



# Archaeology in Durham University's Sudan Archive

*Chloë Ward*

## Introduction

The following paper is partly based on some research begun in 2015 at Durham University on the Sudan Archive: <https://www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/sudan/>. The initial research was an attempt to assess the type of information in the Archive which made more or less direct references to archaeology (Ward 2016a; 2016b), as well as looking at the potential use of this information in archaeological research today. Therefore, the aim was more of a general overview of the archaeological information in the Sudan Archive, rather than researching a specific site or particular aspect of archaeology. The material considered here mostly focuses on the type of information that was considered 'archaeological' in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. While some of this material relates to archaeology or sites in other countries, including Egypt, the following will mostly limit itself to material referring to archaeology that is now in the Republic of Sudan.

The first part of this paper will introduce the Sudan Archive and its establishment as part of Durham University Library. The location and type of archaeological information in the Archive will then be discussed. This includes a wide range of types of material, from photographs and personal letters, to official papers, which will each be summarised in turn. The final part considers the wider potential of the Sudan Archive in archaeological research today and some of the problems or limitations with the material in the Archive.

## The Sudan Archive

The Sudan Archive is part of Durham University Library's Special Collections and is housed in Palace Green Library. The Archive is an extensive collection of papers and other documents, most of which belonged to – or were created by – British officials, or their families, posted to the Sudan during the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium (1898-1955). As such, the majority of the material is of a more administrative, social, and political nature relating to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

The Archive was set up in 1957 by members of staff at Durham University including Richard Hill (1901-1996), Kenneth David Druitt Henderson (1903-1988), and Thomas William Thacker (1911-1984) (Corey and Forbes 1983, 1). Both Hill and Henderson were former members of the Condominium government. Richard Hill (1901-1996) was posted to the Sudan between 1927 and 1949 where he was employed in various positions in the Railway Department until 1945 and then worked as a lecturer in the University of Khartoum – University College, Khartoum at the time (Anon. 1997). Henderson was also a member of the Sudan political service between 1926 and 1953, while Thacker was

the first director of the School of Oriental Studies at Durham University and set up the research collection which would form the basis of the Oriental Museum (Oriental Museum Website 2019).

In 1957 a call for donations was sent out asking for papers or materials from people who had spent time in the Sudan during the Condominium (Forbes 1980, 49; Corey and Forbes 1983, 1). The Archive quickly grew and now has over 350 different collections (Sudan Archive Website 2019). These collections vary considerably in size, and in types of material. A large proportion is of a more official nature which includes material such as reports, correspondence, or the minutes of meetings. Personal documents can also be found in some of the collections, which range from written records such as diaries or letters, to photographic material. The vast majority of the material is in English and relates to the Sudan in the Condominium. However, earlier and later documents are also found, as is material related to other countries across the world. A limited amount of Arabic material is also preserved which mostly dates to the Madhdist State in Sudan (1885-1899). There are also a number of museum objects in the Archive, typically memorabilia relating to the Anglo-Egyptian government – such as province flags – as well as ethnographic material – including weapons and jewellery.

Much of the material is only available through the Sudan Archive in Durham, although a large portion of the catalogue is available online through the library's website. Some of the archive material has also been digitised and is also available online. This includes reports – such as 40 Governor-General Reports published between 1902 and 1952 – and the Sudan Intelligence Reports from between 1889-1902. The Sudan Gazette (March 1889-July 1970) and published Sudan Government Staff lists (1914-1963) have also been digitised and are available through the Sudan Archive's website. Finally, many of the Sudan Survey Maps created between 1856 and 1950 are also available online.

## Archaeology in the Sudan Archive

References to archaeology in the Sudan Archive are extremely varied and spread both within and across the different collections. This includes references or reports from specific excavations, as well as material related to the establishment and later running of the Antiquities Service. Both archaeology and specific sites are referred to inconsistently within the Sudan Archive and its catalogue. The catalogue bases all spellings on the variant used in the original documents. For example, both *Gebel* and *Jebel* are used throughout the catalogue. This can make identifying the archaeological material in the Archive challenging; and part of the initial research discussed here was to create a searchable database and list of all the material in the Sudan Archive that referenced archaeology (Ward 2016a; 2019). This was mostly based on looking at the existing catalogue of the Sudan Archive, some of which is digitised – although the catalogue for some collections is only available in handwritten copies in the Archive.

| Reference                         | Date                   | Type       | Sites Mentioned                  | Themes Mentioned | Author           |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| SAD.855/3/11                      | 1914-1940              | Photograph | • Luxor Temple                   |                  | n/a              |
| SAD.855/3/12                      | 1914-1940              | Photograph | • Luxor Temple                   |                  | n/a              |
| SAD.855/3/2                       | 1914-1940              | Photograph | • Medinet Habu                   |                  | n/a              |
| SAD.855/3/3                       | 1914-1940              | Photograph | • Ramasseum                      |                  | n/a              |
| SAD.855/3/4                       | 1914-1940              | Photograph | • Colossi of Memnon              |                  | n/a              |
| SAD.855/3/5                       | 1914-1940              | Photograph | • Karnak                         |                  | n/a              |
| SAD.855/3/6                       | 1914-1940              | Photograph | • Karnak                         |                  | n/a              |
| SAD.855/3/7                       | 1914-1940              | Photograph | • Karnak                         |                  | n/a              |
| SAD.855/3/8                       | 1914-1940              | Photograph | • Karnak                         |                  | n/a              |
| SAD.855/3/9                       | 1914-1940              | Photograph | • Luxor Temple                   |                  | n/a              |
| SAD.856/4/10                      | 1960-1979              | Photograph | • Naqa                           |                  | Stevenson, R. C. |
| SAD.856/4/3                       | 1950-1956              | Photograph | • Soleb                          |                  | Stevenson, R. C. |
| SAD.862/1/2-3                     | 1930                   | Diary      | • Kabushiya<br>• Meroe<br>• Naqa |                  | Law,             |
| SAD.862/1/36<br>-<br>SAD.862/1/43 | 12/1930<br>-<br>1/1931 | Diary      | • Naqa                           |                  | Law              |
| SAD.862/1/4                       | 1930                   | Photograph | • Meroe                          |                  | Law              |
| SAD.862/1/44                      | 1930                   | Photo      | • Naqa                           |                  | Law              |
| SAD.862/1/5                       | 1930                   | Photograph | • Meroe                          |                  | Law              |
| SAD.862/1/6                       | 1930                   | Photograph | • Meroe                          |                  | Law              |
| SAD.862/1/7                       | 1930                   | Photograph | • Meroe                          |                  | Law              |
| SAD.868/1/37                      | 1921-41                | Photograph | • Meroe                          |                  | Souper, J. L.    |
| SAD.868/1/38                      | 1921-41                | Photograph | • Meroe                          |                  | Souper, J. L.    |
| SAD.868/1/39                      | 1921-41                | Photograph | • Meroe                          |                  | Souper, J. L.    |
| SAD.868/1/40                      | 1921-41                | Photograph | • Meroe                          |                  | Souper, J. L.    |
| SAD.868/1/41                      | 1921-41                | Photograph | • Musawwarat es-Sufra            |                  | Souper, J. L.    |
| SAD.868/1/42                      | 1921-41                | Photograph | • Gebel Barkal                   |                  | Souper, J. L.    |
| SAD.868/1/43                      | 1921-41                | Photograph | • Naqa                           |                  | Souper, J. L.    |
| SAD.868/1/44                      | 1921-41                | Photograph | • Gebel Barkal                   |                  | Souper, J. L.    |
| SAD.868/1/45                      | 1921-41                | Photograph | • Naqa                           |                  | Souper, J. L.    |
| SAD.868/1/46                      | 1921-41                | Photograph | • Musawwarat es-Sufra            |                  | Souper, J. L.    |

