

Historical Perspectives

Henry Solomon Wellcome:

A philanthropist and a pioneer sponsor of medical research in the Sudan

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ABSTRACT

Henry Solomon Wellcome, the famous drug manufacturer had a fascinating association with the Sudan. Besides supporting tropical medicine research in this country, he established an extensive project in the Sudan that aimed at combining archeological excavations, philanthropy and social reform. This article is an archives-based account on this side of Wellcome's association with the Sudan. The article starts with Wellcome's early years in the American Midwest and the evolution of his career and his rise as a world-renowned drug manufacturer. After the battle of Omdurman, Wellcome visited Sudan in 1900 - 1901 where he offered to support the establishment of the research laboratories which later came to be known as the Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories in Khartoum. He then became directly involved in the planning and running of extensive archeological excavations in the central Sudan. This project served as a field in which Wellcome found an outlet for his philanthropy. More than 4000 labourers were employed in Jebel Moya. Professional archeologists and anatomists were recruited by Wellcome to supervise the work, and all the requirements in terms of equipment were catered for. Wellcome devised a Savings Bank System whereby part of the earnings of each labourer were saved to him till the end of the season. He also introduced one of his innovations: aerial photography using box kite which was used for the first time in archeology. Wellcome made it

a rule that no applicant should be turned away. The Camp Commandant had to find suitable work for each applicant, including the handicapped who were assigned to appropriate jobs like mending baskets or cutting grass for building huts. Wellcome's welfare work had a significant impact on the local inhabitants of Jebel Moya.



Henry Solomon Wellcome, 1906. Oil painting by Hugh Goldwin Riviere. Credit: Wellcome Library

Key Words

Henry Wellcome; Wellcome Trust; Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories; Sudan; Khartoum; Archeological excavations; History; Philanthropy; Jebel Moya.

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INTRODUCTION

My Dear Sir Henry ...

I have always said that you are a (world benefactor), and every day I live, I feel more and more of the truth of that thoroughly well-earned title. I hope you may long be spared to carry on for the world's welfare.)

Sir Reginald Wingate, 1933 [1]

Henry Solomon Wellcome's philanthropy is best known through his legacy in the Wellcome Trust which has been established in 1936 as an independent charity, funding research to improve human and animal health. Now it has an endowment of around £14.5 billion and has an extraordinary record of achievements in advancing medicine and health by funding biomedical research and supporting the public understanding of science. The Trust is the United Kingdom's largest provider of nongovernmental funding for scientific research and one of the largest providers in the world. It is also the world's second largest private funder of medical research after Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation [2]. Yet, little is known about Wellcome's extraordinary work in the Sudan. The present article sheds light on this extraordinary chapter in the life of Henry Wellcome.

The Early Years of Henry Wellcome

Henry Solomon Wellcome was born half a world away from the Sudan in the American Midwest in 1853. His personal qualities and attitudes to life have been shaped in his early years. The Wellcome family was deeply religious, his father and two uncles were ministers of the Adventist sect. When Henry was eight, his family moved to Garden City, Minnesota where his other uncle, Jacob Wellcome was in medical practice.

In the 1860ies the Midwest was still frontier country.

Shortly after the family settled in Garden City there was an Indian uprising in the area. Over 2000 settlers were killed and the towns were transformed to small fortresses defended by volunteers and troops. The young Henry helped his uncle in caring for the wounded and he was also appointed captain to a group of children casting rifle bullets for the settlers. The uprising ended in an Indian defeat and the public hanging of 38 Sioux Indian chiefs. This event created in Wellcome a life-long awareness of the suffering of the dispossessed peoples in whom he saw the suffering of mankind. Later in his life, for many years he supported missionary work among a group of American Indians.

In Garden City Henry managed to get good education and worked in a drug store attached to his uncle's clinic. Here he gained his first experience in business and a fascination with pharmacy. He moved to Chicago and then to Philadelphia where he worked and studied Pharmacy, graduating in 1874 from Philadelphia College of Pharmacy.

He chose to move to the East in quest of better business opportunities. While working for the firm of Caswell Hazard & Co. in New York he became an active member of the American Pharmaceutical Association. He soon received an offer from the firm of McKesson & Robins to become a traveling salesman to promote the newly-introduced gelatin coated tablets. This new job took him in adventurous journeys to remote parts of South America. By 1879 Wellcome had an established reputation as a pharmaceutical salesman. He was then invited by Silas Burroughs, a college friend, to join him in a partnership to establish a firm in Britain to market American compressed tablets. The partnership agreement was signed and the firm of Burroughs and Wellcome & Co. came into existence in 1880. The new company was established at the right time and in the right part of the world. The market in Britain lacked manufacturing chemists and the bottled drug preparations could not stand competition

with the more convenient and precisely dosed American compressed tablets. What was required of the Burroughs and Wellcome was to convey these advantages to the English consumer. This was not a problem for Wellcome who was well known for his talents in advertising. Soon the partners decided to manufacture their own drugs with great success. In 1885 Burroughs died of pleurisy and Wellcome became the sole proprietor of the firm. Afterwards, the company underwent a great expansion and Wellcome became the leading figure in the British pharmaceutical industry. He opened overseas branches all over the world.

