

Marsa Matruh, Egypt excavation records

1053

Finding aid prepared by James R. DeWalt.

Last updated on March 02, 2017.

University of Pennsylvania, Penn Museum Archives

2015

Table of Contents

Summary Information.....	3
Biography/History.....	4
Scope and Contents.....	5
Administrative Information.....	5
Controlled Access Headings.....	5
Collection Inventory.....	7
Correspondence.....	7
Publication Correspondence.....	8
Administrative.....	9
Reports and Publications.....	10
Fundraising.....	10
Diaries-Donald White.....	11
Bates Island Field Notebooks.....	12
Deposit and Ceramic Sheets.....	12
Samples and Finds.....	13
Photographs.....	14
Drawings.....	17

Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Penn Museum Archives
Creator	White, Donald, 1935-
Title	Marsa Matruh, Egypt excavation records
Call number	1053
Date [inclusive]	1983-2003
Extent	4.2 linear feet
Language	English
Abstract	<p>Marsa Matruh, on the northwest coast of Egypt, has been the site of trade and commerce among ancient seafarers since the late Bronze Age. The records here represent three seasons of excavation undertaken by the University of Pennsylvania in 1985, 1987, and 1989 under the directorship of Dr. Donald White, as well as several subsequent surveys and study seasons in 1990, 1995, and 1996. The initial excavations centered on an island in a lagoon to the east of the city known locally as Island of the Jew, or Desert Island, since known to archaeologists as Bates's Island (Area I), in honor of archaeologist Oric Bates, who first excavated here in 1913-1914. The focus of these excavations has been the Bronze Age artifacts, although many finds from later periods were documented during analysis. Additional excavation was also conducted on the nearby shore at eight locations (Areas II-IX). The 1990 to 1996 surveys included analysis of locations along the adjacent coast to determine possible sites for further study. Excavation monographs were published in 2002. Collection content extends from 1983 to 2003, including correspondence, planning, field reports and analysis, including significant graphic documentation,</p>

fundraising and publication records.

Cite as:

[Item name]. Box [Box number]. Marsa Matruh, Egypt excavation records. Penn Museum Archives.
Accessed [Date accessed].

Biography/History

Marsa Matruh is the capital of Matruh, the western administrative district of Egypt, a natural harbor situated about 240 km. west of Alexandria, 222 km. east of Sallum on the Libyan border. Today it is known primarily as a tourist resort, but in ancient times it served as a fishing village, and later a resupply harbor for ships trading in the Mediterranean. Known in early Egyptian times to the period of Alexander the Great as Amunia, in the Hellenistic period it became known as Paraitonion, later corrupted to several versions of Bareton. The possibility that part of Mark Anthony's fleet may have been scuttled here after the Battle of Actium (31 BC) has led to some interest in a marine archaeological survey of the region, but it seems that little has come of this to date. A small island in a lagoon to the east of the city is known by locals as the Island of the Jew, or Desert Island, but has since been known to western archaeologists as Bates's Island, in honor of archaeologist Oric Bates, who excavated from 1913-1914. Bates had found 14th century Cypriot pottery which served as links between the ancient seagoing peoples and the Egyptian coast. This island (Area I) and parts of the surrounding inland shoreline (Areas II-IX) have been the site of excavations conducted by the University of Pennsylvania under the direction of Donald White in 1985, 1987 and 1989, focusing on late Bronze Age activity. A planned 1986 season had to be cancelled after the American bombing of Libya in the spring of that year. White also made several return visits to examine finds and conduct additional surveys of the region in 1990, 1993, and 1995, with a final brief survey in 1996. After 1989 White acted as editor-in-chief of the two-volume series Marsa Matruh I: the excavation; and Marsa Matruh II: the objects, (Institute for Aegean Prehistory Press, 2002). These two volumes provide further in-depth historical background and archaeological analysis of the site.

After receiving his PhD at Princeton in 1964, Donald White spent much of his life excavating in Libya and in Egypt. In addition, he also taught Greek and Roman archaeology and art history at the Universities of Michigan and Pennsylvania. White began his archaeological career in Morgantina, Sicily, 1959-1962, and later served as Assistant and Co-Director of the Apollonia Expedition in eastern Libya, 1964-1967. Forced to evacuate the site after the outbreak of the Six-Day-War, he later returned to the region where he became Director of the Cyrene Expedition in Libya from 1969-1981. He has served since 1980 as editor-in-chief of the Cyrene project publications. In 1988 he was appointed Professor of Classical Studies at the University Of Pennsylvania, and in 1990 he was named Curator-in-Charge of the Mediterranean Section of the University Museum. In addition to his project publications, White has been the author of numerous articles and monographs. He is an authority on the archaeology of Egypt's northwest coast and the Libyan Greek Cyrenaica or Pentapolis. Retiring in January 2004, White moved to Cohasset, Massachusetts to complete the final monograph for the 11-volume series on Cyrene, Libya.

