore it.

There was a time when Egypt was so little known to the West that ancient Greek and Roman accounts were the best available guides to what the modern visitor was likely to encounter. Imagine landing on the shores of Alexandria, where Strabo promised 'most beautiful public precincts and also the royal palaces...building upon building', only to find it had shrunk to a fraction of its former glory, its fabled monuments lying in ruin, though still visible in every direction. A short journey through the canals and marshes of the Delta to the far side of the crumbling splendour of Cairo - a relative newcomer on the landscape. but nonetheless centuries old itself - would grant the thrill of glimpsing the pyramids for the first time. First spied from a distance, their massive presence and the immensity of the ancients' achievement in building them must have become ever more apparent with every step forward on the long approach to meet them. Think of the dawning realization: you are standing on the ground of the ancient capital city of Memphis, seat of the Biblical kings of Egypt, or among the 'hundred gates' of Homer's city of Thebes. And yet the locals are entirely unmoved by the historic wonders lying all around them - indeed, they seem utterly bewildered by the strange foreigners' delight in these monuments, and still more so by their desire to capture them in notes and sketches.

This was the earliest travellers' experience of Egypt. All were entranced by the beauty and majesty of the country's natural landscape, and its harmonious relationship with the remains of tombs cut into the natural rock of hillsides and remote wadis. They saw ancient temples and cities gently consumed by drifting sand, as well as the buildings and trappings of modern occupants living in and around them, and were gripped by the urge to document the magnificent things they had discovered. Without recourse to photographic equipment they wrote descriptions, often lyrical and wistful for that lost world they saw traces of, but above all, even obsessively, they drew and they painted, copying the strange symbols and architectural feats they encountered. As more and more intrepid adventurers began to make the journey up the Nile, each sought to improve on the records of those who had gone before, their surveys more comprehensive, ever more accurate. As the records began to accumulate, scholars were encouraged in their desire to understand this great but mysterious civilization, and in particular to read the inscrutable inscriptions they found on the walls of temples and tombs and on all manner of curious and beautiful objects (many of which had begun to travel home with our adventurers, and could be

Chrester Resugh Notes 9



← Ernatinturem nam, anihilia intissi ncipsam estiatia cus, earit eveliquae debis sequi untotat accatem adti, sit asimusa quundicil es enti oquo beaque dolupit iatusciunt omnis endi aut ium remqui simin porelusam, sequisqui te nos sequam, sint. Uci doles enest, erionsequas corumquas nimilib ersped eveliquam fugias volorer ferioriandia i psam fuga. Nam qui a sunt.

so much more to see: 'I had seen a hundred things, while a thousand others had escaped me'.

One of Napoleon's last acts before leaving Egypt was to decree for the Commission an expedition southwards. They set off in two groups, following arguments over who should be allowed to go. It took them only four weeks to reach Aswan, the winds and water level in August being ideal for swift travel upstream, and then returned to Thebes where the met the advance party of engineers, discovering them feeling abandoned by Napoleon's departure and concerned that the remaining scholars may have thought they had perished. Although the party was composed of specialists from a variety of backgrounds – artists, engineers, astronomers and geologists – all ultimately were required to contribute the mammoth task of recording of the decoration on the walls of temples such as those of Karnak.

Among the many who contributed sketches perhaps the finest artist was André Dutertre a series of fine portraits including one of Murad, two scenes of Philae, statue in the forecourt at Karnak, and general views of Asyut and Minya. Perhaps none however would play a greater role than Edmé François Jomard (1777-1862) an engineer, geographer and antiquarian who was not only a member of the Commission but played a prominent role editing the resulting publication. He was only twenty years old when the Commission left France but contributed sketches of Antinoopolis, Beni Hasan, and the Faiyum. More importantly he provided descriptions of most of the monuments encountered between the First Cataract and Cairo and several excurses to boot. The full title of the published work was Description de l'Égypte, ou Recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Égypte pendant l'expédition de l'armée française and was published between 1809 and 1829. It was divided into studied of ancient Egypt, modern Egypt, and natural history.