Henry Wellcome's social activities brought him into contact with the great African explorer Sir Henry Stanley. The two men had a lot in common, Stanley had even a humbler background being raised in an orphanage. Wellcome became one of Stanley's most staunch supporters. His friendship with Stanley was largely responsible for his profound interest in Africa.

Wellcome's Nile Cruise and his Association with the Sudan

During the winter of 1900-1901, Mr. Henry Wellcome, then a well-known drug manufacturer, happened to be in one of the first parties of European civilians to visit the Sudan after the battle of Omdurman, having sailed up the Nile from Egypt. This visit left very strong impressions on Wellcome. The country was devastated by war, disease and famine. This is illustrated in his account of (Sabaloka) an island north of Khartoum where, in the course of this trip, he found most of the inhabitants afflicted by a severe febrile illness:

....(It was very touching to see those natives who had come off from the shore to alleviate the suffering of their neighbours. This indicates in an agreeable manner how, in times of distress, the whole world is akin. I have been informed of instances where natives

who were of enemy tribes came under truce to assist their neighbours when helplessly ill. One thing that impressed me greatly when I was at Khartoum was the possibility of making that city as healthy as New York, London or any other place. With its central location, it occurred to me that one could reach out in various directions from Khartoum, as a base, and collect materials and specimens for scientific investigation.)[3]

On reaching Khartoum he was hosted by Wingate, the Governor General of Sudan and James Currie, Director of Education. He was shown plans for the Gordon Memorial College, under construction by public donations for the memory of Charles Gordon. The generous donations enabled establishment of a Gordon Fund and erection of a magnificent brown brick (college) building with Gothic tendencies. However, the educational system in Sudan was in its infancy. Primary education and basic industrial training were considered the first priority. Thus after lodging the basic educational institutions, Currie suggested that the unoccupied rooms in the Gordon College could be utilized for auxiliary institutions, including a small analytical laboratory which, due to lack of funds, he hesitantly suggested "more in a spirit of expectation than a practical proposal" [4]. After seeing these plans, Wellcome immediately offered to donate Bacteriological and Analytical laboratories to be part of the Gordon College provided that the authorities contributed to the upkeep of these laboratories. The thought of having to pay for the maintenance of the laboratories delayed acceptance of this generous offer until consultations were made with Lord Cromer, the British High Commissioner in Egypt and with the Financial Advisor of Egypt. Wingate was advised that the cost of Wellcome's gift was about £ 15,000 and that the annual cost of running the laboratories was estimated to be £ E 800 of which £E 400 could be paid by The Gordon Memorial Fund and £ E 400 by the government. Having secured approval of the

authorities in Egypt, Wingate asked Wellcome to submit an official offer of his gift, to which Wellcome responded by the following letter :[5]

*Snow Hill Buildings,
September 28th, 1901, London.*

Sir,

I beg to offer for the acceptance of the Gordon Memorial College, Khartoum, a complete equipment for Chemical and Bacteriological Laboratories for Analytical and Research Work. The Laboratories would be designed

- To promote technical education.*
- To undertake the testing and assaying of agricultural, mineral and other substances of practical interest in the industrial development of the Sudan.*
- To carry out such tests in connection with waters, food stuffs and sanitary matters as may be found desirable.*
- To aid in criminal investigation in poisoning cases (which are so frequent in Sudan) by detecting and experimental determination of toxic agents, particularly those obscure potent substances employed by the natives.*
- To study bacteriologically and physiologically tropical disorders especially the infective diseases of both man and beast peculiar to the Sudan, and to render assistance to the officers of health and the clinics of civil and military hospitals.*

In order that the work of the laboratories may be thorough and efficient it is very desirable that the director shall be skilled and resourceful and be prepared to direct and carry out with zeal and energy all branches of work for which the laboratories are equipped, and a man who is willing to devote his life to the work of the Institution. It is anticipated that the work of the laboratories will prove beneficial to both the European and native population. It is my desire that the laboratories be made as far as practicable self-supporting, by the charging of such reasonable fees as will aid in covering the cost of maintaining them. The only condition that I stipulate in making this offer is that the authorities are to maintain the laboratories and appoint and maintain an efficient Director and Staff for conducting the work. In the event of your doing me the honour of accepting my offer I propose that the equipment shall be delivered either at Alexandria or Port Said, as you may prefer.

