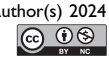
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Mercantile networks and the export of antiquities from Egypt in the mid nineteenth century: A case study of Menkaure's sarcophagus and the *Beatrice*

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Abstract

The export of antiquities from Egypt to the United Kingdom during the mid nineteenth century required an extensive network of cultural, diplomatic and mercantile actors, including private shipowners. While much previous research has focused on the political stakeholders in the process, as well as the archaeologists conducting excavations in Egypt, the attempted export of Menkaure's sarcophagus from Giza to the British Museum in 1838 allows for a closer examination of one of the private shipowners who was involved in this process – namely, Captain Richard Mayle Whichelo of the merchant vessel *Beatrice*. This article investigates the diplomatic processes that were required for the export of the sarcophagus and provides an overview of the history of the *Beatrice* and of Captain Whichelo, placing this within the broader context of the transport of antiquities during the nineteenth century.

Keywords

Ancient Egypt, archaeology, export of antiquities, Giza, maritime commerce

Colonel Vyse at Giza

The export of antiquities from Egypt to various western private and public collections began in earnest following the surrender of the French forces at Alexandria in 1802.

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This surrender, in turn, led to an influx of ancient Egyptian artefacts to the British Museum (including the Rosetta Stone).[1] The appointment of ardent collectors such as Henry Salt and Bernadino Drovetti to posts in, respectively, the British and French diplomatic services in Egypt,[2] as well as the organization of state-sponsored expeditions to Egypt to secure ancient artefacts for national collections (such as the Lepsius Expedition in 1842),[3] led to a significant increase in ancient Egyptian artefacts being exported to Europe during the first half of the nineteenth century.

While much scholarship has focused on the excavators or collectors working in Egypt,[4] there has been less analysis of the private shipowners who provided key logistical support for the export of Egyptian artefacts. The attempted export of the newly uncovered sarcophagus of the Fourth Dynasty Egyptian ruler Menkaure in 1838 provides a significant case study for addressing this aspect of the historical antiquities trade. Not only are the political and diplomatic actions that led to the export of the sarcophagus well evidenced, but the vessel used for the export of the sarcophagus, the *Beatrice*, as well as her captain are also associated with a great deal of archival material.

The attempted export of the sarcophagus of Menkaure begins with its discovery. Its discoverer, Richard William Howard Vyse (1784–1853), did not originally arrive in Egypt with the expectation of undertaking archaeological excavations. Rather, the notion of Vyse conducting archaeological exploration while in Egypt was raised with him by Charles Sloane, the chancellor of the British consulate in Cairo and vice consul in Alexandria.[5] Sloane had worked in Egypt for more than a decade, during which time he had engaged with archaeologists, such as the noted Scottish Egyptologist Robert Hay (1799–1863) in 1824, and archaeological excavations.[6] Sloane proposed a cooperation between himself, Vyse and the consul general, Patrick Campbell (1779–1857).

1. See Emily Duthie, 'The British Museum: An Imperial Museum in a Post-Imperial World', *Public History Review*, 18 (2011), 12–25; Richard Parkinson, *The Rosetta Stone* (London, 2005).
2. Shadia Mahmoud, 'Nationalization and Personalization of the Egyptian Antiquities: Henry Salt a British General Consul in Egypt, 1816 to 1827', *International Journal of Culture and History*, 3, No. 2 (2016), 29–43; Holger Hoock, 'The British State and the Anglo-French Wars over Antiquities, 1798–1858', *Historical Journal*, 50, No. 1 (2007), 49–72; Donald Malcolm Reid, *Whose Pharaohs? Archaeology, Museums, and Egyptian National Identity from Napoleon to World War I* (Berkeley, 2002).
3. Christian Loeben, 'Karl Richard Lepsius and the Royal Prussian Expedition to Egypt (1842–1845/6)', in Vanessa Davies and Dimitri Laboury, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Egyptian Epigraphy and Palaeography* (Oxford, 2020), 243–56.
4. See Alice Stevenson, 'Artefacts of Excavation: The British Collection and Distribution of Egyptian Finds to Museums, 1880–1915', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 26, No. 1 (2014), 89–102; Alice Stevenson, *Egyptian Archaeology and the Twenty-First Century Museum* (Cambridge, 2022); Stephanie Moser, *Wondrous Curiosities: Ancient Egypt at the British Museum* (Chicago, 2006); Sally MacDonald and Catherine Shaw, 'Uncovering Ancient Egypt: The Petrie Museum and Its Public', in Nick Merriman, ed., *Public Archaeology* (Routledge, 2004), 123–45.
5. John Bowring, *Report on Egypt and Canada*, vol. 6 (London, 1840), 81.
6. Jason Thompson, 'Osman Effendi: A Scottish Convert to Islam in Early Nineteenth-Century Egypt', *Journal of World History*, 5, No. 1 (1994), 105.

