



— KEEPING HISTORY SAILING —

the gaff line

For the Friends of the Wherry Yacht Charter Charitable Trust

In the Wake of Hathor

In this special edition, David Splitt gives us a fantastic account of his trip to Egypt, in search of more information about Hathor and her origins.

As we prepare a campaign to return her to full sailing order, now is the ideal opportunity to look into her past..

On a gloomy late-November morning in 1896 a small party set out from Norfolk on a journey that would take them to North Africa and what was then the British Protectorate of Egypt. The purpose of their journey, firstly aboard the P & O Steamer “Simla” to Alexandria and then overland to Cairo was not, however, to search out exotic and mysterious sights or to experience the delights of first class travel and hospitality.

The journey was a sad mission to save the life of Alan Colman, son of the founder of the mustard empire, who was seriously ill with tuberculosis, and it was the hope of his sisters and friends who made up the remainder of the party that the hot and arid climate would prolong his life and even perhaps encourage his recovery.

Ultimately their journey was to be in vain, but the events of this family tragedy would, incongruously, lead eventually to the creation of one of the lasting icons of Broads Heritage – the pleasure wherry *Hathor*.

On a similar wintry morning 112 years later I, and my wife June, set out on a journey to modern day Egypt that was quite clearly meant to be a holiday, but would also be an opportunity for me to gain a little more insight into the events and places central to the story of the wherry.

I knew something of the reasons for the name and the wonderful Egyptian-inspired interior, but perhaps the descriptions and facts I'd often passed on to passengers and visitors during the tours would begin to come more alive – and I might learn a bit more about the Goddess Hathor herself. It had only recently struck me that whilst her husband Horus is represented on board by two fine carved heads on the deck seats, Hathor herself is absent. Who, or what, was she and how did the Egyptians portray her amongst their relics and remains.

What I could not have imagined at the time was that a chance glimpse of an old poster would lead me on my own little “voyage of discovery” when I returned to England.



Above: Alan Colman 1867—1897 (Ludham Archive)

Below: Egyptian themed interior of Hathor



Arrival

The Colman party took 12 days to reach Alexandria by sea, followed by a two day overland trek that included a night stop at Ismala – the headquarters of the Suez Canal.

As they arrived in the Egyptian capital, the party must have watched with wonder as the great pyramids rose before them, experiencing some of the emotions much earlier travellers, unused to man-made constructions of this magnitude, would have felt. As they finally reached the Mena House Hotel, a former hunting lodge built at the foot of the Great Pyramids for a provincial governor, they would have stepped out of their carriage to stand in awe in the shadow of these ancient stone monuments on the barren plateau at Giza.

Our journey to Cairo took only a few hours courtesy of EgyptAir and in the 21st century the open landscape that surrounded the hotel in the Colmans' day has been swallowed up by a century of relentless expansion by the city and our own taxi ride from the airport at 3am gave us no opportunity for a similar experience, as we bounced over miles and miles of city streets that were both brightly lit and seemed remarkably full of people for that time of night. As we passed numerous flocks of sheep throughout the city centre streets or overtook pickup trucks with one or two cows strapped precariously in the back we were reminded that we had arrived just before the Muslim festival of Eid, and people throughout the city were out and about making preparations for the coming days. One of the Pillars of Islam is the showing of charity to others, and most of the animals we saw would be purchased by well-to-do Egyptians, to be slaughtered and the meat given to those less fortunate.

After our intriguing taxi journey – the main road at one moment a super-modern dual carriageway and then after a squeal of brakes we would pick our way at 20 mph over what seemed little more than a cart track – we arrived in the early hours in the 19th century reception of the much extended 21st century Mena House Hotel.

As we were led to our rooms we had no chance to take in the surroundings or to guess where we were in relation to the pyramids. The morning, however, offered us an experience that some might argue was better than the gradual revelation experienced by the Colmans. A step onto our balcony gave an immediate and heart-beat skipping answer to our previous night's query. As we looked away from the swimming pool, which most certainly was not there in 1896, the eyes were drawn up and up to the mountain of masonry that rose through the murky sky above the hotel.