The publication was still incomplete at the time of the decipherment of hieroglyphs by Champollion. Jomard opposed Champollion's theories and was his enemy throughout Champollion's career. The Description did not play a major role in the decipherment therefore not least as the signs had been copied by the savants without knowledge and too quickly to be very accurate (thus providing the opportunity for subsequent expeditions including Champollion's to improve on them), but the publication represented a far more comprehensive and scientific record than any that had gone before, and stimulated an enormous amount of interest in Egypt and its ancient monuments. It was a landmark achievement.

Dominique Vivant Denon

#### **Edward William Lane**

1801–1876 British Arabist and Egyptologist

Lane was the leading scholar of Arabic in Europe and made three prolonged visits to Egypt. He joined Robert Hay's expedition between xxxx and xxxx, but also travelled independently to Egypt's monuments. He prepared a monumental 'Description of Egypt' for publication, but it would only appear many years after his death.



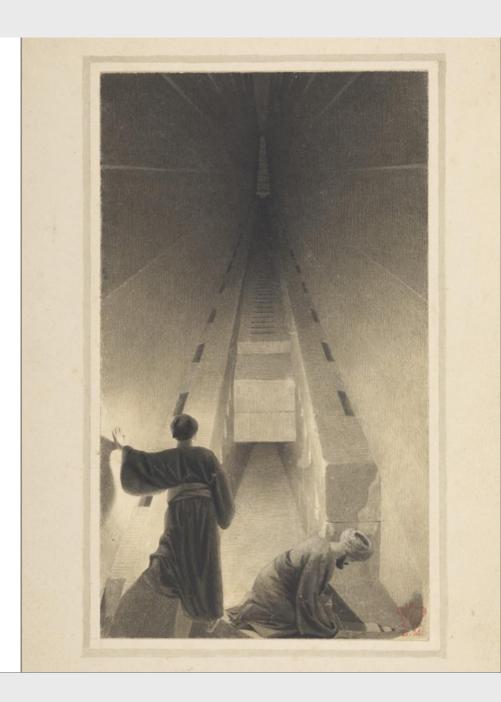
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Edward William Lane was born in Hereford and educated at the grammar schools of Bath and Hereford before following his brother into a career in engraving in London. His health declined while living in the capital, however, and he decided to find a way to spend time in warmer climes, a common doctor's order in the 19th century. He became fluent in Arabic, which he had begun to study when he moved to London, and journeyed to Egypt in 1825. The voyage, aboard a brig named Findlay, took two months. Lane had high hopes as he caught his first glimpse of the country that would occupy him for most of the rest of his life: 'As I approached the shore, I felt like an Eastern bridegroom, about to lift up the veil of his bride, and to see, for the first time, the features which were to charm, or disappoint, or disgust him. I was not visiting Egypt merely as a traveller, to examine its pyramids and temples and grottoes, and, after satisfying my curiosity, to quit it for other scenes and other pleasures: but I was about to throw myself entirely among strangers; to adopt their language, their customs and their dress; and, in associating almost exclusively with the natives, to prosecute the study of their

Lane's preparation in his Arabic studies meant that he was able to immerse himself into the local culture, adopting the traditional Turkish dress and habits. His great nephew, Stanley Lane-Poole, wrote that he 'was able, as scarcely one other European has been, to mix among the people of Cairo as one of themselves, and to acquire not only the refinements of their idiomatic speech and the minute details of their etiquette, but also a perfect insight into their habits of mind and ways of thought. The Spirit of the East is a sealed book to ninety-nine out of every hundred orientalists. To Lane it was transparent.'

He also mingled with the prominent British contingent, becoming well acquainted with Robert Hay (see pp. xxx-xx) and John Gardner Wilkinson (pp. xxx-xx). The latter in particular became a lifelong friend and the two, both immersing themselves entirely in the local customs, referred to each other by adopted Arabic names: Wilkinson became Isma'eel, and Lane Mansoor. The issue of dress was a sensitive one among the British at this time, the British Consul-General, Henry Salt, having issued a proclamation stating that the Consulate could offer no protection to British subjects adopting Oriental dress – though many did so anyway. Like many of his contemporaries, Lane took a slave girl, Nefeeseh, as a companion and would eventually marry her in 1840.

