

Ensign John Harwood Writes About Recent Trip to Pyramids in Egypt

(Editor's Note:—The following is the third part of a highly interesting letter from Ensign John Harwood, USNR, commander of a guard crew aboard a big American Liberty ship, taking supplies overseas to the American armed forces. In this part of the letter Ensign Harwood tells of sights and events in Egypt. Another part of the letter will appear in this paper next week.)

Ah, the pyramids! No trip to Egypt would be complete without a pilgrimage thereto, so one sunny but cool afternoon when we were in Cairo, part of my crew—a delegation of 10—and I engaged one Omar Suliman and one Mahmoud Hassan, Heemied dragsmen and guides, to show us the works. We got into two cars and drove outside the city over the River Nile to the place called Gizeh, where the largest of Egypt's 1,000 pyramids thrust its awesome bulk into the sky.

On high land overlooking the city, and alongside of Meno House, the hotel where President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill, and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek held their recent conference, we removed ourselves from the cars with cold disdainful men, were 20-memorable and tired-looking camels.

Remembering the famous words of Nathan Hale: "I regret that I have but one life to give for my country," and the modern expression uttered when a couple dozen zeros tumbled at you: "This is it, boys!" I notchalantly

stroled over to the camels, looking for one with a kind face. It would never do now, to weaken in front of my men!

Camel Named Moses

"So, I met a camel named 'Moses,' and when his driver gave the sign and password, the beast, with snorts and groans, rocked forward to his knees and then collapsed backwards to his haunches. It was time to get aboard. I did so, and before long, a U. S. Navy caravan special was rolling and pitching its way up the hill to the pyramids. It was a queer motion and can be conservatively described as a combination of a rough crossing of the English Channel and a gale in the Bering Strait. But we got there and soon forgot any tendency to seasickness as we got closer to the Great Pyramid of Gizeh, rising 450 feet in the air and covering 13 acres of ground. Far at the top, we could see tiny figures—of ambitious military visitors who had scrambled up the side, climbing on each step, which I judged, was about five feet high.

The guide told us that the stone for this pyramid, built a couple thousand years ago by Pharaoh Cheops, came from quarries in the Sudan, far up the Nile and about 40 miles inland, and that the whole job took about 15 years. Originally the outside was covered with a smooth face of better stone, but this had all been carried away and used for mosques, of which Cairo has hundreds. Nearby are two lesser pyramids, the middle-sized one having been built by Cheops's son. It has been covered with that beautiful white translucent stone, alabaster, and it was easy to visualize what a magnificent pile it must have been in that clear, blue Egyptian sky. However, one of the ambitious Turkish sultans removed the alabaster and it now composes the great Mohamed Ali mosque, which we later saw on the other side of the Nile.

Inside of Pyramid for a few, another guide, having thrust lit candles in our hands, took us on a spooky trip inside the Cheops pyramid, where in large rooms in the center, the Pharaoh and his queen had been interred.

The tunnel was low, the path rough, and our clothes became covered with some very ancient dust; the out-of-doors looked good when we blinked our way into daylight once more.

Much smaller, but equally interesting, was the celebrated Sphinx, the crouching lion with the human head. Napoleon had his artillerymen shoot off the nose, I recalled, and Hitler would probably have taken a few potshots at the ears—unless Goering had removed it in 1941 for one of his castles—but their plans failed to materialize. As it was, the Sphinx was doing well, thank you, even though the Egyptian government had been fit to keep its chin up with a big pile of sandbags, a precaution against air raids. (I remember running a picture of the sand-bagged Sphinx in The Birmingham Eccentric, in column 2, page 1 of Part II, about a year and a half ago. As the old saying goes, "Little did I then think...")

Then came the procedure which is almost as old as the pyramids themselves, no doubt. Everyone must have his picture taken with the pyramids and Sphinx in the background, so the result is that future generations of the Harwood clan will be able to turn to the background, so the result is that with meritment the scene of 12 knock-kneed, sad-eyed camels, 10 U. S. Bluejackets arming from ear to ear, one English hanging on with both hands, a dragoman named Ahmed and another named Omar, and six dark-visaged camel drivers dressed in burruses and nightgirts. The Sphinx, it is plain to see, will have nothing to do with it, and continues its stony-eyed stare in another direction.

Sees Excavations

The picture taken, we went back to the cars, passing numerous other tombs and excavations. I believe a Harvard expedition has been at work and spits its discoveries 50-50 with the Government. Apparently only the surface has been scratched, and from the alabaster suggested a magnificent gateway; we later saw activity in another section of Cairo and could make out the arches of an old Roman aqueduct. Ruins are piled on ruins. The guides offered to take us to a very ancient part of the city where Joseph and Mary are said to have brought the infant Jesus in the flight from King Herod, but we were unable to make this excursion. We were disappointed to learn that the national museum, filled with a marvelous collection of antiquities, is still closed because of the war.

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In the Matter of the Estate of Lillian M. Long, Deceased.
I, Frank H. Moore, executor of said estate, having filed in said court a petition praying that the time for the presentation of claims against said estate be limited to a time and date to be appointed to receive, examine and adjust all claims and demands against said deceased by and before said court.
It is further ordered, that the 7th day of June, 1944, at said probate office, be and is hereby appointed as the time and date for the presentation, examination and adjustment of all claims against said deceased.
ARTHUR E. MOORE, Judge of Probate.
Oliver H. Kirk, Attorney at Law, Water's Building, Birmingham, Michigan. 9-10-11

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