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

Brief von James Henry Breasted an Adolf Erman

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The University of Chicago

Haskell Oriental Museum

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

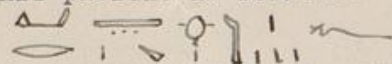
June 5, 1922.

My dear friend:

The accumulation of duties which are converging upon my departure for Europe and the Orient has been so heavy that I am still unable to reach a group of friendly letters which I want to write with my own hand, and of course on the top of the pile of unanswered correspondence lies your last very welcome letter.

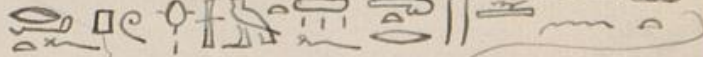
However, even in this unsatisfactory way let me acknowledge, in the first place, the receipt of your statement of the Dictionary enterprise before the Leipzig meeting of orientologists. At the same time we have also had a note from Grapow indicating the very gratifying progress which you have been making. We are all very much delighted, here at the Museum and Institute, to see how near the end the enterprise now really is and we all want to do everything we can to encourage and support the project.

In this connection I want to mention also that I wrote as diplomatic a letter as I could to the Executive Committee of the New York Historical Society, emphasizing the international aspects of the Dictionary, and I am very glad to say that I have received their official permission to communicate to you the entire Edwin Smith Papyrus for incorporation in the Dictionary. It contains no less than seventy glosses, some of them quite long, explaining the meanings of all sorts of words and terms which will be of value to the Dictionary, and it would be lamentable if they should not go in. Let me give you an example. The physician is frequently admonished to treat his patient as follows:

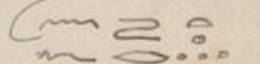


These enigmatic instructions are then explained in a gloss in this way:





Many curious and ancient phrases thus become intelligible.



I shall be sending you in a few days a very popular preliminary announcement of the papyrus from the Bulletin of the New York Historical Society, in which you will remember our friend Caroline has been publishing some of the archaeological material from the Historical Society's collection. With this little article I am sending you also a copy of the first of our Oriental Institute Communications, which is likewise a purely popular publication for the sake of keeping our benefactors interested and showing the Trustees of the University something of what we are doing, and of course this could not be done in a technical publication. You will notice when this reaches you that I have taken the liberty of publishing two Wörterbuch Zettel as an illustration of the process of compiling a modern dictionary of an ancient oriental language. While this was done in an endeavor to explain the work of our new Assyrian Dictionary, I was very glad incidentally to present the Egyptian Dictionary in this way in order that our supporters here may know something more of the enterprise and of the necessity for supporting it.

With regard to the best method of handing to you the Edwin Smith Papyrus, let me say that I would send you the photographs at once. Owing to the fact, however, that a set of these photographs made in New York would cost between fifty and sixty dollars, as they are very large, -- in most cases the size of the original; (in the case of some of the wider columns there has been a slight reduction of size) -- it did not seem wise, therefore, to involve my request in New York with an expense like this which might have endangered the whole matter. Consequently we shall proceed as follows:

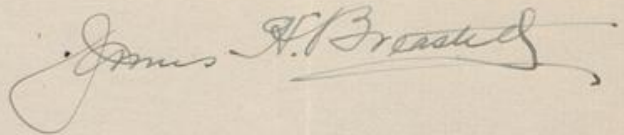
I am sailing from New York June 28 and after the centenary celebration in Paris I shall be obliged to go to Brussels to attend a meeting of the International Research Council. Gardiner and I expect to hold a conference on the Coffin Texts in Paris and if we are unable to finish this work before the end of the Paris session I am hoping that the Brussels conference will end in time to permit me to run up to Finland to continue our work there and at the same time to gain a little rest and vacation, for this past winter has been a hard one for me and I am rather tired. I hope to finish the visit with Gardiner in Finland in time to reach Berlin by the end of August at the latest. I hope very much that this will not bring my arrival at Berlin at a time when you are all expecting to be away on vacation. I will then have my set of photographs of the Edwin Smith Papyrus with me and you can make your hieroglyphic transliteration directly from these photographs, or one of your assistants can first copy out my transliteration from my notebooks and you can then quickly revise it from my photographs. At the same time I will have my photographs re-photographed and, as the document is

wonderfully clear and beautiful, like the pages of Ebers, I think a re-photograph will be perfectly clear and legible. In any case, these details can be arranged after my arrival.

This letter will not arrive in time for you to write me again before I leave America. Please note that you can reach me in Paris Care of Thomas Cook and Son, Avenue de l'Opéra. Kindly let me know whether in carrying out the above itinerary I may hope to find you in Berlin at about the date mentioned. I hope if you have plans carrying you away on vacation, that you will not for an instant dream of making any changes on my account. I shall try to return from the Orient in the summer of 1923 by way of Germany, if possible, so that if I should miss seeing you this present summer, regrettable as that would be, I could still hope to see you in the summer of 1923, and I can surely make arrangements for leaving the copy of the Edwin Smith Papyrus in Berlin even if you were obliged to be away.

Please give kindest greetings from us all to all your household and to the gentlemen at the Museum, and believe me,

Always very faithfully and sincerely yours,



Professor Adolf Erman
Peter-Lenestr, 36
Berlin-Dahlem, Germany

Breasted