

WE ARE FOR  
EGYPT

A GUIDE TO EGYPT, ILLINOIS

BY STACY DAVIDSON



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**Hieroglyphs:** The hieroglyphs in this handbook were created using the free, open-source program JSesh created by Serge Rosmorduc, available at <http://jseshdoc.qenherkhopeshef.org>.

**Photo Credits:** Photos in this handbook appear courtesy of Dr. Amy Calvert, Stacy Davidson, Allan Gluck, Oleksandr Jockusch, Library of Congress, Metropolitan Museum of Art's Open Access Initiative, Jenny Pape, William Williams, and the Williamson County Illinois Historical Society and Museum.

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2022



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I do not remember any of my history classes from K-12 explaining or describing why Southern Illinois was called “Little Egypt” or that it had been called “Egypt” before that. I knew nothing of the rich regional history waiting to be uncovered in newspaper accounts and archives.

It was only after giving a community talk many years after earning two degrees that I was confronted by the glaringly obvious need to delve deeper into the history of “Egyptian” Southern Illinois. As a Southern Illinois native, a historian, an Egyptologist, and a public educator, I activate my training, skills, and curiosity to illuminate this rich subject matter. By creating this handbook, I aim to make this research more accessible to general readers, armchair historians, students, residents of Southern Illinois, and, indeed, anyone interested in Southern Illinois’ “Egyptian” affiliation. The information is all around, dispersed but waiting, and it is my hope that this handbook will be the first stop on your journey through Egypt, Illinois.



**Life, Prosperity, & Health**

*Stacy Davidson*





**DEDICATION** This resource is dedicated to the residents of Southern Illinois who are curious about their “Egyptian” connection.

## HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

This Handbook includes selections of ancient Egyptian and Southern Illinois history that can be used by educators (grades 6 and above, including higher ed) in conjunction with school subjects like history, language arts, fine arts, and government\* or perused and enjoyed by anyone with a curiosity for the subject matter. Southern Illinois’ regional history is juxtaposed with Egyptological material that will help readers understand what is “Egyptian” about Southern Illinois through an exploration of ancient Egyptian art, culture, architecture, names, and more.

An overview of how Southern Illinois’ Egyptian identity developed and changed over time along with shifting trends in the American reception of ancient Egypt, in a broader sense, is also included. This Egyptian legacy can still be seen in Southern Illinois today— in its pyramids, obelisks, architecture, and business branding. Writing and activity prompts accompany informational text— as do fun activities like coloring pages. There is a glossary at the end for specialized words as well as a Further Reading list to delve deeper into topics covered in this Handbook.

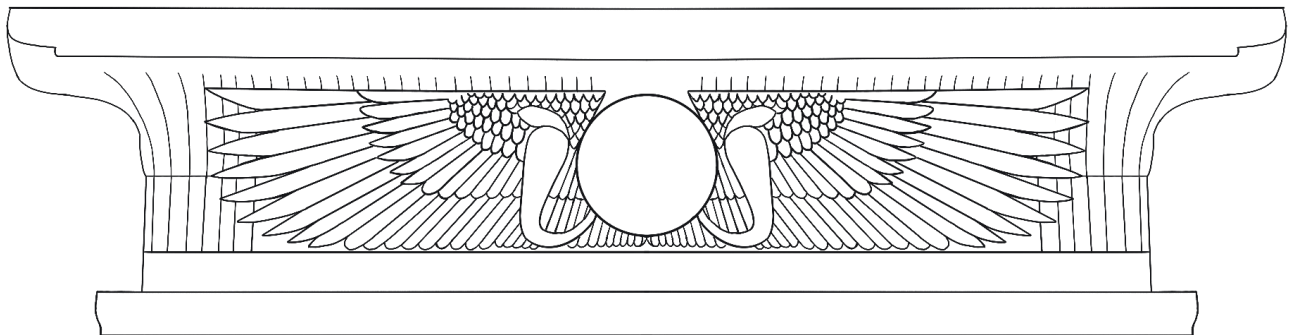
\*If you are an educator, check your state and local subject standards for guidance to include this material in your curriculum.



## HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT

Traces of ancient Egypt are visible throughout Southern Illinois. They have been hiding in plain sight, bearing silent witness to the nearly 200-year-old affiliation between Egypt/Little Egypt Illinois and its namesake. Although there was no direct connection between the two lands and no notable influx of Egyptian immigrants to the region, many peoples and places, including Southern Illinois, have adopted and appropriated ancient Egyptian motifs, artistic styles, and symbolism throughout the ages. The two regions are separated by vast distances of time and space, but an introduction to the geography, histories, and artistic traditions of ancient Egypt (Kemet) will lead to a greater understanding and appreciation for how Southern Illinois' Egyptian identity has helped shape its present.

Research for the project *We Are For Egypt: The History, Culture, and Legacy of Egyptian Southern Illinois* was supported by a Mellon/ACLS Community College Faculty Fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies. *We Are For Egypt* is an interdisciplinary project that integrates underrepresented voices into an inclusive history of the region, generates a handbook for educators to incorporate local history into their curricula, and produces musical recordings that bridge the past and present artistic heritage of Egyptian Illinois.





## WRITING PROMPT

What do you think about when you hear the name “Egypt, Illinois” or “Little Egypt, Illinois”? \_\_\_\_\_

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What does “Egypt” mean to you? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why do you think Southern Illinois was called “Egypt” or “Little Egypt”?

