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# 'Trying desperately to make myself an Egyptologist': James Breasted's early scientific network

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## Introduction

On Tuesday 30 October 1894, James Henry Breasted (JHB) wrote to his parents back in Rockford, Illinois from his steamship in the Mediterranean: 'Just think of it! I am within a few hours of the shores of Egypt and will soon be among the scenes I have studied so long. It seems hardly credible. Now I hope to use every moment and hasten back to my homeland and all I love as soon as ever I can' (JHB Papers, Box 4).<sup>1</sup> Breasted's first expedition to Egypt in 1894 as a newly minted Egyptology PhD would be crucial to his career – and he knew it. Not only would the journey provide him with experience in the field, which he needed in order to be considered a true professional Egyptologist, but it would also allow him to build the dynamic scientific network that would aid and sustain his work within Egypt for the next forty years. Scientific networks are essential to the practice of science, both in the field and within institutions. Furthermore, investigating the locations in which scientific networks are formed is pivotal to how these groups interacted within themselves and among other networks, as well as affecting what kind of knowledge they produce, if any. Place is crucial in the study of the development of scientific networks and the manners in which scientists communicate.

Studying the groups of colleagues, assistants, students, and staff is not new to the history of science, but in the case of archaeology and Breasted's career it bears some explicit discussion here. Scholars who study present-day scientific networks argue that the best way to visualise their connections is through tracing joint publication and reviews of those publications (e.g. Newman, 2001; Glänzel and Schubert, 2005).

Historians agree with this assessment but recognise the limitations of this medium, arguing that correspondence is a key piece of evidence in understanding how networks interacted with each other outside of publications, that is, out of the public eye (e.g. Secord, 2000; Finnegan, 2005; Fyfe and Lightman, 2007; Browne, 2014; Sheppard, 2018). In archaeology especially, the main groups of scholars who influence each other tend to gather in the field, in ephemeral groups among which some members are permanent fixtures every dig season, others come and go, and still others only appear once, briefly, and then vanish into the dust of the site and archive. Their connections do not necessarily appear in joint publications and are, therefore, hard to trace. As Janet Browne has argued, studying correspondence among scientific networks allows 'the prospect of reconstructing patterns of sociability with due appreciation to the structure of the society in which they emerged' (2014: 169). We then gain insight into schools of thought, in order to better understand who is participating, who is allowed to share ideas, and how those ideas are shared.

Further, we must understand the places in which knowledge is being created. Just as David Livingstone (2003: 13) has argued that 'scientific knowledge bears the imprint of its location', I argue so too do collegial relationships. Where science is done depends on who is able to, or allowed to, participate in the creation of knowledge; the reverse is also true, that is, who is allowed to create knowledge depends on where science is done (e.g. Naylor, 2002, 2005; Livingstone, 2007; Livingstone and Withers, 2011; Terrall, 2014). Geography of knowledge determines how relationships within scientific networks operate depending on where they were built, where they operate, and where and how their knowledge is spread. To comprehend this, it is crucial to understand who is interacting at different types of site such as universities, excavation sites, museum offices, private homes, hotel dining rooms, and formal scholarly meetings.

In Egyptology, knowledge is created, discussed, and refined in every space from the university or museum office in a disciplinary center out to the unceremonious field site and back. In early Egyptology, network hubs tended to be in metropolitan cities all over the world. Societies like the Egypt Exploration Fund (now Society, in London), institutions such as the Cairo Museum, British Museum (London), the Oriental Institute (Chicago), Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), the Louvre (Paris), the Museo Egizio (Turin), and the Berlin Museum were all hubs from which and to which scholars and their ideas traveled. As the formal institutions in Egyptology, these centers retain records of membership, meeting minutes, details of official activities and decisions, and formal collections of scholarship. The records held by these institutions help to

tell a rich story of discipline formation from an official point of view. Their published collections are crucial to historians and other scholars who trace changing ideas over time. Through some collected correspondence, historians are also able to view the overlapping members at each of these metropolitan hubs. Senders and receivers of letters, as well as the subjects of those letters, are central to understanding the story of who was present and active in multiple networks, what they said to each other, and how they interacted. In the field, that is, outside of metropolitan institutions, these developments and movements are harder to trace. But they are the mundane everyday activities that ended up being even more central to the formation of the professional discipline than published scholarship and institutional organization.