Figure 1. Part of the list of material referencing archaeology in the Sudan Archive created in 2015.

The result of this research was a database with over 1000 entries which was sorted by site or theme depending on the information provided in the archive material (Figures 1 and 2). Basic information on each of the archives was also entered into the database, which included the archaeological site or theme described, the country, the date, the author or creator, the collection, the type of material, any variant in spelling, and a short description or summary of the information available (Ward 2016b; 2019). The material uncovered was found across over 50 collections in the Sudan Archive, which included the papers of officials not always directly involved in archaeological research in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Figure 3) (Ward 2016a, 171-172). For example, a large amount of archaeological material can be found

in the Wingate Collection which contains the papers of Sir Reginald Wingate (1861-1953) from between 1874 and 1951 (Sudan Archive Website 2019). Wingate was the Governor-General of the Sudan from 1899 to 1916 and many of the official records and correspondence pertaining to the Antiquities Service at this time are preserved in his papers in the Sudan Archive. His collection is one of the largest in the Archive, and contains over 200 archival boxes of material and covers a period of over 70 years. Wingate also seems to have had a personal interest in archaeology and corresponded personally with a number of the archaeologists and Egyptologists working in the Sudan while he was Governor-General. Since 2015, parts of the Wingate collection have been digitised and some of the documents are now available to consult online.

Much of the material in both the Wingate collection and the rest of the Sudan Archive relates to particular aspects of archaeological research in the Sudan rather than specific sites. This includes material discussing: Antiquities and the museums  
The Sudan Antiquities Service  
Conservation and preservation of sites and monuments  
History of the Sudan  
Language (in particular the decipherment of Meroitic)  
Rock Art

In addition, over 100 specific sites and excavations are also referred to in the material in the Sudan Archive, many of which are in the Sudan (Figure 4) but other countries mostly in North Africa and the Middle East are also well represented. The type of material in the Sudan Archive referring to archaeology is very varied and includes: photographs, correspondence – both official and personal – reports, diaries, and a range of other material.

### Photographs

Over two thirds of the material found in the Archive relating to archaeology in the Sudan is photographic. This includes snapshots taken of many of the sites and monuments, in particular the pyramids at Meroe or Jebel Barkal and some of the temples. There are very few photographs of actual excavations taking place, as most were taken by British officials posted to the Sudan or visitors to the country rather than archaeologists or Egyptologists. However, there are many photographs taken before the sites were explored. This includes temples before they were cleared and in some cases reconstructed or moved. Unfortunately, many of the



| SITE     | DATE      | TYPE           | AUTHOR                      | DESCRIPTION  | REFERENCE                    | COLLECTION              | VARIANT |
|----------|-----------|----------------|-----------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------|---------|
| Kerma    | 10/4/1914 | correspondence | Wingate, F. R.              | <p><b>Letter to Reisner</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Finds the photographs of the grave tumuli of the 20<sup>th</sup> century very interesting</li> <li>- Finds of buildings dating to the 6th dynasty (Sesostris) which reverses Breasted's theories on Egyptian occupation</li> <li>- Pleased that he is renewing his work in Dongola</li> </ul>           | SAD.190/2/133                | Wingate                 |         |
|          | 7/5/1914  | correspondence | Drummond, P.                | <p><b>Letter to Wingate (Typewritten)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reisner has had good results</li> <li>- Site to be guarded by Egyptian workmen until the next year</li> <li>- Description of the 3 large burial mounds</li> <li>- 200 - 300 bodies found</li> <li>- Ring of ox heads covered with baked mud and white pebbles around the mound</li> </ul> | SAD.190/2/85<br>SAD.190/2/89 | Wingate                 |         |
|          | 1914      | miscellaneous  | Reisner, G.<br>Drummond, P. | <p><b>Agreement on the division of finds from Kerma 1913-14</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Between the department of Antiquities and Harvard-Boston Expedition</li> <li>- No space in Kerma to display them all, so must be brought to Giza and divided there</li> <li>- List of finds which have already been divided</li> </ul>                              | SAD.190/2/88<br>SAD.190/2/89 | Wingate                 |         |
|          | 13/4/1926 | Diary          | Addison, F.                 | - Visit to Reisner's excavations, no details or description given  | SAD.294/19/58                | Addison                 | Kerma   |
| Khartoum | 1912      | Report         | Drummond, P.                | - Roman Coins found including one bearing the name Licinius  | p.304                        | Governor General Report |         |
|          | 1945      | Report         | n/a                         | - Excavation of Early Site   | p.128                        | Governor General Report |         |
|          | 1946      | Report         | n/a                         | - Excavation of early site<br>- Discovery of other sites nearby  | p.134                        | Governor General Report |         |
|          | 1947      | Report         | n/a                         | - Excavation complete<br>- Report published  | p. 144                       | Governor General Report |         |

Figure 2. Part of the database of archaeological references in the Sudan Archive created in 2015.

|                |           |               |                |
|----------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|
| Addison        | Disney    | Law           | Sarsfield-Hall |
| Baker          | Drew      | Lea           | Smith          |
| Balfour        | Edmonds   | Macphail      | Souper         |
| Beckinsale     | Elderton  | Maslen-Wells  | Spence         |
| Blaikie        | Gillan    | Mather        | Stevenson      |
| Bloss          | Hawkes    | Miller        | Storrar        |
| Boardman       | Heir      | Miscellaneous | Titherington   |
| Cameron        | Henderson | Moir          | Udal           |
| Christopherson | Hill      | Newbold       | Vokes          |
| Clayton        | Hornby    | Nicholls      | Wingate        |
| Crispin        | Howell    | Owen          | Wollen         |
| Crowfoot       | Hunter    | Parr          |                |
| Dick           | Jackson   | Riley         |                |
| Dingwall       | Kelly     | Roper         |                |

Figure 3. List of the Sudan Archive collections containing material referencing archaeology.

