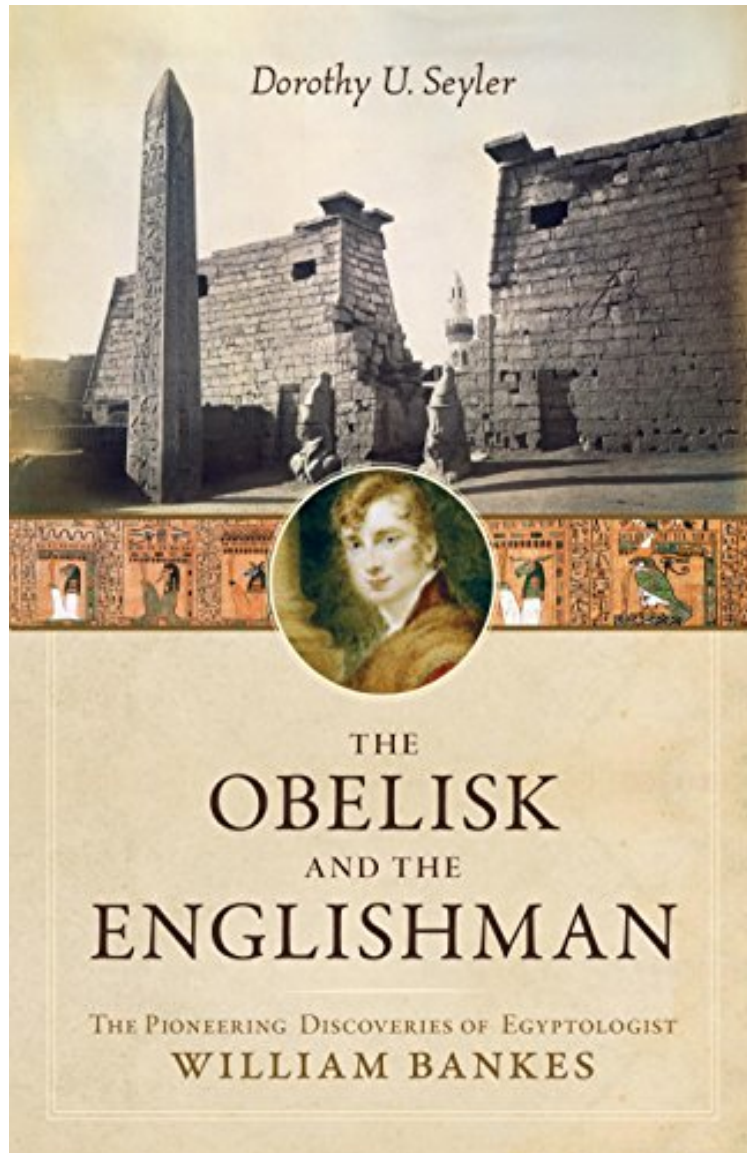


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The Obelisk and the Englishman: The Pioneering Discoveries of Egyptologist William Bankes

Dorothy U. Seyler

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Dorothy U. Seyler : The Obelisk and the Englishman: The Pioneering Discoveries of Egyptologist William Bankes before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Obelisk and the Englishman: The Pioneering Discoveries of Egyptologist William Bankes:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating life of an early adventurer and Egyptologist who delved deep into ancient pyramids and tombsBy Barbara S.No one knows her subject better than this author. Scholarly yet

eminently readable, this is an intimate and fascinating account of the life and phenomenal discoveries of a little-known early Egyptologist, Born to landed gentry, William Bankes' classical education helped to prepare him for the lengthy study and analysis he undertook as he delved into the relics in the ancient lands of Egypt and Petra. However, an upbringing aimed at making him a proper member of upper class society must have done little to prepare him for his explorations. Life in desert tents and camel caravans and in the depths of ancient tombs was arduous and hazardous. This narrative describes the drama in Banke's life and adventures (which makes the book hard to put down) and explains the lasting importance of his discoveries, Recommended! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is an exceptional story, melding the personal life ...By Ben Anderson This is an exceptional story, melding the personal life of William Bankes with his almost unbelievable explorations of the Egyptian antiquities that we all take for granted in the world today. I hesitate to single out a particular aspect of this story, for, despite the Egyptology aspects, it is a story. Mrs. Seyler has given us a story that reveals the "injustice" of past credits for hieroglyphic discoveries, and simultaneously lets us know that, "at least, William got his Obelisk!" 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An Exciting and Informative Adventure By M. Delmore Reading this book is an exciting and informative adventure. The vivid and descriptions of William Bankes's archeological expeditions into Egypt, Syria and Jordan make the reader feel that he is on-site. The book is also an in-depth reading experience of Bankes's life in 19th-century England, his travels to Italy, his love of Italian art, and his acquisition of Italian art for his beloved estate, Kingston Lacy. Bankes's friendship with the poet Byron adds further interest. The research behind this book is obvious. The photographs and drawings are very helpful. The reader is assured of an entertaining and informative experience.

William John Bankes (1786–1855) was a pioneer in the nascent study of the language, history, and civilization of ancient Egypt. At the Abydos Temple he discovered the King List; a wall of cartouches listing Egyptian kings in chronological order; which was vital to the decoding of Egyptian hieroglyphs. At Philae he uncovered a fallen obelisk, which he arranged to be transported back to England. And in modern-day Jordan he was the first European to make sketches and site plans of the "city of Petra." Bankes's life was rich and full, and his discoveries have proven to be quite valuable and influential. But, living in an era when homosexuality was a capital offense, he was persecuted for being gay and threatened with imprisonment and execution. His decision to travel and pursue his love of art and architecture went against his father's wishes that he follow in his footsteps and become a politician. Despite such obstacles, Bankes's pioneering work on ancient temples and artifacts now enriches the knowledge of modern Egyptologists, and his art collection and decorative talents can be enjoyed by those who visit his home, a National Trust estate; with the obelisk from Philae still raised on the south lawn. Enhanced by many of Bankes's drawings and paintings, this engaging story is full of vivid detail about the beginnings of Egyptology, Regency England, and a fascinating individual, and it sets the record straight about Bankes's crucial role in setting the stage for the work of later scholars. From the Hardcover edition.

"Dorothy Seyler's fluent and readable book on William Bankes explores the life of a leading player in the early decades of Egyptology both in Egypt and afterwards in England. A must for anyone interested in the decipherment of hieroglyphic script and the collecting of Egyptian antiquities by the British in the early nineteenth century." — Andrew Oliver, author of *American Travelers on the Nile* "Through the exploits of the adventurer and scholar William Bankes, the reader is led into ancient Egypt as well as 19th-century England. Bankes's archaeological labors uncovering sacred treasures in the burning desert are here juxtaposed to his difficult service in Parliament against a backdrop of political intrigue and unforgiving moral and cultural mores. The view of the two worlds, as seen through the eyes of the talented but complicated Bankes, provides enlightening and entertaining reading." — Solveig Eggerz, author of *Seal Woman* About the Author Dorothy U. Seyler is professor emerita of English at Northern Virginia Community College. Dr. Seyler holds degrees from William Mary, Columbia University, and SUNY at Albany. She has taught at Ohio State, the University of Kentucky, and Nassau Community College. She is the author of ten college textbooks, including the widely-used *Read, Reason, Write*, now in its eleventh edition.