This chapter focuses on James Breasted's early professional network, specifically the two nodes that he cultivated on his first trip to Egypt: the British field archaeologist Flinders Petrie and the French Director of the Department of Antiquities in Egypt, Gaston Maspero. These personal and professional networks then expanded from the institutional hubs into the broader scientific discipline of Egyptology. In scientific networks, nodes are the people around whom subnetworks can and do form. The people in those subnetworks and the relationships among them dictate what kind of professional or personal activities happen. Using Breasted and his relationships with Petrie and Maspero as brief case studies, I will examine the importance of place in building and maintaining scientific networks for the field scientist. My contention is that scientific relationships built primarily at an isolated excavation site – a space far removed from conventional institutional settings – made relationships informal and familiar, much like the field itself. On the other hand, connections developed in urban areas or within formal and established scientific institutions, such as in universities or museums, tended to maintain that decorum, as well as be reflected in the types of work the scientists do together. I reveal the nuances behind these varying sites of knowledge creation and the effect that the rural field site Petrie occupied or the urban institution Maspero led can have on the development of scientific networks. While detailing each of these instances would be a book-length study, Breasted's example will illustrate the point and hopefully lead to further discussion by other scholars. For Breasted's early scientific network, the informal excavation site at Naqada as well as the metropolitan centers at the University of Paris and the Cairo Museum were hubs of knowledge creation and forging the bonds of scientific relationships. Each location produced different evidence, different relationships, and different scholarly outcomes.

Correspondence and field diaries, usually found in archives at the metropolitan centers, are essential to tracing network participation in

different areas of the scientific practice. Scholars are able to witness activity described within the correspondence at these institutions, and it is fascinating to see how, when, and where people moved throughout the excavation seasons and their off-seasons. Using this evidence, we are able to trace the creation of scientific knowledge within, outside, and throughout the hubs and the field. The evidence I use here is taken mainly from archival correspondence and published biographical accounts of the characters. Even with giants of the field like Maspero, Petrie, and Breasted, it is difficult to trace personal and professional relationships through the literature. Therefore, my conclusions are based on anecdotes from their published life stories as well as a theoretical appraisal of correspondence as biography (C. Breasted, 1943; Drower, 1985; Abt, 2011). James Breasted is the central character of this particular investigation for two reasons. First, he is largely recognised as the earliest university-trained American Egyptologist, which meant that his career trajectory would be vastly different from European Egyptologists at the time. Second, because Breasted's career would set the foundations of academic Egyptology within the United States, he knew from the start that it would be necessary to form his scientific network carefully and deliberately. His case therefore allows for the explicit examination of strategic network building.

### **James Breasted, Egyptologist**

James Henry Breasted was born on the prairies of Illinois in 1865. By the time he was 22, he had shifted careers from pharmacy to the ministry, which he pursued at the Chicago Theological Seminary. While there, his Hebrew professor Samuel Curtiss found Breasted's linguistic ability to be a useful asset. He convinced Breasted to continue studying Hebrew and to pursue a career in what was then a 'vacant field' in America: Egyptology (Abt, 2011: 6–19). Breasted went first to Yale to study Semitic languages under William Rainey Harper, receiving his master's degree in 1892 (Abt, 2011: 23). Following Harper's advice, he began studies at the University of Berlin in 1891 in Egyptology with one of the foremost scholars of the day, Adolf Erman (Abt, 2011: 19–26). After three years of intense study with Erman, a brutal exam process, and a dissertation written in German, then translated and hand-written in Latin for publication, Breasted earned his doctoral degree. Although he had completed all the university requirements to earn the title *Herr Doktor der Philosophie* Breasted, *Hochwohlgeborner*, and had a job waiting for him at the new University of Chicago, he still had to make the journey to and through Egypt to establish himself as a true professional.