Scope and Contents

The Marsa Matruh, Egypt excavation records comprise 4.2 linear feet of documents, dated from 1983 to 2003, relating to a series of excavations undertaken by the University of Pennsylvania under expedition Director Donald White. The principal excavations took place in 1985, 1987, and 1989, but subsequent surveys and studies were undertaken in 1990, 1995 and 1996. Donald White also served as Editor-in-Chief of the Marsa Matruh publications series Marsa Matruh I: the excavation; and Marsa Matruh II: the objects, (Institute for Aegean Prehistory Press, 2002). The documents in the collection include correspondence, administrative records, reports, excavation records, field notebooks, and object finds documentation both textual and graphic created by White and fellow archaeologists at the Egyptian site. In addition, there are records of concurrent fundraising activities and later object analysis and publication undertaken in America. The documents are virtually all from the professional files of Dr. White, and correspondence is between White and other archaeological team members, publication consultants, government officials in Egypt and administrators at the University of Pennsylvania. Many documents, including correspondence and email, were not dated. When this occurs a year has been supplied in brackets when the document was found in a dated folder or among a collection of similarly dated documents. Almost all of the documents are in English; only occasional Egyptian government licenses and notices are in Arabic, not translated. Further description of the scope and contents of the collection are noted under each series.

Administrative Information

University of Pennsylvania, Penn Museum Archives

2015

Finding aid prepared by James R. DeWalt.

Access Restrictions

Although many items from the archives are in the public domain, copyright may be retained by the authors of items in these papers, or their descendants, as stipulated by United States copyright law. The user is fully responsible for compliance with relevant copyright law.

Controlled Access Headings

GEOGRAPHIC NAME(S)

- Marsa Matruh (Egypt)

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Bailey, Donald M.
- Conwell, David H.
- Gardner, Rita
- Gieringer, David H.
- Green, Roy
- Hadidi, M. Nabil , 1934-
- Hulin, Linda
- McClellan, Murray C.
- Reese, David S., 1954-
- Russell, Pamela
- Schaar, Kenneth W., 1939-
- Simpson, Fiona
- White, Donald, 1935-

SUBJECT(S)

- Bronze age--Egypt

Collection Inventory

CORRESPONDENCE, 1984-1997.

Scope and Contents note

This series contains almost exclusively correspondence between Donald White and others from 1984 until 1997, and deals with the Marsa Matruh excavations and related scholarly concerns during the active period of excavation and later years when Dr. White returned to the region for further study and survey. Included are communications with excavation team members, other scholars and administrative officials in Egypt. Arrangement is chronological within each year. Some of the correspondence was found undated, including some email communication. Where this occurs, a year designation within brackets indicates that the document was located in a file of this year, or the document was found among other correspondence dating to this year.

	Box
General 1984.	1
General 1985.	1
General 1986.	1
General 1987.	1
General 1988.	1
General 1989.	1
General 1990.	1
General 1991.	1
General 1992.	1

General 1992.	1
General 1993.	1
General 1994.	1
General 1995.	1
General 1996.	1
General 1997, undated.	1

PUBLICATION CORRESPONDENCE, 1986-2003.

Scope and Contents note

Publication correspondence contains files by correspondent and institution relating to the publication of the two-volume series Marsa Matruh I: the excavation; and Marsa Matruh: the objects, (Institute for Aegean Prehistory Press, 2002). All of the correspondents are contributors to these volumes. In the combined Linda Hulin and Fiona Simpson file, Simpson correspondence does not begin until about 1999. The Peabody Museum file refers to objects from the Oric Bates excavations in 1913-1914. The general publication file contains White correspondence dealing mostly with technical aspects of publishing both the Marsa Matruh volumes and various other publications and journal articles.