### Correspondence

After photographs, the majority of the written material is epistolary. This includes a wide variety of examples which range from more official correspondence to personal letters often written to family members. The preservation of carbon copies of many of the letters written by Wingate or other government officials means that both sides of the correspondence can often be considered.

The Wingate Collection contains a significant number of letters written by archaeologists and Egyptologists working in the Sudan written to Wingate. These often include more or less official reports on excavations at particular sites to the then-Governor-General. Wingate seems to have had a personal interest in archaeology in the Sudan, which he himself refers to in a letter to Sir (John) Eldon Gorst – the then Consul General of Egypt – in 1908 (SAD.284/4/15). This is also attested by the letters written to Wingate by those directly involved in archaeology in the Sudan at the time. These include a letter by Archibald Sayce describing the discovery of the Temple of Amun in the City of Meroe sent on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 1909 (SAD.285/2/29-30) (Ward 2016a, 174). Many of these letters contain direct references to the excavation and archaeological methods used at some of the sites. For example, both Wallis Budge and George Reisner describe their excavation of pyramids in personal letters to Wingate (SAD.273/2/29-34; SAD.199/2/94-95) (Figure 5).

Many letters are more administrative in nature and

photographs in the Archive are difficult to date specifically. Unless they have a date written on them, or they are presented as part of an album or diary, they tend to be dated to the entire period that the person who took them was posted in the Sudan. In some cases, this can be as long as 20-30 years. In addition to photographs in the Sudan, a large number of photographs of Egyptian sites are also held in the Sudan Archive. Most of these seem to have been taken by officials during the journey to Sudan, although a number of government members, including Wingate, held posts in Egypt subsequently or previously to their postings to the Sudan.



|                   |                     |                            |                         |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Abas Fagir        | Goz Bekhit          | Kumma                      | Sessebi                 |
| Abka              | <b>Gubba Selim</b>  | Kurgo                      | Shaheinab               |
| Abu Fatma         | Habarab             | <b>Kuru</b>                | Shellal                 |
| <b>Abu Sofian</b> | Jebel Afari         | Makwar Dam                 | Shendi                  |
| Airi              | Jebel Bakalai       | <b>Meroë</b>               | Singa                   |
| Akasha            | <b>Jebel Barkal</b> | Mirgissa                   | <b>Siwa</b>             |
| Amara             | Jebel Bishara       | Mograka                    | Soba                    |
| <b>Aqiq</b>       | Jebel Doshhe        | <b>Musawwarat es-Sufra</b> | <b>Soleb</b>            |
| <b>Argo</b>       | Jebel Geili         | <b>Naqa</b>                | Suarda                  |
| Atbara            | Jebel Ghaddar       | Nauri                      | <b>Susinarti Island</b> |
| Basa              | <b>Jebel Moya</b>   | Noobt                      | Tamai                   |
| <b>Buhen</b>      | <b>Jebel Qeili</b>  | <b>Nuri</b>                | Tombos                  |
| <b>Delgo</b>      | Jebel Sesi          | <b>Old Dongola</b>         | Uronarti                |
| <b>Dengkur</b>    | <b>Jebel Sihan</b>  | Omdurman                   | Ushara                  |
| <b>Deraheib</b>   | Jebel Zankor        | <b>Qasr el Hair</b>        | Wad Ben Naqa            |
| Dongola           | Kamlin              | <b>Qasr wad Nimeiri</b>    | Wad Hassuna             |
| El Dab            | Karima              | Rufaa                      | Wadi Halfa              |
| Erkowitz          | <b>Kawa</b>         | <b>Sabu</b>                | Wawa                    |
| <b>Faras</b>      | Kerma               | <b>Sai Island</b>          | <b>Zolat Hammad</b>     |
| Firka             | Khartoum            | Sanam                      |                         |
| <b>Gelti Um</b>   | Khor Musa           | <b>Saras</b>               |                         |
| <b>Tasawir</b>    | <b>Kirbekan</b>     | <b>Sedeinga</b>            |                         |
| Gemai             | Koyeka              | <b>Selima</b>              |                         |
| Gezarak al Malik  | Kulb                | <b>Semna</b>               |                         |

Figure 4. List of locations in the Sudan referenced in relation to archaeology or antiquities (those in bold include photographic material).

23<sup>rd</sup> of February 1903

[...]

We have work in two places: In the case of the largest pyramid we have made a huge ramp, and have gone down to a depth of full 30 feet: at this depth we came upon a huge slab of stone, which extends inwards under the Pyramid, and we decided to dig inwards from it [...] This excavation is most instructive, for it explains the plan of the building of the pyramid. From it we see that most of the ground about each pyramid was made up artificially, and we are not to expect well cut passages as we find in Egypt, for the stone is of too poor quality to allow of it. I have now no doubt at all that we are going the right way to work, and are working at the right pace, but we ought really to plank and shore up every bit of each shaft and tunnel we drive, for we shall have to search above and below, and round and about for the burial place of the king or queen. At the present we are 16 feet inwards under the pyramid and as it is 45 feet square we must go in, and go down several feet more. But this is dangerous work, and I am not easy in my mind about the safety of the men; so far we have had no accident I am thankful to say, and I want none, for I don't think all the pyramids in the world worth the life of one man.

It is just the same with the pyramid through which we drove a trench; we are 30 feet down having gone through layers of natural sandstone and we have arrived at the tolerably soft "made up" stuff. We are going in under the pyramid at this moment and though we are shoring up all we can I am uneasy as to the security of it. I have worked it out with captains Drake and Lewis, and we think it would take a month to shore up and timber the shafts and we might have to dig two months afterwards to clear the places out. What it really means is that we have to remove most of what each pyramid rests on, and hold up the pyramid itself whilst we do it.

[...]