Cairo

The Colmans had travelled to Egypt for "the pure air of the desert", and the account of their time at the Mena House Hotel describes:

"days of cloudless sunshine (passing) into nights of brilliancy such as northern countries never know - the sky even at midnight being of clear deep purple blue like dark sea depths on rocky coasts. And out of it the stars shone, almost dazzling in their brightness"

Perhaps global warming, but certainly the expansion of both domestic and industrial activity in the city, had contributed to the somewhat dismal conditions we experienced during our own brief visit to Cairo. The sun did manage to burn through the dull haze now



Above: Old poster for the Mena House Hotel
Below: Early photo of the Mena House Hotel
Mena House Hotel today



Below: A gloomy view over Cairo from the pyramids at Giza





Above: The Colman party explore some ruins (FColman)
Below: Giza and Cairo
 The other end of the Sphinx
 Entertainment at Giza



Below: Four thousand year old ferry to the afterlife



and again, but at one point our guide suggested we might even experience a rather uncommon local phenomenon - rain. We were spared this, but realised that had conditions been the same when the Colmans were here they, like us, might have headed south after two days, rather than the 6 weeks they actually stayed.

I could not imagine Alan Colman being content to

“spend most of his time lying out on the balcony or flat eastern roof”,

under these circumstances.

The remains at Giza

We can only surmise how much Alan Colman was able to join with the others in taking local excursions, but we know some of them must have visited the nearby Sphinx, described by his sister as

“carved out of solid rock with eyes gazing far into infinity”.

Our visit to the Sphinx, apparently known so well from books and films was a revelation in terms of its size, and in simple things like discovering that at the end you never see in the pictures there is an enormous carved tail standing proud from the body of this mythical creature.

Of one thing we can be certain though, they did not visit the exhibition of gold and other remarkable artefacts from Tutankhamen’s tomb in the Cairo Museum or watch the evening “Son & Lumière” that today uses the pyramids and the Sphinx as a backdrop for an enthralling and skin-tingling laser light and sound show telling the tale of these monuments as if they were speaking for themselves.

Howard Carter, also a Norfolk man, would not break into the young king’s tomb for another 20 years and spectacles of the sort we were able to experience in the 21st century were not even in the wildest imagination of the wisest tourism entrepreneur in those days.

I would like to think, though, that if Alan Colman had been able to join us for the evening at the pyramids, he too would have been highly amused to watch the performance, before and after the main event, of a band of musicians dressed as if for walk-on parts for a performance of “Aida”. Complete with bagpipes they gave a fine rendition of many a traditional Egyptian ballad, such as “Flower of Scotland” and “Scotland the Brave”.

An intriguing discovery

When we visited the pyramids on the plains at Giza we also discovered a modern museum with an unexpected theme, and one which chimed well with my alternative agenda – a Boat Museum.

Inside this air-conditioned building, mostly glass, right at the foot of the Great Pyramid of Cheops is a 140 foot long wooden boat found in a nearby trench in the 1950’s.

Virtually intact, despite being four thousand years old, this cedar-wood vessel looks as if it could still take to the water and sail away. However, it’s intended purpose was never to sail along the Nile, but to take its owner, the son of Cheops, across the celestial river into the afterlife.

The museum also houses many of the objects buried with the boat, as well as bundles of the ropes that had been used to bind the vessels planks together.

Protected in their display cases they look as if they have just been unwound from a new coil, rather than having lain undiscovered for forty centuries.

The introduction to Hathor

The New Year of 1897 had brought little improvement in Alan Colman's health, and as the party was joined by Alan's father, Jeremiah, and two other sisters it was realised that he was "*gradually sinking*". The family had hoped that the occasion of Alan's 30th Birthday, January 15th, would be one for true celebration and thanks, but we can only guess their feelings as the day came and went and he got steadily weaker.

Not long after his birthday Alan

"grew weary and felt a longing to move from the Mena House onto the Nile",

and the family made contact with the local Thomas Cook office, a company which must surely have arranged their earlier travels, to plan their next move onto the river.

At that time, Thomas Cook was the operator of a large fleet of boats on the Nile, to cater for the different types of cruise that wealthy European and American tourists might desire to take.

These ranged from the "First Class Tourist Steamers" that would take many passengers on specific cruises (imagine Agatha Christie's *Death on the Nile*) to those steam or sail powered boats that were available with a crew and would travel where the hirer desired (think of the original activities of many of the pleasure wherries and wherry yachts on the Broads).

The type of boat the Colmans chose was a "First Class Dahabeah", one of seven large sailing craft of this type owned by the company and named after ancient Egyptian Gods or Goddesses.

