

August 20th 1939

Dr. William F. Albright
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Baltimore, Md.

Dear William,

I am glad to hear that the first proofs are already in Nagberg's hands, and that he will be sending me the second proofs to read on my way home. If I can get a cabin, I am going to take the Escalibur, sailing September 11th, and getting to New York on October 4th. That will give me the chance to get a good rest on board boat, and to see something of my family in Cincinnati, and enable me perhaps to get away for a week somewhere with Helen alone before commencing the lecture-tour. At the moment, I am a bit tired, and somewhat stale.

I finally succeeded in getting permission from Kirkbride to return to Transjordan, but he limited me to the Jerash area, and made it a condition that I come back to Jerash over night. However, I made a number of interesting discoveries which I shall not detail here, except to say that for a considerable distance north of Jerash the gap in the Bronze Age period continues.

I am deeply impressed with what you have written in the past and in your letter of July 28th with regard to the dating of the Qasnal seals, the "Aramiac" inscription and the Minnean inscription. I have no particular hobby-horse to ride with regard to the dating of those inscriptions, and on the whole would be most willing to date them to + 600 B.C., if the contexts in which they were found at all permitted it. There is, however, no question that these epigraphic materials do not come "from the period immediately before the last destruction of this level". They seem to come rather from the very beginning of Stratum III, from which Stratum most of our pottery finds originate. I simply cannot see any possibility at the present time of assigning all of this pottery to the latest phase of Iron II. Some of the Qasnal jars were found for instance more or less intact and in situ on the floor of the first phase of Stratum III. There is on the whole thus far comparatively little clear out stratigraphic pottery finds, as I pointed out in my letter to you of July 6th. I shall know much more clearly where I stand when the architect has worked out the various levels. I hope to bring the worked out charts and plans with me when I come to Baltimore, and I shall also bring drawings and photographs of pottery with me. I am very anxious to hear what you will have to say about them.

In the meanwhile, I think I shall wait with the second article which I have promised on Tell el-Kheleifeh until I have had an opportunity of studying my materials more closely. In as much as I said in the article that I sent you that I would discuss the history of the settlements at Tell el-Kheleifeh in a second article, I am going to ask you to omit the references to the datings of Stratum III and the Minsean inscription to the 8th century, which appear in the first article. I am also going to ask you to add for me a paragraph with regard to Shishak's invasion. These changes will be noted on the separate enclosed pages.

I am pleased that you agree so strongly with my dating of Eniongeber I to the Solomonian period. I was extremely interested in your note in the Archiv für Orientforschung, and in Both's article in the ZDPV. I think it most probable now that Shishak destroyed Eniongeber I.

I am enclosing copies of my handcopies of the ostraca and also a photograph of Room 27 which shows a number of the Qasnal jars in situ at the bottom of the floor which begins with Stratum III.

I shall probably hear when I get to America whether or not the lectures before the A.P.S. which you spoke about in one of your recent letters, has been scheduled.

I am still hoping that somehow or other I can get the funds to complete Tell el-Kheleifeh next spring. It is hard to believe that if war doesn't break out soon, it can be stayed off more than a year or two at the very most. It is for that reason that I should like to finish the work there. Of course, I guess with it is bound up my love for my work over here and my deep regret that I shall ever have to leave it.

I quite agree that Père Vincent's review of Annual XVII is somewhat off the mark. Even if Wright were a closet pottery man, which he isn't, it would not form in itself a valid criticism. I shall be interested when I get home in hearing what you have to say about my datings of the Transjordan sherds in the volume now in press.

Looking forward to seeing you,

sincerely yours

NC:IR