Finding the sarcophagus of Menkaure

During the spring and summer of 1837, Vyse and his excavators worked all across the Giza plateau, including around the Pyramid of Menkaure, where explorations began on 31 May 1837. On 1 August 1837, Vyse and his colleagues reached the burial chamber of the pyramid, although, as evidenced by the Arabic graffiti in the chamber, they were by no means the first post-pharaonic people to have visited it.[7] Undoubtedly, the most significant of the finds in the burial chamber was the basalt sarcophagus of Menkaure himself, which Vyse described in great detail.[8]

According to Vyse's own memoires, he decided to send the sarcophagus of Menkaure to the British Museum, allegedly to prevent damage to the artefact should it remain in situ.[9] Vyse established contact with Edward Hawkins, the Keeper of Antiquities at the British Museum, on 16 January 1838 by letter, suggesting to him that the sarcophagus would make a good addition to the British Museum's collections. The following day, Hawkins wrote a letter to Josiah Forshall, the Keeper of the Manuscript Department at the British Museum.[10] Hawkins warmly supported Vyse's notion that the sarcophagus should be moved from Giza to Alexandria, and from there be shipped to the United Kingdom without delay, arguing that the sarcophagus was an 'interesting monument' that would enhance the Museum's collections (Figure 1).

On the basis of Hawkins' recommendation, the trustees of the British Museum, meeting on 27 January 1838, directed the committee secretary to accept the donation and instruct the consul general, Patrick Campbell, via the Foreign Office to arrange its transport.[11] The board of trustees also authorized the expenses of £150 for the transport of the sarcophagus from Giza to London.

7. Richard William Howard Vyse, *Operations Carried on at the Pyramids of Gizeh in 1837: With an Account of a Voyage into Upper Egypt and an Appendix*, vol. 2 (London, 1840), 77.
8. 'It was entirely empty, and composed of basalt, which bore a fine polish of a shaded brown colour, but was blue where it had been chipped off, or broken. Some sharp substance, such as emery powder, had been used in its construction, and it appeared to have been sawn, which is remarkable, as the art of sawing marble was not known at Rome till a late period. It was finely carved in compartments, and the ornaments upon it resembled in some degree the architectural decorations in the tomb of Numbers, and those carved upon two blocks of stone now exhibited in the British Museum, and which formerly belonged to the collection of the late Mr. Salt' (Vyse, *Operations*, 84).
9. 'As the sarcophagus would have been destroyed, had it remained in the pyramid, I resolved to send it to the British Museum' (Vyse, *Operations*, 83).
10. Central Archives, British Museum, personal communication, 22 November 2022.
11. '[A]ccept with the best thanks of the Trustees Colonel Vyse's offer, and having consulted that Gentleman as to the spot where the sarcophagus lies, and then best and most economical method of conveying it to England, to write through Lord Palmerston to Colonel Campbell requesting him to take such steps not involving any serious expense as were expedient for