As with many field sciences, a degree in Egyptology alone did not give Breasted professional standing. Erman thus urged Breasted to go to Egypt ‘for the sake of his health and scientific future,’ and gave him an important task: collating inscriptions in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo for a massive dictionary Erman was writing (C. Breasted, 1943: 51). Understanding the importance of this fieldwork, Breasted scraped together money from a variety of sources. Writing to Harper, his old professor at Yale who was to be the new President of the University of Chicago, he argued that he would not only be able to get objects for the new Haskell Oriental Museum, but he would also gain essential practical knowledge on such a trip. Eventually, Harper allowed Breasted a fully paid leave from his position at Chicago before his duties even began, and his parents were able to give him money for the journey, amid their own hardship. He reassured them: ‘Apart from its usefulness for my studies, the Egyptian trip would be a replenishing of the man, and a lifelong inspiration. It would be a godsend before settling down to the grind at the University of Chicago’ (quoted in C. Breasted, 1943: 52). Breasted was soon on his way to Egypt, with his new wife Frances. As he understood and had explained to his family and Harper in the United States, this first journey to Egypt was crucial to his professional status and the development of his network of associates in Egyptology.

### **Breasted: Petrie’s Pup**

The Breasteds first arrived in Cairo in early November 1894, and took inexpensive lodgings as they prepared both to work and to celebrate their honeymoon. While getting their supplies organised for a two-month trip down the Nile, they met and forged friendships with already-famous archaeologists, such as Archibald Sayce and Jacques de Morgan, and a number of British and American tourists. Breasted spent every spare minute working at the Egyptian Museum on Erman’s dictionary project and completing some tasks for Harper at Chicago. Harper had written to inform Breasted that he had been voted by the Board of Trustees to be a ‘representative of the University to receive gifts.’ On top of being paid his full salary throughout the trip, Breasted was given \$500 for the purchase of Egyptological photographs, casts and artifacts for the building of the new university’s Haskell Oriental Museum collections. Harper encouraged him in all of this, writing: ‘This I think will show you our appreciation of the situation and will redeem in part at least the pledges given you for assistance this year... I hope you will do your best to secure material, having in mind especially the practicability of the material for us, and not mere curiosities.’ He then wished Breasted

a 'satisfactory... and most successful trip' (September 26, 1894: JHB Office Files, 1894–6).

These activities were no doubt the start to making Breasted a 'real' Egyptologist. By meeting with him and encouraging his work, Erman, Sayce, and DeMorgan supported these activities as legitimizing Breasted as a true field scientist. Contributing to Erman's project as well as acquiring objects for the Museum, Breasted had his work cut out for him. He was employed by the top linguist in his field and his new university was entrusting him to build their Museum collection from the ground up. Further, that he was doing these activities in Cairo made his case as a professional Egyptologist even stronger. But he was still missing a key component.

Knowing full well he would be busy in Egypt trying to become an Egyptologist, before he left Berlin Breasted had taken the first step in building his network so that he would indeed have a successful trip. He sent copies of his thesis, which analyzed ancient Egyptian hymns to the Sun under Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten), to a number of archaeologists and Egyptologists in Europe. He received favorable responses from many of them. The most exciting response Breasted received was from University College London's Flinders Petrie. Petrie was a self-taught British archaeologist; although he lacked formal education, steady funding, and experience, he began his work in Egypt in the early 1880s on the Giza plateau, surveying the pyramids (Drower, 1985: 34–64). Petrie quickly established himself as an authority in the field and by 1892 held the first university chair of Egyptology in Britain. Even more quickly, he established himself as an infamously frugal excavator. By the time Breasted met him in 1894, Petrie was undoubtedly the leader in excavation practices in Egypt. He had a ready group of students who he, Walter Crum, and, later, Margaret Murray, trained in the classroom at UCL and from whom he had his choice of field assistants, known as Petrie's Pups (Janssen, 1992: 12–13). Aside from acknowledging Breasted's thesis in his response, the Professor also offered 'some kindly advice, the promise of some things for our Museum and above all an invitation to come & spend some time with him at his excavations of Coptos!!!!' (November 1, 1894, JHB Papers, Box 4). Upon his arrival, Breasted found a ready mentor and Petrie had a willing new Pup.

In his letter, not surprisingly, Petrie also advised the newlyweds on the cheapest way to travel in Egypt: by boat on the Nile (C. Breasted, 1943: 64). In accordance with Petrie's advice, and through the help of an Egyptian acquaintance, the Breasteds ordered a *dahabeya*, or houseboat, on which they would sail down the river from Aswan to Cairo. The Breasteds reached Asyut by train from Cairo, sailed up the Nile, South, to Aswan first in order to then sail down the river, North, with the

