Our information concerning the discovery and trafficking of the Nag Hammadi codices was originally derived almost exclusively from reports by Jean Doresse, who was in Egypt for much of the winter season each year from September 1947 through February 1953. They are analyzed in Part 1 of the present chapter. My own repeated investigations thereafter in the Nag Hammadi region have provided the bulk of the information about the actual discovery and trafficking summarized in Parts 2 and 3. This is followed by a presentation of previously unavailable early reports in Part 4: A letter of the Department of Antiquities from 1946 locating the site of the discovery; Doresse’s report of his and his wife’s visit to Nag Hammadi on 26–27 January 1950; the report later in 1950 by Ludwig Keimer, a European scholar residing of Cairo, summarizing what was known at that time; then Doresse’s recommendations to me in 1972 for undertaking archaeology in the region. Finally, Part 5 presents and discusses the scholarly debates about my own early reports.

A visit to the site of the discovery was first made by the antiquities dealer Phokion J. Tanos in the spring of 1946 (see Part 3 below). After visiting in Tano’s shop, Doresse wrote to Puech the oldest record of the discovery available to us for years: 1

1 http://ccdl.libraries.claremont.edu/cdm/ref/collection/nha/id/336. Phokion J. Tanos was interviewed at his shop in Cairo on 20 xii 71. His daughter Cybele Hadjioannou was interviewed at her home near Nicosia on 28 ix 73, and provided his photograph. Tano was from Cyprus, and his mother tongue was Greek. His full name was Phokion J. Tanos, but in Cairo he spoke Arabic with the Egyptians, and French with those of the international colony. In French his last name was pronounced without the final ‘s,’ and so was usually written Tano. The French pronunciation of his first name was Phoqué, which was the usual way one referred to him.

2 14 xii 47: Letter from Doresse to Puech:

J’ai eu d’autres nouvelles de la trouvaille, fait dans une jarre en un lieu dont on ne peut savoir le nom. Il y avait, dit-on, dix manuscrits. Deux ont été brûlés et les autres vendus en bloc par les paysans pour une ou deux livres. Des huit restant nous en avons deux: celui du Musée et celui de l’antiquaire. Deux autres ont été proposés à Kuentz
I have obtained other news of the discovery, made in a jar in a place whose name one cannot know. There had been, one says, ten manuscripts. Two have been burnt, and the others sold all together by the peasants for one or two pounds. Of the eight that remained, we have two: that of the Museum and that of the antiquities dealer. Two others have been offered to Kuentz, who has seen them, but messed up the affair, in wanting to pay a ridiculous price. One no longer knows where they are, and about them Kuentz maintains a silence that nothing can break. Schwartz, who had alerted him to them at that time (a year and a half ago) recalls having seen there the title *Apocalypse of Peter* and having recognized in several places the name of Seth. The binding was decorated with a serpent. Finally, three other manuscripts are said to have been acquired by Tano (who denies it energetically, but I do not believe him), who can already have granted them to Chester Beatty. The total count makes me think that there had been nine manuscripts in all, of which perhaps seven still exist.

Tano’s information was no doubt used by Jean and Marianne Doresse on their visit 26–27 January 1950 (see Part 4 below). Other scholars interested in the discovery made visits to Nag Hammadi without publishing records of their visits: Søren Giversen went early in 1958, as reported to me by Edward F. Wente from the Chicago House in Luxor who accompanied him. Nag Hammadi was then visited by Robert North in 1959, who learned nothing beyond what Doresse had reported:

> In two visits to Qaṣr Sayyâd and Dabba (Ḥamrá-Dûm, hamlet of the finders), I found no townsfolk able (or willing!) to clarify the circumstances of the discovery.

Martin Krause visited Nag Hammadi in the early 1960’s, but he did not publish any new information he might have obtained. My visits on 3 March

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