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BOOKS**

THE PYRAMIDS OF EGYPT

I. E. S. EDWARDS



ONE SHILLING

THE PYRAMIDS OF EGYPT

by I. E. S. Edwards

How and why did the ancient kings of Egypt build their Pyramids? These are two of the questions which this book sets out to answer, and a novel explanation is offered to account for the invention of the Pyramid. Excavations conducted in and around the Pyramids during the past century have revealed the astonishingly elaborate measures devised by the Egyptian kings to provide for their supposed wants in the Next Life and also to defeat, but always without success, the incursions of the tomb-robber. The story of their efforts to achieve this twofold aim, by the constant adaptation and development of their Pyramids, is here recounted, with the aid of numerous drawings and photographs to illustrate the principal changes.

1911

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WASHINGTON, D. C.
JANUARY 1, 1911
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HONORABLE
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D. C.
SIR:
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th inst. in relation to the matter of the
land in the State of California, and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper
authorities for their consideration. I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Yours very truly,
J. M. [Signature]

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PREFACE

THE following chapters are, in the first place, an attempt to describe some of the principal features of a number of Pyramids, nearly all of which were built over a period of about a thousand years. Only those Pyramids which illustrate most clearly the evolution and subsequent decline of that class of tomb are discussed in any detail, the remainder being merely mentioned in passing. The last chapter gives some account of the methods employed in construction and of the motives which prompted the Egyptian kings to adopt the Pyramid form.

Although I have visited, either before or during the war, most of the Pyramids described and have made use of notes which I recorded on their sites, a considerable part of the factual matter is, of necessity, taken from the published reports of the various archæologists who have surveyed or excavated these monuments in the course of the past century. My debt to these archæologists and to the publishers of their reports will be apparent to every reader. Many of the interpretations given are also based on the works of previous writers; in some cases, however, I have ventured to offer explanations of my own.

I must here express my gratitude to the friends who have helped me in different ways when writing the book and, in particular, to John Cruikshank Rose, whose line-drawings are an indispensable adjunct to the text. Some of the drawings have been adapted in points of detail by Mr. Rose, either because direct reproductions from the publications in which they first appeared would have been unsuitable for the purpose of this book or because subsequent archæological discoveries have necessitated small adjustments. The authors of the books

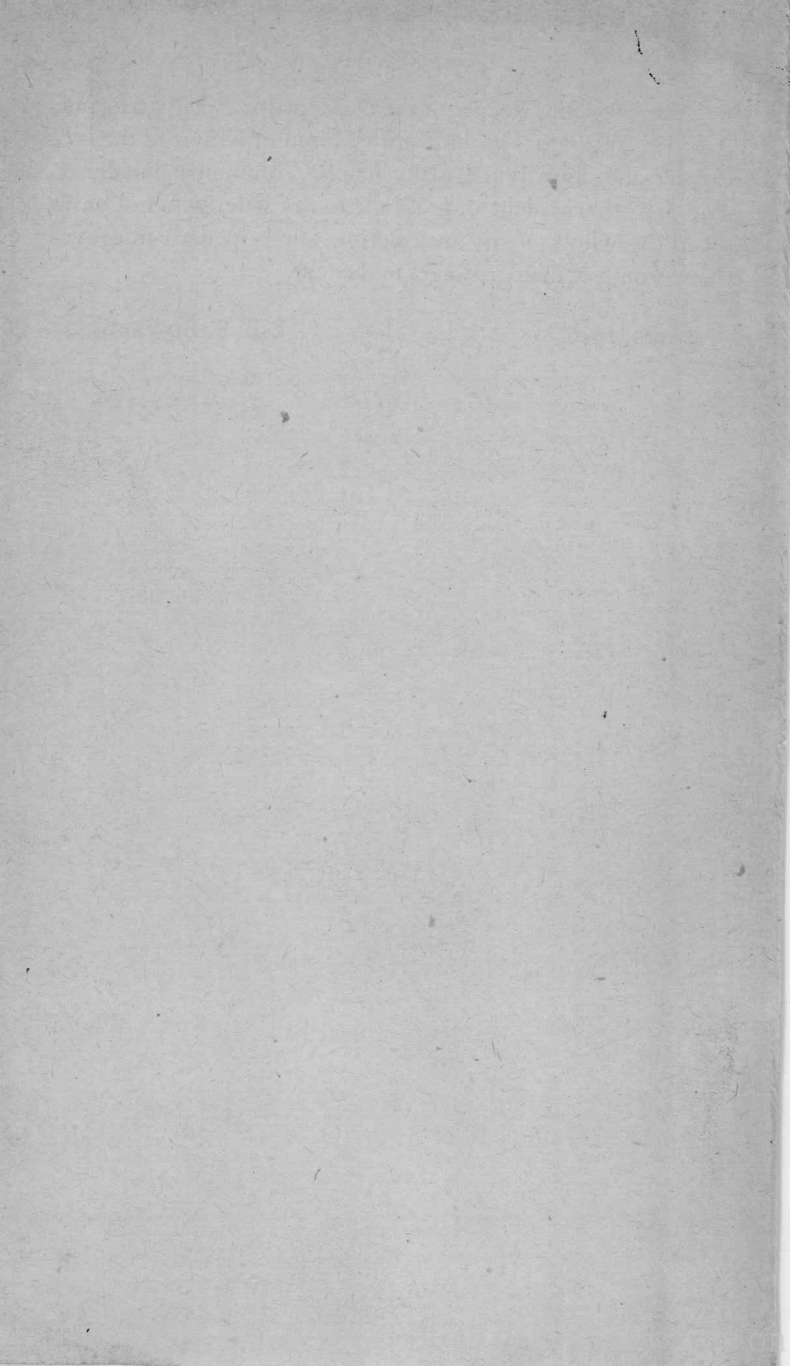
or articles from which the drawings were made are listed at the beginning of the book. For the opportunity of consulting these works while in the Middle East, I am greatly indebted to Mr. Bernhard Grdseloff, Librarian of the Egyptological Institute of the late Dr. Ludwig Borchardt in Cairo; to Dr. I. Ben-Dor, Librarian of the Palestine Archæological Museum in Jerusalem; to Dr. Nelson Glueck, Director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem, and to Mr. Seton Lloyd, Technical Adviser to the Directorate of Antiquities in Baghdad. Mr. Guy Brunton, of the Cairo Museum, kindly enabled me to obtain the photographs of objects in that Museum which are included among the Plates. For similar assistance in securing a photograph of the group-statue reproduced in Plate 12, my thanks are due to Mr. Dows Dunham of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The authorities of the Metropolitan Museum have shown great generosity in allowing me to include fig. 26 before the final report of the excavation has been published. My visits to the various Pyramid sites were greatly facilitated by Dr. Etienne Drioton, Director-General of the Service des Antiquités, and by local officials of the Service.