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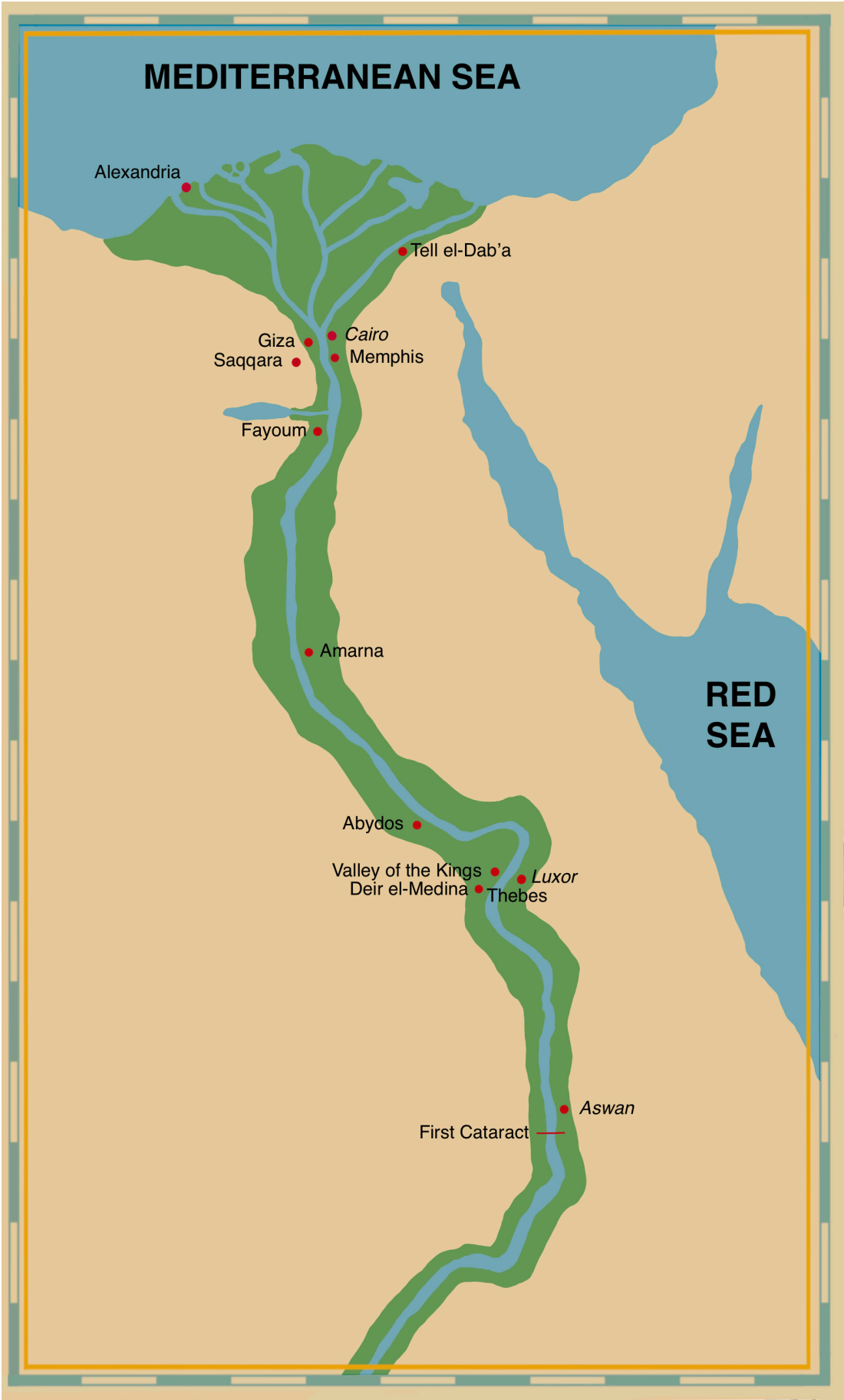
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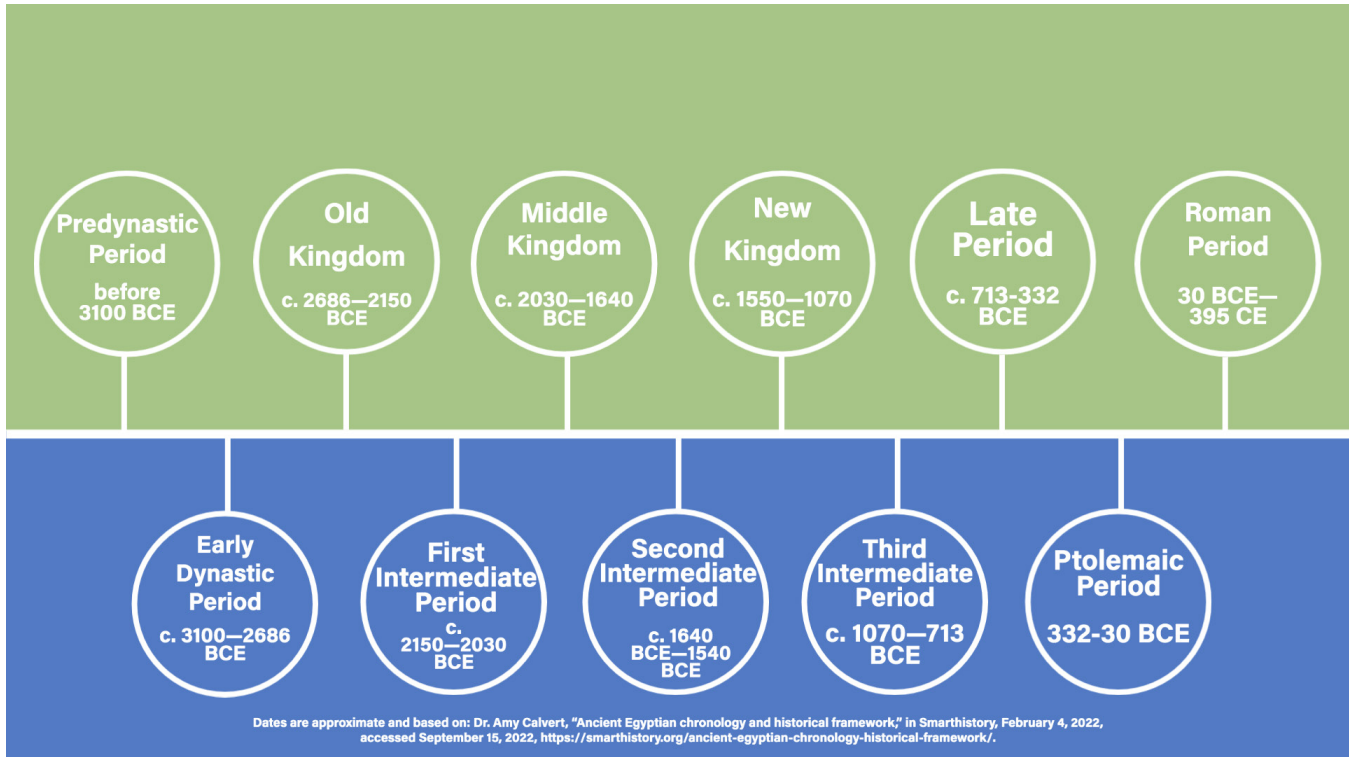
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Revisit these questions when you have finished reading this Handbook to see if your answers change.





# TIMELINE OF ANCIENT EGYPT



Theban Hills. Photo Credit: William Williams

# EGYPT



Map by Nate Graham

# TIMELINE of EGYPT, ILLINOIS

DATE	EVENT	DESCRIPTION
c. 1100 CE	Cahokia at its height	Cahokia was the largest and most important Mississippian site in the United States covering over 6 square miles and containing over 120 earthen mounds. In 1699, the first permanent European settlement in Illinois territory was established here by the French.
1818	Illinois founded	Illinois becomes the 21st state with its capital at Kaskaskia.
1818-1865	Illinois Black Codes	restrictive legislation that heavily regulated or prohibited the habitation of people of African descent within Illinois borders
c. 1831-1833	The Winter of Deep Snow	The most probable origin for the name "Egypt" is due to a severe climatological event in the early 1830s when central and northern Illinoisans went "down to Egypt for grain."
1838-1839	Trail of Tears	It took over three harsh winter months for 15,000 Cherokee to cross Illinois with many fatalities. This was but one of several Trail of Tears removal events.
1861-1865	U.S. Civil War	John A. Logan (1826-1886) is credited with suppressing a rebellion in Marion in 1861. A faction of residents wanted to secede from the Union, join the Southern Confederacy, and create a state called "Egypt."
1870s-1920s	Bloody Williamson	A period of violence and criminal activity that includes the Bloody Vendetta, labor massacres, KKK activity, lynchings and other acts of racial terrorism, and gangland warfare. The Herrin Massacre (1922) led to the deaths of 23 people on both sides of a coal-mining strike. These events drew national attention.
1925	Tri-State Tornado	With nearly 700 deaths, this estimated F5 tornado remains the deadliest to ever hit the United States.
1937	Great Flood of 1937	Shawneetown was relocated three miles inland after the Ohio River historically flooded.