	Box
Bailey, Donald 1988-2003 (1 of 2).	1
Bailey, Donald 1988-2003 (2 of 2).	1
Hadidi, M. Nabil el- 1989-2002.	1
Hulin, Linda; Simpson, Fiona 1986-2002 (1 of 3).	2

Hulin, Linda; Simpson, Fiona 1986-2002 (2 of 3).	2
Hulin, Linda; Simpson, Fiona 1986-2002 (3 of 3).	2
Gardner, Rita 1988-2001.	2
Peabody Museum 1984-2001.	2
Reese, David S. 1985-2002.	2
Russell, Pamela 1986-2001.	2
General Publication 1986-2003.	2

ADMINISTRATIVE, 1985-1997.

Scope and Contents note

The administrative series contains documents dealing with the planning and execution of the excavations and surveys at Marsa Matruh. Project plans and proposals include planning for both achieved and aborted projects. Staff applications include brief biographical data as well as passport photocopies, including photographs, for most team members. Egyptian Antiquities Organization license material has official documentation from the Egyptian authorities, not translated. Budgets and expenses include direct University funding information as well as more detailed expenses incurred on site.

	Box
Project Plans and Proposals 1983-1995.	2
Staff Applications and Visa Requests 1985-1993.	2
Egyptian Antiquities Organization License 1985-1988, 1991.	2
Budgets and Expenses 1984-1997 (1 of 2).	3

Budgets and Expenses 1984-1997 (2 of 2).	3
Expense Lists 1985, 1989.	3
Equipment and Supplies 1985, 1987, 1989.	3
Local Worker Accounts 1985, 1987.	3
Misc. Receipts and Related 1985-1986.	3

REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS, 1985-1999 (BULK, 1985-1989) .

Scope and Contents note

This series includes reports filed after each excavation, both general relating to specific topics, by Donald White and other team members. There are also notes for talks or presentations that White made concerning the project. There is very little here concerning the official Marsa Matruh publications.

	Box
Reports and Publications 1985, 1987.	3
Reports and Publications 1988-1989, 1999, undated.	3

FUNDRAISING, 1984-1999.

Scope and Contents note

The fundraising series contains documentation relating to requests for funding from outside grant-making institutions as well as individuals. Included are applications to the Institute for Aegean Prehistory (INSTAP), as well as the National Geographic Society. Individual donor lists include both

persons solicited for donation and American companies doing business in Egypt. It is unclear whether or not any formal attempt was made to contact these companies. Individual donor files contain correspondence with donors, mostly by Donald White or University Museum Director Robert Dyson. The Bates/Satterthwaite file contains correspondence with Mandon Bates and Natica (“Tica”) Bates Satterthwaite, both children of archaeologist Oric Bates, with frequent references to his work at Marsa Matruh in 1913-1914.

	Box
Institute for Aegean Prehistory Grants 1985-1999.	3
National Geographic Society 1987.	3
Donor and Company Lists 1984-1986.	3
Donor File-Individual Correspondence 1984-1987.	3
Donor File-Bates and Satterthwaite Correspondence 1984-1999.	3

DIARIES-DONALD WHITE, 1987-1995.

Scope and Contents note

Two diaries were kept by Donald White, recording both information from the excavation site and more personal and anecdotal accounts. The first diary includes the 1987 and 1989 excavations, as well as the 1990 survey, with additional detail concerning expenses and equipment. The second diary records travel to Turkey and the 1995 survey of the Egyptian coast, with an added expense list.

	Box
Diary 1987, 1989, 1990; Expense Lists 1990-1991; Equipment Lists 1987-1988.	3
Diary-Turkey and Egypt; Expense List 1995.	3

BATES ISLAND FIELD NOTEBOOKS, 1985-1987.

Scope and Contents note

Field notebooks from the 1985 and 1987 seasons deal with excavations on Bates Island, known also as the Island of the Jew or Desert Island. The 1985 notebooks record the work of Donald White, Murray McClellan, David Conwell and Kenneth W. Schaar; the 1987 notebooks are from David H. Conwell, Eric H. Gieringer and Roy Green. A small booklet of pottery notes taken by Murray McClellan is probably from the 1985 season.

	Box
Donald White-Island of the Jew 1985.	4
Murray McClellan-Island of the Jew 1985.	4
David Conwell-Island of the Jew (Site I) 1985.	4
Kenneth W. Schaar-Island of the Jew-Land Survey 1985.	4
David Conwell-Site I (Bates' Island) 1987 (1 of 2).	4
David Conwell-Site I (Bates' Island) 1987 (2 of 2).	4
David H. Gieringer-J8I/II; E4III W. Baulk; E4 Center 1987.	4
Roy Green-I6 I-II; D4 I/II 1987.	4
Murray NcClellan-Pottery Notes 1985?.	4

DEPOSIT AND CERAMIC SHEETS, 1985-1987.