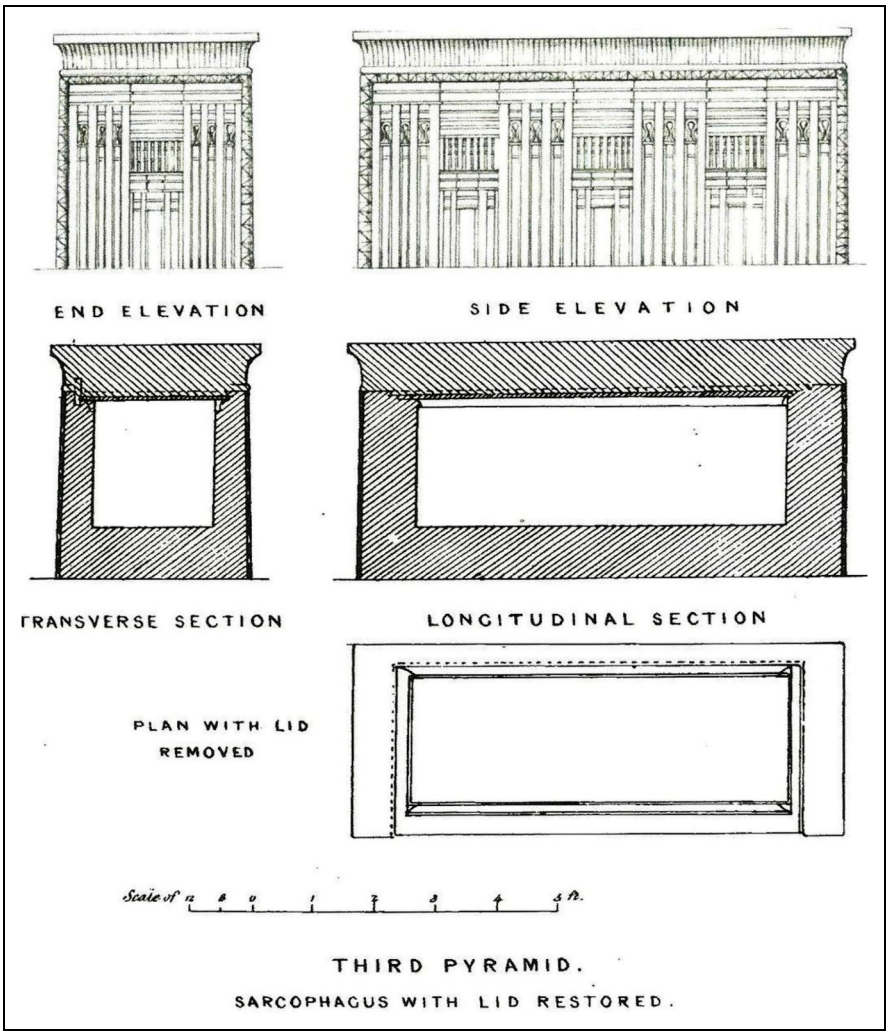


Figure 1. Sketch of the sarcophagus found in the burial chamber of the Pyramid of Menkaure. Source. Richard William Howard Vyse, *Operations Carried on at the Pyramids of Gizeh in 1837: With an Account of a Voyage into Upper Egypt and an Appendix*, vol. 2 (London, 1840), 85.

Less than two weeks later, on 17 February 1838, John Bidwell, the superintendent of the Consular Service, wrote on behalf of Lord Palmerston, the foreign secretary, directly to Campbell in Alexandria, instructing him to organize the transport of the sarcophagus

the removal of the sarcophagus.' British Museum, 'Board of Trustees Standing Committee', vol. 16 (1838), 4697–8.

and the relevant firman for its export from the Egyptian government[12] – a requirement following the passing of the first law aimed at preventing the export of antiquities from Egypt in 1835.[13] On 18 May 1838, Campbell replied to Lord Palmerston's instructions:

> My Lord, In reply to Your Lordship's Consular No. 3 of 17th February, on the subject of the transport from Gizeh to Alexandria and from thence to England of a sarcophagus presented by Col. Vyse to the British Museum, I have the honour to state to Your Lordship that I have taken the necessary steps for that purpose and that Mr Hill, one of the persons mentioned by Col. Vyse as qualified to superintend the transport of the Sarcophagus has undertaken to convey it to Alexandria for the sum of £150. I have the honour to transmit to Your Lordship the copy of the contract of Mr Hill for the removal of the sarcophagus to Alexandria.

Campbell did note, however, that the transport of the sarcophagus to Alexandria could not be conducted until later in the summer, and its export to England not until August at the earliest. Campbell finished his letter by stating: 'I have procured the permission of the Pacha with a Firman for the exportation to England of the Sarcophagus'.[14] Aside from this mention, no evidence of this export permit has survived.

The transport of the sarcophagus from Giza to Alexandria had been accomplished by the end of the summer, and from there the final leg of its journey would be a voyage by sea. For this stage of the transportation, Campbell or one of his deputies contacted a British merchant sailor already in Alexandria, and even though no contract or letters between these two individuals have survived, a letter from Campbell to Josiah Forshall at the British Museum, dated July 1838, confirms that the vessel hired for the transport of the sarcophagus to the United Kingdom was the *Beatrice*, which was owned and commanded by Captain Richard Mayle Whichelo (Figure 2).[15]

12. 'Sir, I am directed by Viscount Palmerston to transmit to you copies of a letter … from the British Museum, requesting that you may be instructed to take charge of a sarcophagus which has been presented to the Museum by Colonel Howard Vyse, and to forward it to England, and I am to desire that you will follow in this request the directions contained in the accompanying papers.' National Archives Kew,, FO 141/4, Consular No. 3, 17th of February 1838. The letter also suggests in a further paragraph that the British Museum, through the medium of Josiah Forshall, communicate this request directly to Lord Palmerston, highlighting the significant political influence of the British Museum trustees and management at the time.
13. See Stevenson, 'Artefacts of Excavation', 89–90.
14. National Archives, FO 142/10, Consular No. 12, 18 May 1838.
15. 'I beg to inform you that the sarcophagus taken by Colonel Vyse out of the 3d. Pyramid at Ghizeh, and which in your letter to Viscount Palmerston of 7 February last you requested His Lordship to instruct me to send to England, has this day been embarked on board of the English ship the *Beatrice*, bound for Liverpool and London.' Paul Boughton, 'The Lost Sarcophagus', *Ancient Egypt Magazine* 51/9 (2009), 20–23, 22.

