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## Sarah Jane Clackson (1965-2003)

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Sarah Jane Clackson  
(1965–2003)

In 1990, she was awarded a D.Phil. in Egyptology at St John's College, Oxford, in which her first book (*JEA* 77 (1994), pp. 169–74, with a review in *JNES* 23 (1994), pp. 1–10) appeared in 1995. It was also at this time that she started working on the Michaelides Papyrus Collection of Cambridge University Library and the British Library, cataloguing its Demotic, Greek and Coptic material, and

**SARAH JANE CLACKSON**  
(1965–2003)

WHEN SARAH CLACKSON DIED ON AUGUST 10, 2003 from cancer, papyrology lost one of its brightest stars. I met Sarah in the spring of 1996 when I had come to work on the Arabic papyri of the Cambridge University Library Collection. I experienced her generosity and hospitality from the very first time we met and she not only advised me with great patience and thoughtfulness on the academic and personal implications of being a papyrologist, but welcomed me into the warmth of her and James' home. I left after that first encounter loaded up with photocopies, off-prints and a recipe for chocolate-cake. Over the years we would meet in different places in the world, and everywhere Sarah was able instantly to re-create an atmosphere of direct and intense contact. She knew what she stood for and where she wanted to go, and she showed a singular determination in getting there.

It was a drive that seems to have been present from an early age. Sarah Jane Quinn was born on 11 December 1965 in Leicester. She attended Loughborough High School where she met James Clackson, whom she was to marry in 1991. A highly promising golfer in her youth, she played competitively, reaching several major championships.

In 1985 she entered Cambridge University, where she read Classics and Egyptology at St John's College; she graduated in 1989. Her first article (*JEA* 77 [1991], pp. 169–75), on a New Kingdom stele at Girton College, appeared in 1991. It was also at this time that she started working on the Michaelides Papyrus Collection of Cambridge University Library and the British Library, cataloguing its Demotic, Greek and Coptic material, and

transcribing its Coptic texts. Her work on this archive resulted in several publications on the collection as a whole and on individual pieces.

In 1992 she began work on her Ph.D. at the Institute of Archaeology of University College, London, completing her thesis on the monasteries of Apa Apollo in the Hermopolite nome under the supervision of W. J. Tait in 1996. From 1993 to 1996 she also worked on the Dictionary of Manichean Texts as a project officer at the Manichean Documentation Project in London. Her thesis resulted in the publication of two books: *Coptic and Greek Texts Relating to the Hermopolite Monastery of Apa Apollo* (Oxford 2000), and the forthcoming *It is Our Father Who Writes: Orders from the Archimadrite's Office at the Monastery of Apollo at Bawit (and Other Monasteries)*, as well as numerous articles. Her thesis set not only the geographical parameters of what was to be the primary domain of her research, the Bawit Apollo Monastery, but also the underlying methodology that informed all of her work: the re-assembling of related texts dispersed in the course of excavation and sale across multiple private and public collections. She continued her research with a Research Fellowship at Girton College, Cambridge (1996–1998), and later as the Lady Wallis Budge Research Fellow in Egyptology at Christ's College, Cambridge (1998–2003): At the time she died she was planning to take up a Humboldt Fellowship in Heidelberg, which she had been awarded in 2003.

The tracing of texts and the reconstruction of archives was a special skill of Sarah's. A strong conviction that every papyrus fragment deserves to be edited, a task made more urgent since few scholars are able and willing to do this, took her to collections all over the world, and led to discoveries of valuable documents from known archives, as well as new and unique texts. It was Sarah who discovered the first Coptic texts belonging to the Patermouthis archive in the British Library. And it was Sarah who discovered a papyrus of the poet Dioskoros, unknown and uncatalogued in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. Whether on a commission or making a visit on her own account, Sarah never passed through a collection without leaving behind her identifications and descriptions that lit the way for other researchers following. Always ready to share her discoveries and to collaborate on projects with other scholars, her indefatigable commitment to making texts known through editions and descriptions significantly increased the profile of Coptic documentary papyrology in the

international scholarly fold. It also made her into one of the staunchest supporters of the establishment of Arabic papyrology as a discipline.