Lane visited the pyramids of Giza for the first time on 8 October 1825. He was not ready to undertake a thorough survey, but paid a flying visit, to take the edge off his ardent curiosity'. He climbed to the summit of the Great Pyramid during the night, and was rewarded with 'a sight such as one hardly sees twice in a life time...the moon rose and lighted up the eastern side of the nearer pyramid with a magic effect. Two hours more and the sun had revealed the plain of Egypt, and Lane had been already amply rewarded for the dangers and trouble of his





† Ernatinturem nam, anihilia intissi ncipsam estiatia cus, carit eveliquae debis sequi untotat aceatem adir, sit asimusa quundicil es entio quo beaque dolupit iatusciunt omnis endi aut ium remqui simin poreiusam, sequisqui te nos sequam, sint. Uci doles enest, erionsequas corumquas nimilib ersped eveliquam fugias volorer ferioriandia ipsam fuga. Nam qui a sunt.

observations and explications of other aspects of the country that he came across during his journey. A sketch of a group of Egyptian dancers, reproduced as an engraving in the published volume but in glorious colour in the original, is accompanied by his description of their performance – 'these young girls of nature, with transparent clothes, do not hide their emotions; what they experience they express to the audience and cause them to feel it' – and provides a few bars of musical notation for some of the music he heard, which was accompanied by 'chanting in unison and clapping of hands'. Some of his scenes of the local landscape and activities are positively idyllic, such as those of the towns of Mallawi ('Melawi el Arich') and

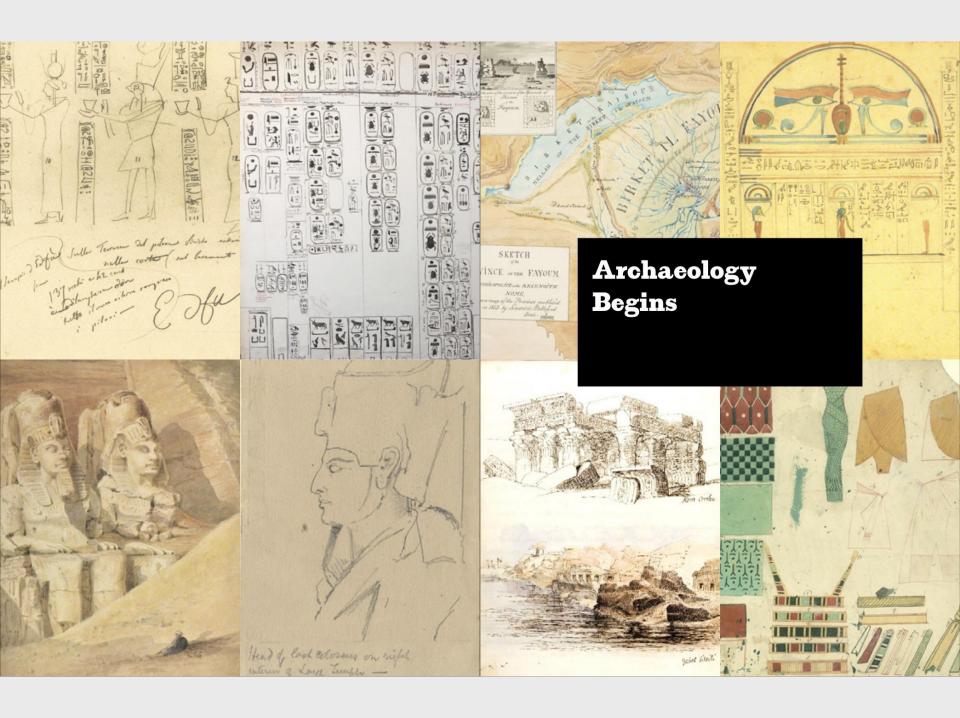
➢ Ernatinturem nam, anihilia intissi ncipsam estiatia cus, earit eveliquae debis sequi untotat aecatem adit, sit asimusa quundicil es entio quo beaque dolupit iatusciunt omnis endi aut ium remqui simin poreliusam, sequisqui te nos sequam, sint. Uci doles enest, erionsequas corumquas nimilib ersped eveliquam fugias volorer ferioriandia ipsam fuga. Nam qui a sunt. Ecum is sin rem quam et volupta turperit utenis.