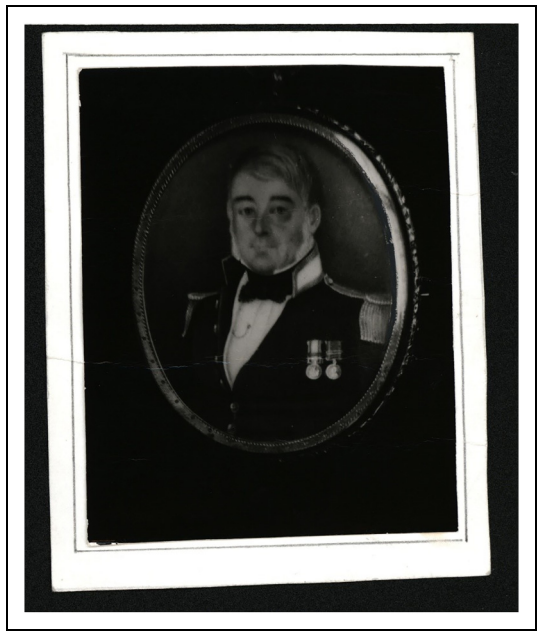


Figure 2. Miniature painting of Richard Mayle Whichelo.
Source. King's College Archive Centre, Cambridge.

Shipping the sarcophagus

The *Beatrice* was built in Quebec in 1827 by the shipwright John Bell,[16] and first owned by a Mr Evans, about whom no further information is preserved.[17] The *Beatrice* remained in the ownership of Mr Evans until 1834,[18] when she was purchased by Richard Mayle Whichelo, who had already functioned as her captain since at least 1830.[19] While the

16. This information is based on a Lloyd's of London inspection of the *Beatrice* conducted on 21 July 1835 while the ship was docked in Liverpool. The ship is registered as a snow, weighing 224 tons, built in Quebec in 1827 and registered in the Port of London, though sailing between Liverpool and Alexandria. The report concludes that the *Beatrice* was, at inspection, '[a] well built vessel. Materials appear good and well fastened. Well found in good order fit to carry dry and general cargoes with perfect safety', Lloyd's Register Foundation LRF-PUN-LIV573-0032-R.
17. *The Register of Shipping for 1829* (London, 1829), 78; *The Register of Shipping for 1830* (London, 1830), 75; *The Register of Shipping for 1831* (London, 1831), 73; *The Register of Shipping for 1832* (London, 1832), 76.
18. *The Register of Shipping for 1834* (London, 1834), 87.
19. 'Newcastle: Arrived foreign – *Beatrice*, Whichelo [from] Alexandria', *Durham County Advertiser*, 3 December 1830.

Beatrice initially ran a route between London and the Caribbean,[20] Whichelo sailed her primarily between the ports of Liverpool and Alexandria, calling at a number of locations between the two – most commonly La Valletta on Malta,[21] but also Gravesend, Milford, Cardiff, Genoa, Istanbul and Civito Vecchia.[22]

In terms of cargo, the *Beatrice* mostly transported cotton from Alexandria to Liverpool during the latter half of the 1830s, but as is clear from an advertisement in the *Liverpool Standard and General Commercial Advertiser* published on 1 September 1837, the ship also transported other goods. The advertisement announces a sale of goods imported on the *Beatrice* from Alexandria, which include '1023 bales cotton … 6 cases natural history. 1 case saddles … 1 case natural history … about 15 tons Cyprus earth, 3 tons old junk … 1 box samples gum … 4 jars preserves … 8 bales ginger'. The reference to cases of 'natural history' could potentially include ancient artefacts,[23] and so it is possible that Captain Whichelo already had experience transporting artefacts from Egypt to the United Kingdom by the time he was approached to convey the sarcophagus of Menkaure in 1838. The nineteenth-century import of ancient Egyptian artefacts alongside other trade goods reflects the prevailing