It was only a short carriage ride from the Hotel down to the River Nile and Alan Colman, his close family, friends and servants joined the Dahabeah named after the great goddess "*Hathor*" to begin what was to be the last stage of their increasingly desperate journey. So was set in motion the final chapter in one story and the first chapter in another.

The Nile – the lifeblood of a Nation

The Nile is extraordinary for many reasons, not least its journey as a gentle watercourse through 8 other countries before entering Egypt and evolving into the greatest river in Africa, and the only one flowing north into the Mediterranean .

Well into the 20th century the whole of the Nile flooded every year in July as a result of the rain and melting snows in the high lands south of Egypt. With nowhere else to go the river swelled and covered millions of acres of land on each side of its course, all the way down to the sea. Whilst this brought destruction and death to the unprepared and the unwary, it also brought with it silt that was deposited onto the riverside land as the flood waters receded. This



Above: Ancient rope - 'as new'

Below: The Hathor of 1896



Below: The desert reaching to the banks of the Nile





Above: Farming on the banks of the Nile



Above: The Nile at Luxor

fertile soil would then sustain the crops that not only fed the population but usually provided a surplus to be traded with its neighbours. In fact, during the period that Egypt was part of the Roman Empire, most of Rome's requirement for wheat came from this province, which as a consequence became a closely guarded personal fiefdom of the Emperor.

The British built a dam across the river at Aswan between 1899 and 1902 in a first attempt to regulate this flooding and to utilise its strength to generate electricity, but total control only came after the construction in the 1970's of the High Dam a few miles further upstream. This dam, built by the Russians for the then newly created Republic, also created Lake Nasser, an immense reservoir stretching south over 500 miles – extending deep into Sudan and inundating virtually the whole of populated Nubia, necessitating the relocation of an entire people.

All this, however, was in the future as the Dahabeah *Hathor* set sail from the modern capital of Egypt on its journey to perhaps the greatest of the ancient ones at Thebes, now known as Luxor.

By the time of the Colmans' voyage, in late January, the flooding would have long subsided and some crops may have already been harvested, but they would undoubtedly have been able to see signs of previous flooding, including washed away banking and even the remains of houses built far enough away to withstand most floods, but overcome perhaps during one particularly high one.

The ancients built their cities on the eastern banks of the river that was the source of life, as the east was where the sun-god Ra came from as he created each new day. The western bank was seen as the place of the end of the day, and of death itself, as the setting of the sun saw the death of each day before being reborn anew the next. The desert to the west was therefore the place of the dead and that was where the bodies of the dead would be taken for burial, from the Pharaoh to the common man or woman: only the ceremonial and the physical size of the tomb or simple grave would be different.

It is perhaps prophetic that the family made their journey on a boat named after the goddess Hathor, amongst whose influence as a goddess was "love, and joy, of the sky and of the west - the abode of the dead".

Travel in Egypt today

Later in the 1900's river cruising from Cairo became less popular, and following a number of terrorist attacks targeted at foreigners in the 1980/90's river travel of this sort north of Luxor virtually ceased. In fact, following the murder of 58 foreign tourists and four Egyptians at the temple of Hatshepsut in 1997 river Nile cruises, and the tourist trade in Egypt as a whole, were dealt an almost fatal blow.

A massive increase in military and police activity, particularly in central Egypt, enabled the industry to be slowly but steadily rebuilt but river cruises are now centred on Luxor with the principal cruising between Luxor and the city of Aswan in the south. In order to visit Luxor and cruise on the Nile, our only option was an internal flight rather than the more sedate river journey of the Victorian era.

The military presence around Luxor is still very evident, as are the

Below: A checkpoint near Luxor



metal detectors and armed guards at all hotels and public buildings, and it was with some surprise that we discovered that it was only a matter of weeks before our visit that tourists were allowed to travel on their own beyond the city. Previously the army had operated a system whereby tourists and their guides would congregate with their taxis or buses at specified places and then be escorted in armed convoys to and from the historic sites.

However, checkpoints were frequent, each guarded by a motley selection of heavily armed police, soldiers and non-uniformed personnel.

Such concerns did not seem to be an issue in the 1890's, although no doubt the careless traveller might suffer at the hands of local 'villains' if they strayed away from the safety of their hotels or guides, and the Colman's trip upriver towards Luxor was as peaceful and uneventful as such a sad journey could be.

