

**A SHORT HISTORY
OF THE EGYPTIAN
OBELISKS**

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A short history of the Egyptian obelisks by W. R. Cooper

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W. R. COOPER

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OBELISKS**

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SHORT HISTORY
OF THE
EGYPTIAN OBELISKS.

BY
W. R. COOPER, F.R.A.S., M.R.A.S.,
Secretary to the Society of Biblical Archaeology.

WITH TRANSLATIONS OF MANY OF THE HIEROGLYPHIC INSCRIPTIONS;
CHIEFLY BY
M. FRANÇOIS CHABAS.

Second Edition.



Multæ terricolæ linguæ, cælestibus una.

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15, PATERNOSTER ROW.

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

TO
SIR WILLIAM W. BURTON, KNT.,
LATE JUDGE
OF H.M. SUPREME COURT, MADRAS.

DEAR SIR,

Please to accept the dedication to yourself of this little Book, the completion of which has brought back to my mind many pleasant memories; not the least of which are those of your hospitality to me at Cheltenham in 1874, and constant friendship since.

Yours faithfully,

W. R. Cooper

VENTNOR, October 1, 1877.



P R E F A C E.

IN the following pages I have endeavoured to arrange, in something like consecutive order, all that is definitely known concerning the History of the Egyptian Obelisks generally; and more particularly of those now standing. To do this it has been necessary to compare the accounts of many writers, and the measurements of various authors, but the result of such a comparison is far from satisfactory; in truth there is very little agreement between them; and there are several statements which cannot be reconciled with each other. Under these difficulties, I have had to rely chiefly upon the measurements of Bonomi, he being professionally a sculptor as well as an Egyptologist, and, therefore, possessing a double guarantee against liability to errors of detail. With regard to the identifications of the obelisks mentioned by Pliny with those now standing in Rome, it is hardly possible to be quite certain as to any special monument, except perhaps the Obelisk of the Circus Maximus. The original text of Pliny is very vague, and the judgment of Zoega is not wholly to be depended upon. Fortunately these contrarieties do not affect the chief thing in connection with the obelisk to which importance is to be attached: namely, the interpretation of their

hieroglyphics, since these latter enable us now to re-construct a history of the monarchs by whom they were erected, from their own contemporaneous records. And here let me add, that I trust that the impetus now given to Egyptian archæology by the splendid gift of the Obelisk of London by Prof. Erasmus Wilson, will not be allowed to dissipate itself after a few months' excitement; but that it will induce many of my readers to study for themselves the language of the Egyptians, which has now become accessible to all students by the Grammar of P. le Page Renouf, and the text books of Dr. Birch, the father of English Egyptology.

I have now to express my sincere thanks to M. François Chabas, for his very valuable aid in freely translating for me the inscriptions upon six of the principal obelisks; to Prof. Erasmus Wilson, who while himself engaged on a similar work, has with singular liberality of sentiment assisted me in my own; to Mr. Hodder Westropp for the loan of many books of reference; and to Dr. Sinclair Coghill, Mr. Westropp of Eglington, the Rev. Clement Hue, of St. Lawrence, Prof. Monier Williams, and Mr. S. M. Drach, for many literary kindnesses in connection with this work.

W. R. COOPER.

VENTNOR,

October 1, 1877.





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