I am yours always sincerely,

E.A. Wallis Budge

Figure 5. Extracts from Budge's letter to Wingate on his excavation of a pyramid (SAD.273/2/29–34).

include requesting permissions to excavate at certain sites or issues concerning the running of the Antiquities Service. This includes correspondence to, or from, the excavators themselves as well between British officials. For example, in 1908 James Currie – the Director of the Education Department, which administered the Antiquities Service – writes directly to Wingate to confirm that David Randall-MacIver has been given permission to excavate at Buhen (SAD.284/3/75-80). There are also several letters discussing the division of finds from excavations between archaeologists and various officials of the Anglo-Egyptian government. For example, a letter by Drummond in 1914 grants Garstang permission to negotiate the sale of objects discovered at Meroe with the British Museum (SAD.189/2/37). Correspondence between members of the government also relates to the inspection of archaeological sites by the Acting Conservator of Antiquities (e.g. Figure 6).

Other correspondence discusses more complex issues concerning the running of archaeological sites in the Sudan. This includes letters from archaeologists to the government offering their opinions on the running of other sites in the country. For example, a letter by Reisner in 1918 to James Currie offering his positive opinion on some of Henry Wellcome's excavations at Jebel Moya is clearly an answer to a direct request from the Director of the Education Department (SAD.189/3/61-63) (Figure 7). Some letters are less positive and include criticisms of some of Wallis Budge's methods especially in his removal of artefacts and monuments (SAD.273/7/76-77). The conservation or preservation of monuments is a common theme in the correspondence with many detailing the potential damage caused by removing monuments (SAD.273/7/46).

Specific concerns are also raised at sites throughout the correspondence. This includes the building of rest houses, and the appointment of guards at various locations; at first to encourage the excavation of the sites and later visits by tourists. For example, as early as 1902 the construction of rest houses at Soba, Argo island, and Jebel Barkal is suggested to support potential excavations (SAD.272/5/88). Wider concerns over the treatment of workers in the country are also discussed, mostly in a series of letters between Henry Wellcome and Wingate concerning an accusation of mistreatment of workmen at Jebel Moya (SAD.181/2/167-168). Other issues discussed include the study of human remains. A personal letter dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 1913 by Marc Armand Ruffer to Wingate — during his study of human remains found by Griffith at Faras – includes the following, annotated passage:

*Dr. Reisner took away with him to America any number of anatomical and pathological*



7th May 1914

Dear General,

I send the following notes in the hope that they may prove of interest. They are the summary of the results of the first extended tour that I have been able to make since a rearrangement of the college staff afforded me greater opportunity for travel, Naqa, Meroe, where Mr. Percy Martin was shown the site, and Kerma were visited.

At Naqa a satisfactory commencement has been made with the rescue work on the temples. I trust to be in a position to complete my scheme next year and in the meantime those parts, which most obviously required attention, have been straightened. When finished the three more important temples will be clear of debris, the walls, where necessary, repaired and each surrounded by a low mud brick wall, the ramps also, as far as possible, will be set up on their original pedestals.

While at Naqa I found several fragments of what appears to have been an aqueduct. This discovery together with the enormous figures of the Nile God, which ornament the walls of one of the temples, would seem to point to an effective water supply carried from place to place along masonry conduits. Whether the water was obtained from springs or from storage tanks on the hill cannot yet be decided but the presence of an efficient well, in the neighbourhood, suggests that the former may have been the main source.

As far as I can ascertain, the aqueduct remains have not yet claimed anyone's attention. Indeed Caillaud especially comments on the boldness of a people who ventures to found a city and to build splendid edifices 'on this parched land in the middle of the desert'.

Various sculptures fragments including a sundial have been placed in the Rest House. The sundial is of local stone so was probably made on the spot. It resembles in principle the marble one from Basa which is now in the museum (No. 70).

Dr. Reisner has again been fortunate in his results. He promises to forward the season's report, diary etc. from Cairo.

There is still some few weeks work to be done at the site and until he returns next year he has left it efficiently guarded by two of his Egyptian workmen.

The large burial mounds, of which there are three, are most striking. They are artificially formed by building a couple of long brick walls about three metres apart and rising from a few centimetres at the ends to about breast height at the centre. More or less parallel walls ran at right angles to the main passage. The space between the walls ran at right angles to the main passage. The space between the side walls was filled up with sand etc. while the main corridor contained from 200-300 bodies. These apparently were buried alive when the Egyptian governor of the province was laid to rest, in his tomb, which was built near the centre of the main corridor.

Round the mound there was a ring of ox heads while the whole was covered with a layer of sum baked mud on which were strewn white pebbles.

[...]

In Dongola I visited Abu Fatma, Argo and Kawa.

Objects of archaeological interest may be found during the cutting of the Argo Canal, so I have asked those in the charge, in the event of their finding anything of seeming antiquity, to have it carefully handled, to note its exact locality and to send me information. I am expecting proposals from Dr. Reisner re the confirmation of his work in the Province and I hope it may be arranged for him to devote a short time to the excavation of Kawa. This site, owing doubtless to its nearness to Dongola has, on many occasions, past and present, provided an irresistible temptation to unauthorised treasure seekers.

[...]

Figure 6. Extracts from Drummond's letter to Wingate on his inspection of archaeological sites and excavations (SAD.190/2/88-89).

*specimens from Nubia. Should you give him permission to dig in the Sudan, may I suggest that the Khartoum Museum should have first claim on all specimens.* (SAD.185/2/12)

Wingate, as well as highlighting the passage in Ruffer's letter, takes direct action in this matter, as implied in his response to Ruffer, which includes:

*Your hint regarding Dr. Reisner came at an opportune moment: he has received permission to excavate some of the graves in the Kerma basin, which, as you know, will probably be under water shortly should we get good Nile floods. Colonel Jackson has been told to see that your suggestions are carefully complied with.* (SAD.185/2/122)

March 19th 1914

Dear Mr. Currie,

In reply to your note of March 17th, requesting my opinion of the scope and value of Mr. Wellcome's archaeological work, I am very glad of an opportunity to record my present conclusions. For I am afraid I have been guilty of misunderstanding the importance of his results. Of course, I have never underestimated the importance of the problem which he has set for himself. That problem is nothing less than the unravelling of [...] the delineation of the life from the neolithic period down with all the accompanying questions of foreign occupation and mixture of races. Any material evidence on this problem means a distinct addition to human knowledge, of importance not solely to those interested in the Sudan, but to all archaeologists and anthropologists.

Now I am in a position to say that Mr. Wellcome has secured an abundance of dated evidence on this problem.

