



PLATE I.—Reconstruction of the Meydūm Pyramid Site.

THE ECKLEY B. COXE, JR., EXPEDITION EXCAVATIONS AT MEYDÛM, 1929-30

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I. INTRODUCTION

THE excavations carried out at Meydûm by the Coxe Expedition of the University Museum were begun on November 2, 1929, and closed on April 30, 1930, a season of nearly six months. During this period my staff consisted of Dr. I. Ben-Dor, chief assistant; Messrs. C. N. Johns and R. W. Hamilton, archæological assistants; Mr. R. Franks, Jr., and Fadil Effendi Saba, photographers; Mrs. Rowe, recorder of antiquities; Mr. C. Kent, draughtsman; and Mr. P. Beidler and Ahmed Effendi Abd el-Aziz, architects and surveyors. The three last, together with Mr. I. Reich, drew the plates for this work. Some months prior to November, Mr. Franks also carried out research work in the libraries in Cairo in connection with bibliographical material of the Meydûm site which the Expedition was collecting. It gives me much pleasure to be able to place on record that the loyal coöperation and assistance of the staff enabled me to bring the work of the season to a successful conclusion.

My thanks are due the authorities of the Cairo Museum, especially M. P. Lacau, Director General, Mr. R. Engelbach, and Mr. Battiscombe Gunn (whose assistance in connection with the translations will be referred to elsewhere), for information in various directions; to Professor Sir William Flinders Petrie for allowing us to publish material from many of his maps; to Dr. L. Borchardt for permission to reproduce some of the drawings in his *Entstehung der Pyramide*; to M. Černý for supplying the dates of various hieroglyphic graffiti in the pyramid and pyramid temple; and to Mr. W. Hayes, Director of the Cadastral Survey of Egypt, for kindly instructing his department to make an extensive survey of our site. We have made much use of the publications of our predecessors at Meydûm, particularly those of Lepsius, Mariette, Maspero, Petrie, and Borchardt, the works of the two last, in particular, being monuments of careful and painstaking labour. Our indebtedness to the works of other authorities, especially Dr. J. H. Breasted and Dr. G. A. Reisner, will at once be evident from the references in our text.

Our excavations during 1929-30 were confined to: (1) the Pyramid, the passages and chambers of which were entirely cleared out, and the northern, eastern and western sides partly cleared; (2) the Pyramid Temple;

(3) the Pyramid Causeway; (4) the Great Mastabah Number 17; (5) various Tombs, of all periods, situated on our concession, which runs for a distance of three kilometres both to the north and to the south of the pyramid.

The scientific results of the season have proved to be of considerable value and include the discovery of stepped stages in Mastabah 17 and of the way in which the ancient builders calculated its levels; of a pit in the pyramid unnoticed by other explorers; of ancient level lines on the inner parts of the north face of the pyramid; of a tomb with about one hundred burials in it, and other discoveries to be described later.

Were it not for the poor quality of the rock at Meydûm, the existence of which is unhappily responsible for roof-falls upon the coffins in underground tombs which were not masonry-lined, we might have preserved for exhibition many coloured coffins of exquisite workmanship, the drawings of which are seen in our plates. As a matter of fact, roof-falls have done quite as much damage to some of the tombs as did ancient tomb robbers. In many cases, for instance, when we opened a carefully sealed tomb, we found that the only damage in the tomb had been caused by the rock itself and not by human agency. Mariette [27 : 459]¹ also refers to the poor quality of the rock at Meydûm. But in spite of all this we brought to light many valuable smaller objects, such as scarabs, amulets, bead pectorals of the Twelfth Dynasty, jewellery, figurines, toilet boxes, pottery, and the like, all of which will be published in due course.

From the following chronological list it will be observed that during the last one hundred and thirty-seven years trial soundings, excavations, and scientific observations have been made at Meydûm by a considerable number of archæologists; other people who have visited the site or described it are included for the interest attached to their notes.

II. CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF PEOPLE ASSOCIATED WITH MEYDÛM SINCE THE TWELFTH CENTURY A. D.²

- 1117-1119 *Makrizî and Abû-Mohammed Abdallah.* Makrizî, an Arab historian (1364-1442), wrote: "There is another pyramid, called the 'Pyramid of Meydûm,' which is like a mountain, and has five stories"; he cites as his authority for this statement Sheikh Abû-Mohammed Abdallah, son of Abderrahîm el-Qaisi, who visited Meydûm in 1117-1119. [32 : 359, footnote 5; 73 : II, 354; 6 : 6]
- 1737 *Frederick Lewis Norden, F.R.S.,* a Captain in the Danish Navy, saw the Meydûm pyramid from the Nile. He gives three excel-

¹ Throughout the text, bibliographical references will be indicated by numbers in brackets: the numbers in bold face correspond to the numbers of the various works as indicated in the Index of Bibliographical References on pages 37 and 38; the numbers in ordinary type refer to the volume number (in Roman numerals) and the page of the work in question.

² A similar list, giving the names from the earliest times up to the twelfth century A. D., is in course of preparation and will be published later.