current. They visited a number of sites along the way, including Luxor twice and Elephantine Island. The highlight of the trip for Breasted was getting to the Petrie camp in late December. It was such an important event for him, he later recalled, that upon reaching Naqada, Breasted ‘jumped ashore and without waiting for a donkey to ride, hurried off on foot to find Petrie. His eagerness and the warm welcome he received made him oblivious to the long, tiring walk.’ Breasted found Petrie on site, dressed, ‘not merely careless but deliberately slovenly and dirty. He was thoroughly unkempt, clad in ragged, dirty shirt and trousers, worn-out sandals and no socks’ (C. Breasted, 1943: 75). Despite his appearance, Petrie was ever the professional excavator, and trained Breasted in his meticulous methods. Petrie and his assistant James Quibell (one of the earliest Petrie Pups) were already ensconced in the site, excavating a large pre-dynastic cemetery. Because of the massive number of burials – they excavated over 2,200 graves in one season – Petrie had to quickly develop an organised system of uncovering and safely cleaning the grave, recording the finds, and collecting the objects.

He recorded this system in the field report for the season in order to ‘give sufficient confidence in the general accuracy of the results noted’ (Petrie and Quibell, 1896: ix). He explained that he used a ‘compound gang’ of pairs of Egyptian men and boys, led by his *reis* Ali Suefi (Quirke, 2010). He described the process:

First a pair of boys were set to try for a grave, and if the ground was soft they were to clear around up to the edges of the filling, but not to go more than a couple of feet down. At that point they were turned out to try for another, and an inferior man and boy came in to clear the earth until they touched pottery or bones in more than one place. They then turned out to follow where the boys were working, and the pair of superior men came in to dig, or to scrape out with potsherds, the earth between the jars. While they were at work Ali was in the hole with them, finishing the scraping out with a potsherd or with his hands, his orders being to remove every scrap of loose earth that he could without shifting or disturbing any objects. When he had a favourable place his clearing was a triumph; every jar would be left standing, still bedded to the side of the grave, while all the earth was raked out between one jar and another; the skeleton would be left with every bone in its articulations, lying as if just placed on the ground, the cage of ribs emptied, and the only supports being little lumps of earth left at the joints. The flint knives or other valuables would be each covered with a potsherd, to keep it from being shifted and a pebble laid on that, to denote that it marked an object (Petrie and Quibell, 1896: viii–ix).

Petrie would then come to the grave to record the locations of the objects as well as finish the removal of the grave goods and skeleton.

His excavation and recording techniques were routinely detailed and focused on small objects such as potsherds and necklace beads, giving him the nickname 'Abu Bagousheh – Father of Pots' (see Stevenson, 2015).

Breasted spent almost two weeks with Petrie on the site and 'absorbed every detail of the technique of excavation, its supervision and cost,' as a good Pup was expected to do. Not only did he witness Petrie's new cemetery excavation technique in detail, but he also learned that, the previous year, 'Petrie had paid "just five shillings a week for provisions for himself and his assistant"' (C. Breasted, 1943: 76). Before leaving Naqada, Petrie had suggested to Breasted that they should collaborate on an excavation site for a season, and Breasted was happy to consider it. As an American, Breasted had the potential to bring a lot of private money with him, which the British were not able to secure (see e.g. Reid, 2015: 19–29). However, while Breasted believed that excavation was 'eminently worth-while,' it was only of 'secondary importance' to him. Instead, he 'foresaw that his own most important work in Egypt would be the reconstruction of her ancient past rather than the recovery of the material remains of her civilization' (C. Breasted, 1943: 77). This reconstruction project soon became his life-long goal, institutionalised in The Epigraphic Survey at the University of Chicago, whose continuing mission is to record all surviving inscriptions on temple and tomb walls in Egypt and publish them before they perish with time (Abt, 2011: 46–7, 281–301; Epigraphic Survey, 2014). Petrie not only taught Breasted how to excavate, but also allowed Breasted to realise that excavation was not his passion or purpose.

Throughout his career, Breasted continued to meet Petrie in the field and, later, in London. They never published any joint scholarship, so tracing their relationship through that medium would not reveal what the archival evidence does. For the rest of their long, collegial relationship, Petrie and Breasted exchanged letters about excavations, the Egyptian Research Account (ERA), and the British School of Archaeology in Egypt (BSAE) – both institutions run by Petrie at their early stages, and both institutions that gave objects to Breasted's museum. The two men would meet in London when Breasted was there, usually at the College (UCL), which was the headquarters for the ERA and BSAE, at the Petries' house, or out for a meal. Petrie did not keep a journal and Breasted did not write about the details of their meetings, but it can be assumed that in their 'talking shop' they spoke in person as they did in their letters – about excavations, objects, money, and sometimes family. They had much to discuss, in terms of what should be excavated and/or recorded as both Petrie and Breasted continued in their chosen lines of work.

