GEORG STEINDORFF (1861-1951)

A German Egyptologist and Coptologist. He was educated at the universities of Berlin and Göttingen, and was Adolf Erman’s first student. From 1885 to 1893 he occupied the post of assistant curator of the Berlin Museum. He was professor of Egyptology at Leipzig from 1893 until 1938. There he founded the Egyptian Institute and filled it with objects from his excavations in Egypt and Nubia. Steindorff made a special study of Coptic, and was, with W. E. Crum, one of the two leading authorities in his field.

He explored the Libyan Desert and excavated at Giza and in Nubia. He edited the Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde for forty years and contributed many articles to it. His studies in Coptic were of the utmost importance, and his Coptic Grammar (Berlin, 1894) still remains a standard work of reference and perhaps the most popular ever written in this field. In philology as a whole, he was in the first rank and established the rules that are generally accepted for the vocalization of Egyptian.

In 1939 he was forced to leave Nazi Germany and emigrate to America, where he started another career at the age of nearly eighty. He continued his studies in the museums of New York, Boston, and Baltimore and at the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago. He became an honorary member of the American Oriental Society. At Baltimore he compiled a twelve-volume manuscript catalog of Egyptian antiquities in the Walters Art Gallery.

Both his seventieth and eightieth birthdays were the subject of tributes. His published works are numerous and his bibliography lists about 250 books, articles, and reviews, the first of which appeared in 1883, the last in the year of his death, nearly seventy years later. Apart from a great multitude of articles, his Coptic bibliography can be found in Kammerer, A Coptic Bibliography (1950, 1969). He also edited many editions of
Baedeker's Egypt, making it a standard work for all travelers and the best general guide available. He died in Hollywood, California.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


AZIZ S. ATIYA

Tags: Eminent