20. The primary route of the *Beatrice* is listed as London to either Nevis or St. Kitts in *The Register of Shipping* from 1829 to 1831. From 1832 to 1833, the route is changed from London to Malta.
21. See, for instance, 'Deal, 8 [June], *Beatrice*, Whichelo [sailed for] Malta', *Lloyd's List*, 13 June 1834; '*Beatrice*, Whichelo, from Alexandria at Malta 20th March and sailed 22nd for Liverpool', *Lancaster Gazette*, 18 April 1835; 'Cove of Cork: … The *Beatrice*, Whichelo arrived here, sailed from Malta on the 8th of April', *Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser*, 6 June 1836; '*Beatrice*, Whichelo, from Alexandria at [Malta] 24th March and sailed 27th for this port (e.g. Liverpool)', *Liverpool Standard and General Commercial Advertiser*, 28 April 1837.
22. See 'Gravesend, Sept 3 and 4 … Arrived … *Beatrice*, Whichelo [from] Malta', *Morning Advertiser*, 6 September 1831; '*Beatrice*, Whichelo, from Alexandria (Egypt) … for this port, at Milford', *Liverpool Albion*, 19 May 1835; 'Cardiff: Foreign Entered Outwards … *Beatrice*, Whichelo, for Alexandria', *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian, Glamorgan, Monmouth, and Brecon Gazette*, 5 September 1835; 'Genoa: 29 [September], *Beatrice*, Whichelo, from Liverpool', *Morning Advertiser*, 10 October 1836; 'Constantinople: [December] 16 *Beatrice*, Whichelo [arrived from] Liverpool and sailed 17th for London', *Lloyd's List*, 14 January 1834; 'Civito Vecchia, *Beatrice*, Whichelo [arrived from] Liverpool', *Lloyd's List*, 18 January 1838.
23. The cargo of the *Beatrice* and in particular the inclusion of perceived 'typical' oriental imports, such as ginger and cotton alongside boxes of natural history curios, is noteworthy in the context of both the long-standing link between antiquities and specimens of natural history – see this link in the collections of Napoleon's *savants* in Egypt in Maya Jasanoff, *Edge of Empire: Lives, Culture and Conquest in the East 1750–1850* (New York, 2005) – and the perspective of important ancient artefacts as essentially a kind of luxury trade commodity, not at all unakin to spices or other rare foodstuffs. See Grant Parker, 'Narrating Monumentality: The Piazza Navona Obelisk', *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*, 16, No. 2 (2003), 203; Carla Bocchetti, 'Introduction: Global History, Geography and the Classics', *Global History, East Africa and the Classical Traditions*, Special Issue of *Les Cahiers d'Afrique de l'Est*, 51 (2016), 9–10.

contemporary view that antiquities were in themselves trade goods, and sometimes, although not always, they were perceived as a luxury good. A prime example of this dichotomous view is the arrival of several tons of mummified cats at the port of Liverpool on 4 February 1890 on board the steamship *Pharos*.[24] While some of the mummified cats were sold 'for fancy prices, such as 40 s [shillings] 6d [pence] for a head and 5 s 6d for a perfect body without the head' to local collectors and learned institutions,[25] the majority of the mummies were 'knocked down to Messrs Leventon and Co' to be ground up and utilized as fertilizer.[26]

Richard Mayle Whichelo was born in 1783 in Sussex and was the older brother of the painters John and Henry Mayle Whichelo.[27] He served first as a midshipman in 1804 on board HMS *Britannia* during the Napoleonic Wars, before being appointed to the position of ship's clerk. He took part in the Battle of Trafalgar on board the *Britannia* in 1805 and, in 1807, received a promotion to paymaster and purser on board the 26-gun sloop-of-war HMS *Egeria*. On board the *Egeria*, he participated in action in the North Sea and Baltic Sea, including an 1809 engagement with a Danish convoy that resulted in the capture of four Danish vessels.[28] Whichelo's movements between 1815 and 1830 are somewhat unclear. An advertisement from 1822 records him as the captain of the *Dash*, a brig lying at anchor at Irongate wharf in London and headed for Sicily.[29] Six years later, Whichelo served as captain on board the *Borneo*, a convict ship that transported 73 female prisoners from London to Hobart,[30] before first being attested as the captain of the *Beatrice* in 1830. During the 1830s, two of Whichelo's sons also worked with him on the *Beatrice* as the ship's first mate and second mate.[31]

The *Beatrice* left her home port of Liverpool for the last time on 28 November 1837, setting a course for the Italian port of Civito Vecchia.[32] She arrived in Italy on 18 January

