

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

WORCESTER COLLEGE

OXFORD

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Dear Emmett,

This letter is headed in this pompous way for two reasons:
(a) your odd attitude to the privacy of private correspondence and
(b) in the interests of decency, sanity, and scholarship the time has come for some plain speaking.

I was surprised and saddened by the content and tone of your recent communication. Whatever your intentions may have been, it gives evidence:

(1) that you have gone to quite extraordinary lengths to detect material errors of presentation in On the Knossos Tablets and have almost completely failed.

(2) That having assembled a collection of trivialities, you have blown them up to grotesque proportions, seeking to represent the book as a disservice to scholarship.

(3) You have then by every means sought to do me the maximum damage by representations to the Delegates of the Press and the Visitors of the Museum.

(4) What grieves me most, is that in (2) and (3) you have destroyed your own case by your admission that the majority (unspecified) of the "errors" will not conceivably alter the sense of the passages in which they occur.

I will enlarge on these points not in any spirit of reproach or recrimination, but because you have confused a scholarly issue of a most important kind, and I shall try once again to bring you to see and face that issue.

(1) I have entered your corrigenda on a copy of the book and sent it to the O.U.P. I have analysed them (see enclosed sheet) and shown that they bear out your own admission: they are overwhelmingly of the most trivial kind and do not affect the essential archaeological information which the book seeks to convey. What scholar with a pinch of common sense will bother his head whether Mackenzie wrote "enclosed" or "inclosed"? The enclosed sheet embodies my assessment of the archaeological implications of your proposed revisions. You are invited to specify your own assessment of the extent to which the archaeological picture relating to the tablets is affected.

(2) You were given 300 words for a notice of the book. The major question was posed by Blegen, to whom you owe some loyalty. What evidence was ever offered by Evans to substantiate his date? C.W.B. said virtually none. The documents have shown that A.E.'s sole decisive stratigraphy was a 100% fabrication. Boardman himself admits that the vessels reproduced in PoM IV, 735, Fig. 720 were found in widely separate parts of the palace. You know better than anyone that Fig. 719 likewise conveys a false picture. Does this staggering revelation not raise the most fundamental question of all: Evans's

reliability as an archaeological reported . This is what a review should have stressed. This is the central issue, already posed in another context by D. Levi. Instead, you seek to confuse this issue by one of the hoariest devices in the history of reviewing: irrelevances of textual minutiae. I am no less perfectionist than you. But I remain unconvinced that you are really gravely "distressed" by such points as "burned" for "burnt" or "partly" for "partially". Would any man in his ~~senses~~ senses consider such matters worthy of mention at all considering the magnitude of the scholarly and personal issues ?

(3) This brings me to your interventions with the Delegates and the Visitors. The O.U.P. will give its own reply on the points of publishing practice and policy you raise. I have provided them with an analysis of the errata you submit as evidence and pointed out the self-contradictions in which you have involved yourself. How can you maintain simultaneously (a) that in the majority of cases the sense of the passages will not be conceivably altered and (b) that the mere publication of a list of errata will not suffice. What grieves me is this double impression you have left here of gross exaggeration and self-importance. In your letter to the Ashmolean you use expressions which are open to the interpretation that all would have been well if only the whole thing had been entrusted to E.L.B. This may well be so, but the priority was mine in virtue of discovery. May I remind you of how long you sat on the OLIVE OIL tablets ?

I regard all this as trivial in the extreme. The scientific issue remains. By all means make your revisions to the picture presented in our book. From the start I took practical steps to ensure that the evidence should be presented objectively. You have never acknowledged this and I will enumerate them again.

(1) As soon as I realised what the documents contained I voluntarily invited Boardman to collaborate and handed the books over to him with a copy of my first excerpts.

(2) When we disagreed, I voluntarily waived my rights and proposed that the two versions should be published simultaneously.

(3) This is where you come in. I suggested to Hamilton that a microfilm of the books should be made. I suggested to the British School that a microfilm should be made of the pottery notebooks. This is how you come to be in a position to check the text and write your review.

(4) It was I who noted the importance of the Guide to the Stratigraphical Museum. I wrote to you and even had a photograph made of one of the plans. Nestor bears witness to the search for copies in the libraries of the world.

