

The Johns Hopkins University

Baltimore, Maryland

July 28th, 1939

Dear Nelson,

Your letters and articles of July 6th and 11th have both been received. My heartiest congratulations on the discoveries at Jerash, which are rather unexpected, since we had all assumed that the site had been combed by the excavators in all directions! I suggest that this article can wait until the December number of the BULLETIN, since we want both the article which I have received and the next one on ~~Jerash~~ Esion-gheh for the October BULLETIN.

The first proofs of the Annual are probably in Engberg's hands, and I suppose he will send you the second proof in Palestine, so you can read it on your way home!

Don't you think that the rich materials, including South-Arabian and "Aramaic" inscriptions (not ostraca), from stratum III must belong to the period immediately before the last destruction of this level? Nearly always we find the richest materials from a destroyed stratum in the latest occupation level of the stratum in question. This dating would be splendid from the epigraphic point of view. As you know, I have been most reluctant to date the seal impression, graffiti, and the South-Arabic characters before 600 B.C., though I was willing to compromise at a pinch on the late seventh century. If we could date all this material in the early sixth century (not after 550 B.C.) it would be fine. As you know from the recent BULLETIN article by Winnett, the latter has proved that the oldest Minasian inscription from Dedan and the vicinity are younger than the oldest inscriptions of local origin -- which seem to belong to the 7th-4th century. Of course, I don't mean that these imported vases must come down as late as the Minasian colony there, but simply that they can hardly be dated too early and a date in the 6th century would be most suitable.

If you received my latest letter you know how strongly I favor your Solomonite date for stratum I. After the gateway I feel that the date is practically certain. A destruction by Shishak is well within the bounds of probability, since Both and I have just independently pointed out that a large section of names in the Shishak list must be Edomite. I enclose my review of Simons in the Archiv für Orientforschung where I publish my observation, which includes the identification of Eg. ngh in the list with ngh, "mine." Both's discussion appeared in SDPV 61, 29-7 ff.

Your suggestion about Harris is excellent, though it may be too late. I shall write immediately, calling attention to this fact.

I am afraid that it will not be possible to get a third subvention from the Philosophical Society for Esion-gheh, since the second application was made and granted with the express understanding that this will be the last. I know that the site is important and that the money has been well spent and the results first-class, but rules are rules. The AALS has no money for grants any more -- alas! I really think that it will be wisest for you to finish up your work recording and preparing for the publication of Tannur and Kneleifeh (which will take all your spare time next year) next year and come home until things quiet down in

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^{the} Near East. You have plenty of material for a preliminary publication and you can raise money yourself for a substantial third campaign (say three months), in which you can complete or practically finish the site. With the mass of pottery you now have you can certainly date individual levels rather closely, even if most of the material is local. One never really finishes anything in archaeology!

Père Vincent's remarks in his review of Annual XVII are rather misleading, though I shall not make any effort to reply anywhere, since we are such old friends and we cannot agree on everything. His insinuation that I have changed my mind about the distinctions in M.B. pottery at Tell Beit Mirsim is not at all true. In the publication of the pottery I throw I and H, G and F together so far as types of pottery are concerned, and only differentiate between pottery from these strata, as well as from E and D, when there is actual stratigraphic basis. Wright is not a closet pottery man, since he spent a season at Bethel, did a good deal of work on pottery thereafter at the School in Jerusalem, and has worked since nearly a year on Grant's material from Beth-shean, which is very extensive. Of course, as you know, Wright's conclusions are my own almost throughout, too, since we discussed matters at every stage of his progress. He did a grand job on the classification of E.B. pottery, though there is plenty still to be done.

Very cordially yours,

William