24. Chris Elliott, 'Bandages, Bitumen, Bodies and Business: Egyptian Mummies as Raw Materials', *Aegyptiaca*, 1 (2017), 40.
25. *Winfield Tribune*, 7 March 1890.
26. *Chester Observer*, 15 February 1890.
27. This part of the Whichelo family were the ancestors of the noted British author E. M. Forster and are discussed in his *Commonplace Book* (ed. P. Gardener), (London, 1985), 88. In addition, the only known portrait of Richard Mayle Whichelo (see Figure 2) was included in the personal papers of E. M. Forster held in the King's College Archive at the University of Cambridge. On the back of the portrait is a handwritten note: 'Richard Mayle Whichelo, R.N., b. 1783 d. 1858. Served on board HMS Britannia in Battle of Trafalgar, HMS Blenheim in China and HMS Victory at Portsmouth'.
28. Robert Holden MacKenzie, *The Trafalgar Roll: Containing the Names and Services of all Officers of the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines who Participated in the Glorious Victory of the 21st October 1805, together with a History of the Ships engaged in the Battle* (London, 1913), 44–5.
29. *Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser*, 7 February 1822.
30. Charles Bateson, *The Convict Ships, 1787–1868* (Sydney, 1983), 360–1, 386.
31. National Archives, 1835–1836 Seaman's Lists, BT 120, Nos. 10133, 10134, 10135.
32. '*Beatrice*, Whichelo for Civito Vecchia', *Liverpool Albion*, 28 November 1837.

1838,[33] spending only a short time in port before leaving again for Alexandria, where she arrived in March 1838,[34] a little over a month after the British Museum's board of trustees had accepted the sarcophagus and authorized the payment for its transport to Alexandria. There is no direct documentary evidence to illuminate under what circumstances Captain Whichelo was approached to organize the transport of the sarcophagus from Alexandria to Liverpool. It is likely that it was organized either directly by Patrick Campbell or, alternatively, by his representative in Alexandria, Charles Sloane. Even though no record exists to directly evidence it, it is, however, likely that Campbell or one of his representatives paid some additional money to Captain Whichelo in order to guarantee that his ship remain in Alexandria awaiting the arrival of the sarcophagus coming overland from Giza. The *Beatrice* remained in the port throughout the spring and summer of 1838 – a far longer period of time than the ship and crew had spent in the city on previous journeys.[35]

The crew of the *Beatrice* on its final voyage from Alexandria is not known. The last full crew list of the *Beatrice* to survive does so in the National Archives of Malta.[36] These records show that the *Beatrice* arrived in the port of Valetta on 30 March 1836 and, on this voyage, her crew comprised a total of 13 men: her master, Richard M. Whichelo (aged 49 at the time); the first mate and captain's son, John R. Whichelo (aged 22); the sailors Thomas Goodwin (21), William Thompson (24), William Fenah (22), Richard Baker (23), Spencer Williamson (25), John Clark (20), John Williams (24) and William Gittan (30); and the ship's youngest crew member, whose surname is unclear in the records but whose first name was Neil, aged 17. In addition, there were two further crew members whose names are sadly illegible due to the state of the records (Figure 3).

The sinking of the *Beatrice* and the aftermath

The return voyage of the *Beatrice* from Alexandria to Liverpool via Malta was unusual not just because of the cargo it carried – an Old Kingdom royal sarcophagus destined for the British Museum. It was also unusual because the *Beatrice* did not sail under the command of her usual captain. For unknown reasons, Richard Mayle Whichelo had remained behind in Alexandria when the *Beatrice* left on 20 September 1838. Possibly he had become ill or he was simply delayed on other business. The command of the ship fell to her first mate, Whichelo's son, John.

33. 'Civito Vecchia, Beatrice, Whichelo [arrived from] Liverpool', *Lloyd's List*, 18 January 1838.
34. 'Beatrice, Whichelo, hence at Alexandria', *Liverpool Albion*, 19 March 1838.
35. For instance, in 1834–1835, the *Beatrice* arrived in Alexandria on 23 November 1834 (*Lloyd's List*, 13 January 1835), leaving again for Malta by early February 1835 (*Lancaster Gazette*, 18 April 1835), for a total stay of around two-and-a-half months. In 1837, the *Beatrice* arrived in Alexandria on 16 January (*Liverpool Albion*, 23 January 1837), leaving again in late February 1837 (*Liverpool Standard and General Commercial Advertiser*, 28 April 1837), for a duration of less than two months. By contrast, in 1838, the *Beatrice* remained in Alexandria from 19 March to 20 September, for a total duration of around six months.
36. 'Register of Arrivals in the Great Harbour of La Valetta', National Archives of Malta, Valletta, NAM CUS 18 K40 (1836), fol. 2533.