(5) I wrote long letters to you pointing out the nature of the evidence, thinking that you would be vitally interested in the facts recorded. Evidently I was mistaken.

THE ISSUE

I will make one more effort to get you to face scientifically the issue posed by our publication. In the first place I concede ~~xxxx~~ a batch of your corrigenda. I choose pp.64-66. D

p.64: delete the ; add the word I couldn't read ~~xxxx~~ above.

p.65 : I question your proposal these for the; ~~delete~~ delete the .

p.66: read Plan I ; delete an ; query near the for near to ; read another for a ; add the word I couldn't read mouth ; transpose originally so.

What has been achieved archaeologically speaking ?

Now use the book as it is intended to be used. I have entered some important data on the enclosed plan. ① The Clay Chest [Bath] was found on 6 IV 00. On the same day the bronze statuette to the west ②. On the same day the ~~xxxx~~ the first of the Chariot Tablets ③ (FP 73). On the same day the fragments ^④ near the mouth / thank you ! / of the fresco corridor. We now know that pithos 6 stood next to the bath. We now know that the walls of the bath room " seem to belong to a very late period of re-occupation ". We now know that all these finds of 6 April ' were quite uniformly made in deposit that in no case went down below the level of the Mycenaean flooring as reckoned by means of ... [LM III B / pithoi bases]. We have long known (since 1900) that the Chariot Tablets were found next to the massive wall that cut the palace in two in its final phase. We now know that the ~~xxxx~~ north and west wall of the bronze statuette room were built above the ' Megaron ' detected in 1907 and still further above the foundations of the stair bastion which AE later reconstructed. Here is a summary section of the recorded data.

Statuette

Very Late Reoccupation

Megaron
Bastion Foundations

I invite your comments on this archaeological issue now that your work as a textual critic is over. I hope that I am correct in still believing that your main purpose is to advance the truth about the Knossos excavations and to secure that that issue is not blurred by struggles about the heinousness of 'near to' for 'near the', particularly in view of the fact that AE has a very sketchy rendering of these ~~wordlets~~ wordlets. I prefer to test you in private first. But contrary to your own practice, I think I ought to warn you that shortly I am to have an opportunity of discussing publicly this very area of the palace, about which I have secured some new evidence. I intend to put on the spot all those who have contributed to the discussion. We shall see how they respond and stand up to this new investigation. ~~Remember~~ Remember AE's MM III dating and location of the statuette, and much else besides.

Now my dear boy, pull yourself together. You would do well to withdraw your review. The Press and the Museum may well persuade you that the evidence submitted is inadequate for your serious strictures on two Oxford scholars, one of whom is

Your humble servant,

L .

Analysis of Professor E.L.Bennett's Corrigenda to O_n the Knossos Tablets

My tacit corrections off evident slips of the pen such as "and /and/ a bit"	3
Meaningless insertions and omissions (e.g. "alogs ⁿ side /of/ it"	60
Changed spellings (e.g. "burned" for "burnt")	7
Synonymous substitutions (e.g. "partly" for "partially")	28
Transpositions (e.g. "so originally"/"originally so")	9
Forms of the articles/ demonstratives (inserted, omitted, etc)	64
Singular for plural and vice versa (e.g. "with no trace/traces "	14
Tense forms (e.g. " impressions turn up / turned up")	11
Punctuation (marks of omission etc.)	14
Passages deliberately omitted with suitable indication ...	8
Illegible items indicated as such: ELB's suggestions	16
Misprints (<u>site</u> / <u>side</u>)	2

The only items which seem to me to have even slight significance for the main theme of the book (The Find Places of the Knossos Tablets) are:

- p.96: unimportant fragments of ~~xxxxx~~ inscription tablets
- p.99: almost from the surface
- p.112: Westward (in any case clear from the context and the sketch map reproduced).
- p.119: 2.50 for 2.80 , which involves the displacement by some 30 cm of some inscription fragments belonging to the Great Deposit, the precise location of which as a whole in in any case given on Mackenzie's sketch plan which I reproduce in Plate XVIII.

Result: the essential scholarly purpose of the book has been achieved. The archaeological information is presented accurately.