Assyut ('Syout'), or a scene of shipbuilding on the banks of the Nile at Derr; others, like his view(s) the slave market, less so, though it/they illuminate(s) this thankfully forgotten aspect of life in Egypt that was nonetheless part of the Egyptian experience for some of our explorers. Indeed, Robert Hay and Edward William Lane found their wives there.

Horeau is perhaps most celebrated for his contribution to the history of architecture. None of his buildings has survived, but in any case he is best known for his visionary designs that were never realized, including a submission for the Crystal Palace in London and another for a tunnel running underneath the channel between England and France. His interest in architecture is reflected in his drawings of the ancient monuments he saw in Egypt and Nubia, particularly in his series 'Comparaison des différents ordres Egyptiens'. The architect's sense of vision is also evident in his imagined reconstructions of Thebes and Edfu as they would have appeared in ancient times, perhaps the most striking of all his drawings.

Comparison of Horeau's original sketches with the illustrations as published in his *Panorama* is fascinating. Some were reproduced in glorious, full colour, others in the form of black and white engravings. The originals are clearly the work of a gifted artist and accurate observer, but are scruffier, perhaps hurried and more impressionistic



#### Giovanni Battista Belzoni

1778-1823 Italian explorer and engineer

Belzoni, a former circus strongman, removed antiquities from Egypt's archaeological sites on behalf of the British Consul-General, Henry Salt. He also carried out his own excavations, discovering numerous tombs in the Valley of Kings, most importantly that of Sety I.



Giovanni Battista Belzoni was born in Padua and studied engineering in Rome. In 1803 he moved to London to join his brother Francesco and found employment as a circus strongman; he was an impressive 6 feet 7 inches (2.01 metres) tall. A chance meeting with Ismael Gibraltar, an agent of Mohamed Ali Pasha in Malta in 1814, was to set him on a new career path. Gibraltar suggested that Ali might find a use for Belzoni's knowledge of hydraulics. In 1815 Belzoni met Burckhardt and Drovetti with whom, at this point, he was on good terms. The following year he was recommended by Burckhardt to Salt (probably at the cost of good relations with Drovetti). Alongside his engineering knowledge and physical strength, a mixture of persuasiveness and determination allowed him to navigate the perils and pitfalls of dealing with the local administration - cashefs, defterdars and the local population whom he would need as his labour force. These qualities would also prove crucial in dealing with his rivals, which frequently brought him in to conflict with them sometimes even at gunpoint, and ultimately led to a truce (see Thompson on JGW)

Belzoni's great physical strength, in a time before mechanized lifting technology was readily available in remote regions, proved a boon to his value to the Consul-General in the retrieval of heavy stone monuments. On his way back from an unsuccessful attempt to clear the great temple at Abu Simbel, he was able to remove a colossal bust of Ramesses II from that king's mortuary temple, the great Ramesseum at Thebes, which the French agents of Drovetti had assured him was an impossible task. Yet Belzoni removed the statue, known as the 'Younger Memnon', with the minimum of fuss: in fifteen days it had been transported to the Nile ready for its journey northwards, ultimately to London.

