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## **Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Bremen**

**DFG-Projekt "Digitalisierung und Erschließung des Nachlasses des  
Ägyptologen Adolf Erman (1854-1937)"**

### **Brief von John Bigelow an Adolf Erman**

**Bigelow, John**

**Washington D. C., 03.12.1920**

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1836 Jefferson Place,  
Washington, D. C., *U.S. of America*  
December 3, 1920.

Professor Adolph Erman,  
University of Berlin,  
Berlin, Germany.

Dear Sir:

I have undertaken to write a history of the Suez and Panama Canals and as an introduction to it, I am trying to prepare a brief authentic review of the antecedents of the Suez Canal, including the commercial and political vicissitudes with which they were connected. I am surprised at the amount of assertion without proof or authority that has been indulged in on this subject, and am impressed with the difficulty of collecting the demonstrable truths regarding it. I hope that you have the time and disposition to render me some assistance, and accordingly I submit to your consideration a list of questions, not with the idea that you will answer them all, but with the object of informing you of the principal points of my investigation, in the hope that you will find among them some on which, without too much trouble, you can furnish me the truth, with proof or authority for it. Any contribution with which you may favor me will be highly appreciated.

Yours very truly,

*John Bigelow*

P. S. Have your latest conclusions as to the chronology of Egypt been published? If so, in what work and edition thereof?

*J.B.*

1886 Jefferson Place,  
Washington, D. C., U.S.A.  
December 3, 1930.

Professor Adolph Brunn,  
University of Berlin,  
Berlin, Germany.

Dear Sir:

I have undertaken to write a history of the Suez and Panama Canals and as an introduction to it, I am trying to prepare a brief authentic review of the antecedents of the Suez Canal, including the commercial and political vicissitudes with which they were connected. I am surprised at the amount of assertion without proof or authority that has been indulged in on this subject, and am impressed with the difficulty of collecting the demonstrable truths regarding it. I hope that you have the time and disposition to render me some assistance, and accordingly I admit to your consideration a list of questions, not with the idea that you will answer them all, but with the object of informing you of the principal points of my investigation, in the hope that you will find among them some on which, without too much trouble, you can furnish me the truth, with proof or authority for it. Any contribution with which you may favor me will be highly appreciated.

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thereof?

*J.B.*

Questions on the Antecedents of the Suez Canal.

1. When was the first canal built, extending from the Nile toward the Red Sea?
2. By or under what ruler was it built?
3. Was this an irrigation canal, or a navigation canal, or both?
4. What map shows the course of this water-way most accurately?
5. Was there any current to it; if so, in what direction?
6. Was there any sluice or lock in it; if so where was it located, what was its particular function, form, and mode of operation; is there any drawing or diagram illustrating its construction; if so, where?
7. Is any particular vessel, known to have gone through this canal; if so, what kind of vessel was it. What was its mission or business, when did it go through, what relics or records are there suggesting answers to this question?
8. Same question as 3--7, respecting:
  - a. The Necho Canal,
  - b. The Ptolemy Canal,
  - c. The Trajan Canal,
  - d. The Amrou Canal/
9. Was there ever a canal, other than those above indicated, that connected the Nile with the Red Sea; if so, same question as 3--7 regarding it. This question (9) has special reference to any possible canal from the following points on the Nile; Meroy--Growth and <sup>2</sup>vissitudes of commerce etc., (1878) by John Yeats, page 45. Kenne (Cenae, Caenopolis)- Voyage dans la <sup>ci/</sup>haute et basse Egypte, etc. [1800] by C. S. Sonnini, III. 302, 303, Koptos (Coptos) or vicinity-- <sup>ef</sup>Idem. 303. Translated from the Portuguese edition of ~~1774. Refers to Greece, Mediterranean.~~

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10. What are the best maps showing the topographical changes in the isthmus of Suez from the time when the Mediterranean and the Red Sea communicated with each other? ( L'Isthme et le canal de Suez, etc. (1901) by J. Charles-Roux, 1,3,4,8,9(.
11. What is the best study of discussion of these changes?
12. Who are the best dealers to resort to for literature on the subjects of the foregoing questions?

Washington, D. C., December 3, 1920.

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