[...]

As for Mr. Wellcome's future work, it must first of all be said that he is at present the only person who has the interest and can afford to carry out such researches so barren in finds of intrinsic value. From a historical standpoint it is extremely desirable that he should finish Jebel Moya in order to complete his present material and, if possible, to ensure some evidence of the antiquity of the earliest villages on that site.

[...]

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

George A. Reisner

Figure 7. Extracts from Reisner's letter to Currie on Wellcome's excavations at Jebel Moya (SAD.189/3/61-63).

More control on the matter of human remains is clearly attempted by the Antiquities Service after this exchange. The result of this is a lengthy letter in June 1913 by Reisner asking for more clarification on the issue and making his own suggestions (SAD.186/3/120-124); in particular regarding whether the government or the excavations directors should choose who is employed to study the human remains.

The Antiquities Service itself faced several difficulties which include the loss of the first Acting Conservator of Antiquities John Crowfoot when he is transferred to Egypt. This caused a number of issues with the Anglo-Egyptian Government, exacerbated by a lack of financial support for the Antiquities Service. Numerous letters discuss the problematic appointment of Peter Drummond as the Acting Conservator in 1908 which, although initially perceived as a temporary appointment, continued until 1921 (Addison 1953, 57). This includes correspondence beyond the Sudan Government with Wingate writing directly to the Consul General in Egypt - Gorst and later Kitchener - to discuss the situation. However, by 1911 there are also several letters containing favourable reports of Drummond's role as Acting Conservator from both members of the government and archaeologists such as Griffith and Garstang – although a



## FINANCE.

**General.**—The revenue of the province, which is chiefly derived from land tax on permanent registered lands, and on date tax, must be considered now as having reached its limit under existing conditions, any substantial increase will solely depend upon basin cultivation. In years of “good average floods” the basins, even in their present state of development, would add from £E.8,000 to £E.10,000 to the total revenue of the province. Unfortunately no “good average flood” has been experienced since the year 1909, and revenue has suffered in consequence.

## HISTORICAL NOTES.

His Excellency, Field Marshal Viscount Kitchener of Khartoum, G.C.B., O.M., etc., His Majesty's Agent and Consul General in Egypt, accompanied by His Excellency the Governor General, visited the province in January.

**Archæology.**—I am indebted to Professor Griffith, of the Oxford Expedition in Nubia, for the following most interesting report on important excavations carried out at Merowe, during the past year:—

“ Mr. and Mrs. F. Ll. Griffith, representing the Oxford Expedition to Nubia, “ in four months work at Merowe, from November 16th, 1912, to March 15th, “ 1913, examined a cemetery, a temple and part of a large stone-lined building “ (store ?), all on the left bank in the Abu Dom-Sanam region, and belonging no “ doubt to the ancient royal city of Napata. The cemetery lies at the north end “ of the modern town immediately behind the old and new hospital buildings. “ Over 1,500 cave-graves, bricked tombs, and sand-burials were found, the bodies “ in them being sometimes contracted and sometimes extended.

“ During a brief visit, Doctor Ruffer, President of the Conseil Sanitaire, “ examined a number of the skeletons and made various notes especially on their “ pathology. All the graves had been much plundered in antiquity, but with the “ exception of the cave-graves, which were very barren, yielded a good amount of “ small objects, beads and amulets, dating from the Ethiopian period, and “ apparently ranging from the reign of Pankhi, about 750 B.C., onward for some “ centuries. Stone tables sculptured with offerings were frequent but none were “ found inscribed. The temple was built on high ground about a kilometre “ further north: a block house with ditch and gun-platform built upon the “ western half during the Kitchener Expedition still stood on the ruins. After “ this had been removed and the temple excavated, it was found to have consisted “ of a large colonnaded court between two pylons, a pillared hall, pronaos and “ sanctuary with surrounding chambers, the material throughout was coral sand- “ stone. It was built and adorned by Tirbaga, whose foundation deposits still “ remained at the east end, and was dedicated to a form of Ammon, entitled “ ‘ Amen-Re the bull of Nubia,’ and Harmachis. Unfortunately, the walls at an “ early date were utterly ruined, and the surface of most of the stone that

Figure 8. Account by Griffith on his excavations included in the 1913 Governor-General Report (Governor-General Report 1913).

lack of additional staff is also noted.

### Reports

The reports in the Sudan Archive can be divided into two categories: the published and the unpublished. Archaeology is also referenced in some of the more general reports on specific provinces. The unpublished and often unofficial reports were often sent as letters to various members of the Sudan Government. This includes a detailed report submitted by Archibald Sayce to Wingate in 1910 on sites and monuments in the North of the Sudan. Sayce provides detailed descriptions of archaeological sites, such as the temples near Jebel Barkal, as well as an assessment of the state of preservation of some of the monuments. For example, he raises concerns over the removal of bricks as *sebakh* (SAD.297/5/26). Other types of reports include drafts of later published reports. This includes the draft – as well as additional notes, drawings, and photographs – of Douglas Newbold's expedition into the Libyan desert, which was published in 1928 as *Rock-Pictures and Archaeology in the Libyan Desert* (Newbold 1928).

The second type of relevant report found in the Sudan

Archive material are the *Reports on the Finances, Administration and Condition of the Sudan*. These are yearly reports sent out by the Governor-General of the Sudan to the British Consul General (later High Commissioner) in Egypt who then forwarded them on to the British Government. Although they vary over time these ‘Governor-General Reports’ contain extensive information on the running of the Sudan in each year. 40 of these reports dating to between 1902 and 1952 are available through the Sudan Archive and are also available online through the Archive's website at [https://www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/sudan/gov-gen/\\_reports/](https://www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/sudan/gov-gen/_reports/). Nearly all the reports contain references to archaeological activity undertaken in that year. This can include references to specific excavations, as well as the running of the Antiquities Service and the implementation of regulations such as the Antiquities Ordinance. Depending on the year more or less detailed information on archaeology and antiquities is provided. In some Reports, this is limited to a short summary provided by the Governor-General of the Sudan. Other Governor-General Reports contain more extensive information including accounts by directors of some of the excavations (Figure 8). A separate report by the Antiquities Service can also sometimes be found in the appendices, which typically contains detailed summaries of each of the excavations run in the year, the state of monuments in the Sudan, and an account of the museums. Lists of material acquired by the Antiquities Museum and library are also normally included (Figure 9).