In forming my conclusions on several problems touched upon in the course of the book, I have received valuable help from discussion with Lieut.-Colonel W. B. Emery, to whose excavations references appear in the text; with Professor J. Černý of London University; with Mr. Bernhard Grdseloff; with Mr. H. W. Fairman, Director of the Egypt Exploration Society's excavations in the two years before the war, and with Lieut.-Colonel R. D. H. Jones of the Royal Engineers. My special thanks are due to Professor A. M. Blackman of Liverpool University, and to Professor S. R. K. Glanville of Cambridge University, both of whom read my entire typescript before it went to press and whose suggestions have resulted in the introduction of several improvements; also to

Dr. Sidney Smith, Keeper of the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities in the British Museum, who read the last chapter and contributed many helpful comments. Finally, I owe a particular debt of gratitude to my wife, who not only typed the whole of my manuscript, but helped to improve the wording of many passages in the text.

London, 1946.

I. E. S. EDWARDS.



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INTRODUCTION

ONE of the first questions which occur to the mind of anyone looking at an ancient monument is its date. In the case of Egyptian monuments it is often difficult, and sometimes impossible, to answer the question in terms of years before the beginning of the Christian era, because our knowledge of Egyptian chronology, especially in the early periods, is still very incomplete. We know the main sequence of events and frequently their relationship to one another, but, except in rare instances, an exact chronology will not be possible until the discovery of material of a different and more precisely datable character than anything found hitherto.

Partly for the sake of convenience and partly because a century of study has demonstrated that it is fundamentally sound, the method of grouping the kings of Egypt into thirty-one dynasties, which is first known to us from Manetho's *History of Egypt*, has been universally adopted by modern historians as a substitute for closer dating. Since the end of a dynasty did not always entail any very marked political or artistic changes, it has also been found convenient to group the dynasties into periods roughly corresponding with the most important of these changes. There are nine main periods, to which the following names and approximate dates may be given:

I and II Dynasties.	.	Archaic Period,	3188-2815
			B.C.
III — VI	„ .	Old Kingdom,	2815-2294
			B.C.
VII — X	„ .	First Intermediate Period,	2294-2132 B.C.

XI — XII Dynasties	.	Middle Kingdom, 2132–1777 B.C.
XIII — XVII	„ .	Second Intermediate Period, 1777–1573 B.C.
XVIII — XX	„ .	New Kingdom, 1573–1090 B.C.
XXI — XXV	„ .	Late New Kingdom, 1090– 663 B.C.
XXVI Dynasty	Saite Period, 663–525 B.C.
XXVII — XXXI Dynasties	.	Late Period, 525–332 B.C.

The Pyramid Age, *par excellence*, covers the second of these groups—the period beginning with the IIIrd Dynasty and ending with the VIth Dynasty. During this time the kings, with few exceptions, and many of their queens were buried in tombs having superstructures in pyramidal form. Pyramids were also built for several kings and queens of the subsequent dynasties, but they were in the nature of archaisms, lacking not only much of the architectural splendour of their predecessors, but also some of their religious significance. The total number at present known in Egypt is about eighty; many of them, it is true, are reduced to little more than sand and rubble, but they are still recognisable to the archæologist as having once been Pyramids.

Those Pyramids which belong to the Pyramid Age were built on the west bank of the Nile in the neighbourhood of Memphis, between Meidum in the south and Abu Roash in the north. If later tradition is to be believed, Memphis was built on ground which had been reclaimed by Menes, the first dynastic ruler of Egypt, by dyking the Nile so that it flowed through a channel to the east of its original course. Whether or not this tradition is true in detail, there can be little doubt that it was Menes who founded Memphis, for the archæological remains in its immediate vicinity dating from