*I have the honour to be, Sir
your obedient Servant.
(signed) Henry S. Wellcome*

*To General Sir Reginald Wingate KCMG, KCB, DSO etc.
Governor General of the Sudan.
19 Bryanston Square W.*

Wellcome participated in selection of the first director of the laboratories, Dr Andrew Balfour. In 1905 he was elected member of the Governing Body of the Gordon Memorial College, position which he held for the rest of his life. His contribution by establishing the Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories in Khartoum (WTRLK) had a great impact on the development of health services, medical research and medical education in the Sudan and put this country in the forefront of tropical diseases research [6].

Wellcome's Project in Jebel Moya

The association of Sir Henry Wellcome with the Sudan involved more than his donations for the WTRLK. He was directly involved in the planning and running of extensive archeological excavations in the central Sudan. This project served as a field in which Wellcome found an outlet for his philanthropy. Here he also exercised his exceptional organizational skills and his flair for innovation. As he later explained, Wellcome had a special interest in the ancient history of the Sudan:

(That soil of Egypt and Ethiopia had been the burial-place of extremely ancient civilizations is a fact familiar to every student. It has been suggested that here also we should seek the veritable birthplace of human civilization itself. Do the sand of this land of enigmas still hide within their depths an answer to the eternal enigma of man's beginning and a record of his first steps upon the pathway of knowledge?) [7]

Wellcome had this question in mind when he made his first acquaintance with the Sudan during his visit of 1900. He did not visit the Sudan again for 10 years. During this period his association with the Sudan grew stronger. In 1905 he was appointed member of the Board of Trustees of the Gordon Memorial College. This brought him in close contact with the authorities

in the Sudan.

Wellcome's first trip to the Sudan was also associated with a significant event in his personal life. During this trip, Wellcome met with Syrie, a strikingly beautiful woman. They got married a few months afterwards in London. It was not a happy marriage, they separated in 1909. Wellcome felt a deep sorrow for failure of his marriage. In 1910, soon after separation from his wife he wrote to a friend:

(...I shall drown my sorrow in work. Work is a great comforter, and my life work is one that contributes to the welfare of others, as well as myself, and this thought helps to brighten one's life.) [8]

Towards the end of 1910, Wellcome was also recovering from a severe illness and was advised by his doctors to spend the winter recuperating in Egypt. Before embarking on his trip he was invited by Lord Kitchener who happened to be in Britain at the time. Kitchener requested from Wellcome to extend his charity work in the Sudan, which started with the donation of the laboratories.

Wellcome promised to respond to this request without committing himself to any specific details. After visiting Egypt he traveled southwards to Khartoum. There he proposed to the authorities his desire to start a project combining welfare and large-scale archeological excavations. This was a timely proposal for the Sudan Government, which was in bad need of private contributions to archeological excavation. In spite of international interest in the ancient history of the Sudan, the authorities had to completely depend on donors for this activity, which was not seen as top priority as stated by Wingate:

(Among the many actual or contemplated developments which have to be abandoned in the Sudan owing to the present shortage of funds, not the least important is the Archaeological Section... I feel I cannot, in view or many other more urgent demands, provide the funds required to pay for the staff which had been practically engaged and therefore, it is with greatest reluctance that I have to forego for the present our projected archeological development) [9]

