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### Discoveries in Egypt, Ethiopia and the Peninsula of Sinai

Dr Richard Lepsius (1810–1884) was a pioneering Prussian Egyptologist considered the founder of modern Egyptology. In 1842 he was commissioned by King Frederick Wilhelm IV to lead an expedition to Egypt and Sudan to explore and record ancient Egyptian remains. The expedition included artists, surveyors and other specialists and spent three years recording monuments in Egypt, modern Sudan and the Sinai. The expedition conducted the first scientific studies of the pyramids of Giza, Abusir, Saqqara and Dashur. First published in 1852, this volume is a translation of 40 reports in the form of letters written by Lepsius to King Frederick Wilhelm IV during the expedition, and translated by Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie. They provide descriptions of many ancient Egyptian monuments which have since been lost or destroyed, and provide an engaging and frank account of the difficulties of supervising an archaeological expedition in Egypt at that time.

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# Discoveries in Egypt, Ethiopia and the Peninsula of Sinai

*In the Years 1842-1845*

RICHARD LEPSIUS

EDITED BY

KENNETH R.H. MACKENZIE



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Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,  
São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo, Mexico City

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108017114](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108017114)

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2010

This edition first published 1852

This digitally printed version 2010

ISBN 978-1-108-01711-4 Paperback

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

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Printed by Hullmandel & Walton.

MOUNT BARIAL (NUBIA)

London: Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street 1852

On Stone by W.L. Walton.

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DISCOVERIES  
IN  
EGYPT, ETHIOPIA,  
AND THE  
PENINSULA OF SINAI,  
IN THE YEARS 1842-1845,  
DURING THE MISSION  
SENT OUT BY  
HIS MAJESTY FREDRICK WILLIAM IV. OF PRUSSIA.  
By DR. RICHARD LEPSIUS.  

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EDITED, WITH NOTES, BY  
KENNETH R. H. MACKENZIE.



MEROE.

LONDON :  
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,  
Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.  
1852.

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TO

ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT,

WITH

THE DEEPEST RESPECT AND GRATITUDE.



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THE purpose of the Scientific Expedition, sent out in 1842 by his Majesty the King, was an historical and antiquarian research into, and collection of the ancient Egyptian monuments, in the valley of the Nile, and the peninsula of Sinai. It was by royal munificence provided with the means for remaining three years; it rejoiced in the favour and interest of the highest person in the realm, as well as in the most active and kindly assistance of Alexander Von Humboldt; and under such a rare combination of fortunate circumstances, it completed its intended task as fully as could have been hoped. A "Prefatory account of the expedition, its results, and their publication," (Berlin, 1849, 4to.) was published with the first parts of the great monumental work, which is brought out at the command of his Majesty, in a manner corresponding to the importance of the treasures brought back, and contains a short abstract of the more important results of the Expedition. The work, there announced, "The Monuments of Egypt and Ethiopia," will contain more than 800 plates, of the largest size, of which half are already prepared, and 240 plates already published, will lay before the public these results, as far as concerns the sculptures, the topography,

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and architecture, while the accompanying text will explain them more fully.

It however, appeared necessary (without taking the purely scientific labours into account), to lay before a larger circle of readers a picture of the external events of the expedition, of the relative operations of its members, of the obstacles, and the favourable circumstances of the journey, the condition of the countries through which it passed, and their effect upon the actual design of the undertaking: finally to offer a few observations on the remarkable monuments of that most historical of all countries, as must continually recur to the well prepared traveller, and which might rouse others who have already perceived the importance of the newly founded science, to a more active interest. If, besides, it be of the greatest utility for a just understanding of these scientific labours which are gradually coming to the light, and which have been caused by the journey; that the circumstances under which the materials for them were collected, I think that the publication of the following letters requires no farther excuse, as they make no pretension to any particular literary perfection, or descriptive power, or, on the other hand, to be a strictly scientific work.

The letters are almost in the original form as they were written, sometimes as a report direct to his Majesty the King, sometimes to his Excellency, the then Minister of Instruction, Eichhorn, or to other high patrons and honoured men, as A. Von Humboldt, Bunsen, Von Olfers, Ehrenberg, and sometimes to my father, who followed my progress with

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the most lively interest. Several of them were immediately printed in the papers on their arrival in Europe, particularly in the *Preussische Staatszeitung*, and thence in other papers. The unessential changes mostly relate to the editing. All the additions or enlargements have been added as notes ; and among these belong particularly the arguments and grounds as to the true position of Sinai, which, since then has been proved in various quarters, and again disproved, and again concurred in. The thirty-sixth letter, on the arrangement of the Egyptian Museum in Berlin, turns certainly from the subject ; but we may allow the exception, as this point is not alone interesting to Berlin, but in all points the examination is worth while, where there is any resemblance to or comparison with modern art.

It is proposed to add a second part to these letters, in which several treatises, written during the expedition, or on different points relating to Egyptian art or history, will be published.

BERLIN, 2nd June, 1852.

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