They corresponded about their scholarship, each helping the other with translations, transliterations, and general editing. By late 1896, Petrie received corrections and editing assistance from Breasted for the first volume of his *History of Egypt*, which came out in six volumes over eleven years (Petrie, 1896; Petrie to JHB, December 29, 1896: JHB Office Files, 1894–6). Petrie also continued to depend upon Breasted and his connections for financial assistance. As early as February 1896, Breasted had committed to sending money to Petrie for the ERA's work in the field. By October of that year, Breasted had sent Petrie \$155 for excavations, thus guaranteeing the Haskell Museum a number of objects from that season's work (Petrie to JHB, October 31, 1896: JHB Office Files, 1894–6). It is clear from private correspondence that they respected and admired one another and that they both highly prized fieldwork. Their collegial relationship would continue for the rest of their careers, and they remained warm friends as well.

Much as it had done, and would do, for generations of diggers trained by Petrie, Breasted's time on site made him a professional Egyptologist possibly more than his doctorate did. Petrie's goal in training excavators was to instill in them his methods of scientific archaeology. He was wedded to measurement, quantification, and careful extraction from the ground of as many artifacts as possible. While a PhD was important for the language study that Breasted wished to do, in order to be a real Egyptologist at the turn of the twentieth century he needed field experience and Petrie was the pre-eminent field Egyptologist of his generation. In order for people like Breasted to get the right field training, support from established professionals such as Petrie was crucial. By becoming one of Petrie's Pups, Breasted achieved the necessary training, created this particular node with Petrie at the center, and therefore gained acceptance into the well-established network of field archaeologists who had been trained by Petrie. Breasted's deliberate construction of this part of his network would support him for the rest of his field career.

### **Breasted and Maspero**

With Gaston Maspero, however, the circumstances in creating this node, and therefore the activities that took place within it, were substantially different than with Petrie. As an established scholar and former director of the Department of Antiquities, Maspero outranked Breasted in the profession, so their relationship was undoubtedly marked by that disparity, at least in the beginning. Further, where Breasted and Petrie were field scientists, Maspero was a scholar and administrator, concerned with publications, schedules, permit approvals, and budgets. Their relationship reflected this in their correspondence, as well as their

friendship. Breasted was aware of the dynamic when he met Maspero, which meant that this node and the network associated with it took on a markedly different tone than the node that Petrie occupied.

After a two-month Nile journey, complete with the two-week stop to see Petrie, the Breasteds' honeymoon came to an end. In early 1895, Frances and James made their way back to Chicago by passing through Paris and London to finish a few tasks. In Paris, Breasted visited the Louvre for the first time and worked in the Egyptian collections, copying, reading, and getting more experience in the discipline, while trying to professionalise himself. He had established himself in Petrie's network as an official Pup, but he needed training in a new space. He wrote that, during that busy week,

I did spend an hour with Frances among the Asiatic collections, and ten minutes among the Greek marbles, to see the Venus de Milo. But I saw nothing of Paris and its environs, I learned almost nothing of the French, and moved like a mole through the wintry streets between a shabby little hotel and the Louvre. This was obviously not the way to broaden one's horizon or enrich one's cultural experience. It was, in fact, reprehensible and stupid. But I was trying desperately to make myself an Egyptologist according to a concept I had evolved alone and could not find words to impart to those around me (quoted in C. Breasted, 1943: 82).

Despite his time in Egypt, Breasted knew he still had work to do to 'make' himself an Egyptologist. This included study time in the controlled museum space, as well as continuing to build his network of support from other Egyptologists. Specifically, Breasted went to meet with 'the great Gaston Maspero,' who, he told his father, 'scientifically stands in France where Erman does in Germany'; high praise indeed from a German-trained Egyptologist (C. Breasted, 1943: 82).

