

[Note by James Bruggeman— The following article is taken from the September 1942 issue of Destiny magazine and is reprinted by permission of Destiny Publishers, PO Box 177, Merrimac, MA 01869]

He Helped Show That the Bible Is True!

ON JULY 28 there died in Jerusalem, at the government hospital there, a man to whom the world owes much! At the age of 89, Sir William Matthew Flinders Petrie was at his rest after a full lifetime of labors during which he had made ancient Egypt intelligible to the modern mind.

With disregard for personal comfort and gain, he had swung picks, compared evidence, battled with obstructing officials, taught university students and had written seventy-five volumes on various phases of his work. Abandoning his first love, the Anglo-Saxon ruins of England, he began digging out the glories of Egypt; working first among the pyramids and temples at Gizeh. By 1892 his reputation as an archaeologist was established; he was appointed Professor of Egyptology at University College, London, and in 1933 became Professor Emeritus there.

Among his many and significant discoveries was a camp of the Hyksos or "Shepherd Kings." He found names in the Egyptian "Book of the Dead" strikingly like those in the Caucasus. At Tell el Ajjul, he discovered five palaces, superimposed on each other, the earliest dating from 3100 B.C., containing an immense bathroom, larger than many modern apartments and as good as those of Greek or Roman times. He also discovered at Tell el Ajjul a gold ring proved to be of Irish origin, showing that the British Isles and the East had traded with each other in those ancient days.

When Sir Flinders — as he preferred to be known — after spending years excavating the Hyksos sites, came definitely to the conclusion that

the reign of the Shepherd Kings had lasted for an even longer period than is specified by Manetho, the Egyptian historian, it was to the consternation of German critics who had reduced the period to a century. Further, the contemporary evidence discovered of the period of Semitic occupation of Syria and Palestine some seven centuries before Abraham's time confounded those critics who had thrown the Bible's genealogy of Abraham in Genesis 9 to the winds, boldly affirming that he was a Canaanite!

For among the most significant of the evidences of their own time left by those who lived when Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and Joshua walked the earth are the broken pieces of earthenware from which much has been learned. It was the minute inspection of these which has supplied unmistakable evidence concerning the ancient alphabet (see the preceding article in this issue) and which has made it necessary to accept the fact that our Bible was actually *written!* It was Sir Flinders who had discovered the earliest alphabetical writing yet known, and which connects up with the worship of the Israelites in the wilderness as instituted by Moses. It is true that writing in Egypt in the form of hieroglyphics goes back to an extremely ancient time; but the discovery of the alphabetical form of writing became of tremendous importance to those who were interested in the transmission of the Bible; and indeed, Sir Flinders could say, "The history of the alphabet is as old as civilization."

He was also the first to appreciate the possibilities of using the variations of pottery for chronological purposes.

His admirable survey of Stonehenge in England and his later work in the Great Pyramid showed the Eastern origin of the builders of Stonehenge, the circle of which was shown to be a constructional expression of the geometrical relations holding between the ancient Egyptian square and lineal systems of measures. His archaeological exploration and experience in previous geodetic and other survey work eminently fitted him for the task of surveying the Great Pyramid and has undoubtedly produced the best set of measurements to date. He designed and prepared the most reliable measuring appliances obtainable for lineal measurements: steel tape and special chain, and self-compensating

accessory appliances. He it was who detected that striking feature of the Great Pyramid, the important hollowing in of each base side.

His studies in long-distance quarrying expeditions and their seasons; his metrological researches confirming the value of the Sacred Hebrew Cubit; also, the half-cubit which appeared in Babylonia, in Etruria, in what he deemed to be Roman Britain, and in medieval England — assisted greatly in gauging the importance of the Great Pyramid. His data regarding the stratification of the Gizeh Plateau; his early inspection of the sealed chambers together with notifications regarding the cementing of the beams; his studies concerning the rise and fall of the Semites in Egypt — these and his many other discoveries proved of exceedingly great value in truly understanding the past; and caused, in many respects, the re-writing of ancient history.

"Few realize how much Biblical archaeology owes to Sir Flinders," wrote Sir Charles Marston in his foreword to *The Bible is True*, and added, "The many references to his labors in this book give but a small conception of his achievements."

Time Magazine of August 10, in reporting his death, closed their account in these words: "Other archaeologists, notably the late great James Henry Breasted, dug as brilliantly into the antique past. But none denied having built on the dramatic ruins uncovered over 62 years by Sir Flinders Petrie."