### Diaries

Archaeology at particular sites and monuments is occasionally referred to in the diaries of members of the Sudan Government or other visitors to the Sudan. For example, a short diary by a Colonel W.N.P. Law contains descriptions of his visits to the pyramids of Meroe and the temples at Naqa in December 1929 and January 1930. The diary offers a more ‘touristy’ description of the ruins and includes references to protective shelters and stone walls around some of the monuments. The diary is also accompanied by a number of photographs.

A diary kept by Frank Addison in 1926 is one of the only examples in the Sudan Archive kept by someone directly involved with archaeological research (Figure 10) (SAD.294/19/37–108). The diary kept in April 1926 describes an inspection of archaeological sites and monuments in between Kareima and Wadi Halfa by Addison. At least 13 specific archaeological sites and monuments are described by Addison:

1. The temples and pyramids near Jebel Barkal.
2. Kawa which is described in detail but thought not suitable (financially) for excavation by institutions due to the lack of probable finds. But due to the quality of the inscriptions and potential information Addison finds it worth clearing by the Government once

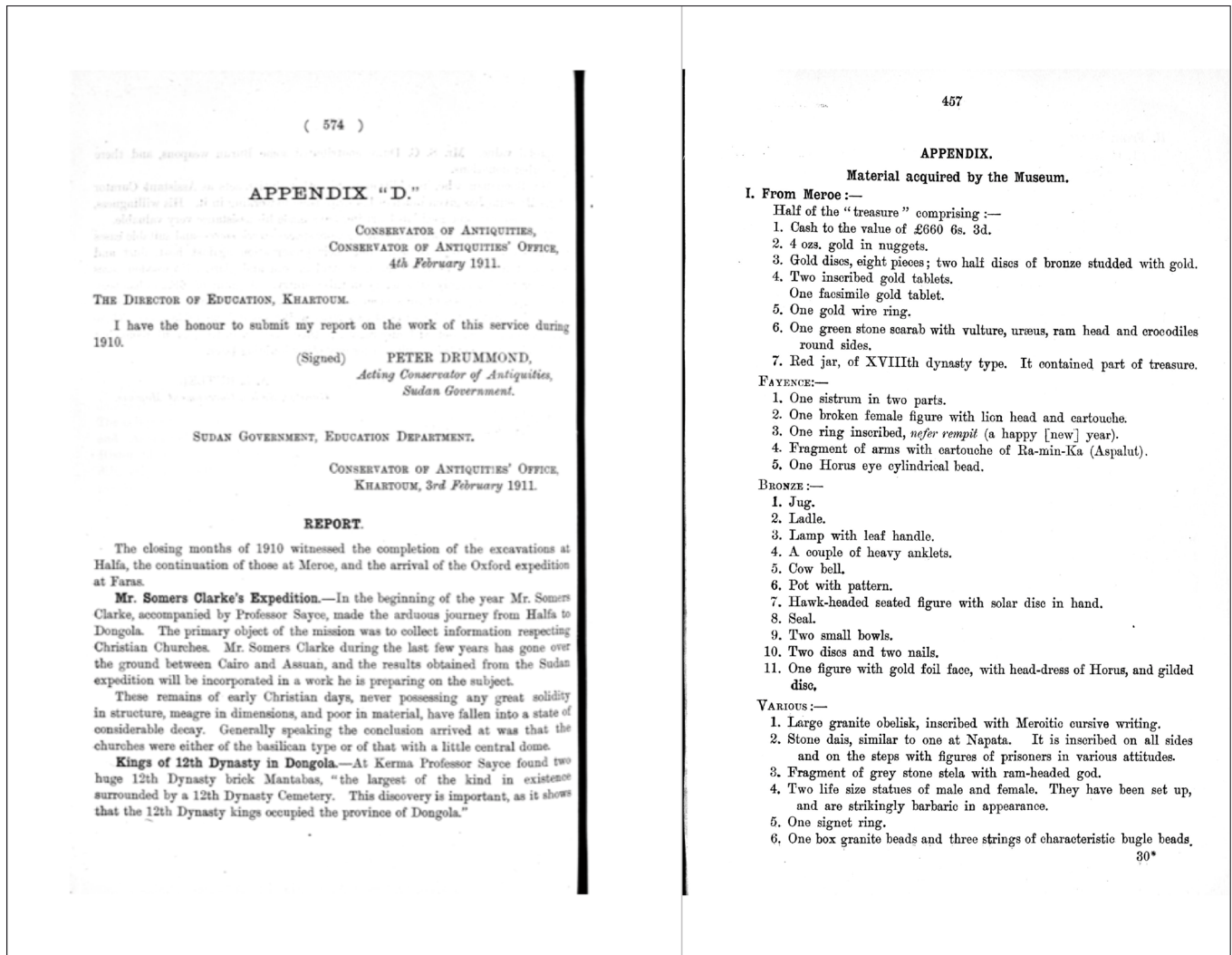


Figure 9. Parts of the Antiquities Service Report included in the Governor-General Reports, including a list of material acquired by the Museum (Governor-General Report).

financial support is available.

3. Argo Island where the two colossi are described.
4. Kerma where he briefly states that there is 'nothing exciting to be seen' since Reisner's excavations.
5. Tombos: Addison describes the quarry, unfinished statue and four inscriptions of Tuthmose III, which are shown to him by some of the local inhabitants.
6. Nauri where Addison describes taking a squeeze of the stela of Seti I.
7. Sesebi<sup>1</sup>: description of the temple.
8. Soleb.
9. Suarda: description of some of the Christian remains.
10. Sai Island: described as uninteresting.
11. Amara: description of the Temple but not sure it is the same one previously described by Wallis Budge.
12. Semna.
13. Kumma.

<sup>1</sup> Spelling 'Sessibi' in original document

Addison's collection in the Sudan Archive also contains photographs of sites. Although these are not dated to 1926, the sites photographed and their sequence suggests that they were taken during this same inspection.

#### Other Material

In addition to the material described above, a wide range of the archaeological material in the Sudan Archive is more varied. This includes official documents such as the minutes of meetings of the archaeological committee. For example, minutes from a 1914 meeting (Figure 11) discuss the division of finds from some of Garstang's excavations at Meroe (SAD.189/3/23). This shows the role of the Sudan Government in the control of some of the archaeological activities in the country, as well as their concern for preservation of monuments, not just excavation. The Archaeological Committee was set up in 1911 and included representatives from the Education, Finances, and Legal Departments of the Condominium Government (Governor-



*April 1926*

I slept on board last night and early this morning the boat crossed the river to a place called Kawa, about 4 miles upstream, where there are ruins which I wanted to see. As this place is south of Dongola, we went there without any difficulty whatever with the north wind.

