

**HIS6E01-PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF
ARCHAEOLOGY
MODULE-1 FLINDERS PETRIE**



PREPARED BY

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Sir William Matthews Flinders Petrie

1853-1942





- British archaeologist & Egyptologist
- Made valuable contributions to the techniques of excavation & dating
- A pioneer of systematic methodology in archaeological excavation
- Conducted solo expeditions & produced a book '*Inductive Metrology*' 1877- he sought to determine the standard of measurement used by different ancient civilizations
- His collections made the Egyptian collection of British museum
- Conducted first scientific excavation of Egyptian antiquities
- Excavated many important archaeological sites in Egypt like Naukratis, Tanis, Abydos, Amarna & Merneptah Stele



- As a son of civil engineer & professional surveyor- began his professional life as a practical surveyor, self studying trigonometry & geometry
- His interest in ancient relics came up when he came into contact with the megalithic ruins such as stone henges in Southern England
- 1892- become Professor of Egyptology at University College, London
- After 2 years- founded '*The Egyptian Research Academy*'- which later became '*The British School of Archaeology*' in 1905
- Studied & excavated *Great Pyramid of Giza*- 1880-83 & analyzed meticulously
- 1884- discovered fragments of statue of Ramses II, ancient Egyptian king



- Excavation work continued along the Nile delta resulting in the discovery of the temple of Tanis, the sites at Naukratis & Daphnae
- Stated that both Naukratis & Daphnae were ancient Greek trading ports in Egypt
- Added to the knowledge of the pyramid builder during his exploration of necropolis of Abydos, the holy city of the cult of Osiris, the god of dead
- At Tell- El-Amarna- excavated the city of Akhnaton or Amenhotep IV, ruler of ancient Egypt
- explored & excavated over 30 sites in Middle East
- Most famous excavation- Stele of Merneptah at Thebes- contain earliest known Egyptian reference to Israel of 13th C BCE



- World came to know about the great pyramid of Giza in Egypt for the first time with the work of Petrie
- 1880- his first visit to Egypt to investigate how pyramids were constructed – on the destruction of ancient pyramids by treasure hunters & by clumsy or careless excavation, he described Egypt as a 'house on fire'
- 1884- once again visited Egypt
- 1890 onwards- excavations in Palastine
- Had no formal training in archaeology



- Inscription found from Sinai Peninsula represented an intermediate stage of written communication between Egyptian Hieroglyphics & Semitic alphabet
- Wrote nearly 100 books & 900 articles & some reviews
- ‘Methods & Aims of Archaeology’- most imp work- 1904- he defined the goals & methodology of his profession along with more practical aspects of archaeology such as details of excavation including use of camera in the field
- His painstaking recording & study of artifacts set new standards in archaeology
- He writes ‘ I believe the true line of research lies in the noting & comparison of the smallest details’



- By linking styles of pottery with periods, he was first to use ‘seriation’ in Egyptology, a new method for establishing the chronology of a site
- Trained a whole generation of Egyptologists including Howard Carter
- Most imp contribution to archaeology- his ‘ method of statistical analysis’, which he had developed & applied in 1899 to study the materials excavated from pre-historic cemeteries of Naqada & Abadiya- such methods were not applied in archaeology until 1970
- Known as ‘ Father of Modern archaeology