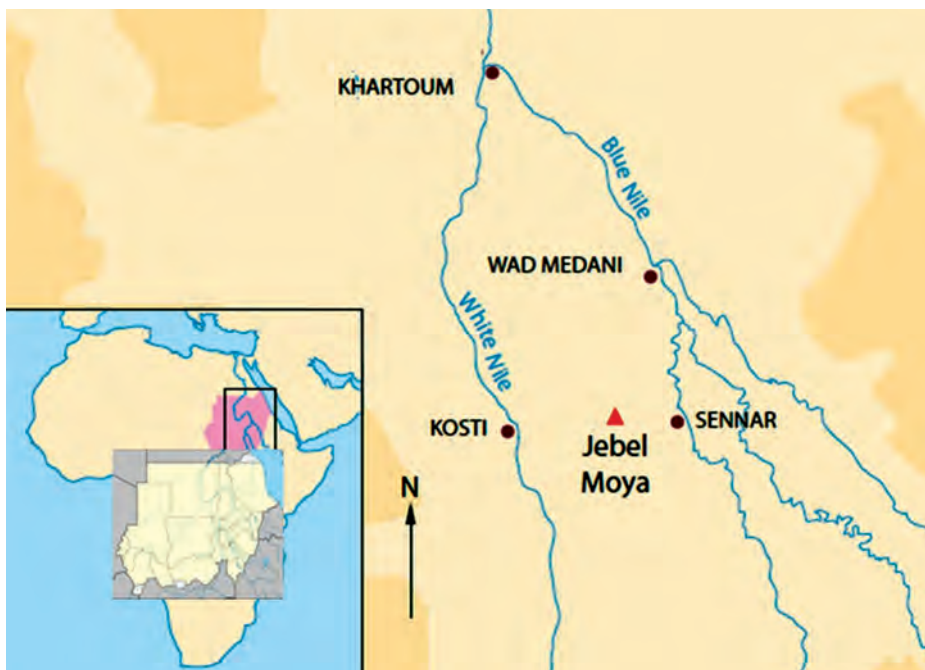


Figure 1 -Map showing location of Jebel Moya

In Khartoum, Wellcome learnt about possible locations for archeological excavations. He chartered the dababeah [Nile sailing-boat] CADANCE and sailed leisurely up the Blue Nile accompanied by his doctor and valet. He reached Singa before returning down stream to Sennar where he disembarked and went on land reaching Jebel Moya on 26 January 1911 (Figure 1). Jebel Moya (also transliterated as «Gebel Moya») was a compact group of granite hilts with interconnected valleys and ridges, the entire massif having a perimeter of about eleven kilometers. After finding a profusion of stone implements Wellcome decided to start his excavations in this area. He spent the rest of the winter of 1910- 1911 establishing his excavation project [10,11].

One of the main objectives of the project was to provide the local inhabitants with profitable work. As a self-made man, Wellcome believed that indiscriminate distribution of charity was demoralizing. He wanted to give the local inhabitants, a chance to earn this charity. However, the people in that area were not used to paid employment and he was viewed with suspicion by the local chiefs. Gradually he was able to overcome these problems so that by the end of the season he was employing 500 workers.

After the end of the first season in April 1911, Wellcome applied for a formal concession that covered the whole Anglo-Egyptian Sudan! Understandably the Sudan Government could not approve such a concession but granted Wellcome a Special License giving him excavation rights over Jebel Moya and a large area in the regions of the Blue Nile and the White Nile. The work of Wellcome in Jebel Moya did not find favour with many high officials in the Sudan due to the isolated and exposed position of the area. However, Wingate intervened on the side of Wellcome and wrote to Peter Drummond, Conservator of Antiquities and the work proceeded forwards, with a cordial invitation from Wingate:

(I have written to Drummond to see that all the arrangements are in good order as regards Jehel Moya and I trust you may make your mind easy on that score and that we shall have the pleasure of seeing you in the Sudan in the coming winter) [12]

Wellcome started his second excavation season in December 1911 with an optimistic note that he sent to Wingate [13]:

(You will, I am sure, be pleased to learn that large numbers of people whom I trained last year have come to me again for employment, and many more have sent, messages that they intend to join me later. Besides this, many others are coming from distant parts of the Sudan. It is gratifying to find that the training I gave them, and particularly the lesson in industrial habits have not been wasted, and from present appearances the wild spirit that prevailed when I came to Jebel Moya has given way to more peaceful attitude hide and certainly the friendly bearing of the people towards me has been all that I could desire.)

Professional archeologists and anatomists were recruited by Wellcome come to supervise the work, and all the requirements in terms of equipment were catered for. The excavation work was greatly expanded, with labourers from different parts of the Sudan employed. Workshops were erected in which many of the workers were trained in crafts of carpenting , balcksmithing etc. To absorb excess labour, Wellcome started work on a huge megalithic building constructed of huge boulders, which he named the «House of Boulders' (Figures 2 and 3).



Figure 2- Building the House of Boulders



Figure 3 - Building the House of Boulders

Life in the excavation camp was run on military lines with a Major Meldon as a Camp Commandant (Figure 4). The day was regulated with bugle calls and armed guards were mounted daily (Figure 5). Wellcome devised a Savings Bank System whereby part of the earnings of each labourer were saved to him till the end of the season. These savings enabled them to go home with substantial savings for investment in agriculture and in breeding animals. Throughout his life, Wellcome held other people at arm's length. Sir Henry Dale, one of Wellcome's closest associates later wrote:

(Henry Wellcome .. was curiously lonely.. It may be doubted whether anyone knew him with sufficient intimacy to do more than speculate as to his real feelings and motives)
[8]

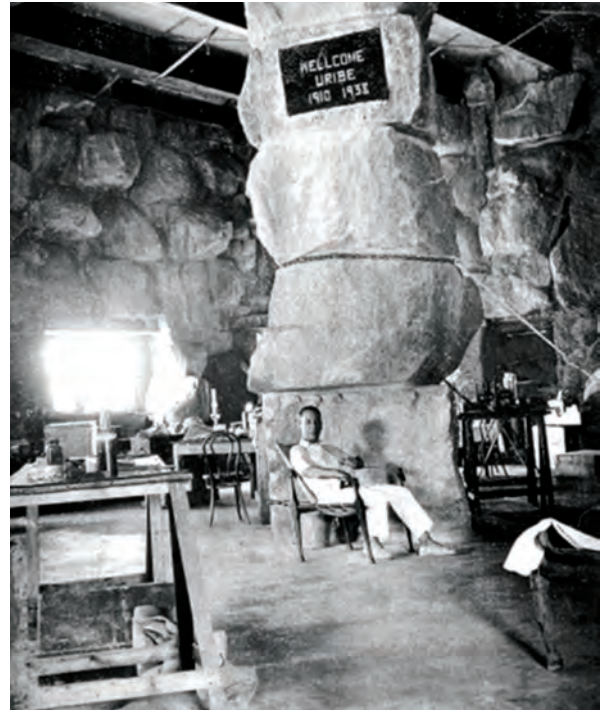


Figure 4 - Major J.S. Uribe Camp Commandant in Wellcome's House of Boulders at Jebel Moya , 1938.



