

## **Archaeological History of Nubia**

For some historical periods in Nubia, written records, from such varied sources as Egyptian inscriptions and Greek historians, provide a great deal of information. For all of Nubia's history, though, archaeological work is necessary to fill in the picture. The sites of ancient Nubia first received extensive attention from archaeologists during the First Archaeological Survey of Nubia (1907-1911), when the Aswan Dam in Egypt was enlarged and the resulting reservoir flooded portions of the Nubian Nile Valley. The Archaeological Survey was a salvage project, designed to explore systematically all the sites in the area that would be flooded. The majority of the sites that were actually excavated, though, were cemeteries, and dated to the earliest periods of Nubian history. The material obtained during the First Survey enabled archaeologists to define the characteristics of the A-, C-, and X-Group Periods in Nubian history fig 3. The Second Archaeological Survey of Nubia (1929-1934) was made necessary by a second enlargement of the Aswan Dam. Like the first survey, the second was a salvage project that enabled archaeologists to explore areas inaccessible today.

David Randall-MacIver and Leonard Woolley led the Eckley B. Coxe Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania, which worked at various sites in Nubia from 1907 to 1910. In 1907-1908, the Coxe Expedition worked at the Lower Nubian site of Karanog, where Woolley and MacIver explored a large Meroitic cemetery and a village that included a governor's palace. During this same season, the Coxe Expedition excavated the C-Group village site of Areika, which provided a rare picture of a settlement from this Period. The Egyptian colony at Buhen was explored by the Coxe Expedition in 1910 as well. In 1913, a joint expedition to Nubia was launched by Harvard University and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Led by George Reisner, the Harvard-Boston Expedition worked in the northern Sudan for 18 years at such important sites as Kerma, the Egyptian fortresses in the Second Cataract area, and the Napatan and Meroitic royal cemeteries at Kurri, Nuri, and Meroe. In 1961-1962 William Kelly Simpson, leading a University of Pennsylvania Museum/Yale University project, excavated the tomb of a Nubian prince, Hekanefer of Miam, at Toshka. This expedition also recovered X-Group and later material from the site of Arminna.