Belzoni then visited Aswan and Nubia intending to open the temple of Ramesses II at Abu Simbel, but faced with uncooperative locals and a shortage of money and food he abandoned the effort after just seven days. He returned downstream to Karnak, where - while waiting for the Younger Memnon to be transported downstream to Cairo - he discovered twenty lion-headed goddess statues at temple of Mut, six of which were intact. At this time he also carried out his first work on the Theban West Bank, discovering the tomb of Ay in the western branch of the Valley of Kings. He was himself somewhat disappointment with its contents, writing 'I cannot boast of having made a great discovery in this tomb', having been unable to identify its intriguing owner. A short while later he found a second tomb in the same area, which contained the mummies of eight individuals, probably belonging to a family of 22nd Dynasty date. Such discoveries would make headlines around the world today, but Belzoni would not be satisfied until he had found the tomb of a great royal, and so he focused his efforts on the main branch of the Valley. He was swiftly rewarded with success, discovering the tomb of Mentukherkhepeshef,



<sup>→</sup> Ernatinturem nam, anihilia intissi ncipsam estiatia cus, earit eveliquae debis sequi untotat aecatem adit, ist asimusa quunidiel es entio quo beaque dolupit iatusciunt omnis endi aut ium remqui simin porelusam, sequisqui te nos sequam, sint. Uci doles enest, erionsequa scrumquas nimilib ersped eveliquam fugias volorer ferioriandia ipsam fuga. Nam qui a sunt. Ecum is sin rem quam et volupta tureperit utenis.



† Ernatinturem nam, anihilia intissi ncipsam estiatia cus, earit eveliquae debis sequi untotat aceatem adit, sit asimusa quundicil es entio quo beaque dolupit iatusciunt omnis endi aut ium remqui simin poreiusam, sequisqui te nos sequam, sint. Uci doles enest, erlonsequas corumquas nimilib ersped eveliquam fugias volorer ferioriandia ipsam fuga. Nam qui a sunt.

Aware that the classical authors had described many more tombs in the Valley than were known in modern times, he resolved to begin uncovering the missing ones. In October, he found the tomb of the first king of the 19th Dynasty, Ramesses I. It had a beautifully decorated burial chamber, 'tolerably large and well painted' in Belzoni's estimation, with a red granite sarcophagus in the centre. Belzoni found two mummies inside the sarcophagus, but neither was that of the king. The tomb seemed not to have been completely finished: one would normally expect further chambers in the tomb of a king, and the decoration on the sarcophagus had not been carved into the stone as was the norm, but applied in yellow paint, and with numerous errors. As the founder of the Dynasty, and therefore not of royal blood himself, Ramesses may have come to the throne late in life and ruled only for a short period of time, perhaps two or three years, which might explain why his tomb wasn't grander.

In any case, Belzoni clearly still wasn't satisfied, and moved his team a little further up the same branch of the Valley. Here, at last, he made a discovery of the magnitude he had hoped for: the tomb of Ramesses I's successor, Sety I, one of the greatest of all pharaohs, who re-established Egypt's territory in Syria-Palestine and commenced massive building projects, notably at the sites of Karnak and Abydos (although all this was unknown to Belzoni at the time – he believed the tomb to belong to a 'Psammuthis'). This was the longest tomb ever constructed in the Valley of Kings, its passages stretching over 450 feet (137 metres), and beautifully decorated throughout. Fragments of the king's burial equipment littered the floor of the tomb, including the remains of numerous shabti figurines, small statues that acted as the servants of the deceased in the afterlife.

The single most spectacular discovery in the tomb was that of the king's sarcophagus. It was found in the vaulted burial chamber, not in its intended position but lying over a staircase leading to a roughly cut passageway (the end of which was only, finally, reached in 2007). The lid had been removed and smashed into fragments, some of which Belzoni found close to the tomb entrance, and the king's body was missing. What remained was the sarcophagus box, a masterpiece of craftsmanship carved from a single enormous piece of translucent Egyptian alabaster and decorated with finely carved hieroglyphic texts and accompanying images from various religious texts, principally the 'Book of Gates'. This text divides into twelve sections, one for each hour of the night. The gates themselves were depicted on the sarcophagus at fearsome scale, guarded by snake-like creatures with names such as 'Bloodsucker' and 'He Whose Eyes Spew Fire'. The deceased king would have to pass through all of them on his journey to the afterlife.