Sarah worked hard to break through the linguistic compartmentalization of late antique and Islamic papyrology, seeing no profit in separating the languages and cultures that had once been indivisible components of one society. She published Greek and Coptic papyri, willing even to work on a trilingual Greek-Coptic-Arabic papyrus or a Coptic manuscript containing numerous Arabic loanwords. Nor did she limit herself to papyri: manuscripts, inscriptions, graffiti, ostraca and other texts all belonged to her written world. In this way she placed well-known places and periods in a new light, giving the town of Oxyrhynchus, for example, which had long been known for its treasure of Greek papyri, a ‘Coptic face’, and recognising the Coptic name for a type of Nile fish not previously known in that language. The integration of Coptic papyrology into the larger papyrological enterprise is something we owe very much to her efforts. Significantly, it was Sarah who was invited to give the keynote speech ‘Research and Publication in Coptic Papyrology (2000–2004)’ at the forthcoming Eighth International Congress of Coptic Studies in Paris. Her election to many scholarly boards and committees is another expression of the respect and authority she commanded in the field. In keeping with her wishes, her library has been donated to the University of Warsaw and her papers deposited in the Griffith Institute at Oxford where a fund has been established to allow scholars to work on them to further Coptic studies – another sign of her acute sensitivity to what scholarship most needs: cooperation, openness and support.

As well as starting the preparation of texts for a Coptic papyrological primer, Sarah taught Coptic papyrology at Yale, Princeton, Cambridge and Oxford. She might not have considered herself a teacher, but the seriousness and sincerity with which she approached her own work and that of others was a powerful and inspiring stimulus to scholars just starting out. As she helped you read the first ostrakon in your life, with very little Coptic to go by, or encouraged you to study a collection of tiny, seemingly insignificant papyrus fragments, Sarah could always make you feel that your contributions were important and valuable. It also won her the universal affection and gratitude of those she encountered. Sarah refused to form alliances in scholarship along lines other than those motivated by her

strong sense of personal and professional integrity. Nothing passed her unnoticed, and it was her extraordinary commitment to the people around her that helped to make what she said so clear and so valuable. Her determination to enjoy all that life had to offer, her sense of humour, elegance and genuineness left lasting impressions on everyone she met. Sarah could talk with as much enthusiasm about the joy of swimming from a sailing boat out in the middle of the Mediterranean, a future trip to Andalusia or Graceland, Tennessee, or the best way to drink a gin-and-tonic. I am looking forward to remembering Sarah on the many occasions I will continue to encounter her through her work and memory in my life.

[Petra M. Sijpesteijn]

## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

### BOOKS

- 1) *The Elephantine Papyri in English. Three millennia of cross-cultural continuity and change* (= *Documenta et monumenta orientis antiqui* 22). E. J. Brill, Leiden 1996 (with B. Porten, J. J. Farber, G. Vittmann, L. S. B. MacCoull and contributions by S. Hopkins and R. Katzoff).
- 2) *Dictionary of Manichaean texts*. Vol. 1. *Texts from the Roman Empire (Texts in Syriac, Greek, Coptic and Latin)* (= *Corpus Fontium Manichaeorum: Subsidia* II). Brepols, Turnhout 1998 (with E. Hunter and S. N. C. Lieu, in association with M. Vermes).
- 3) *Coptic and Greek texts relating to the Hermopolite Monastery of Apa Apollo* (= *Griffith Institute Monographs*), Oxford 2000.
- 4) *Checklist of editions of Greek, Latin, demotic and Coptic papyri, ostraca and tablets*. 5th ed. (= *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists, Supplement* 9). With J. F. Oates, R. S. Bagnall, A. A. O'Brien, J. D. Sosin, T. G. Wilfong, K. A. Worp. 2001.
- 5) *It is our father who writes: orders from the archimandrite's office at the Monastery of Apollo at Bawit* (= *American Studies in Papyrology*). Forthcoming.