Figure 5 - Camp Guards , Jebel Moya

The European workers whom Wellcome had to recruit in a hurry to catch up with the season had very little time to get acquainted with his character. Even in the loneliness of his remote settlement in Jebel Moya, Wellcome managed to keep at a distance from everyone. He ate alone in his tent while all others ate in messes. This can hardly make a man popular with his subordinates. As the season was closed in April 1912, some of the Europeans employed in the camp filed a complaint to the Sudan Government against Wellcome accusing him of mistreating his Sudanese workers. That was a very sensitive issue for the British rulers who came to the Sudan raising a banner of Justice, condemning previous Turko-Egyptian misrule and inadequate system of justice that led to the Mahdist uprising. As Wingate went to his summer resort in Erkowit, he left a letter to be handed to Wellcome when he passed through Khartoum on his way to Britain after the end of the season.

...there are some silly rumours going about regarding treatment of natives in the Excavation Camp, but I do not in the least credit them- At the same time I think it is only fair to you that you should be made aware that there is some irresponsible talk and I dare say when you hear the details you will be able to put your finger on the cause which has led up to it. I feel confident that, had there been a word or truth in any of these silly allegations the first people to complain would have been the natives themselves, and, as far as I am aware, no complaints have reached any of the officials here in the Sennar Province or at Head Quarters) [14]

This mild letter did not reflect the seriousness with which the government regarded this matter. On

Wingate's instructions two senior government officials discussed these accusations with Wellcome as they handed him the letter. Wellcome continued his trip to Egypt on board the Sudan Government steamer IBIS, from which he dispatched the following response to Wingate: [15]

*S. G. Steamer IBIS, Nubia
May 18th 1912*

Dear Sir Reginald,

Your kind letter of 10th was handed to me by Col. Phipps on the 15th as I passed through Khartoum, and I am obliged to you for having me notified. I have seen Governor Taylor and Captain Butler and given them all information.

The statements you refer to are false or are such distortments of facts as to render them false, and are clear (clearly) made through malice and spite and perhaps also to cover the wrong doings of those who made them... One of the Chief Officers of the Intelligence Department was in my camp for several days and was, as they well know inspecting the native workmen and enquiring(sic) into their condition. Various other Government Officials visited the camp from time to time and the camp Post Office was always open to them but not a word of complaint was made. My work, the improved condition of the natives and my relations with the natives speak for themselves...

The third season that started in November 1911 witnessed great expansion in the excavation activities [see Supplementary Material below]. Larger numbers of workers were employed. Sifting machines to separate artifacts from excavated soil were installed. Light railway and tip wagon was used to remove the refuse (Figure 6).



Figure 6 - Excavation work in Jebel Moya

An aerial rope-way known as the “flying camel” was installed to transport equipment from plane to plateau. In this season Wellcome also introduced one of his

innovations: aerial photography using box kite which was used for the first time in archeology (Figures 7, 8 and 9).



Figure 7 - Kite aerial photography in Jebel Moya excavations

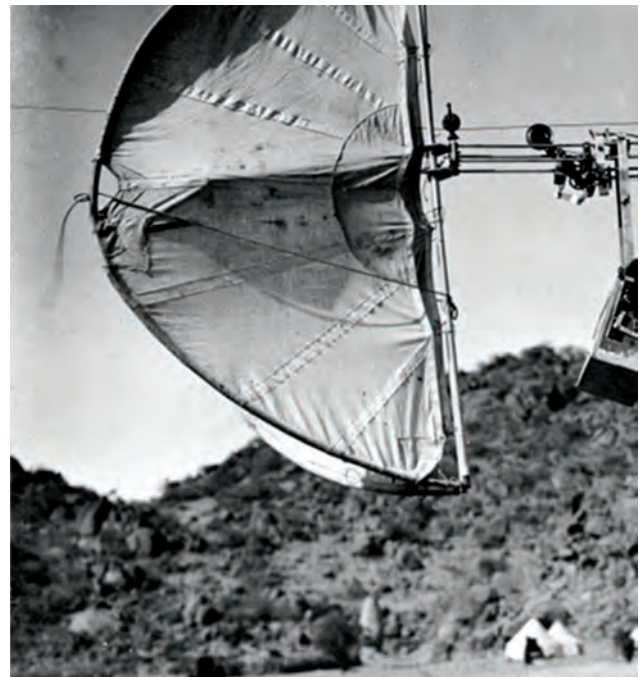


Figure 8 - Camera mounted in kite at Jebel Moya



Figure 9 - Example of aerial photos taken in Jebel Moya

During this season, Major J.S.Uribe joined Jebel Moya Camp (Figures 4 and 10). Major Uribe was an officer in the Ecuadorian army. He happened to join the wrong side in the 1910 revolution. Wellcome managed to give him safe passage out of Ecuador as a member of his expedition, thus saving his life. He later became Camp Commandant in Jebel Moya.