Alan's sister recorded that he

“enjoyed the days on the voyage, either in his cabin or on deck watching the changing scenery” and “sometimes the placid days would be diversified by a series of small adventures crowded into a moment - our boat would run into a sandbank, the attendant tug set up frantic whistling, the respective captains shout and gesticulate, the crew of 20 men start a wild chorus, some of them jump into the water and others rush furiously up the mast”.

Following this incident Alan Colman was heard to remark, with a rare sparkle of fun

“This is what I call a quiet day on the Nile”.

Reflecting on this description makes me smile as I recall some of my own recollections of the escapades of a later **Hathor** many miles away in East Anglia, and wonder whether some 'spirit' travelled over with the name, intent on recreating forgotten adventures in its new home.

Luxor – at the heart of the ancient empire

Late 19th century Luxor was, as now, a flourishing hub of the tourism industry, geared up to provide for the needs of, predominantly, Western European and American visitors on their own particular Grand Tour. Whilst the tourists now come from throughout the world and include those with more modest means than the rich or titled tourists of that bygone age, it is still the mystery, majesty and sheer magnificence of the remnants of an ancient world that is the draw.

The majority of the ancient sites around Luxor that now attract hundreds of thousands of visitors each year, had only recently been rediscovered in the late 19th century, and many were still partially covered by the sands that had preserved them for thousands of years.

The Valley of the Kings, the Temples of Karnak and Luxor and the Colossi of Memnon were literally just emerging from the desert and beginning to reveal their secrets to the archaeologists and tourists that were arriving in droves. Few of these people would have had much foreknowledge of the buildings and tombs they would see and their travels truly would have been journeys of discovery.



Above: Local traffic near Luxor
A modern Falukah with another iconic name

Below: The Temple at Luxor (note mosque in the top right built when the ruins were under sand)
The ultra modern Luxor Museum





Above: The workman's village near the Valley of the Kings
An all too rare colourful remnant, still only hinting at the original grandeur

Below: Back street in modern Luxor



The 21st century visitor benefits from the 100 years of discovery and excavation, as well as the modern methods of interpretation and display. This was brought home to us after visits to two quite different museums. The old museum in Cairo has been the repository of thousands, if not millions, of artefacts over the last century and it all seems to be on display, in vast dingy halls where there is row upon row of similar items jammed in together with little in the way of explanation to most of it. The gallery of mummy caskets reminded me of walking down the warehouse aisles at IKEA.

Our later visit to the ultra modern museum in Luxor was a completely different experience, with very limited numbers of items, displayed with plenty of space around them, well lit and with detailed descriptions and clear linkage to other items and the local and historical context.

Other small museums and sites now give the visitor much more of an insight into aspects of everyday life in these ancient times than was available to our Victorian ancestors. The enormous workman's village, home to those who built the tombs in the Valleys of the Kings and Queens, and the Museum of Mummification are excellent examples of the way modern archaeology is striving to introduce us to the ordinary and mundane as well as the palaces, temples and tombs.

One thing, however, that we can only imagine is the opportunity available to those 19th century visitors as the temples and other ruins, covered by thousands of years of windblown sand, were laboriously rescued from the desert or from underneath later structures built on top of them.

The vibrant colours and fine detail on the wall paintings, statues and columns are now but a dismal shadow of what was revealed to those early investigators. The effects of weather and pollution have all but erased the vast majority. Only pieces removed to museums or those hidden in dark corners have retained any hint of their former grandeur.

Some of the paintings inside the tombs under the ground have been much better preserved, but even here the battle is on to prevent the air the visitor breathes hastening the destruction of these as well.

The 19th and early 20th century was also the period of the gentleman collector, and like many of his contemporaries Jeremiah Colman was always keen to add to his own little museum of antiquity. The collection of Egyptian artefacts he purchased during this journey would eventually pass on to his daughters who, in turn, donated them to the Castle Museum in Norwich, where many of them are still on permanent display.

It is also of interest to note that the author Rider Haggard, who was a later visitor to the Wherry *Hathor* in his native Norfolk, was also fascinated with things Egyptian and some of his collection is on display in Norwich Castle as well.

21st century cruising

As we boarded our own Thomas Cook Nile "steamer" at Luxor we scanned the 21st century waterfront and tried to imagine how it would have looked over a century before, as the Dahabeah *Hathor* brought its Victorian guests here.