1982	Marion Tornado	This F4 tornado killed 10 people and resulted in \$85-100 million in damage.
1993	Great Flood of 1993	The Missouri and Mississippi Rivers caused major widespread flooding for months.
2009	"Super Derecho"	Strong and geographically widespread storm system that produced over 100 tornados and devastated parts of multiple states



Photo Credit: Library of Congress LC-USF34-026911-D



## Is it “Egypt” or “Little Egypt”?

You may have heard the southern tip of Illinois called “Little Egypt,” but this has not always been the case. In the earliest references through the turn of the 20th century, Southern Illinois was called “Egypt” and its people were “Egyptians.” Around World War I, however, the name “Little Egypt” started being used along with “Egypt.” Gradually, “Little Egypt” eclipsed “Egypt.” There was a fierce opposition to the change in some local circles, however. In the very first issue of the *Egyptian Key* magazine (April 1943), the “Egyptorials” section clearly stated that the “correct name for the area in Southern Illinois is ‘Egypt’. . . Let every one make a decided effort to correct any speaker or writer who uses the term ‘Little Egypt.’” This fight was seemingly lost, however, and in recent years, the original name of “Egypt” was used primarily by historians.

In this Handbook and in additional work done for the *We Are For Egypt* project, the author has chosen to give preference to the terms “Egypt, Illinois” and “Egyptian Illinois.”





Egyptian Brick. Carbondale, IL. Photo Credit: Stacy Davidson

Letter	Name
A α	alpha
B β	beta
Γ γ	gamma
Δ δ	delta
E ε	epsilon
Z ζ	zeta
H η	eta
Θ θ	theta
I ι	iota
K κ	kappa
Λ λ	lambda
M μ	mu
N ν	nu
Ξ ξ	xi
O ο	omicron
Π π	pi
P ρ	rho
Σ σ,ς	sigma
T τ	tau
Υ υ	upsilon
Φ φ	phi
X χ	chi
Ψ ψ	psi
Ω ω	omega

## NAMES MATTER

The people of ancient Egypt did not call their land “Egypt.” The name “Egypt” derives from the ancient Greek, *Αἴγυπτος* (EYE-gyp-toss). Similarly, Egyptians did not call themselves “Egyptian.” They called themselves

 (REM-etch) which means “people.” One word the

ancient Egyptians used to describe their land was  or Kemet. This territory did not correspond to the current boundaries of modern-day Egypt but included the areas bordering the Nile River and extending south to the First Cataract near modern-day Aswan.

Many of the words we use to study and learn about Egypt are not Egyptian. The words *Egypt*, *obelisk*, *pyramid*, and *sarcophagus* all have Greek origins as do the god and goddess names of Osiris, Isis, Nephthys, Seth, Anubis, and Thoth. One reason for this is because the Greeks ruled ancient Egypt for a period of about 300 years ending with the death of Cleopatra in 30 BCE. In time, the knowledge of how to read hieroglyphs was lost to the world and not rediscovered until the 19th century. In the meantime, people could and did read ancient Greek, so the world learned about Kemet through the eyes of a foreign culture’s writings.

## PROMPT


**Consider the following:** We have been able to read the language of the ancient Egyptians for the last 200 years, yet we still use Greek names.

Do you think we should be using the Egyptians’ own words to describe their culture?

Do you believe there is an influence, impact, or bias in our understanding of Egypt from relying on the writings of others like the Greeks instead of on Egyptian documents?

## HOW DO HIEROGLYPHS WORK?

Unlike emojis which convey an emotion or reaction, the hieroglyphic script of the ancient Egyptians was a full and complex system that was capable of recording anything the Egyptians needed to write down. They could write nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and more! Hieroglyphs (from the Greek for “sacred writings”) were called

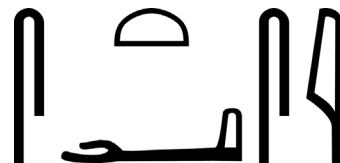
 (MED-oo NET-chur) or “god’s words” by the Egyptians. This form of writing was reserved for important uses like tomb and temple walls and religious documents. The Egyptians had other scripts, like hieratic, that were used for other records like business, correspondence, and administration.

The hieroglyphs in the following chart are commonly referred to as the “Egyptian alphabet,” but it is not an alphabet at all. What the chart contains is a list of the 25 hieroglyphs that correspond to one letter or one sound. The hieroglyphs are written with a left-to-right orientation (so you can read it in the direction you would in English). There are hieroglyphs that stand for two letters, three letters, four letters (rare), or no letters/sounds. Some hieroglyphs appear at the ends of words to provide additional meaning or clarification. Egyptian words combine hieroglyphs with all of these usages into one word! The hieroglyphs you see here are the first set people today learn when they begin their study of the language of the ancient Egyptians. To be considered fluent in ancient Egypt, however, you would have to memorize hundreds of hieroglyphs!















### PROMPT

Using the chart, pick out the hieroglyphs you would use to spell your name. A few pointers: think about the sound of your name— not the spelling. If your name has a vowel or a sound not shown below, you may substitute or skip it. Also consider how your name looks: if you have smaller signs, group them together instead of listing them one after the other like we do in English.












Sample: The author’s first name can be written=










## Egyptian Hieroglyph Alphabet Chart

Egyptian Hieroglyph	Identification	Transliteration	Pronunciation
	Egyptian Vulture	<i>ʿ</i>	“a” as in “ah”
	reed leaf	<i>j</i>	“ee” as in “meet”
	double reed leaf	<i>y</i>	“ee” as in “meet”
	arm	<i>ʿ</i>	“a” as in “ah”
	quail chick	<i>w</i>	w sound at the beginning of a word; “oo” as in “too” at the middle or end of a word
	foot	<i>b</i>	b
	stool or bundle of flax	<i>p</i>	p
	horned viper	<i>f</i>	f
	owl	<i>m</i>	m
	water	<i>n</i>	n
	mouth	<i>r</i>	r
	enclosure	<i>h</i>	h
	rope	<i>ḥ</i>	h
	unknown object	<i>ḥ</i>	kh (the “ch” in the Scottish word “loch”)



	belly and udder	<u>h</u>	kh (the “ch” in the Scottish word “loch”)
	doorbolt	z	z
	bolt of cloth	s	s
	pool	š	sh
	hill	q	k
	basket with a handle	k	k
	pot stand	g	“g” as in “get”
	bread loaf	t	t
	hobble	<u>t</u>	“ch” as in “cheek”
	hand	d	d
	cobra	<u>d</u>	“j” as in “jar”

What about the missing English Letters?

English	Egyptian	What is it?	How does it sound?
C	 or 	bolt of cloth or basket	s or k
L		lion	l
O		quail chick	oo
V		horned viper	f
X	 	basket + bolt of cloth	ks as in “books”

## THE WEST AS "EGYPT"

Receptions of ancient Egypt in the early 19th century were influenced by the Bible, Napoléon's campaigns in Egypt, and the westward expansion of white settlers along the Mississippi River who sought to associate this "new" country with ancient glory.



Map credit: Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, [Link to map](#)

Early explorers' accounts, such as that of Henry Marie Brackenridge, connected the Mississippian mounds in and around present-day St. Louis to the pyramids of Egypt. The site of Cahokia, once a vibrant metropolis, was of particular interest to Brackenridge, and he wrote in his 1814 work, *Views of Louisiana; together with a Journal of a voyage up the Missouri River, in 1811*: "When I reached the foot of the principal mound, I was struck with a degree of astonishment, not unlike that which is experienced in contemplating the Egyptian pyramids (187)." Comparisons of the "Mighty Mississippi" River with the Nile were common and appeared even earlier than Brackenridge's account. For example, the *Connecticut Courant and Weekly Intelligencer* of 19 Sept 1785 stated that "the slime which the annual floods of the river Mississippi leaves on the surface of the adjacent shores, may be compared with that of the Nile...(1)." The Mississippi's size, length, and propensity for flooding strengthened these comparisons. In 1823, the *Daily National Intelligencer* in Washington, DC, referred to the river as the "Nile of America."

