The Nile

The Water

Where the river Nile starts is not certain. Some people think that it originates in Burundi. The water in the Nile comes from the White Nile and the Blue Nile. The White Nile water comes from Lake Victoria whilst the Blue Nile water comes from lake Tana in Ethiopia.

The Uses

Nile was the reason that the first farmers settled there around 5000BC. The river was used for water, food and transport, as well as making the soil in the area perfect for growing crops.

The river banks were also filled with a reed called papyrus, which was turned into a kind of paper. The ancient Egyptians also used these reeds to build the boats that they would use to transport people, goods and materials up and down the river.The ancient Egyptians would also use the river to catch fish with spears and nets as well as catch birds that came to the water.

The God

It was very important to pay thanks to a God for their gifts so people would pay tribute to the God Hapi for bringing the flood to the land to allow them to grow their crops. A lot of farmers would keep an amulet of Hapi or a statue as a sign of respect.

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Flooding

The melting snow on the Ethiopian mountains and the summer rain is what caused the flood. The water would rush down the Nile and into Egypt where it would burst the banks and flow onto all the nearby flat fields.

The farmers would then build mud-brick reservoirs to keep the water in. They would then build canals to allow the water to flow near their land to make it easy to move to the crops.

Moving the Water

The farmers would lift the water from the canals using a tool called a shaduf (or shadoof). A shaduf is a large pole balanced on a beam. At one end of the pole was a heavy weight and on the other end was a bucket. The ancient Egyptian farmer would pull the bucket down into the water, then the weight would pull the filled bucket back out again. He would then swing the bucket round and empty the bucket onto his crops.

Quick Facts!

1. The Nile is approximately 4132 miles long (6650km). That makes it the longest river in the world.

2. The river starts in the country of Burundi and runs through Ethiopia, Uganda, Sudan and touches a few more before it reaches Egypt, where it flows into the Mediterranean Sea.

3. Since ancient Egyptian times, Crocodiles have lived in the water, most measuring in at 4 metres long.

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