The modern hotels, the concrete promenades and the cars, trucks and buses give an initial impression of a modern metropolitan city, but the hustle and bustle of the streets, the shops and the boats of all sizes darting across the river could quite easily have jumped out of one of the Victorian era postcards on sale everywhere. The Djebellah, the one piece garment almost universally worn by the local men, looked the same, as did the horses and kaleshes (horse drawn carriages). A few steps away from the main tourist areas took you into streets, alleys and markets that looked remarkably similar to those of those sepia postcards.

Disappointingly, our cruise boat did not bear the name of an ancient God or Goddess, but “Rhapsody” proved to be one of the smaller ones of its kind, catering for no more than 50 or so passengers rather than the immense floating boxes we frequently passed and which looked as if they could accommodate the population of a small town.

The weather for this part of our holiday was much more in line with that experienced by the Colmans and like them we could while away the journey between stopping points viewing the ever changing scenery.

No amusing running aground for us (although a visit to the boat’s bridge and a talk by the Captain did give the impression that the “Rules of the road” for the Nile and the means of avoiding sandbanks and other boats were somewhat rudimentary!), but fishermen in open rowing boats casting fishing nets by hand, camels ambling along the water’s edge and small groups of cattle standing in little groups ankle deep but at least 200 yards from the bank, were reminders of the way some things appear to have remained unchanged for centuries.

And once away from modern cities such as Luxor the houses and villages that can be seen from the river could have leapt from the Colmans photograph album, were it not for the satellite dishes that seem to adorn even the most ramshackle dwelling.

As already mentioned, a lot of the water traffic is tourism-related and at Luxor even includes sea-plane rides from the river.

Amongst the modern fleets of uninspiring cruise boats are a few older boats that have had a previous life as the private yachts of royalty, and we also saw several boats that were recent reproductions of the Dahabeahs that had plied their trade under the Thomas Cook flag in the 19th century. Their resemblance to the photographs from the Colman album is striking.

At all the towns along the river you could see tourists enjoying a trip in modern representations of the traditional falukah sailing boats, although most appeared to be constructed in steel rather than the wood of the originals. They did, however, make a wonderful sight under the sun and blue skies against the backdrop of the palms and desert that in places reaches right to the river’s edge.



Above: Thomas Cook’s ‘Rhapsody’
An interesting cruise boat
The necessities of life—a mosque and a satellite dish
A modern Dahabeah under way

Approaching the end of the journey

The Dahabeah **Hathor** reached Luxor in early February 1897, after a river journey of about 400 miles, and the family diary records that:

“Looking across the river one’s eyes rested on the plain of ancient Thebes, rich in countless memories of a civilisation long ages backTheban mountains which morning and evening are lighted up with a fiery opal glow – beginning with the palest pink, and passing on through countless ever-varying shades to clear orange and glowing crimson”

We, too, were fortunate to experience the God Ra disappearing into the land of the dead on several evenings, but from the roof garden of a riverside hotel rather than a moored vessel, and could not use any better words to describe this magnificent spectacle.

For the Colman party the stay at Luxor was far from enjoyable, as Alan’s health began to decline rapidly, and five days after their arrival he “passed away quietly”.

The loss to his father and sisters was clearly immense and his memory would be kept alive within the family in many ways, not least through the decision taken a few years later by two of his sisters, Ethel and Helen, to name their new Pleasure Wherry **“Hathor”** in commemoration of their beloved brother. And to emphasise the link they asked their brother-in-law Edward Boardman, a prominent architect, to design the interior to remind them of their last days with Alan.

Hathor the Goddess

But what of the Goddess, and why is she not depicted on the wherry?

During our trip we were fortunate to be able to visit many ancient sites and we came across a number of different representations of Hathor, wife of Horus .

She can be found carved on the walls amongst the hieroglyphics or as a separate sculpture in many tombs, temples and other buildings, and can be represented both in human and animal form as are most of the ancient Gods.

Perhaps this is why Boardman made the decision to omit Hathor in favour of the falcon-headed Horus, because the animal is a cow and the human form has very prominent cow’s ears or horns on the head. It is not hard to see that such a representation might be unwelcome and somewhat out of place on such a luxury vessel.

The temple to Hathor at Dendera is a massive structure dedicated to this Goddess, and the pictures of Hathor included with this article come from there. Interestingly, although Hathor was worshipped in the early kingdoms of Egypt, Dendera is a relatively new structure, being only two thousand years old rather than the four thousand year old pyramids at Giza.