## NAMING EGYPTS

There is still uncertainty about when and how the regional appellation of “Egypt” first took hold.

Egypt, Illinois, is not the only Egypt that existed in the United States. Although less common than Greek or Roman namesakes, place names that include the word “Egypt” can be found in over half the 50 states! Even the Grand Canyon contains sites with such names as the Cheops Pyramid, the Tower of Set, the Tower of Ra, Horus Temple, Osiris Temple, and Isis Temple. Thoughts of Egypt were present in the minds of those who were renaming or establishing sites in the US, and many explorers and settlers looked eastward to an antique past for inspiration.

Many of these sites are either very small or have been abandoned. For Egypt, Illinois, however, this “Egyptian” connection has lasted, in some fashion or another, for over 200 years. There is much speculation around pinpointing a definitive origin for the name. News reports and memoirs throughout the 19th century point to a climatological event in the early 1830s when the crops failed in some parts of Illinois. People tell of traveling south to “Egypt” to get grain in a parallel to the biblical story found in Genesis 42. However, many of the accounts came decades later when older, established men in the towns were asked what they remembered about the “old days,” and some fanciful details crept into some of those reports.



Grand Canyon. Photo Credit: Stacy Davidson



## POSITIVE ASPECTS OF EGYPT

The word “Egypt” means many things to many people—depending on who you ask. Quite often people first think of the pyramids at Giza. It gives viewers a sense of awe and wonder to be standing the presence of ancient human engineering accomplishments on the grandest scale. It can also bring feelings of significance in terms of human achievements and one’s place in the past, present, and future of humanity and, perhaps, insignificance at the measure of one’s singular existence. They also embody a sense of endurance through the passage of time. Egypt is something that has been and will be. Images of sand and gold are also recalled along with “treasures” and “mysteries.” Egypt is a travel destination, a real land with a long and storied history, but “Egypt” is also a conceptual idea, and that idea could represent positive or negative qualities.

Southern Illinois’ connection with Egypt began as a compliment. A common frame of reference for Egypt in the early 19th century came from the Bible. While Egypt is shown both positively and negatively in biblical writings, it was the story of going down to Egypt to get grain during a period of famine (Genesis 42) that influenced many early American “Egypt” to receive their names. The same was true for “Egypt,” Illinois—a name applied to the region as a whole rather than to a particular city, town, or village. Southern Illinois was prosperous in many ways: through riverine trade and travel, natural resources such as salt and coal, and conditions for growing crops. A generosity of goods and spirit is recorded in contemporary news articles, but a tension between that foundation and rapidly shifting meanings can also be found in those same accounts.



Pyramid of Khafre at Giza. Photo Credit: William Williams

## NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF EGYPT

The idea of Egypt as “dark” also had its roots in the Bible. In Exodus, references to “Egyptian darkness” occur several times.

- Exodus 10:15     For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left; and there remained not any green thing, either tree or herb of the field, through all the land of Egypt.
- Exodus 10:21     And the LORD said unto Moses: “Stretch out thy hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt.”
- Exodus 10:22     And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days.
- Joshua 24:7     And when they cried out unto the LORD, He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; and your eyes saw what I did in Egypt; and ye dwelt in the wilderness many days.

This darkness, although originally referring to a lack of light, took on new meaning in the mid-19th century when it became associated with ignorance, laziness, violence, and pro-slavery positions. Countless newspaper and literary sources published articles in subsequent decades that equated the “Egyptians” of Southern Illinois with degeneracy and poor moral character.

“EGYPT.- A cant popular designation of the southern portion of the State of Illinois, --being a figurative allusion to the “thick darkness” in which ancient Egypt was involved for three days, in the time of Moses. The inhabitants of southern Illinois have had the general reputation of being extremely ignorant.”

Anonymous. 1876. “The Learning of the Egyptians.” *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 18 Aug 1876.

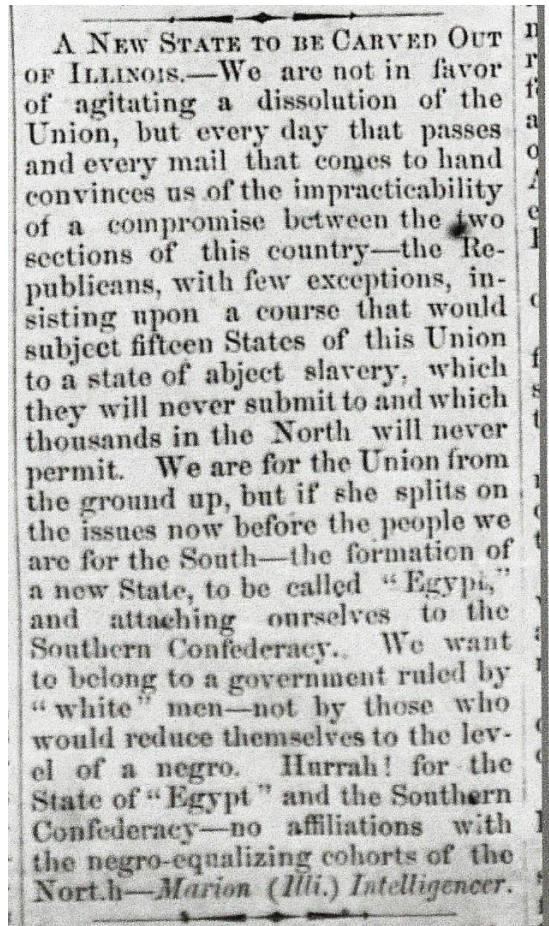


Tensions reached an almost unimaginable breaking point as the Civil War inched closer. In 1861, a faction of Southern Sympathizers, gathered in Marion, IL, wanted to break off from the rest of Illinois and the Union. The proposed name of their new Confederate state? "Egypt"! This did not come to pass due to the influence of John A. Logan who addressed a crowd in Marion's Town Square. You can see a plaque marking the spot.



Photo Credit: Stacy Davidson

Note: This newspaper article includes terms that are considered offensive today.



Anonymous. 1861. "A New State to be Carved Out." Dallas Daily Herald, 6 March 1861, 1.

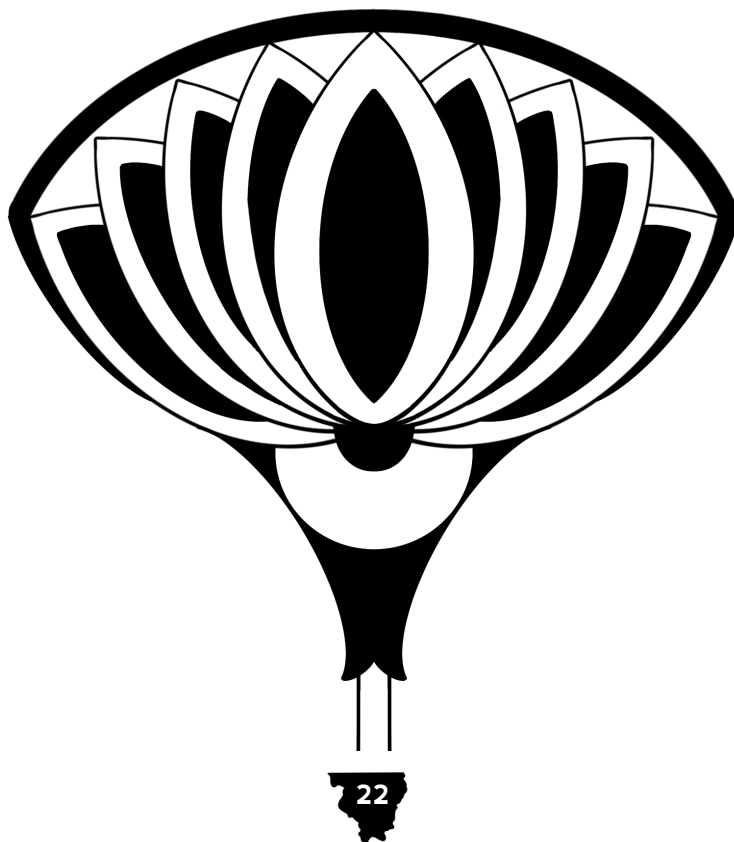
## STATE OF EGYPT

Did you know that some Southern Illinoisans wanted to create a state of Egypt during the Civil War?