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- 2) “The Michaelides Coptic Manuscript Collection in the Cambridge University Library and British Library”, [in:] *Acts of the Fifth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Washington D.C., August 12–15 1992*. Rome 1993, vol. II, pp. 123–138.
- 3) “Jonathan Byrd 36.2 reconsidered: another ΠΕΝΕΙΩΤ ΠΕΤCΖΑΙ text”, *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 30 (1993), pp. 67–68.
- 4) “The Michaelides manuscript collection”, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 100 (1994), pp. 223–226.
- 5) “Four Coptic papyri from the Paternouthis Archive in the British Library”, *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 32 (1995), pp. 97–116.
- 6) Contribution to I. Gardner ed., *Kellis literary texts*. Vol. 1 (= *Daklehb Oasis Project* 4; *Oxbow monograph* 69). Oxford 1996.
- 7) “An unedited Coptic Leaf of Genesis in Cambridge University Library (P. Camb. UL Or. 1699 p i)”, *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 35 (1998), pp. 135–144.
- 8) “Something fishy in CPR XX”, *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 45 (1999), pp. 94–95.
- 9) “Ostraca and graffiti excavated at el-Amarna” in Stephen Emmel *et al.* eds., *Akten des 6. Internationalen Koptologenkongresses, Münster, 20.–26. Juli 1996* (= *Sprachen und Kulturen des christlichen Orients, Coptic series*, 2). Wiesbaden 1999, vol. II, pp. 268–278.
- 10) “The papyrus collections of Cambridge”, in W. Clarysse, H. Verreth eds., *Papyrus collections world wide 9–10 March 2000 (Brussels – Leuven)*. Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten. Brussels 2000, pp. 25–36.
- 11) “Reconstructing the archives of the Monastery of Apollo at Bawit”, I. Andorlini, G. Bastianini, M. Manfredi, G. Menci eds., *Atti del XXII Congresso Internazionale di Papirologia, Firenze, 23–29 agosto 1998*. Florence 2001. Vol. I, pp. 219–236.
- 12) “Nouvelles recherches sur les papyrus de Baouit”, in C. Cannuyer ed., *Études coptes VIII: Dixième journée d'études, Lille 14–16 juin 2001* (= *Cahiers de la bibliothèque copte* 13). Lille – Paris 2003, pp. 77–84.
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- 14) *Korr. Tyche* 484–489: 484. “P. Vindob. G 16802. 2 Lemlakati (‘Man from Alexandria’) – a new anthroponym; 485. P. Vindob. K 11375; 486. *MPER* XVIII 219 = *BKU* I 57 – ἐπὶ τῶ + ΕΡΟΙ; 487. *CPR* IV 198; 488. *P. Laur.* V 205, 23 – ΞΥΛΟΚΟΥ-ΠΙΟΝ; 489. *P. Bingen* 150 – another Apollo”, *Tyche* 17 (2002), in press.
- 15) “Appendix C: A Coptic inscription from Sinai copied by Linant de Bellefonds”, *Syria* 79 (2002), in press.

- 16)** “Archimandrites and *andrismos*: taxation at Bawit”, *Proceedings of the 23. Internationaler Papyrologenkongress in Wien 22.–28. Juli 2001*, in press.
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- 18)** G. T. Martin, *Catalogue of Egyptian stelae in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge*. Cambridge University Press, in press.
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- 21)** “Coptic Oxyrhynchus” in the proceedings of the symposium *Oxyrhynchus: a city and its texts*, Oxford, 16–18 July 1998, in press.
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- 2)** Raffaella Cribiore, *Writing, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt* (Atlanta, 1996), *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 86 (2000), pp. 22–29.
- 3)** C. Cannuyer, *Coptic Egypt: the Christians of the Nile* (New York 2001), *Egyptian Archaeology* 19 (2001), p. 43.
- 4)** J. Clédât, *Le Monastère et la nécropole de Baouit* (= MIFAO 111, Cairo 1999), *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 39 (2002), pp. 189–204.
- 5)** P. Bridel et al., *Explorations aux Qouçour el-Izeila lors des campagnes 1981, 1982, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1989 et 1990*. (EK 8184, tome III). (Leuven 1999), *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 60, 1/2 (2003), pp. 142–144.