Left, from top: Author hard at work, somewhere on the Nile
The Theban Hills viewed from Luxor
The Temple of Hathor at Dendera
The Goddess Hathor
Another representation of Hathor

A chance discovery

Part of our holiday was on board the Nile Cruiser "Rhapsody", which is owned by Thomas Cook. When we arrived on board we had no previous knowledge about how the Colman family had arranged their own cruise on the Nile, just the fact that they had sailed on a Dahabeah named Hathor.

One evening whilst walking around the boat we noticed an old framed poster in a corridor near the on-board shop. It was a Victorian advert for their fleet of boats for hire, with sketch drawings of the different types on offer. One of the drawings looked remarkably like the picture in Peter Bower's booklet "Hathor – The story of a Norfolk Pleasure Wherry" and underneath it was the legend "Cook's New First Class Dahabeahs Osiris, Horus, Isis, Hathor, Nepthis, Ammon-Ra"

My amazement at finding this link with the original boat that had carried the Colmans was soon turned into a desire to obtain a copy of this poster to add to the archive of materials and information held by the Trust.

Perhaps they had reproductions for sale in the shop? No such luck, and it soon became clear that no-one on the vessel knew anything about the poster or where it had come from. As the boat is actually operated and crewed by an Egyptian company with Egyptian staff on behalf of Thomas Cook this was not perhaps surprising.

I took a photograph of the poster and decided that once back home I would try and find out more about the poster and the original Hathor from Thomas Cook in England.

An easy task

After recovering from almost two weeks in bed from 'something' I caught either from another passenger on Rhapsody (who spent most of the week coughing over everyone) or from being crammed in Cairo Airport with thousands of pilgrims returning from Mecca (one of the pilgrims told us on the plane that they always expect to be ill when they get home!) I started my quest. Someone at Cooks would know all about the poster and would know where I could get a copy.

Someone did, it just took a little longer than I had expected to find him.

My first mistake was to assume that the people selling the holidays would be the people to help me find the "Someone who knows". Clearly I had not yet fully recovered as a moment's sane thought would have dismissed this as ridiculous.

Anyone who has been trapped in the Bermuda triangle of customer services will already have guessed that after very many phone calls and letters, each time getting a response from a different person, I would find myself exactly where I started.

After several months sanity must have returned as I shifted my attentions to Corporate Head Office and after only a few further hiccups and wrong directions found myself with the official Thomas Cook Archivist, Paul Smith, who could not have been more helpful.

Not only did he have the poster I had seen, but there were pictures and plans of the boats themselves which he would be happy to copy and send to me.

These items are now with Hathor's "effects" and when she is once more in sailing "fettle" will be displayed amongst her memorabilia.



Above: The poster that set me thinking (courtesy of Thomas Cook Advertising poster for the Victorian Dahabeahs (courtesy of Thomas Cook)



Above: Plan of the original Hathor

Afterthoughts

Whenever I recall the story of **Hathor** I always find myself thinking – what if Alan Colman had recovered? Ethel and Helen would no doubt still have commissioned a new pleasure wherry for themselves but what would she have looked like? A fine craft certainly, like Ardea or Solace perhaps, but would she have had that special magic that only resulted from this unhappy episode.

These are uncomfortable thoughts because no-one could be pleased, even in retrospect, that Alan Colman did not overcome his illness.

We cannot change the past, but it is incumbent upon us, as Friends and supporters of the Charitable Trust, to continue to do our utmost to ensure that this floating memorial is preserved as such, not just as a magnificent example of a rich Edwardians' pleasure boat.

Afterword

This article describes a modern day visit to Egypt at a time before the current upheaval in the country as a consequence of the people's struggle for a freer and more democratic society.

Whilst our stay was uneventful in these terms, we were always aware of a strong presence of "the authorities" wherever we went and we particularly noted that the walls surrounding the President's Palace in Cairo had soldiers placed every 50 yards or so.

However, most of the guides we talked to were quite open about their desire to see changes in the way the country was governed. Several of our guides were very well educated, but complained that little was being done to provide jobs for the population after they had been educated.

One of our guides, who we had for several days, pointed out that the government maintained an enormous military force and many young people went into the different armed forces or police just to have a job and that this didn't make them very effective or its members loyal.

With hindsight, who could not have seen that things were bound to come to a head very soon.

David Splitt, Friend and Crew Member

Right: Hathor during her centenary tour
Below: The Goddess Ra sees the end of another day over the Nile
Modern dahabeah under way