How do you feel about that?

Do you think the name "Egypt" is appropriate?

Why do you think they chose it?







Martin Ryerson Mausoleum, Graceland Cemetery



Cairo Supper Club

**Southern Illinois is not the only place you can see Egyptian motifs in the state. If you travel north to Chicago, there are several unique Egyptian destinations to choose from.**



Egyptian Lacquer Co. Photo Credit: Stacy Davidson



Egyptian Lacquer Co. Photo Credit: Stacy Davidson



Egyptian Revival architecture often reproduced common motifs such as winged sun disks, sphinxes, columns, cobras (uraei), and statuary without adhering to the ancient Egyptian color palette of dark blue, turquoise, gold, and red.



Schoenhofen Sphinx, Graceland Cemetery.



Egyptian Lacquer Manufacturing Company



Schoenhofen Pyramid, Graceland Cemetery



# OBELISKS

Obelisks are easily identifiable shapes that have their origin in ancient Egypt. Today they are known by the Greek version of their name ὀβελίσκος [ah-bell-EES-kas], meaning “little nail,” rather than the Egyptian



[teh-KHEN]. Obelisks were made from one piece of stone, have four straight sides, and culminate in a pyramid shape at the top. They were positioned in and around ancient Egyptian temples and had associations with solar themes. Obelisks like those seen here at Karnak Temple in Egypt were inscribed with important hieroglyphic texts.

Obelisks from ancient Egypt were transported all over the world and became symbols of enduring remembrance. There are more obelisks standing in Rome today than in Egypt!

Over the millennia, people chose to replicate the obelisk shape—particularly in war memorials, sites of national importance, or to mark graves. Modern obelisks are often made of many joined stone or metal elements, are typically not inscribed with text, and some, like the Washington Monument, are actually buildings that can be entered.

Karnak Temple. Photo Credit: Amy Calvert

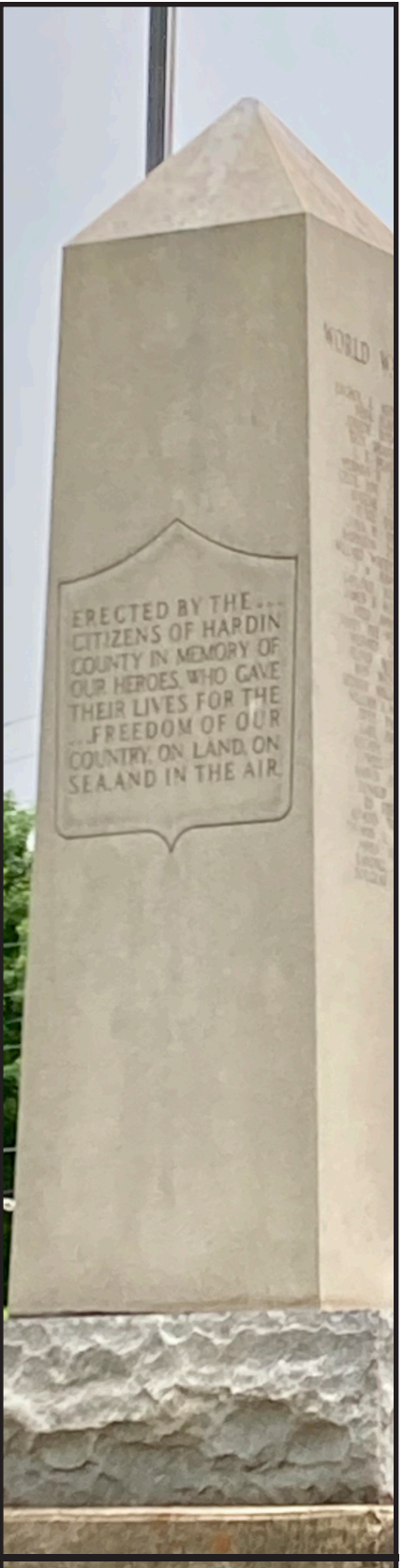




Rosehill Cemetery, Marion, IL



Mound City National Cemetery



Elizabethtown, IL. War Memorial

# OBELISKS of SOUTHERN ILLINOIS





Photo Credits: Stacy Davidson

## **PYRAMID OR OBELISK? CONCORD CEMETERY, OLMSTED, ILLINOIS**

Outside the town of Olmsted, Illinois, in Pulaski County rests Concord Cemetery (turn at the beautiful old barn for the cemetery entrance). Nestled within its well-cared for tombstones stands a monument almost 60 feet tall! It is the grave marker of local grocer E.B. Gore (1875-1933). In exchange for forgiving townspeople's debts, the story goes, he asked the town to provide him with an impressive funerary monument. Often described as a pyramid, the monument also resembles an obelisk. Based on the information in this handbook, what do you think it is? Is this a pyramid, obelisk, or a combination of the two? How did you come to your conclusion?



# ART & ARCHITECTURE



If you pull into the parking lot of Southern Illinois Dermatology (1001 E Main St, Carbondale, IL 62901), you will see two large Egyptian-style statues facing Main Street. While the general styling, clothing, and posture make us immediately think of Egypt, once you understand a little about Egyptian art, you will realize why these are “inspired by” rather than exact replicas.



Photo Credits: Stacy Davidson

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the information below and study the photos of ancient Egyptian statues. Use what you learn to spot the similarities and differences between the examples from ancient Egypt and Carbondale.



Royal Statue at Karnak Temple, Egypt.  
Photo Credit: Dr. Amy Calvert



Seated Statue of Hatshepsut.  
Photo Credit: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 29.3.2.

body styling	Body styling varies over time. Generally, there are not exaggerated and well-defined muscles, and great care is taken to ensure body proportions follow specific standards. Statues are rarely bulky or heavy-looking. Royal male statues wore false beards. Statue hands often gripped objects. Faces appeared youthful and at the height of vigor.
color	Egyptian statues and reliefs were often painted in bold, bright colors.
kilt	A common kilt style in ancient Egypt is the tripartite (or 3-part) kilt. You can clearly see the three main elements that make up the garment in the kilt hieroglyph.
material	The ancient Egyptians used many types of stone such as granite, limestone, basalt, and granodiorite to create sculptures.
nemes headdress	The nemes headdress was worn by royal males in ancient Egypt. On occasion, female kings like Hatshepsut also wore them. Movies and TV shows like to show everyone wearing this type of headdress, when, in reality, its use would have been restricted to the royal family only.
posture	Most standing male sculptures positioned one foot in front of the other to indicate motion and liveliness. Male statues with feet together were associated with mummification and the Afterlife.



