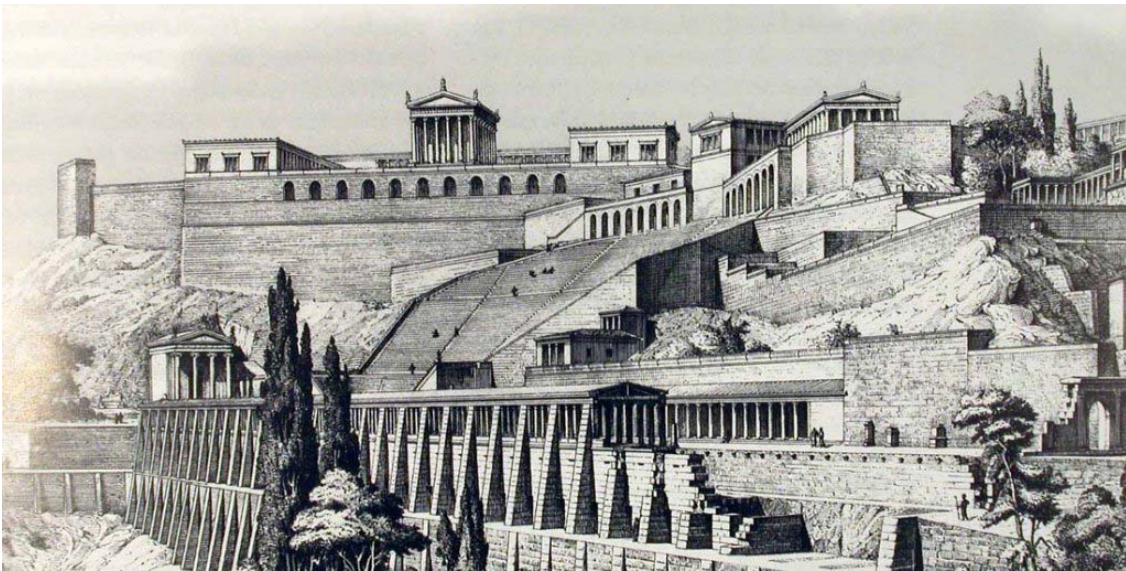


ASTENE

ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF TRAVEL
IN EGYPT AND THE NEAR EAST

BULLETIN



NOTES AND QUERIES

Number 49: Autumn 2011

just knowledge, can never be based only on facts directly linked to a particular problem. So thank you all for the papers which you have given here, and for expanding my horizons.

It was wonderful to see all of you in Oxford. We shall meet again in Birmingham at Aston University in two years' time. I wish you all a safe journey home.

Jaromir Malek

ASTENE Bursaries

ASTENE has always offered bursaries to enable attendance at the Conference. These are open to all members irrespective of age. The bursaries cover the cost of the conference, but not travel. Bursars assist with a range of important administrative jobs to ensure the smooth running of the conference, as well as presenting a paper. This year we were pleased to be able to offer five bursaries: Amr Omar from the American University in Cairo gave a paper on Pascal Coste; Nagihan Haliloglu from Istanbul talked about Evliya Çelebi in the Levant; Elvan Topalli from Bursa informed us about Turkish painters who studied in Paris; Tessa Baber from Cardiff presented her research on 'mummy pits', a focus for early travellers and source of many antiquities; and Jacke Philips from SOAS discussed images by David Roberts and the route of the Luxor Canal.

Amelia Edwards Exhibition

ASTENE is very grateful to Somerville College for very generously putting on a display of watercolours by Amelia Edwards for the Conference. Amelia Edwards bequeathed her general library, papers and paintings to the College. Some of the paintings were engraved as illustrations for *A Thousand Miles Up the Nile*. Those on display included views of landscapes and monuments in Egypt and Nubia, England, Wales, Germany and Italy.

Egypt in the Victorian Parlour: E.L. Wilson's virtual tour.

ASTENE members were launched upon an immersive 19th century visual journey to Egypt and the Middle East by Prof. George L. Mutter.

Donning special coloured glasses to see the images in 3D, we were treated to a premiere showing of rarely seen, newly digitized, stereophotographs by the Philadelphia photographer Edward Livingston Wilson who

travelled to the Holy Land in the winter of 1881-1882. Going up the Nile by khedival steamer and dahabiyeh then overland by camel through Sinai to Petra and Palestine it was a grand tour indeed! Accompanied by William Rau, who did most of the actual photography, Mr. Wilson documented the trip specifically for an audience of armchair travellers who would purchase and view his "Scenes in the Orient" stereocards. These are original photographic prints mounted as stereo pairs on salmon mounts embellished with Wilson's name written in Arabic.