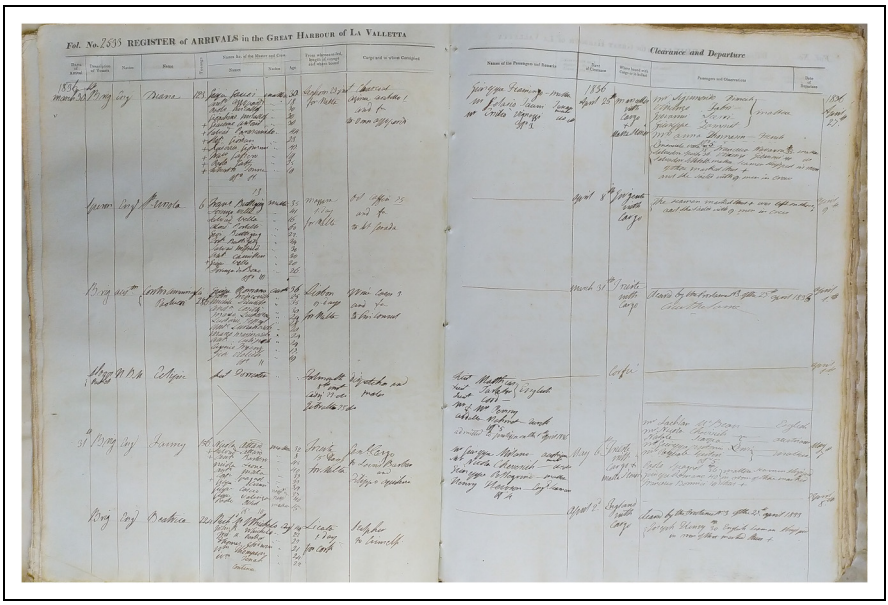
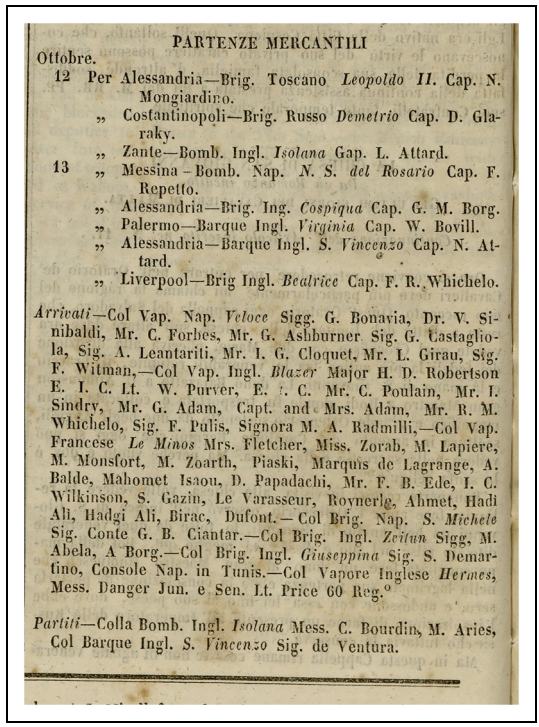


Figure 3. 'Register of Arrivals in the Great Harbour of La Valetta'.
Source. National Archives of Malta, Valletta, NAM CUS 18 K40 (1836), fol. 2533.

Captain Whichelo himself left Alexandria some days after the departure of the *Beatrice* on board the steamship *Blazer*, and is recorded as arriving in Malta on 14 October 1838 in the Maltese newspaper *Il Mediterraneo* (Figure 4).[37] The same newspaper article also records the *Beatrice*, captained by F. R. Whichelo (most likely a misprint of J. R. Whichelo), departing Malta on 13 October 1838. This is curious, as the otherwise extensive and detailed customs records produced by the harbour master in Valetta do not record either the arrival or the departure of the *Beatrice* in 1838. This suggests that either the customs records are incomplete or the reporter gathered this shipping information by simply asking the arriving passengers in the port. This may, then, reflect the arrangement as Richard Mayle Whichelo understood it – that the *Beatrice* was to wait for him in Malta and leave the port for Liverpool if he had not arrived by 13 October – rather than the reality of the situation, which leaves open the possibility that the *Beatrice* sank even before reaching her first port of call in Malta.

By the New Year, Whichelo – who had by that time arrived in Liverpool – and his family, as well as the families of the sailors on board the *Beatrice*, must have begun to

37. National Library of Malta, Valletta, *Il Mediterraneo: Gazzetta di Malta*, 17 October 1838. The article 'Partenze Mercantili' records 'Major H. D. Robertson, E. I. C., Lt. W. Purver, E. I. C., Mr. C. Poulain, Mr. I. Sindry, Mr. G. Adam, Capt. and Mrs. Adam, Mr. R. M. Whichelo, Sig. F. Pulis, Signora M. A. Radmili, [and] Col Vap. Francese' as passengers on the *Blazer*, who arrived in Valetta on 14 October 1838. See also Boughton, 'The Lost Sarcophagus', 22–3.