## EGYPTIANIZING ARCHITECTURE: THE MARION VA MEDICAL CENTER

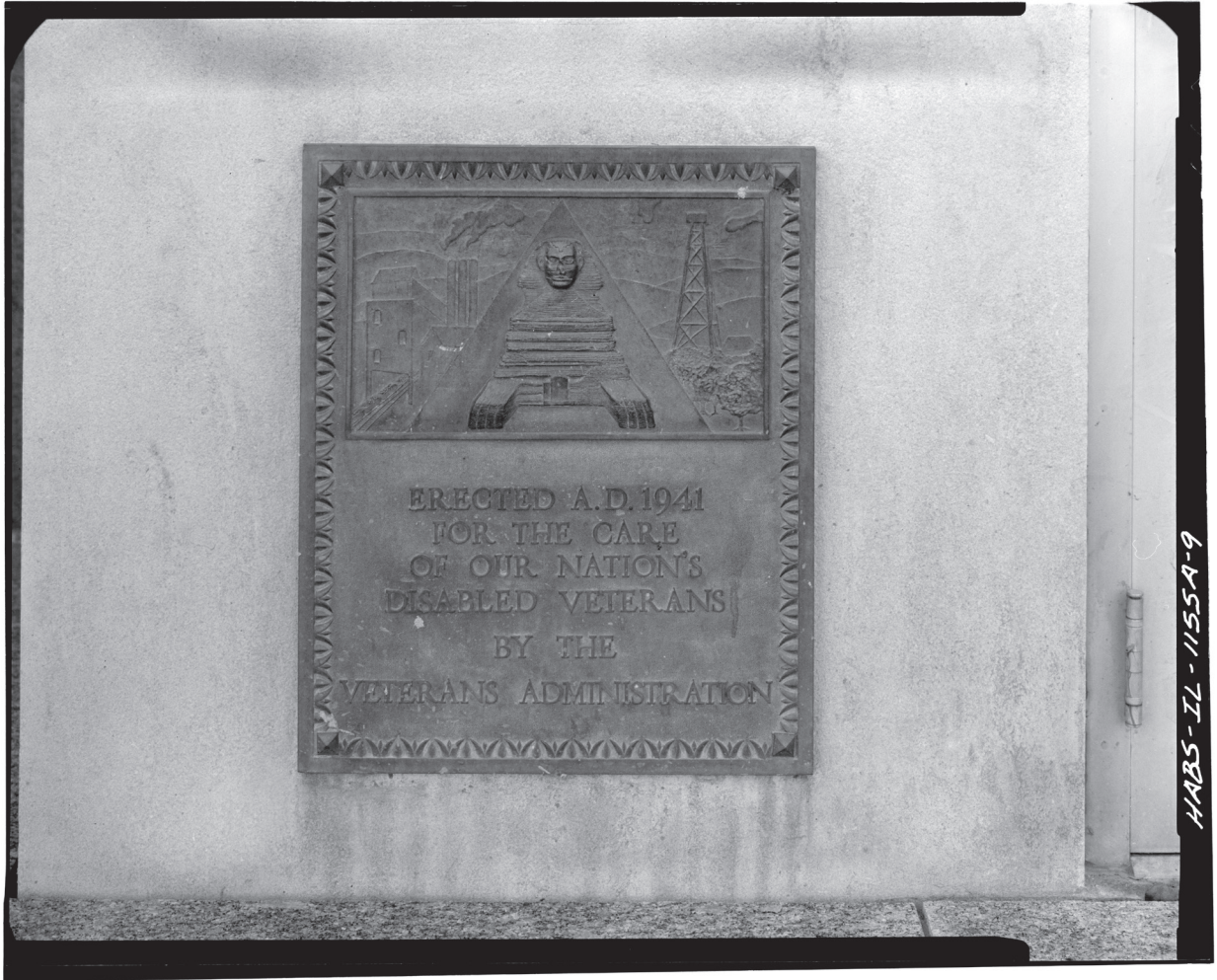
Disclaimer: Due to security concerns, visiting the Marion VA Medical Center without prior authorization is highly discouraged. Contact the Marion VA Medical Center before a prospective visit to ask if a visit to the exterior of the main building is permitted: 618-997-5311 or 866-289-3300.

The Marion VA Medical Center (2401 West Main St., Marion, IL 62959) was commissioned in 1940 and opened to the public in 1943. It is the only Veterans Medical Center in the United States constructed with Egyptian Revival designs and motifs. Brigadier General Frank T. Hines (head of the VA at the time) suggested the theme based on the region's historic connection with Egypt. The main building exhibits several Egyptianizing elements: a pyramid at the top, polychrome (multi-colored) lotus columns, cavetto cornices, and winged sun disks. The lobby of the main building also continued Egyptian column and border motifs.

Note: You can access many primary source documents and ephemera about the Marion VA Medical Center at the Williamson County Illinois Historical Society and Museum (<https://www.wcihs.org/>) in Marion, IL.



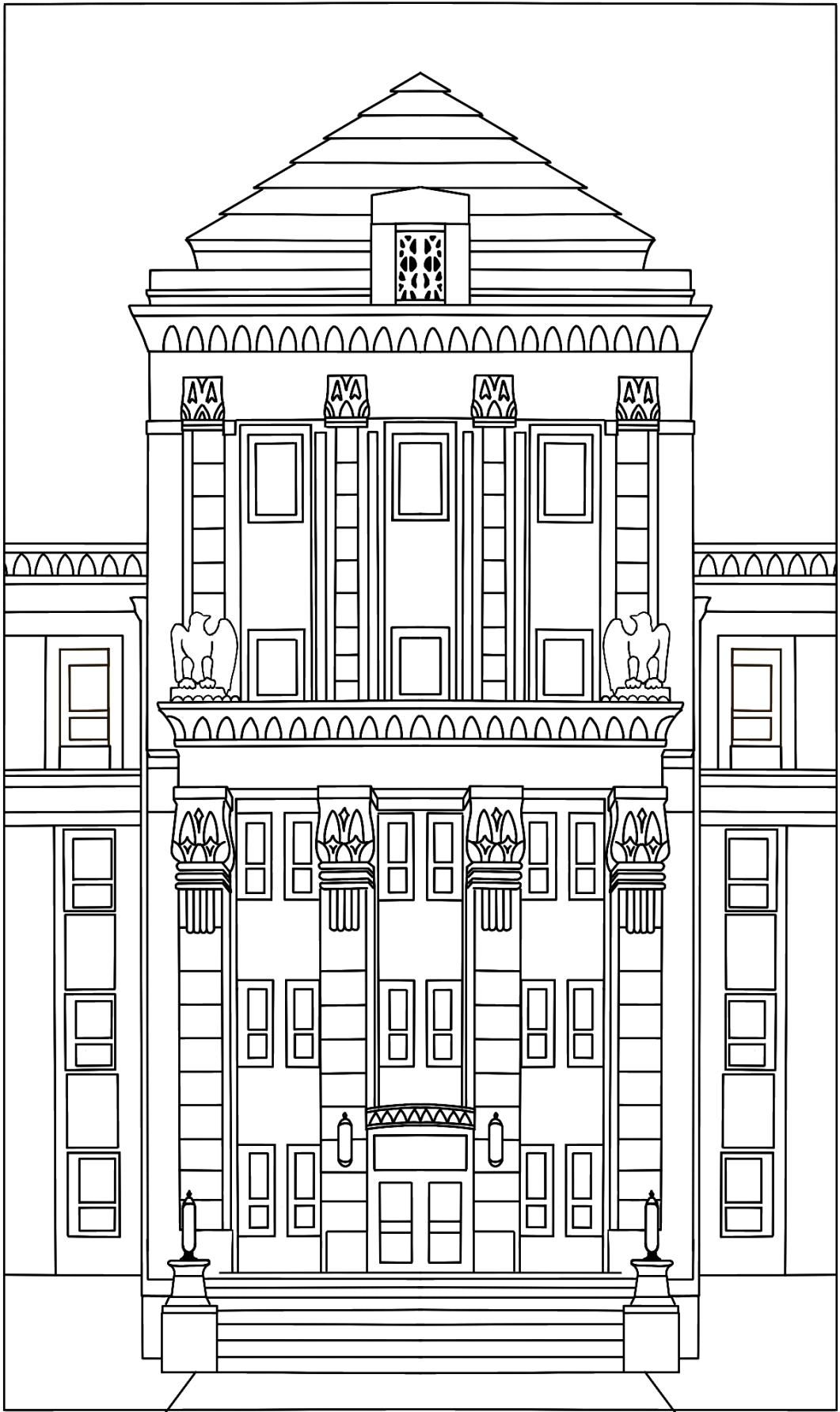
Detail, exterior of main Marion VA Medical Center building. Photo Credit: Stacy Davidson



