

# **Egypt Exploration Fund**

**0032**

**Finding aid prepared by Jody Rodgers.**

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University of Pennsylvania, Penn Museum Archives

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	University of Pennsylvania: Penn Museum Archives
<b>Title</b>	Egypt Exploration Fund
<b>Call number</b>	0032
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1888-1926
<b>Extent</b>	0.4 linear foot (the records of the Egypt Exploration Fund fill one archival box of correspondence and financial records)
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>Amelia B. Edwards, a novelist and travel writer, traveled in Egypt from 1873 to 1874 to escape bad weather in her native England. Her stay in Egypt inspired the book, <i>A Thousand Miles Up the Nile</i>. A best seller at the time, Edwards' story presented a view of nineteenth century Egypt along with descriptions of the previously unknown antiquities of the ancient civilization. After returning to England, Edwards and Reginald Stuart Poole of the Department of Coins and Metals of the British Museum co-founded the Egypt Exploration Fund. Its 1882 mission was to "explore, survey and excavate ancient sites in Egypt and Sudan and publish the results of this work." The work of W.M. Flinders Petrie was of great interest to the amateur Egyptologist Edwards, and she supported Flinders Petrie's appointment as successor to Edouard Naville in Egypt. Petrie arrived in Egypt in 1884 with funds from University College, London. He later became the first Edwards professor of Egyptology at the University of London. Subscriptions to the Fund came from all over the world. An office was founded in Boston to do the work of the fund in the United States. Organizations such as the Free Museum of Science and Art who subscribed to the fund were able to share in the artifacts recovered by</p>

Flinders Petrie's work. The Egypt Exploration Fund records fill one archival box. There are seven folders of correspondence and financial records including several circulars from the London and Boston offices of the Fund.

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## Biography/History

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Amelia B. Edwards, a novelist and travel writer traveled in Egypt from 1873 to 1874 to escape bad weather in her native England. Her stay in Egypt inspired the book, *A Thousand Miles Up the Nile*. A best seller at the time, Edwards' story presented a view of nineteenth century Egypt accompanied by descriptions of the previously unknown antiquities of the ancient civilization. After returning to England, Edwards and Reginald Stuart Poole of the Department of Coins and Metals of the British Museum co-founded the Egypt Exploration Fund in 1882. Its mission was to "explore, survey and excavate ancient sites in Egypt and Sudan and publish the results of this work."

The Fund's founding emphasis, of necessity, was to attract sponsorship. Assistance came from the community looking to find evidence to support biblical versions of ancient Egypt. Many of their early contributions came from clergymen. The work of W.M. Flinders Petrie was of great interest to the amateur Egyptologist Edwards, and she supported Flinders Petrie's appointment as successor to Edouard Naville in Egypt. Flinders Petrie arrived in Egypt in 1884 with funds from University College, London. He later became the first Edwards professor of Egyptology at the University of London. Subscriptions to the Fund came from all over the world. An office was founded in Boston to do the work of the fund in the United States. Organizations such as the Free Museum of Science and Art who subscribed to the fund were able to share in the artifacts recovered by Flinders Petrie's work. The Egypt Exploration Fund recovered many antiquities for the museum. Even after the American Exploration Society was founded, Edwards' organization and Flinders Petrie's discoveries helped to expand the collection. The association became less close after 1906 but was revived by George Byron Gordon during his Directorship.

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## Scope and Contents

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Amelia B. Edwards, a novelist and travel writer traveled in Egypt from 1873 to 1874 to escape bad weather in her native England. Her stay in Egypt inspired the book, *A Thousand Miles Up the Nile*. A best seller at the time, Edwards' story presented a view of nineteenth century Egypt and the previously unknown antiquities of the ancient civilization. After returning to England, Edwards and Reginald Stuart Poole of the Department of Coins and Metals of the British Museum co-founded the Egypt Exploration Fund. Its 1882 mission was to "explore, survey and excavate ancient sites in Egypt and Sudan and publish

the results of this work."

The Fund helped to insure that subscriptions would follow by emphasizing the biblical aspects of exploration in Egypt and the first contributors were members of the clergy.