Scope and Contents note

This series contains printed forms used to record ongoing excavation finds for deposits and ceramics for

1985 and 1987.	Box
Ceramics 1985.	5
Deposits 1985.	5
Ceramics 1987.	5
Deposits 1987.	5

SAMPLES AND FINDS, 1985-2002.

Scope and Contents note

A register of samples and finds records objects apart from pottery from the 1985 and 1987 seasons. Objects listed include iron, glass, worked stone, bronze, bone, shell. Some sparse notes include soil and plaster samples from the same seasons. An index card catalogue of finds (Box 9), contains descriptions of objects, including pottery, arranged by season and study year from 1985-1993 and type of find, with photographic contact prints. Documents and correspondence concerning post-excavation analysis of finds include studies by Durham University, U.K., and MASCA (Museum Applied Science Center for Archaeology) at the University Museum.

	Box
Register of Samples and Finds 1985, 1987; Samples 1987.	5
Catalogue of Finds 1985-1993 [index cards].	9
Post-Excavation Analysis 1985-2002.	5

PHOTOGRAPHS, 1913-1996 (BULK, 1984-1993) .

Scope and Contents note

The photograph series includes the original photo catalogue of contact prints, other loose photographs arranged by subject and year, photographs published in Marsa Matruh I: the excavation; and Marsa Matruh II: the objects, (Institute for Aegean Prehistory Press, 2002) arranged by chapter and figure number, and photographs of drawings. All photographs produced by the Marsa Matruh excavation are black and white.

The photo catalogue and contact prints include prints arranged by type (35mm or 2.25 x 2.25"), and within these files by roll and exposure number. There are photo catalogue files from each of the principal seasons (1985, 1987, and 1987) as well as from further study trips in 1990 and 1993. The 35mm prints are almost all object finds; the 2.5" prints include site and excavation views, as well as many photographs not used in publication, including shots of team members and of surroundings at Marsa Matruh. Negatives from this catalogue, as well as negatives and transparencies used in publication are filed separately.

Photographs arranged by subject are in various enlargement sizes, and include objects identified by inventory number, as well as site photographs without any identifying text. The site photographs include satellite imagery, aerial photographs, views of the site (including some probably taken by Natica Satterthwaite in 1989, in color), and photographs taken of the excavation. The pottery and other object photographs in this section are arranged by year of excavation, indicated by the inventory number found on the photograph or subsequently located and marked in pencil on the back of the photograph itself. Photographs in this section are those for which no other identifying information could be found, specifically chapter and figure numbers from the Marsa Matruh volumes. Objects are arranged by inventory number; for example: 85I-P-55 identifies inventory year 1985-pottery-object 55. The object abbreviations are as follows: P=pottery, C=coin, M=miscellaneous metal object, TC=miscellaneous terracotta object, AS=architectural stone, AT=architectural terracotta, SS=structural stone, SO=miscellaneous stone object, G=glass, MO=miscellaneous object. There are also photographs in this section of objects from the Bates excavation in 1913-1914, post excavation study (1990, 1993), and crucible analysis (1996).

Photographs from the Marsa Matruh volumes (represented here as either MMI or MMII) are filed by chapter and labeled in pencil on the back of each photograph with chapter and figure number. Please note that only this pencil notation can be taken as correct, as many tentative chapter and figure numbers written on the photographs were subsequently abandoned. In all cases, where a photograph could be identified by chapter and figure number, it was filed in this section. If there was only an inventory number, it was filed in the previous section by year. Researchers searching for a photograph from the Marsa Matruh volumes are advised to search first in this section by chapter and figure number. If the

object is not found, the description in the published volumes may give the original inventory number, and the item can be further searched by year and inventory number in the previous section. There are necessarily missing objects, and there will also be some duplication. Miscellaneous and unidentified objects include composite photographs, sometimes labeled.

Photographs of drawings include maps, plans and sections, and pottery profiles, mostly intended for publication. Several oversized photographs are filed separately.