Marion VA dedication plaque featuring a sphinx inside a pyramid along with emblems of Southern Illinois industry: oil wells, orchards, factories, and coal mines. Photo Credit: Library of Congress, HABS ILL,100-MAR,1-A--9.



Metal pyramid, cavetto cornice, and Egyptianizing details. Photo Credit: Library of Congress, HABS ILL,100-MAR,1-A--7





Pyramids are a symbol for Egypt, but they are misunderstood. Forget what you think you know about them: pyramids have nothing to do with aliens or mystical energies, and they were not built by enslaved people. Reality is far more interesting than fiction.

The shape of the pyramid, a square base with four sloping, triangular faces, recalls the Mound of Creation in Egyptian mythology.

Although the most famous and largest pyramids in Egypt were built nearly 5,000 years ago by tens of thousands of Egyptian workers, smaller pyramids continued to be built throughout ancient Egyptian history. The span of time is so vast that the last queen of Egypt, Cleopatra, is closer in time to us than she was the building of the Giza pyramids!

Pyramids are massive tombs marking the burials of royalty. They are sometimes called "Resurrection Machines" by Egyptologists because early Egyptian religious texts indicate the king was thought to ascend to his Afterlife from inside the pyramid.



The Nile River is the longest river in the world. It flows for over 4,100 mi! It is also the only major river to flow south to North. The White Nile and the Blue Nile converge at Khartoum, Sudan. The river then flows through Upper Egypt (south) and Lower Egypt (north) before reaching the Mediterranean Sea.



**(EE-ter-oo), river**



Photo Credit: William Williams

The word "Nile" comes to us from Greek and Latin: Νεῖλος (NAY-las) and Nilus.

Nilometers, such as this one at Elephantine, were developed to measure levels of the Nile River. River levels of the Mississippi River at Cairo are marked on the levee. (See photos on next page.)

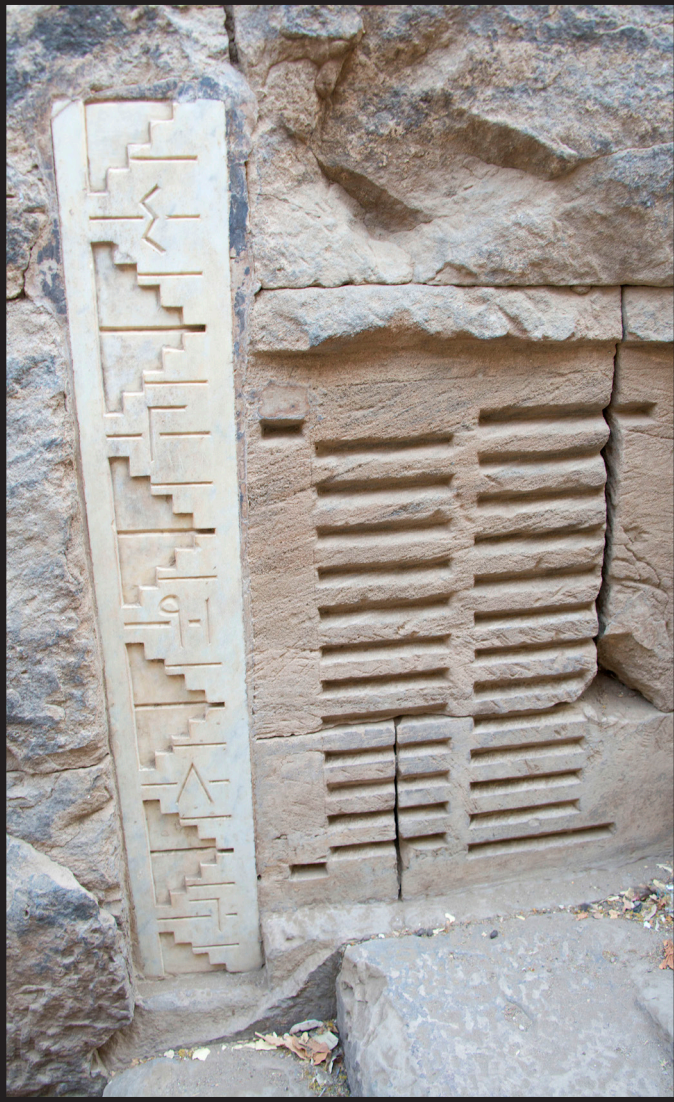




*Underwood & Underwood, Publishers,  
New York, London, Toronto-Canada, Chicago-Kansas*

*Views and Illustrations of the Nile  
Washington D.C.*

Photo Credit: Library of Congress, LC-DIG-ds-00986 (86) The Nilometer (measurer of inundations), Island of Elephantine, first cataract, Egypt. Copyright 1904 by Underwood & Underwood.



Elephantine, Egypt. Photo Credit: Allan Gluck



Cairo, Illinois. Photo Credit: Stacy Davidson

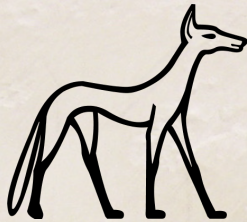




Recumbent Inpu. Metropolitan Museum of Art 69.105.



Saluki at SIU Stadium. Photo Credit: Stacy Davidson



# CANIDS



When you think of animals in ancient Egypt, your first thought is probably about cats. However, canids like dogs and jackals also existed in ancient Egypt and were of great importance as companion animals, hunters, and religious icons.

Historical texts mention dogs by name, and some dogs were even given elaborate burials! Jackal-headed gods like



Inpu (EEN-poo) [Greek: Ἄνουβις/Anubis] were of vital importance to ancient Egyptian funerary rites and Afterlife beliefs. Inpu participated in the Weighing of the Heart ceremony where the heart of the deceased was weighted against the feather of the goddess Ma'at. Only those hearts that successfully passed this trial would be allowed to join the Afterlife.

Although the most modern dog breeds date back only a few hundred years, by examining ancient Egypt art and artifacts, we can learn about the kinds of dogs that were present in ancient Egypt.

## How do you pronounce Anubis?

If following the ancient Greek pronunciation, Anubis/Ἄνουβις is pronounced AH-new-bis. Today, we also say ah-NEW-bis.