The work of W.M. Flinders Petrie was of great interest to the amateur Egyptologist Edwards, and she supported Flinders Petrie's appointment as successor to Edouard Naville in Egypt. Petrie arrived in Egypt in 1884 with funds from University College, London. He later became the first Edwards professor of Egyptology at the University of London.

Subscriptions to the Fund came from all over the world. An office was founded in Boston to do the work of the fund in the United States. Organizations such as the Free Museum of Science and Art who subscribed to the fund were able to share in the artifacts recovered by Flinders Petrie's work. William Pepper and Sara Yorke Stevenson, beginning to establish a collection and work toward the construction of a museum building, were frequent correspondents with Edwards, Flinders Petrie and Charles Winslow, the Secretary of the Fund's office in Boston. Talcott Williams was appointed secretary of the Philadelphia chapter of the Fund.

Eventually, American chapters sought independence from the constraints of the London-based organization. The Free Museum of Science and Art established its own funding source for artifacts, the American Exploration Fund and cultivated a relationship with Flinders Petrie through correspondence with Sara Yorke Stevenson the curator of the Egyptian section.

Later, Dr. George Byron Gordon reconnected with the Egyptian Exploration Fund and this connection continued until the late 1920s.

The Egypt Exploration Fund papers consist of seven folders in one archival box. Five folders hold correspondence while two folders contain financial records and receipts.

The correspondence includes letters from William Pepper to Clarence H. Clark the Treasurer and Talcott Williams, the Secretary of the local branch of the EEF. Pepper also communicates with Amelia B. Edwards of the London branch and William C. Winslow, Vice President and Honorary Secretary of the Boston office. Additional letters and lists concern the objects sent to the museum from the EEF. There is a group of letters from Sara Yorke Stevenson to Annie A. Pirie, Calvin Wells, Thomas S. Harrison, Emily Paterson, Henry W. Cramp and William Pepper. Her letters to Eduoard Naville and Henri de Morgan are in French. Stevenson writes about the "reorganization" of the chapters of the EEF in the U.S. to Thomas Harrison, and the objective to "insure to our museum a share in the distribution of the results of Dr. W.M. Flinders Petrie." Other letters to Stevenson from Marie N. Buckman, James S. Cotton, William C. Winslow, Clarence H. Clark, and F.D. Griffith along with a copy of an agreement between Phoebe A. Hearst of California and George A. Reisner of Cambridge Massachusetts dated 8/23/99 are with the correspondence group. The later communications are with George Byron Gordon who became Director of the museum in 1910. A series of communications addressed to George Byron Gordon from W.M. Flinders Petrie have been transcribed and both the hand-written and typed copies are present. The financial records include a large bound book that served as the letterbook of Clarence S. Clark, Treasurer of the EEF local chapter. In addition to letters about finances, the records include canceled checks, international money order receipts, hand-written receipts from the Department of Archaeology and Paleontology and the Egypt Exploration Fund and duplicates of drafts.

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## Administrative Information

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## Related Materials

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### Related Archival Materials note

For additional information about the Egypt Exploration Fund see:

Sara Yorke Stevenson Egypt section Curatorial papers

Board of Managers records

For additional correspondence with W. M. Flinders Petrie, see:

Egyptian section Curators Files Sara Yorke Stevenson

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## Controlled Access Headings

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### GEOGRAPHIC NAME(S)

- Egypt

### PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Edwards, Amelia B., 1831-1892
- Flinders-Petrie, W.M., Sir, 1853-1942
- Gordon, G. B. (George Byron), 1870-1927
- Naville, Edouard, 1844-1926
- Pepper, William, 1843-1898
- Stevenson, Sara Yorke, 1847-1921
- Williams, Talcott, 1849-1928

### SUBJECT(S)

- Archaeological expeditions

## Collection Inventory

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### **CORRESPONDENCE, 1889-1929.**

	Box
General correspondence 1888-1891 (1 of 2).	1
General correspondence 1906-1929 (2 of 2).	1
Correspondence Sara Yorke Stevenson (1 of 2), 1891-1897.	1
Correspondence Sara Yorke Stevenson (2 of 2), 1898-1902.	1
Correspondence Flinders Petrie to Gordon, 1909-1916.	1

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### **FINANCIAL, 1890-1908.**

	Box
Clarence S. Clark letterbook, 1890.	1
Receipts, 1906-1929.	1