It seems that Wellcome assumed that his response in the previous season had satisfied the authorities in Khartoum regarding his methods of running the camp. Thus in the third season he resumed operating the camp on the same lines as before. However, this time the Acting Governor of Sennar filed an official complaint to Wingate who had then to respond to Wellcome in a more direct tone than previously. [16]



Figure 10 - Wellcome's Camp in Jebel Moya Note the "House of Boulders" on the left and the railway at the bottom.

Dear Mr. Wellcome,

It is with considerable diffidence that I write to you on the following subject, but I for sure you will realise it is one of importance to the Government, and also one which, in my capacity as Governor General, I cannot overlook.

I refer to the treatment of your laborers at Gebel Moya and the system of fines and punishments instituted by you. Last year some of your European staff thought fit to make statements imputing to you gross ill-treatment and cruelty to natives. I need hardly say that I never believed for a moment such statements but the fact remains that rumours of peculiar treatment of natives have been circulated in the country, and it would lead to endless trouble and annoyance if such rumours gained credence further afield. I fully appreciate the high motives by which you are actuated and your desire, by encouraging thrift and industry among your employees, to raise their moral tone and standard, but my many years experience in dealing with native questions in this country have taught me that what may at first sight seem desirable is not always possible to carry out. The two points which have been brought to my notice are:

1. System of payment. I understand you have a system by which you pay a labourer a small sum at the end of each week, and the balance due to him at the end of the season. The reason for this is obvious, but such an arrangement is contrary to the custom of this country and liable to be misunderstood. I would therefore suggest that you should in future institute a system of weekly payments by which a man draws all that he has earned at the end of each week.

2. Punishments and fines. The native of the Sudan is very quick at grasping the meaning of law and order and the punishments which an offender will incur for various offences are generally known throughout the country. Any variations from such punishments must inevitably lead to misconception and very likely to charges of ill-treatment. Your best plan therefore would be to immediately discharge any labourer whose conduct or work was unsatisfactory, paying him the full wages due to him up to the date of discharge. Judging from the reports, which I have received regarding the happy and prosperous condition of your little settlement, I expect that a man so discharged would return very shortly in a chastened mood seeking re-employment. More serious offences should be referred at once to the nearest Mamur [administrative assistant] or Inspector.

I trust that you will appreciate the reasons, which have induced me to write to you on this matter and that you will be able, without much inconvenience, to institute a new system which will effectually prevent the recurrence of such unpleasant charges however inaccurate they may be. Hoping that you are in good health and with my best wishes for a successful season.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

P. Wingate

P.S. I am writing this on the representation of the Acting Governor, Sennar Province, who has again brought the matter to my notice.

Wellcome was disappointed for what he saw as a close ally, seemed to question his methods. James misrepresentation of this work in Jebel Moya Currie (Director of Education, SG) visited Jebel Moya especially now that Wingate, whom he considered as and sent his first impressions to Wingate [17]:

PRIVATE

**EDUCATION DEPARTMENT,
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE,
Khartoum 10 th March 1913**

My Dear General,

1. I have seen Mr Wellcome and I think all will go well. He is, I think a little hurt that you (in his opinion) attached credence to statements and declined to give him your authority for them, but this is passing away. In any case Drummond Hays withdrawal is sufficiently abject. But, ill as he was at the time, he felt the accusations very keenly, more keenly than would have been under ordinary circumstances.

2. It would have been much easier for me to deal with Mr Wellcome if I had been informed how matters stood. I have no right or claim to be so unless I am employed in some sense as an intermediary, but, if I am, and am to have a chance of doing good, I think I ought to be put in possession of all the facts.

3. He has got 1100 men working there, and an obviously competent English staff. Duncan MacKenzie formerly second in command to Sir Arthur Evans in Crete, has just arrived and is opening up a second site on the hill. MacKenzie's reputation as a scholar is almost world wide, certainly of the very highest rank. The real point at issue is to determine the nature and limits of this Ethiopic culture and then to see what its connection is, (a) with Egypt, (b) conceivably with the Mediterranean basin. Of course if such connection were clearly established, a revolution in accepted thought on the subject would be brought about and the whole matter would arouse an incalculable amount of interest.

4. The work at Jebel Moya is going on admirably, the houses are more than half finished, and the 1100 workmen as happy as can be.