**“WE ARE FOR EGYPT” (2022) IS A MUSICAL ALBUM** that bridges Egypt Illinois’ traditional musical heritage with its living arts culture. Work on the album began during the global COVID-19 pandemic—a time in which themes of connection, purpose, and creativity became even more important. In an homage to the “song catching” of Appalachian ballads, half of the songs on the album are traditional songs with ties to the region. The other half are newly commissioned works inspired by the “Egyptian” experiences of their creators. It was a firm requirement that all of the musicians were from Southern Illinois or were active in Southern Illinois’ music scene. A limited print run was made, but all the songs are available for streaming to increase accessibility and break down barriers of access. This album serves as a successful example for historians and researchers to encourage them to develop more outward-facing projects and incorporate community members in the knowledge-making process. Ultimately, a scholar’s work is not for themselves but for others. May listeners, present and future, find inspiration in these songs and the rich, artistic traditions of Egypt, Illinois.

### **Southern Illinois**

Written and Performed by Rip Lee Pryor

### **La Guillannée [French Traditional]**

Translated by Stefan Santiago

Performed by the Prairie du Rocher Singers (Gabe Doiron, Yves Dorémieux, Linda Franklin, Camille Moreddu, and Stefan Santiago. Led by Gerry Franklin.)

### **Marion Rebellion of 1861**

Written by Joseph McCamish

Performed by Banjo Joe and Danielle

### **Flood of Shawneetown**

Written by G.B. Fields (1898)

Arranged by Mila Maring and Josh Morrison

Performed by Mila Maring and The Kitchen Table Crew (Nate Graham, Lew Hendrix, Toby Merriman, and Josh Morrison)

### **County of Saline**

Lyrics by George T. Pratt (1897)

Melody and Arrangement by Jenny Pape

Performed by Miss Jenny and The Howdy Boys (Nate Graham, Dakota Holden, Alex Pape, Chad Shaffer, and Kyle Triplett), additional vocals by Kendall Bell and Eva Joy



## **Down in Southern Illinois**

Lyrics sourced from oral tradition

Melody, Arrangement, and Additional Lyrics by Joseph McCamish

Performed by Banjo Joe and Danielle, additional vocals by Jenny Pape, Nate Graham, Kendall Bell, and Eva Joy

## **Old Girl of Cairo Town**

Lyrics sourced from oral tradition

Melody and Arrangement by Rip Lee Pryor

Performed by Rip Lee Pryor

## **Boomer**

Written by Jenny Pape

Performed by Miss Jenny and The Howdy Boys (Nate Graham, Dakota Holden, Alex Pape, Chad Shaffer, and Kyle Triplett)

## **Somos Igual [Spanish and English]**

Written by Regina Zavala

Performed by Regina Zavala, Nate Graham, Chad Shaffer, Dan Goett, Beth Davis, and Jenny Pape

## **Pirates of the Shawnee**

Written by Mila Maring, John Reibold, and Nate Graham

Performed by Mila Maring, John Reibold, and The Kitchen Table Crew (Nate Graham, Toby Merriman, John Reibold, Mark Stoffel, and Kyle Triplett), additional vocals by Jenny Pape



Photo Credit: Alex Jockusch

Photo Credit: Jenny Pape



## EGYPT/LITTLE EGYPT TODAY

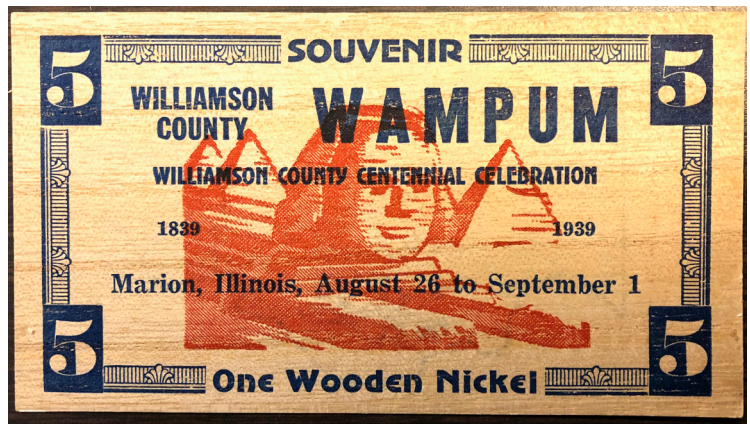
Today most Southern Illinoisans know the area is called “Little Egypt” but have little sense of what exactly is “Egyptian” about it. This handbook provides a basic foundation for understanding about the ancient Egyptians and their history to help you make connections with local “Egyptian” history. Next time you are out and about, look around you. Do you see anything that reminds you of Southern Illinois’ “Egyptian” heritage? Take note of pyramids on signs and obelisks in cemeteries. Spot hieroglyphs and mummy masks. The vestiges of your history are all around you—just waiting for you to take notice.



Photo Credits: Stacy Davidson and the Williamson County Illinois Historical Society and Museum



This souvenir wooden nickel is redeemable in U. S. coin, if not mutilated, at any bank in Williamson and Franklin counties on September 2, 1939.  
Williamson County Centennial Ass'n., Inc.





## GLOSSARY

**BCE**= Before the Common Era

**c.**= abbreviation of the Latin *circa* meaning "around." This is used when an exact date or date range is not known.

**Cataract**= one of six shallow and rocky areas of the Nile that is rocky and impassible by boat

**Cavetto cornice**= a highly stylized concave decorative element found above doorways and passageways. It is one of the most recognizable features of ancient Egyptian architecture.

**CE**= Common Era

**Dynasty**= a ruling family (In the case of ancient Egypt, this did not mean an automatic father-to-son transfer of power.)

**Intermediate Period**= a period in which provincial leaders hold more power locally and the centralized rule of a monarch is weakened. There may also be civil unrest or confusion about leadership. Social and artistic innovations occur at the local level.

**Kemet**= An ancient Egyptian name for "Egypt." "Egypt" is the Anglicized version of an ancient Greek word.

**Kingdom**= a period of strong centralized rule by a monarch. Local leaders uphold the authority of the king. The centralized authority of the ruler drives social and artistic developments.

**Nemes headdress**= a headdress was worn by royal males in ancient Egypt. On occasion, female kings like Hatshepsut also wore them.

**Nilometer**= a system of markings the Egyptians made to record the levels of the Nile over time



**Obelisk**= a square pillar with gently sloping sides (taller than it is wide) that is capped with a pyramid shape. In ancient Egypt, the obelisk had connections to solar worship. In the modern world, it is a familiar shape for gravestones, monuments, and memorials.

**Polychrome**= multi-colored

**Reception**= how a motif, concept, idea, theme, etc. has been used, adopted, adapted, or modified for use by a different society—often far removed in time and space. These elements can become part of a “cultural vocabulary” by the adopting/modifying culture and eventually lose most or all of their original meaning and context. Ex: an Egyptian obelisk form used to mark burial places or sites of significance; the shape of a pyramid to recall a connection with Egypt but not its original use as a burial place.

**Torus molding**= a convex strip placed around doorways, often adjacent to the cavetto cornice.



Jackal detail, KV 9. Photo Credit: Amy Calvert

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## **LOCAL MUSEUMS WITH "EGYPTIAN" MATERIAL**

General John A. Logan Museum, 1613 Edith St, Murphysboro, IL 62966  
<https://loganmuseum.org/>

Williamson County Illinois Historical Society and Museum, 105 S Van Buren St, Marion, IL 62959  
<https://www.wcihs.org/>