Wilson and Rau separately published serialized accounts of their journey, which when combined with the sequentially numbered stereoviews create a first person annotation of the stunning scenes as encountered en route.¹ It was the first known use of dry plate photography in Egypt, an advance which liberated the photographer from the necessity of a portable darkroom in the field, thereby permitting greater freedom of movement and spontaneity than previously possible.

Arriving in Cairo in January 1882 by way of Alexandria, Islamic and pharaonic monuments are balanced by everyday life. Street scenes populated by Egyptians going about their business are punctuated by poignant vignettes. When accosted by a dozen donkey boys at the Kasr el Nil bridge, Wilson re-established order by lining them up in to take their smiling picture. Women were more elusive. Because the unveiled female visage was traditionally absent from public life, he had to offer a cash reward for the woman willing to bare her face to the camera. Success ensued, immortalized by paired shots of a young woman astride her donkey in the street: one with, one without, the veil. Largely due to these unflinching efforts we are treated to snapshots of local people and ways of life throughout. Beggars, guards, messengers, fantasia dancers, religious and political figures, and even real

lepers are all there.

A highlight was that Emile Brugsch who was an old friend of Wilson's, allowed him to photograph the royal mummies discovered a few months earlier in the royal cache of DB320. Sprawled openly on the floor of the central salon of the Boulak Museum, the wrapped encased mummies had yet to be installed in display cabinets. Brugsch and Gaston Maspero then accompanied Wilson's party as far as Luxor, where together they entered the original tomb still containing scattered debris of the rapid clearance that had taken place six months before. Rau caught Maspero, Brugsch at the mouth of the shaft, flanked by the robber Mohammed Abd er Rassul himself holding the actual rope used to first enter the tomb. For the past 117 years, this now famous scene had only been known from derivative steel engravings.² There is mention of a shot of Brugsch sitting in the burial chamber, which appears now to be lost.

Images presented were compiled by Prof. Mutter and his collaborator Bernard P. Fishman of Rhode Island, as part of their ongoing digitization of a collection of 24,000 stereoviews, some of which will be posted online at their website www.Photoarchive3D.org ASTENE members have much to look forward to!

¹ Published in serial form as "Echos of the Orient" (Wilson) and "Photographic Experiences in the East" (Rau) in the magazine *Philadelphia Photographer*, 1882-1883.

² Mutter GL, Fishman BP. "Lost" photographs of Edward L. Wilson: The American who documented the discovery of the Royal Mummies cache. *KMT A Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt* 2009; 20:60-68.

In the footsteps of William Sherard and Paul Rycaut: ASTENE in Turkey

Brian Taylor led the tour which was organised by Elisabeth Woodthorpe through McCabe's. We were pleased to be joined by several members who had not been on an ASTENE tour before. Although many travellers were mentioned, two recurred with particular frequency: Sir Paul Rycaut and William Sherard, both of whom served as consul in Smyrna, modern Izmir.

Sir Paul Rycaut (1629-1700), who was the subject of Sonia Anderson's conference paper, was born in London into a Dutch family that had settled in the late 16th

century. His *Present state of the Ottoman Empire* was one of the most important studies of the subject in the late 17th and 18th centuries. After several years working for the ambassador, Heneage Finch, 3rd Earl of Winchilsea, Rycaut was appointed as consul at Smyrna in 1667 and remained there until 1678. He travelled around western Turkey, correctly identifying Thyateira and rediscovering Laodicea in 1669. He copied inscriptions, and sent cuttings and seeds to Oxford.



Sir Paul Rycaut, an engraving by Robert White after the painting (1679) by Sir Peter Lely (National Portrait Gallery)

William Sherard 1659-1728 was born in Leicestershire. Sherard attended Merchant Taylors' School in London (1674-7), and then St John's College, Oxford. Pursuing his botanical interests in Paris (1686-88) and Leiden, he was then employed by Sir Arthur Rawdon at Moira, co Down, probably as botanical advisor. Later he went twice on the Grand Tour, first as tutor to Charles, Viscount Townshend. This was followed immediately by a second tour, as tutor to the Marquess of Tavistock (1695). During this he was able to study the gardens of Italy.

Sherard was appointed as consul in Smyrna in 1703 and made several journeys through western Turkey, collecting inscriptions and coins, and botanical specimens. Returning to England in 1718, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and helped his brother