5. Mr Wellcome proposes to take an unappropriated tract of land, clear it of «Kitr» and grow «dura» for his men, on model dry farming principles, in order to avoid any possible trouble in the future.

6. This leads me to the point that Mr Wellcome wants two things- an extension of the time of his concession, and, though he will not ask for it, the gift of Jebel Moya! He wants, I think, to be buried there, even as Cecil Rhodes rests in the Mataoppos (sic), and he will bequeath all the buildings, etc. on it to the Government after his death.

7. I would like you to see him before he goes and talk it all over, as it is not too late to enrol him as warm ally, and it is worth the trouble. From any point of view, as educator of the wildest natives (and the wilder he gets them the more he likes it) he is worth anything to us. And it must be forgotten that he spends £6000 a year on wages, and practically compels the natives to invest them properly.

8. But if the most is to be made of him, you must see him, and spontaneously offer him one or two things - things that as a matter of fact are not worth a milled to us.

9. I have informed him of Lord Kitchener's decision confirmed by the letter to you of which you sent me a copy, that the £500 annually for publication is to be found after two years, i.e. at the beginning of 1915, I am sending him an excerpt from Minute, so far as it deals with that question. I hope you are having a good journey. Yours very sincerely,

JAMES CURRIE

In spite of the reconciliatory attitude of Currie, Rudolf Slatin who was holding the office of Inspector General held a strong stand against Wellcome. He saw his growing influence in the area as a threat to the authority of the government as he wrote to Wingate:

(I still cannot forget the letter which Drummond Hayes wrote to Wellcome - and think it would have been fair to tell me that Currie was sent to Jebel Moya. I saw him on his return and he confessed that he was quite ignorant with facts and he has not seen any correspondence or telegrams concerning former complaints from W. - He saw only the outsides and was justly satisfied that W. has about 1000 workmen and Dinka women for which he leaves thousands of pounds in the country. The Indenture or how you call the contracts which every man has to sign is illegal- as it appoints him G.G. [Governor General] over Jebel Moya. I quite understand that you try to make him happy to get something out from him in the future too- but we have to think that if things will be known to public we may be very severely criticized.) [18]

In the end, it seemed that Wingate did not want to

loose Wellcome and he thought it was time to mend the damage in the relationship between Wellcome with the Sudan Government. He conveyed his opinion in a letter he sent to Currie:

I was much interested in the various Letters you have sent in dealing with your visit to Jebel Moya. You have no doubt seen Slatin on the subject and, as you know, he holds very strong views on the Drummond Hay incident. On the whole, therefore, I have not thought it desirable to ask Mr Wellcome to come to Erkowit and even had I done so I think in all probability it would not have suited him to come so far out of his way. In any circumstances I think that you have had a calming influence on his much over-wrought nerves and I hope that with rest outside the Sudan and temporary cessation from his labours, he will forget the irritation which I think his health condition has tended to exaggerate, and will return to the Sudan just as keen and as helpful an enthusiast of yore. [19]

The fourth season started in early November 1913 and ended in late April 1914 (Figure 11).

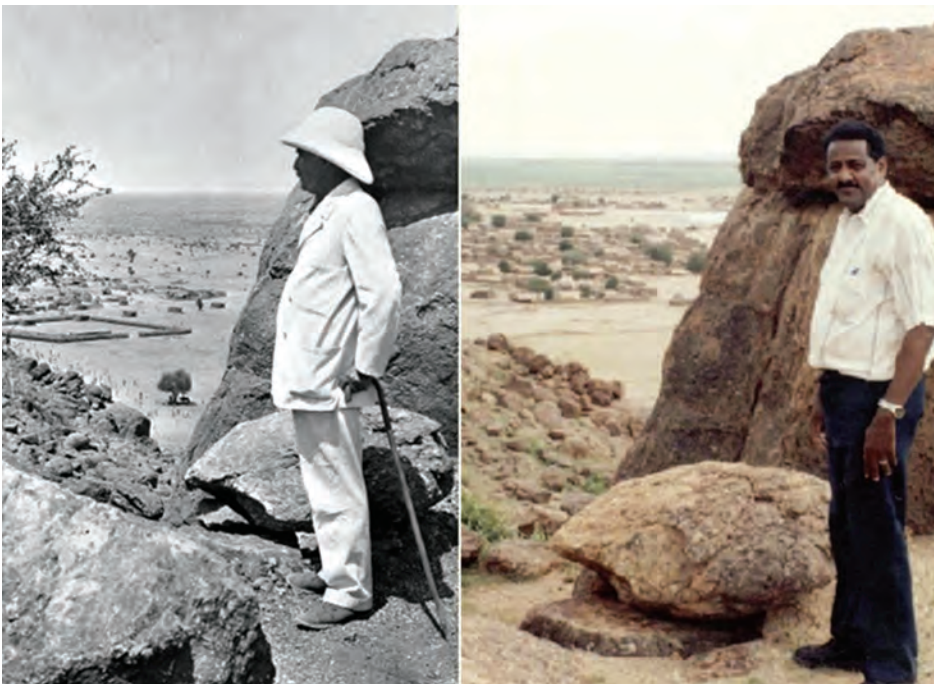


Figure 11 - Left: Henry Wellcome looking over the Jebel Moya village, circa 1913; right: the Author standing at the same spot in 1997.

