

**REPORT ON TWO
EXPEDITIONS
TO MIDIAN**

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Report on Two Expeditions to Midian by R. F. Burton

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R. F. BURTON

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REPORT

ON TWO EXPEDITIONS TO MIDIAN

BY

CAPTAIN R. F. BURTON.

*Richard
Harris*

ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT.

The Alexandria Stationers' & Booksellers' Company Limited.

1880

REPORT
ON TWO EXPEDITIONS TO MIDIAN

The following lines contain a concise account of the circumstances which, during the last three years, have connected me with the Egyptian province, El-Madyan.

H. H. Ismail I., honoured me, through Mr. Frederick Smart, with an invitation to visit Egypt, and to lay before him certain details which I had collected concerning mineral wealth in N. Western Arabia.

I left Trieste on March 3, 1877. A small expedition was at once prepared: it set out for El-Muwaylah on April 2; and returned to Suez on April 20. During those 18 days we found, by examining four sites, that the country had been extensively mined, while a larger area remained untouched. I brought home specimens of gold, silver, galena, zinc, copper, sulphur, iron and other metals. H. H. was much pleased and promised me, in presence of Mr. Smart and of other persons, either a concession or a royalty of 5 per cent, on gross produce.

Returning from the First Expedition I had the honour to recommend :

1. Mr. Charles Clarke (of Zagazig) for the rank of Bey.
2. Lt. Hasan Effendi Haris, and Lt. Amir Effendi Rushdi for a step in promotion.

I also solicited a small Life-pension for Haji Wali (El-Din) of Zagazig, who had drawn my attention to the mines of El-Madyan.

On October 9, 1877 I again left Trieste. After some delay at Cairo, the second Expedition set out from Suez on December 11 ; and returned on April 12th 1879. During this journey of 4 months, Mr. Marie, the Engineer sent by H. H., collected some 20 tons of specimens ; and I was directed to have them assayed in London, while Mr. Smart was charged in my presence, with furnishing the necessary funds. The analysis was duly made and the printed report was forwarded to Egypt; but funds were not forthcoming, and the consequence was, that I was compelled to supply them.

Returning to Cairo I renewed my request touching the pension of Haji Wali : I again submitted for promotion the names of Mr Clarke and Lt: Amir Effendi Rushdi ; and I added to them that of Ahmed Kaptan Musallam. Moreover for the better government of the province (El-Madyan) which is about to assume new relations with Egypt I had the honour to propose :

1. That Sayyid Abd el-Rahim, accountant of the Fort el-Muwaylah, be raised to the rank of Nàzir or Commandant.
2. That Mohammed Shahadeh, Ex-Wakil of El-Wijh be made Commandant of that Fort.
3. That some token of H. H.'s favour be conferred upon:

Sheykh Alayàn Bin Rabi of the Huwaytât tribe

„ Furayj do :

„ Hasan ibn Sâlim El-Ukbi.

For the safety of Egypt and Europe I also recommended that the Quarantine Establishment be re-transferred from Tor harbour to El-Wijh.

Since leaving Cairo (May, 1878) I have repeatedly written concerning the administrative measures to be adopted before the country can be regularly exploited, but hitherto my representations have remained unnoticed.

I now return to the Mines.

The result of the assays made by three several establishments is so far encouraging that Dr. Percy, one of the highest authorities on metallurgy, declares : "These indications of the presence of the precious metals certainly justify further explorations."

Such exploration I am prepared to undertake.

I left Trieste on December 5, 1879 and came to Cairo ready for a Third Expedition. This time the conditions of exploitation are more favourable, as I have no longer to seek for the sites which are best fitted for beginning operations.

It is, however, evident that no Syndicate, no Company would risk capital upon a project, however promising, without the prospect of enjoying the fruits of success. Certain capitalists in London are willing to aid me, but it will be upon conditions that a formal contract or concession be granted to me.

The *Nouveau Règlement sur les mines de l'Empire Ottoman*, inserted into the Tanzimat (Constitution) and bearing date July 17, 1861, authorises this concession, and lays down all the legal conditions regarding royalty and other matters.

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An objection might be raised that the *Règlement* applies to subjects of the Porte. But, firstly there are precedents for extending the privilege to foreigners; for instance in the case of the minerals about Sidon. Secondly, this proviso, made for Turkey proper is not applicable to Egypt, where there are now International Tribunals. Disputed questions of royalty, jurisdiction &c. could be settled by arbitrators, the latter nominated in equal numbers by the Government and the Company.

The public will observe that I am not acting as one who seeks to receive favours from Egypt. On the contrary I propose to develop a province, which has been for centuries, and which still is, a howling wilderness, occupied by a few hundred Bedawin. I propose to benefit Suez and the adjacent parts of Egypt by creating an industry and a traffic where there is now nothing of the kind. Lastly, I propose adding to the resources of H. H.'s Government, by making over to it the legal share of whatever profits may accrue from the exploitation of El-Madyan.

Under these circumstances I have a claim to expect the realisation of a project whose views are of the most legitimate. And the first steps would be :

1st. A contract or concession drawn up in due form.

2nd. An authority to carry out the measures proposed for the Government of the Province; especially the rewards due to the military officers and the civilians who assisted in exploring El-Madyan.

Alexandria.

January 1, 1880.

REPORT 70972

UPON

THE MINERALS OF MIDIAN,

BY

CAPTAIN RICHARD F. BURTON

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