Belzoni removed the sarcophagus from the tomb and it was transported to Alexandria, and from there to England on the steamship Diana. Although Belzoni had acted on his own initiative in the Valley of Kings he was still the agent of Henry Salt, and so the sarcophagus became part of Salt's collection, and was destined to be sold when it reached England. Relations between Salt and Belzoni had become strained by this point, Belzoni wanting — quite reasonably — greater credit for his discoveries. An arrangement was reached between the two: Belzoni would receive half the proceeds of the sale over



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#### Marianne Brocklehurst

1832-1898 British traveller, antiquarian and collector

Brocklehurst visited Egypt several times in the late 19th century, witnessing the development of archaeology from treasure-hunting to scholarly pursuit. She met and became great friends with Amelia Edwards in the course of her travels, and would later support the Egypt Exploration Fund as well as displaying her own collection of antiquities to the public, raising awareness of ancient Egypt in England.



Ernatinturem nam, anihilia intissi ncipsam estatala cus, earit eveliquae debis sequi untotat accatem adit, sit asimusa quundicil es entio quo beaque dolupit iatusciunt omnis endi aut ium remqui simin porelusam, sequisqui te nos sequam, sitt. Uci doles enest, erionsequas corumquas nimilib ersped eveliquam fugias volorer ferioriandia ipsam fuga. Nam qui a sunt. Ecum is sin rem quam et volupta tureperit utenis.

Marianne Brocklehurst was born in Macclesfield, England, in 1832. Her father, John Brocklehurst, was an MP for Macclesfield and a wealthy silk manufacturer, enabling the family to travel abroad. Brocklehurst set off to Egypt in 1873 with her lifelong partner, Mary Booth. They met Amelia Edwards (pp. xxx–xx) en route to Egypt and subsequently sailed up the Nile with her in a flotilla of sight-seers. Edwards refers to the pair fondly as 'the two MBs' in her popular account of her own travels.

Brocklehurst exemplifies a certain sort of traveller to Egypt in the second half of the 19th century: wealthy enough to indulge their interest in ancient culture by purchasing 'antikas', and well-placed to observe important developments that were taking place in the country's archaeological landscape. This was a time when numerous artefacts were being found and monuments being cleared. Brocklehurst, like many of her fellow travellers, was motivated to generate interest in Egyptology back home, which she achieved not by publishing her diaries, as Edwards did, but by collecting antiquities for public exhibition and funding archaeological expeditions to the country.

Along with Mary Booth, Brocklehurst's party on her first visit to Egypt included her sixteen-year-old nephew Alfred and a footman named George, who took to the customs of the country so naturally that she remarked 'one would have sworn that he and Egypt were friends of old, and that he had been brought up on pyramids from his earliest childhood.' The group landed at Alexandria on 27 November 1873, and travelled by train to Cairo three days later. They settled into Shepheard's Hotel – the traditional waystation for wealthy European travellers – and took the opportunity to explore the city while negotiations over the choice of dahabiyeh and crew commenced. At Giza, Alfred 'made the ascent' of the Great Pyramid, while the MBs 'were content to visit the Tombs and ramble about the Sphinx with an attendant train of Arabs and do occasional bazaar.' and set off with Amelia Edwards, who chartered the Philae.

Brocklehurst's diary opens a window onto the day-to-day experiences of a Victorian traveller touring a route that was becoming well-trod (or sailed). There are frequent references to the difficulties of navigating the river in convoy – "We are unkindly bumped by the Philae and left on a sandbank' – but there were some advantages: 'Still racing and chasing with the Philae and Fostat into Assouan but just at the last we stick on a sand bank in a high wind and cannot get off till the Philae sends some natives for assistance.' Brocklehurst's diary entries are ... Alfred's constant attempts to gun down the local wildlife was a frequent distraction: 'We spend the afternoon among Karnac's immense halls and gorgeous ruins. It is very splendid. Alfred shoots a fox and thinks more of it than the temples, naturally.' Sometimes, this pastime had disastrous consequences: 'A. shoots a native instead of his quail – he quails! But the native recovers and the village is satisfied with three shillings backsheesh, which seems cheap for a man.' Certainly, the tour

