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# DISCOVERING AN ANCIENT CULTURE

**M**ost of the objects in this exhibit were uncovered in Upper and Lower Nubia in the early 1900s during two expeditions led by George A. Reisner of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



In 1906, the Egyptian government asked Reisner, curator of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, to assist them with an archaeological survey of Lower Nubia. The first dam built on the Nile at Aswan was being enlarged to create a reservoir that would cover an area which had not been archaeologically explored. The Egyptian government wanted help in mapping and excavating as many ancient sites as possible before the dam was completed. Reisner's survey team discovered some of Nubia's earliest cultures. They excavated more than 150 sites that led to the first acknowledgement of the historical impact of ancient Nubia. Reisner's team identified the artifacts and buildings that were produced by distinct cultures of Nubia. Each cultural group was identified alphabetically. The earliest Nubian culture was called A-Group, and each successive culture was then identified alphabetically such as B-Group and C-Group.

In 1913, Reisner's Harvard University-Boston Museum of Fine Arts Archaeological Expedition returned to Nubia moving farther south into the Sudan to conduct excavations of Nubian sites. Over a period of 20 years, the Museum Expedition explored:

- **The walled city and burial sites of the Kerma culture**
- **Five massive mud-brick forts guarding the Nile at the Second Cataract**
- **The ancient city of Napata, including the royal cemeteries at el Kurru and Nuri and the temple complex at the Holy Mountain at Gebel Barkal**
- **The cemeteries of the city of Meroë**