PARTENZE MERCANTILI

Ottobre.

12 Per Alessandria—Brig. Toscano *Leopoldo II.* Cap. N. Mongiardino.
„ Costantinopoli—Brig. Russo *Demetrio* Cap. D. Glaraky.
„ Zante—Bomb. Ingl. *Isolana* Cap. L. Attard.
13 „ Messina – Bomb. Nap. *N. S. del Rosario* Cap. F. Repetto.
„ Alessandria—Brig. Ing. *Cospiqua* Cap. G. M. Borg.
„ Palermo—Barque Ingl. *Virginia* Cap. W. Bovill.
„ Alessandria—Barque Ingl. *S. Vincenzo* Cap. N. Attard.
„ Liverpool—Brig Ingl. *Beatrice* Cap. F. R. Whichelo.

Arrivati—Col Vap. Nap. *Veloce* Sigg. G. Bonavia, Dr. V. Sinibaldi, Mr. C. Forbes, Mr. G. Ashburner Sig. G. Castagliola, Sig. A. Leantariti, Mr. I. G. Cloquet, Mr. L. Girau, Sig. F. Witman,—Col Vap. Ingl. *Blazer* Major H. D. Robertson E. I. C. Lt. W. Purver, E. I. C. Mr. C. Poulain, Mr. I. Sindry, Mr. G. Adam, Capt. and Mrs. Adam, Mr. R. M. Whichelo, Sig. F. Pulis, Signora M. A. Radmilli,—Col Vap. Francese *Le Minos* Mrs. Fletcher, Miss. Zorab, M. Lapiere, M. Monsfort, M. Zoarth, Piaski, Marquis de Lagrange, A. Balde, Mahomet Isaou, D. Papadachi, Mr. F. B. Ede, I. C. Wilkinson, S. Gazin, Le Varasseur, Roynerlg, Ahmet, Hadi Ali, Hadgi Ali, Birac, Dufont.—Col Brig. Nap. *S. Michele* Sig. Conte G. B. Ciantar.—Col Brig. Ingl. *Zeitun* Sigg. M. Abela, A Borg.—Col Brig. Ingl. *Giuseppina* Sig. S. Demartino, Console Nap. in Tunis.—Col Vapore Inglese *Hermes*, Mess. Danger Jun. e Sen. Lt. Price 60 Reg.°

Partiti—Colla Bomb. Ingl. *Isolana* Mess. C. Bourdin, M. Aries, Col Barque Ingl. *S. Vincenzo* Sig. de Ventura.

Figure 4. *Il Mediterraneo: Gazzetta di Malta*, 17 October 1838.
Source. National Library of Malta, Valletta.

suspect that some terrible accident had occurred. Official confirmation of the sinking of the *Beatrice* with all hands would not come until 5 February 1839, when the *Liverpool Albion* curtly reported: '*Beatrice*, Whichelo, for this port, which sailed from Alexandria Sept. 20 and from Malta Oct. 13, has not since been heard of'.

The loss of the *Beatrice* also meant the loss of the sarcophagus of Menkaure. Fortunately, from the point of view of the British Museum's trustees, their expense of £150 for its transport had been insured and, during a meeting of the standing committee of the board of trustees on 29 June 1839, it was recorded that the secretary of the board had received a cheque for £148 from the shipping agents Francis & Co., 'being the net amount of the insurance on the sarcophagus lost in the *Beatrice*'.[38]

The discovery and transport of the sarcophagus of Menkaure in 1837–1838 highlights the degree to which the export of pharaonic artefacts from Egypt during the first half of the nineteenth century was conducted not only by archaeologists, but also by an intricate network of private and state actors, including representatives and trustees of the British Museum, the foreign secretary and the consular network in Egypt, represented in this instance by Patrick Campbell, who also played a double role as the initial sponsor of

38. British Museum, 'Board of Trustees Standing Committee', vol. 17 (1839), 5125.

the excavations that unearthed the sarcophagus. The final group of individuals involved were the private shipping actors – both the shipping agents of the British Museum, Francis & Co., and primarily the shipowner and captain, Richard Mayle Whichelo.

This system of private and state actors working together to export antiquities from Egypt would continue throughout the nineteenth century and become even more formalized after the British invasion of Egypt and the establishment of the British protectorate in Egypt in 1882. These political developments would directly pave the way for the establishment of the Egypt Exploration Fund (later Egypt Exploration Society) and the excavations, notably, of Flinders Petrie throughout Egypt, which would, in turn, lead to the wholesale furnishing of hundreds of thousands of ancient Egyptian artefacts to museums throughout the United Kingdom, Europe and the United States.

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