

**PAPERS ON THE GREAT PYRAMID:
INCLUDING A CRITICAL
EXAMINATION OF SIR HENRY
JAMES' "NOTES ON THE GREAT
PYRAMID OF EGYPT"**

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Papers on the Great Pyramid: Including a Critical Examination of Sir Henry James' "Notes on the Great Pyramid of Egypt" by John Vincent Day

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JOHN VINCENT DAY

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McGriffith.

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THE GREAT PYRAMID;
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A CRITICAL EXAMINATION
OF
SIR HENRY JAMES'
"NOTES ON THE GREAT PYRAMID OF EGYPT."

BY
ST. JOHN VINCENT DAY, C.E., F.R.S.E.,
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ENGINEERS, MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTION OF ENGINEERS IN SCOTLAND,
HON. LIBRARIAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF GLASGOW.
ETC.

EDINBURGH:
EDMONSTON AND DOUGLAS.
1870.

TO

C. PIAZZI SMYTH, F.R.S.S.L. & E.,

Astronomer Royal for Scotland, Professor of Practical Astronomy
in the University of Edinburgh,

THAN WHOM THERE IS NO MORE SINCERE
INQUIRER AFTER PRIMEVAL TRUTH IN ITS MOST
COMPREHENSIVE AND ENLIGHTENED SENSE,

These Papers are Inscribed,

NOT ONLY AS AN INDEX OF PERSONAL FRIENDSHIP,
BUT ALSO AS AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF
THE EMINENT SERVICES HE HAS RENDERED IN
PROSECUTING INVESTIGATIONS OF SUCH VAST IMPORTANCE
TO MANKIND.

P R E F A C E.

THE following pages have been written during some of those short intervals of leisure which I have been able, though actively employed in professional pursuits, to dedicate to the investigation of a subject that in richness as a field for research and for elevated character is not surpassed; a subject by the greater portion of the literary and scientific world looked upon with disfavour, yea, even with suspicion—such being an almost necessary result in many cases by reason of the labour of investigation requisite to its right and complete understanding; nevertheless, one needing but to be more carefully dealt with by those who turn attention to it, in order to be rightly appreciated.

A former published Work on the subject, besides one or two Papers in the Transactions of a Scientific Society, have of necessity brought me into contact with every shade of opinion, as to the various theories respecting the Pyramid and the facts belonging to it, which from time to time, from age to age rather, have been propounded and brought to light. I have thus been enabled, both by verbal and written discussions and arguments, to ascertain the weight

of evidence on which theories, assertions, contradictions, and alleged facts, have been supported; and I can only state that in those cases where the Pyramid subject has been examined into with a diligent spirit of inquiry, that is with the aim of not merely strengthening preconceived notions or prejudices, but to evolve absolute realities, I have not yet met anyone but who is more or less convinced by the modern theory originated by John Taylor, and based by him upon the admeasurements of Howard Vyse and Perring. On the other hand I have met many, such as are always to be found, no matter what the subject is, who declare against it; but who on being questioned, do by the very peculiarity of their opposition, show to what extent they have given themselves the pains to comprehend it to the full.

To myself, the chief matter of regret which I entertain is, that some one more able had not taken charge of the duty, which, however poorly, it has been my endeavour to fulfil, in exposing the gross misrepresentations pointed out in the following pages as existing in a recently published official document.

The style of writing—that of exact criticism—became imperative for reasons which will shed their own light on the reader as the investigation is passed through; this I can but regret, yet the circumstances were none of my own controlling.

With regard to the first Paper, the proof sheets of the greater part of it were submitted to Sir Henry James before the edition was thrown off; as I considered it only fair to afford him the opportunity of correcting any of his errors either in arithmetic, fact, or history, beforehand.

The two other Papers were written about two years ago, but they have not been previously published.

The first Paper would not have been written, but for Sir Henry James himself having opened and continued a correspondence on the Pyramid with me up to the time when the Mount Sinai and Great Pyramid Survey Expedition was organized and started from this country, a correspondence wherein he laid the foundation of what was afterwards to appear in his published "Notes;" so that I felt, and was advised by others, that the onus of exposing his misconceptions and perversions rested in my hands. If any other reason for what I have written is asked of me I have none to give, other than the promptings of duty to expose fallacies so authoritatively flung into the midst of mankind. The truth is as I have told it.

If the Papers have numerous and great shortcomings I could not avoid them, but still venture to hope they contain a few things worthy of notice; and in conclusion can only say, as others have already said, with the unassuming writer of the Book

ii. Macc. 15:38 of Maccabees, "If I have done well and fitting the story, it is that which I desired; but if slenderly and meanly, it is that which I could attain unto."

ST. J. V. D.

GLASGOW, *September*, 1870.

ON SIR HENRY JAMES' CONTRIBUTIONS

TO THE LITERATURE OF

THE GREAT PYRAMID.

I.—ON November 9th, 1867, Colonel Sir Henry James, R.E., in writing to the *Athenæum*, under a heading, "The Great Pyramid of Egypt,"* asserted that "the length of one of the sides of the base of the Great Pyramid is precisely 360 *derahs* or cubits of Egypt. This can scarcely be regarded as a mere accidental numerical agreement. The *derah* is a land measure still in use, and is stated by Woolhouse, in his 'Weights and Measures of all Nations,' to be 25·488 inches in length; but $25·488 \text{ inches} \times 360 = 764$ feet, which is the exact length of one side of the base of the Pyramid, 'with the casing stones,' as measured by Colonel Howard Vyse."

The degree of exactitude professed by the investigator is marked by the two sets of words which the writer has italicised in the preceding quotation. Surely, then, it will generally be admitted that the least feature to look for in any endeavour at expounding the proportions and dimensions of such a structure, over the nature and objects of which

* *Vide* Appendix A.