After breakfast I spent about an hour looking over the site. There is nothing spectacular; mostly it is great mounds covered with broken potsherds & bricks, with the mud walls of ancient houses showing here & there, but there are also the remains of a shrine temple of the best Egyptian work buried in the sand. Where the sand is scraped away the reliefs are seen to be in very good condition. This is a site which ought to be cleared, but it would cost a lot of money and though much interesting information would be found, it would not. I think, yield to the excavator "loot" at all measurable with the expense. It is a job for the Government when it has the funds.

[...]

This afternoon I went to see the two colossal granite statues lying on Argo Island (the river channel is quite dry at this time of year); enormous things 20 feet long or more lying on their backs and one broken across the middle. They date probably to 500 B.C. and no doubt stood one on either side of the door of a temple which has now quite disappeared.

[...]

I set out again at about 2.30 pm for here and made a detour to see the site of Reisner's excavations. Quite a large proportions of the things in the museum come from here, but there is nothing exciting to be seen now, and it is difficult to realize that valuable antiquities were ever found here.

*Figure 10. Extracts from Addison's 1926 diary on his inspections of archaeological sites (SAD.294/19/37-108).*

General Report 1911). The members present in 1914 were:

1. James Currie, The Director of the Education Department
2. Wasey Sterry, Chief Justice, Legal Department
3. T. J. Morris, Inspector, Finance Department
4. Peter Drummond, Acting Conservator of Antiquities and Instructor, Education Department

A similar written agreement between Reisner and Drummond, on behalf of the government, discusses the division of finds from Reisner's excavations at Kerma in 1914. This includes a list of the objects to be left in the Sudan and those retained by the Harvard Boston Expedition. All other objects were taken to Giza to be divided there due to there being no suitable building or place to expose them in Kerma (SAD.190/2/88-89).

Several of the collections also contain various newspaper clippings kept due to their connection to archaeology. This includes a 1909 article written by Sayce describing the potential

Minutes of meeting of the Archaeological Committee held on 4th March 1914.

Present:

- Mr Currie
- Mr Sterry
- Mr Morris
- Mr Drummond

Professor Garstang's letter of the 18th Feb was carefully considered & the committee are of the opinion that:

1. The value of the second stela should be taken as being one third of the larger one.
2. The larger stela should, if possible, find a resting place in a British Museum & in the meantime Prof. Garstang should be given a free hand in the negotiation, on the understanding that all arrangements be submitted to the Committee for consideration in conjunction with Prof. Garstang's suggestions on the matter.
3. The Government will receive one third of the stela less £100 which sum Prof. Garstang agrees to expend on the preservation of certain parts of the site.
4. The cost of setting up smaller stela at Meroë which has been retained by the Government, to be adjusted against the sum of £20, the assumed value of the bronze table of offerings.
5. The claim on the bronze table of offerings to be waived in consideration of the promise of the year's finds, on the consideration laid down in 4 above.

*Figure 11. Transcription of the Minutes of a Meeting of the Archaeological Committee in March 1914 (SAD.189/3/23).*

of archaeological research in the Sudan (SAD.770/3/1). This fits in with wider material in the Sudan Archive relating to the publicising and increasing archaeological research and visitors to the Sudan. This includes various letters keeping track of the success of British exhibitions of Sudanese antiquities or detailed reports and itineraries of visits by officials such as Kitchener.

### Potential

As seen above, there is a wide range of information in the Sudan Archive, which covers different aspects of archaeological research in the Sudan and comes in various forms. As a whole, the archaeological information in the Sudan Archive has considerable potential in current archaeological research. Much of the material offers views, many photographic, of the sites and monuments before they were excavated or reconstructed. This includes a number of monuments that have since been relocated or lost often due to infrastructure developments; for example, the temple of Buhen or the colossi from Argo Island. Accidental discoveries of archaeological material during construction work are also referenced in the Sudan Archive. Although limited, much of this information is unlikely to be available from other sources.

The material offers a non-archaeological perspective on the running of contemporary research from an often more administrative and sometimes political angle. The setting up and development of the Antiquities Service can effectively be reconstructed by using the material in the Sudan Archive.





| Antiquities Service.                            |     |                      |     |     |     |     |            |          |                   |
|---|-----|----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Comm. for Archaeology                           | ... | P. L. Shinnie        | ... | ... | ... | ... | 9. 12. 46  | Khartoum |                   |
| Museum Curator                                  | ... | H. N. Chittick       | ... | ... | ... | ... | 18. 11. 52 | „        |                   |
| Senior Technical Assistant<br>(Antiquities)     | ... | Sadik El Nur         | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1. 1. 31   | „        | Study Course U.K. |
| Senior Technical Assistant<br>(Natural History) | ... | Ahmed Mohd. El Sayed | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1. 1. 36   | „        |                   |
| Antiquities Officer                             | ... | Thabit Hassan Thabit | ... | ... | ... | ... | —          | „        |                   |
| „   | „   | Abdel Rahman Adam    | ... | ... | ... | ... | —          | „        | Study Course U.K. |

Figure 12. Staff members of the Sudan Antiquities Service recorded in 1953 (Sudan Government Staff List September 1953).

The information is available from both an official perspective – for example through the published reports – and a less official level through other material – such as correspondence. For instance, in 1914 Garstang is appointed as an unofficial advisor to the Sudan Archaeological Committee. This is done on the basis that there was very little, if any, archaeological knowledge in the Sudan government at the time. Wingate justifies the appointment further by referencing the lack of funds to appoint anyone else and that Garstang is happy to assist without salary (SAD.469/6/47–49). However, this appointment was met with considerable resistance from other British officials, as recorded in some of the letters to Wingate. To put the information related to specific archaeological sites and excavations into context, it is estimated that only half of the excavations mentioned were published at the time, and only a third have dedicated excavation reports.

### Problems and Limitations

Despite its potential, the archaeological material in the Sudan Archive does have a number of limitations. To an extent this is due to nature of the Archive as a non-archaeological collection. Some issues relating to the cataloguing of the material have already been discussed above, and the archaeological information in the Sudan Archive likely makes up less than 2% of the total archives. Despite this, it is spread across over 50 different collections in the Sudan Archive. Much of the information available is also presented by non-archaeologists or Egyptologists. While to an extent this perspective is invaluable, it also means that mistakes are present. There are similar issues in the amount of information sometimes provided which is often aimed at non-specialists. While archaeologists and Egyptologists are regularly mentioned and contribute to material in the Archive, the majority was created or kept by government officials, some of whom had no archaeological background or training.