Like Breasted, Maspero was as a linguist; he had worked with early experts Auguste Mariette and Heinrich Brugsch. He also performed numerous field duties as the Director of the Bulaq Museum and Antiquities Service from 1881–86 and again from 1899–1914. He was responsible not only for translating a number of now-famous Egyptian texts, but also for opening a number of small pyramids and other tombs, removing the Deir el-Bahari cache of royal mummies, and unwrapping some of those mummies for study (Bierbrier, 2012: 359–61). In order to prepare for the excavation seasons, archaeologists had to visit the Director in order to obtain permits to work in particular areas. Maspero was known as an agreeable Director, so in 1886 when he resigned his post some European archaeologists were distressed. In fact, many archaeologists found the French administration of the Department of Antiquities to be troublesome most of the time. Breasted had had trouble

at the start of his trip in 1894, dealing with then-Director Jacques de Morgan. Breasted wrote: 'I find the administration of the antiquities... by the French, corrupt to the core. Nothing is done in the name of truth or science, but all is a mere scramble for good things to sell & the money goes into private pockets' (quoted in Abt, 2011: 44). The only Frenchman who seemed palatable to British, French, Germans, and Americans alike was Gaston Maspero. He wielded a great amount of power in the discipline, but tended to be friendly and fair, usually granting permissions for digging as requested. Most people found it difficult to dislike him (Hankey, 2001: 131).

Maspero had left his post in Cairo in 1886 in order to go back to Paris and take up new duties as Egyptology professor at the Collège de France; Breasted met him in his office there in 1895. Breasted wrote to his father about the meeting, telling him '[Maspero] received me cordially, talked delightfully for more than an hour about his books, his purposes, his youth and his present researches... He was kind enough to ask about my own work, graciously giving me the opportunity for presenting him with a copy of my Berlin dissertation' (quoted in C. Breasted, 1943: 82). This first meeting, although short, was the beginning of a scientific friendship between the newly branded PhD and the older, seasoned scholar and professor. Interestingly, soon after meeting Maspero in person, Breasted published a critical review of his *The Struggle of the Nations*, which did Breasted no favors with other French archaeologists but seemed not to have troubled Maspero (Abt, 2011: 51; see Maspero, 1896; Breasted, 1897). However, much like his opinion of de Morgan, his review of Maspero's work was doubtless impacted by his German opinions of French Egyptology (see Abt, 2011: 51).

Although both men were scholars – and not primarily excavators – coupled with the differences in their ages and the divide in their professional statuses, the friendship had been established in a formal place – the Great Man's professional, institutional academic office – and the relationship continued this formal pattern. Probably because of this formality, there were few letters between the two scholars when Breasted was not preparing to go to Egypt. However, being allowed into Maspero's network by establishing him as a node in his own network would open up a whole new scientific world for Breasted in terms of work possibilities and travel throughout Egypt. Breasted only needed to contact Maspero about official work, so in 1905, in preparation for his first trip to Egypt in almost a decade, he did.

For this trip, Breasted brought his family with him, consisting of his son Charles, then eight years old, and wife Frances. Before the expedition left Chicago in October, Breasted wrote to Maspero to ask permission to 'photograph or copy all the inscribed ancient monuments

of Upper Egypt' (C. Breasted, 1943: 146). The Herculean request betrayed Breasted's lack of field experience and the process necessary for completing the job. Maspero, having taken up his position in Cairo again, responded to Breasted's request that the area he wished to cover was too vast and the monuments too numerous for Maspero to be able to grant the requested permission. Instead, he advised Breasted to 'select a special district in Nubia and to work it out before asking for a second one' (Maspero to JHB, October 16, 1905: JHB Office Files, 1905). He also told Breasted not to clean or excavate any of the sites. This was good advice from a seasoned field mentor. Upon their arrival in Cairo, like everyone else, the Breasteds needed to go in person to secure their permits. James took his young son Charles with him to meet Maspero in his museum office, which was distinctly different from the Paris University office where they had first met. Charles later described the setting as 'crowded with open boxes of recently excavated antiquities... Here, like treasure in a cave, was everything imaginable, all the things my father had told me I myself could perhaps dig up with a small shovel!' He remembered little of the meeting except that his father and Maspero 'talked their shop,' and that the permissions were granted (C. Breasted, 1943: 147; Abt, 2011: 126–53). Meeting in the museum office was not only necessary for fieldwork, but it was also a symptom of the formal relationship the two scholars had maintained. On both occasions they had met in Maspero's institutional offices; there is no known record of them sharing meals, teas, or meeting in other, informal places. But by 1905, Breasted had risen through the academic ranks in the United States and had earned his professional *bona fides*. He was the Director of the Haskell Oriental Museum, held the chair of Egyptology and Oriental History as full professor at the University of Chicago, and had just been awarded a generous grant for his work by the John D. Rockefeller Foundation. At this point, it would have been more a meeting of equals.

