

**6. Letter from Vincent Smith in Gorakhpur to W. C. Peppé in Birdpore, dated 23 January 1898**

*Probably written to accompany 4b. above, Smith declares the find to be of 'even greater interest than we thought' and characters 'may be as early as B. C. 300'. Dates Buddha 'floruit' BC 500, Asoka BC 270.*

Gorakhpur  
23. 1. 98

My dear Peppé

Your find turns out to be of even greater interest than we thought as the bones were believed by their depositor to be those of Buddha himself. This explains the unusual size of the chest and the large number of precious articles accompanying the deposit. The characters may be as early as B. C. 300.

The exact dates of Buddha's birth and death are still disputed but you may take his floruit as B. C. 500. Rhys Davids tried a later date but that won't wash.

Asoka (Piyadasi) emperor of India – floruit about 270 BC. Exact dates have [ ] [ ] yet to be fixed, but we know approximately with certainty.

With kind regard

Yours sincerely

V C Smith

We saw the eclipse well