Wellcome brought a motor car, the only one in the Sudan except the Governor General's which was, up to that time, called in the Sudan "the One and Only". During this season the activity of the excavation camp reached its peak. More than 4000 labourers were employed in Jebel Moya. Wellcome made it a rule that no applicant should be turned away. The Camp Commandant had to find suitable work for each applicant, including the handicapped who were assigned to appropriate jobs like mending baskets or cutting grass for building huts. O. G. Crawford, who joined the camp as an archeologist during this season was aware of the reserved attitudes towards Wellcome but it seems that he had no doubts about his motives as he later wrote:

(He [Henry Wellcome] was first and foremost philanthropist and his work in the Sudan had philanthropy rather than archeology as its main object.. [20]

Wellcome applied strict rules on his European employees as well as other workers. While some regarded these as encroachment on personal freedoms, others like Crawford accepted these rules as a part of Wellcome's character:

(..one of his hobbies was teetotalism, alcohol was strictly forbidden in the camp, and in the very onerous contract that every member of the expedition had to sign was a clear clause forbidding the consumption of alcohol while in his employment.) [20]

In this context it should be noted that in those days over-indulgence in alcohol was a known hazard

for Europeans working in the colonies. It was not unusual for employers to impose restrictions on the consumption of alcohol. For example, one particular British company operating in West Africa seemed chiefly interested in the sobriety of its applicants and one clause of its contract with the employee was that he .." ..would not indulge in alcohol or liquor save at meals or with the express permission of the company's medical attendant " [21]

Wellcome's welfare work had a significant impact on the local inhabitants of Jebel Moya. Besides the European and Egyptian workers, the camp gave home to people from different Sudanese tribes from different parts of the country and with different languages, habits and creeds, including devout Muslim nomadic tribes as well as animists from the equatorial regions of the Sudan. It was not an easy task to keep such a heterogeneous group in harmony as he managed to do. In his small settlement he encouraged temperance among the Sudanese labourers and provided efficient sanitary and medical services (Figures 12 and 13). He carried an afforestation project in the area, built roads and introduced improved methods for farming, built a model village in Jebel Moya with a mosque and a school. He built a "hafir" [artificial reservoir for rain water] to provide water for the people and animals in the neighbouring villages. Being in charge of these schemes and the employer of virtually everybody in the area, Wellcome easily earned the title of "Al-Pasha" given to him by the local inhabitants. Wellcome left Jebel Moya at the end of the fourth season in April 1914. As events were to prove, that was his last visit to the Sudan. He was prevented by the 1914 - 1918 war, but afterwards did not manage to revisit the Sudan. Yet, he never relinquished his excavation rights and continued to assert that, his excavation work was suspended but not abandoned.



Figure 12 - Stone incinerators built by Wellcome in Jebel Moya camp for waste disposal.



Figure 13 - Stone incinerators built by Wellcome in Jebel Moya camp for waste disposal. Box: A more recent photograph of the stone incinerator.

Year after year he sent Mr. Uribe to maintain the camp and supervise the welfare projects until 1938 (Figure 4), two years after the death Sir Henry Wellcome when the camp reverted to the Sudan Government.

In the vast featureless plane of Gezira, the sight of the massif of Jebel Moya appears suddenly like an eruption. The village of Jebel Moya is not different from other villages of the area. Among the hills the House of Boulders stands as monument of Sir Henry Wellcome. It is abandoned and all the fittings were removed. However, its walls look as durable as the granite hills from which its boulders were dragged (Figures 14 and 15).



Figure 14: The House of Boulders, 1997.



Figure 15 - Wellcome's Headquarters "The House of Boulders" in Jebel Moya, 1997

In the village of Jebel Moya legends are still about the Pasha that once reigned over the hills, served by the jinn. The excavation sites are littered with pot shreds and pieces of bone and there are piles of debris where tons of excavated soil were processed by

the sifting machines. There are also legendary stories of (burmas) full of gold, excavated by the Pasha and shipped away. Certainly, no one would have believed that the grand Pasha was digging the hills looking for bones and pot shreds (Figure 16).



Figure 16 - Henry Wellcome with the renowned Harvard archeologist George Andrew Reisner.

Supplementary Material: Two video clips about Wellcome's camp in Jebel Moya are posted online:

(A) A day at Gebel Moya, season 191213-, pt 1 of 2. At:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vewpljmEYjE>

(B) A day at Gebel Moya, season 191213-, pt 2 of 2. At:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vEb2KNJ-xSA>

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