	Box
Photo Catalogue and Contact Prints 35mm 1985 Rolls 1 to 29.	5
Photo Catalogue and Contact Prints 2.5 x 2.5" 1985 Rolls 70-1 to 70-11.	5
Photo Catalogue and Contact Prints 35mm 1987 Rolls 1 to 25.	5
Photo Catalogue and Contact Prints 2.5 x 2.5" 1987 Rolls 29 to 42.	5
Photo Catalogue and Contact Prints 35mm 1989 Rolls 1 to 13.	5
Photo Catalogue and Contact Prints 2.5 x 2.5" 1989 Rolls 14 to 19.	5
Photo Catalogue and Contact Prints 35mm 1990 Rolls 1 to 3.	5
Photo Catalogue and Contact Prints 35mm 1993 Roll 1.	5
Satellite Imagery early 1960's.	6
Aerial - Bates's Island 1985.	6
Views 1984-1989.	6
Views-Satterthwaite 1989?.	6
People and Miscellaneous (undated).	6
Excavation 1985-1989.	6
Bates's Objects 1913-1914.	6

Pottery 1984.	6
Pottery 1985.	6
Non-Pottery Objects 1985.	6
Pottery and Non-Pottery Objects 1987.	6
Pottery and Non-Pottery Objects 1989-1990.	6
Object Samples 1993.	6
Crucible Analysis 1996.	6
MMII Chapter 7 - Aegean Pottery and Selected Cypriot Pottery 1985-1989 Figures 7.1 to 7.29.	7
MMII Chapter 7 - Aegean Pottery and Selected Cypriot Pottery 1985-1989 Figures 7.30 to 7.59.	7
MMII Chapter 7 - Aegean Pottery and Selected Cypriot Pottery 1985-1989 Figures 7.60 to 7.98.	7
MMII Chapter 8 - Bronze Age Plain Pottery 1985-1989.	7
MMII Chapter 9 - Late Bronze Age Implements 1985-1989 Figures 9.1 to 9.38B.	7
MMII Chapter 9 - Late Bronze Age Implements 1985-1989 Figures 9.40 to 9.113.	7
MMII Chapter 12 - Pottery of the Greek and Roman Periods 1985-1989.	7
MMII Chapter 13 - Post Bronze Age Artifacts 1985-1989 Figures 13.1 to 13.39.	7
MMII Chapter 13 - Post Bronze Age Artifacts 1985-1989 Figures 13.40 to 13.89.	7
MMII Chapter 14 - Ottoman Era Local and Imported Pottery 1985-1989.	7

Miscellaneous and Unidentified Objects 1985-1989.	7
Maps (undated).	7
Plans and Sections (undated).	7
Pottery Profiles (undated).	7

DRAWINGS, 1985-1989.

Scope and Contents note

The drawings series includes almost exclusively original drawings of pottery and pottery profiles. There are also some drawings of non-pottery objects, and site plans. The arrangement of the pottery files is similar to that of the photographs. Drawings for which only an inventory number was available are arranged by year. Drawings for which a figure number from the Marsa Matruh volumes could be found or determined, are arranged by chapter. These are identified in pencil on the back of each drawing; other markings on the drawing cannot always be trusted. A further set of drawings have neither inventory nor figure number, but most of these have grid numbers, indicating the grid lines from Bates's Island where the object was found. A plan of the grid line trenches can be found as Plan 2. at the end of Marsa Matruh: the objects, (Institute for Aegean Prehistory Press, 2002). Unidentified pottery drawings probably belong to chapter 12 of this volume, or were originally intended for this chapter. There are several oversize drawings of plans and pottery filed separately.

	Box
Plans and Sections (undated).	8
Pottery 1985.	8
Pottery 1987.	8
Pottery 1989.	8

MMI Chapter 5 - Area VI: The Great Ridge, Bates's Libyan Cemetery and Sites with Shell-Tempered Pottery 1985-1987.	8
MMII Chapter 7 - Aegean Pottery and Selected Cypriot Pottery 1985-1989.	8
MMII Chapter 8 - Bronze Age Plain Pottery 1985-1989 Figures between 8.1 and 8.99.	8
MMII Chapter 8 - Bronze Age Plain Pottery 1985-1989 Figures between 8.100 and 8.180.	8
MMII Chapter 12 - Pottery of the Greek and Roman Periods 1985-1989.	8
MMII Chapter 14 - Ottoman Era Locan and Imported Pottery 1985-1989.	8
Pottery - Grid Line D 1985-1987.	8
Pottery - Grid Line E 1985-1987.	8
Pottery - Grid Line F 1985-1987.	8
Pottery - Grid Line H 1985-1989.	8
Pottery - Grid Line I 1985-1987.	8
Pottery - Grid Line J 1985-1987.	8
Pottery - Area V Ex-Church 1985-1989.	8
Pottery - Mixed Grids 1985-1989.	8
Pottery - Unidentified 1985-1989.	8
Non-Pottery Objects 1985-1989.	8