Outside of these two meetings, ten years apart, not much is known of Breasted's relationship with Maspero and the few letters between them mostly deal with releasing artifacts, getting permits, and a few other professional concerns. We do know that, unlike his relationship with Petrie, Breasted and Maspero only corresponded about work (although, as with many of his correspondents, Maspero often included some 'personal, even fatherly touch' in his letters to Breasted) (Hankey, 2001: 132). Further, their correspondence differed greatly from those letters Breasted exchanged with Petrie. We know that they met at the start of each season that Breasted went out to Egypt, until Maspero again left Egypt in 1914 to return to France at the start of the First World War. However, when Maspero's son died in the War in 1915, Breasted wrote to Maspero expressing sympathy for his loss (Abt, 2011: 220).

They reviewed each other's scholarship, as they had similar goals for academic Egyptology, but their respective concerns within Egypt were slightly different: they both wished to preserve what was there, but Maspero did so through promoting excavation where Breasted did so by recording and publishing.

### **Conclusion: Dr Breasted, professional Egyptologist**

James and Frances returned to the United States in 1895, after their crucial first journey which took them through Egypt, Paris, and London, building Breasted's experience base and his scientific network, and, in turn, truly making him a professional Egyptologist. These colleagues formed the two foundational nodes in his early scientific network on which Breasted built the rest of his career as a professional Egyptologist. The Petrie node began as an informal mentorship and soon morphed into a partnership of equals. Others in this node were Quibell, Sayce, Francis Griffith, Walter Crum, and George Reisner. The node that Maspero occupied was a formal, foundational connection for Breasted's access to the field in Egypt, which included other museum personnel such as Jacques de Morgan and, later, Reginald Engelbach. Their letters revealed their in-person relationship dynamics: Petrie was a colleague and friend; Maspero was a formal mentor and official contact. Petrie had trained him to run a site and continued to be a friend, colleague, and practical mentor; he also provided objects for the Haskell Museum. Maspero had given him one of his first formal connections, permissions, and the confidence and advice he needed to pursue his goals in Egypt for the Epigraphic Survey. In each of their publications, these three men cite each other as scholars, but there are no joint publications among any of them. Therefore, tracing their relationships through correspondence is crucial to seeing the scientific network Breasted was building and how he was building it. Of all of the factors considered above, the most central are the meeting locations for each of these connections – field archaeologists met in the informal field; scholars met in strict institutional settings. The relationships that followed reflected those initial meeting places and the subsequent dynamics. Undoubtedly, there were other factors that would dictate the dynamics between Breasted and these men: age, expertise, scholarly goals, and more. But it is important to note that the spaces in which scientific networks begin have a profound effect on the work that each person does and what kind of space they are able to occupy.

The Breasteds arrived home in Chicago in time for Breasted to take up his new position at the new University of Chicago in the autumn of 1895. After the trip, he wrote to his father 'I have acquired the equipment for a great work,' and he went on to prove that over the next

four decades (C. Breasted, 1943: 80). He had bought objects for the Museum and his research, but he also gained two important relationships for setting the foundations of his scientific goals. Upon his return to Chicago in 1895, he became Assistant Professor of Semitic Languages and Egyptology, as well as the Assistant Director of the Haskell Oriental Museum. Ultimately, he did much more. His correspondence with other archaeologists, Egyptologists, and scholars grew exponentially from that point on. He heard, largely, from British and German Egyptologists, demonstrating the increasing depth and breadth of his scientific network, thanks to this first and crucial expedition through Egypt for the new PhD. He had built the foundation of his scientific network from the ground up, so for the next forty years he was able to do the work that he had set himself during his first trip to Egypt. He had become an Egyptologist.

### Note

- 1 All correspondence between James Breasted (JHB) and others is located at the Oriental Institute Archives, University of Chicago: Breasted Correspondence (used with permission). They are noted in-text. I would like to thank John Larson and Anne S. Flannery, archivists at the Oriental Institute, for their kind help and hospitality. Thanks also go to Julia Roberts who read and commented on this chapter.