Practical issues include missing or non-available material. This includes one sided correspondence and references to attachments – such as reports or photographs – which are not available in the Sudan Archive. Mistakes do occur both in the catalogue and in the original material. For example, a

number of the Egyptian temples have been misidentified, although it is not always clear if these are original errors or mistakes made during cataloguing. Parts of the material, especially photographs, are undated or dated to a very broad time range which can limit their effective use.

The date and nature of material in the Sudan Archive also contribute to a number of biases in the archaeological information discussed. This includes the type of archaeology considered important at the time. This is directly reflected in the Archive. The archaeological remains discussed tend to be associated either with Egypt or European culture. There is a very little mention of 20<sup>th</sup> century Sudanese in the archaeological material from the Sudan Archive. The major exceptions to this are the occasional vague references to workmen at some of the sites, although at least some of the workmen are likely to have travelled from Egypt. A more notable exception includes a dispute relating to the pay and treatment of workmen by Henry Wellcome at Jebel Moya, which is referenced in several letters by James Currie, Reginald Wingate, and Wellcome himself. By the late 30s and 40s more effort is made to include the Sudanese in the museums and the archaeological sites and Antiquities Guides begin to be translated into Arabic. The first Sudanese antiquities officer was also appointed in 1946 in what was referred to as the ‘Sudanisation’ of the Antiquities Service (Governor-General Report 1946). This likely refers to the appointment of Thabit Hassan Thabit (Hakem 1978, 42). However, he is not named in the archival material or Governor-General reports in the Sudan Archive; only appearing in the Sudan Government Staff lists from 1953 (Figure 12) (Sudan Government Staff List, September 1953).

There is also very little material written by or mentioning women involved with archaeology at the time. Again, there are exceptions, which include letters written by Gertrude Bell, although not referencing the Sudan, and references to donations of antiquities to the Museum by Catherine Wingate – the wife of Reginald Wingate. Antiquities are also mentioned in some of the early Sudan Government Museum reports written by Hilda Broun who served as the Museum’s curator and secretary (Governor-General Report 1904). She

appears to be the only woman to write parts of the official published Governor-General reports.

## Conclusion

The Sudan Archive contains a wealth of archaeological information which could and should be considered in current archaeological research. Much of the material considered here is more obviously related to archaeology. However, other information and photographs relating to heritage more broadly in the Sudan are also available. The accessibility of the material is benefiting considerably from the ongoing digitisation and publication of many of the documents from the Sudan Archive on its website.

## Bibliography

- Addison, F. 1953. 'Early Days, 1903-1931', *Kush* 1, 56-59.
- Anon. 1997. 'Richard Leslie Hill 1901-1996', *Sudanic Africa* 8, 1-15.
- Corey, E. S. B. and L. E. Forbes 1983. 'Resources for Sudan Studies: The Sudan Archive of the University of Durham', *African Research and Documentation* 31, 1-11.
- Forbes, L. 1980. 'The Sudan Archive at the University of Durham', in B. C. Bloomfield (ed.), *Middle East Studies and Libraries*. London, 49-57.
- Hakem, A. M. A. 1978. 'A History of Archaeological Research in the Sudan', in S. Hochfield and E. Riefstahl (eds.), *Africa in Antiquity: The Arts of Ancient Nubia and the Sudan I*. New York, 36-45.
- Newbold, D. 1928. 'Rock-Pictures and Archaeology in the Libyan Desert', *Antiquity* 2 (7), 261-291.
- Oriental Museum Website. <https://www.dur.ac.uk/oriental.museum/about/history/> [accessed 2019].
- Sudan Archive Website. [http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ark/32150\\_s1k930bx05z.xml](http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ark:/32150_s1k930bx05z.xml) [accessed 2019].
- Ward, C. 2016a. 'Durham University's Sudan Archive – An Overlooked Resource in Current Archaeological Research', *Sudan & Nubia* 20, 170-178.
- Ward, C. 2016b. 'The Archaeological Potential of Durham University's Sudan Archive', *Antiquity* 90 (354) [online: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2016.208>].
- Ward, C. 2019. 'Archives in Archaeology: Treasure Troves or Disorganised Detritus — Archaeology in Durham University's Sudan Archive', in S. Tipper and G. Tully (eds.), *Current Research in Nubian Archaeology*. Piscataway, 5-22.

## Archive Material

- Governor-General Reports [available online: [https://www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/sudan/gov-gen\\_reports/](https://www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/sudan/gov-gen_reports/)]
- Sudan Government Staff Lists [available online: [https://www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/sudan/staff\\_lists/](https://www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/sudan/staff_lists/)]
- SAD.181/2/167-168 *Letter from Wellcome to Wingate 18/5/1912*
- SAD.185/2/12 *Letter from Ruffer to Wingate 3/2/1913*
- SAD.185/2/122 *Letter from Wingate to Ruffer 14/2/1913*
- SAD.186/3/120-124 *Letter from Reisner to Wingate 27/6/1913*
- SAD.189/2/37 *Letter from Drummond to Wingate 16/2/1914*
- SAD.189/3/23 *Minutes of the Meeting of the Archaeological Committee in March 1914*
- SAD.189/3/61-63 *Letter from Reisner to Currie 19/3/1914*

- SAD.190/2/88-89 *Letter from Drummond to Wingate 7/5/1914*
- SAD.199/2/94-95 *Letter from Reisner to Wingate 7/2/1914*
- SAD.272/5/88 *Letter from Ward to Wingate 19/7/1902*
- SAD.273/2/29-34 *Letter from Budge to Wingate 23/2/1903*
- SAD.273/7/46 *Letter from Broun to Wingate 21/7/1903*
- SAD.273/7/76-77 *Letter from Broun to Wingate 1903*
- SAD.284/3/75-80 *Letter from Currie to Wingate 29/11/1908*
- SAD.284/4/15 *Letter from Wingate to Gorst 4/12/1908*
- SAD.285/2/29-30 *Letter from Sayce to Wingate 16/1/1906*
- SAD.294/19/37-108 *Diary kept by Addison in April 1926*
- SAD.297/5/26 *Report by Sayce in 1910*
- SAD.469/6/47-49 *Letter from Wingate to Clayton 18/2/1914*
- SAD.770/3/1 *Newspaper clipping of 'The Ancient Temple of Meroe' by Sayce published in the The Times 25/3/1909*