

Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin

Published Bi-monthly. Subscription price, 50 cents per year postpaid. Single copies, 10 cents
Entered July 2, 1903, at Boston, Mass., as Second-Class Matter, under Act of Congress of July 16, 1894

VOL. XII

BOSTON, APRIL, 1914

No. 69

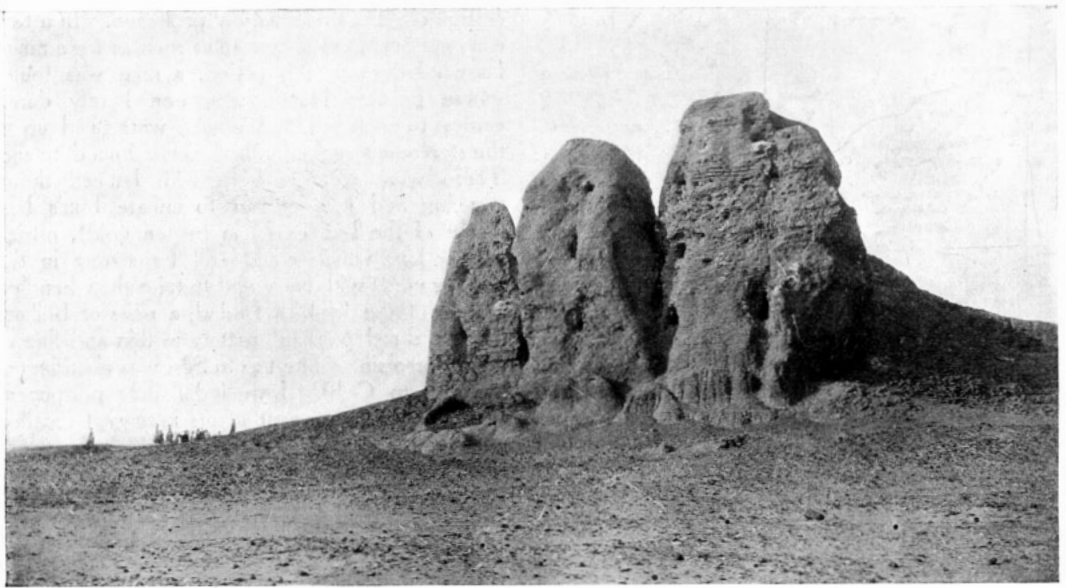


Fig. 1. The Western Defûfa seen from the South

New Acquisitions of the Egyptian Department

A Garrison which held the Northern Sudan in the Hyksos Period, about 1700 B. C.

IT might appear from an inspection of the statues and reliefs sent to the Museum of Fine Arts that the search for works of art was the only object of the Egyptian Expedition; and yet, however important these things are from the Museum point of view, they can never be the sole object of an expedition which represents Harvard University as well as the Museum of Fine Arts. They are a partial product of field work aiming also at historical research. Long experience teaches that in the end the most methodical scientific work brings the best results, both artistic "finds" and historical conclusions. The great element of chance lies in the selection of a site. Once that is determined there is only one thing to do—extract all the information there is in the site, including necessarily all the antiquities.

The trip to the Sudan illustrates very clearly the practice of the expedition. Our Museum collection was weak in works of the Middle Empire and the New Empire, as we have never

excavated any extensive site of either of these periods, and of course our archaeological material presented a corresponding scantiness. Considering the possibilities of various sites, I came to the conclusion that the Nile Valley from Halfa to Merowe, held as Egyptian territory since the Middle Empire, might offer a profitable field of work. Egyptian fortresses and temples were known, royal statues and decrees had been found in numbers. Another consideration of prime importance, I may say the decisive one for me, was the possibility of solving some of the questions raised by the Nubian Archæological Survey. During the survey a race and a civilization had been revealed, called by me the Nubian C-group, the date of which was fixed to the period between the Old and the New Empire, the very period for which we now needed Museum material. An invitation to visit the work of Mr. Wellcome at Gebl-Moya, far south in Sennaar, offered the opportunity of a reconnoitering trip through the valley from Halfa to Merowe. Mr. Crowfoot, formerly inspector of antiquities in the Sudan, assisted me to plan my trip and gave me much information about various known sites.



Map of Nubia

Casually mentioning my plans to Dr. Wreszinski, of Königsberg, my attention was directed by him to Lepsius' notes on Nubia, just going through the press under Wreszinski's editorship. Lepsius had visited Kerma on June 20, 1844, and had formed a great opinion of the place as an Old Empire site. This did not impress me; but he described at one place some rings of stones. These immediately attracted my attention, as such rings are characteristic of the graves of the Nubian C-group. I therefore resolved to include Kerma in the district to be visited. Nevertheless another site was selected for the chief point of examination, and this was Sêsi, opposite Delgo, which Professor Breasted identified in 1907 with Gem-Atom, the southern capital of Amenophis IV (Dynasty XVIII).

Permission was kindly given by the Sudan government for the proposed survey, and on February 8 I arrived with thirty Egyptian workmen at Merowe, the capital of Dongola Province, on my way to Sêsi (see map of Nubia). We had gone around by rail by way of Abu-Hammad and down to Kareima, where we caught the steamer going *down stream* to Kerma. The boat stopped only an hour at Merowe, barely time to permit me to call on Jackson Pasha, the Governor of the Province, and on Professor Griffith, who was making archæological excavations in a XXV Dynasty site nearby. Jackson Pasha informed me that whatever there was at Kerma ought to be excavated at once, as the site formed the southern end of the Kerma irrigation basin and would go under water the next propitious high Nile. It would be necessary to arrange for a permit by telegraph, and Jackson Pasha promised to support my application.

By the time we reached Argo, the last station before Kerma, I had made up my mind that it was my duty to stop at Kerma long enough to make a thorough examination, and I telegraphed to Khartoum for the necessary permission, which was promptly granted.

Then came one of those romantic experiences which sometimes fall to the lot of the excavator — a grinding period of seemingly hopeless drudgery, a painful reconstruction of the history of the place from broken bits of things, and suddenly, quite at the end, a revelation of the civilization of the garrison of the Hyksos Period in a bewildering succession of "finds" incredibly preserved. In a few days customs were shown to us such as were never known before in this period, a race was found whose possible identification one hardly dared confess to one's self, and objects were piled up in the storerooms such as I had never hoped to see. There were wooden beds with latticed thong covering and legs carved to imitate bull's legs (some of the legs cased in beaten gold), ostrich feather fans which could still be swung in the hand, swords with ivory and tortoise-shell handles, scarabs of the Hyksos Period, a mass of brilliant black and red polished pottery as thin and fine as good porcelain. The trip to Sêsi was abandoned, the visit to Gebel-Moya indefinitely postponed. It was only when urgent affairs in Egypt recalled me that I could tear myself away from the unfinished work. On the 3d of April we sailed away *up stream* and worked our way back to the Pyramids, where I arrived on the 15th.

This trip shows very clearly how the expedition was guided partly by the need of fresh material, partly by printed information, and largely by chance, to select a site. The work at Kerma is an equally good illustration of how a site once selected is worked methodically through to completion in the face of apparently hopeless poverty of Museum results.

On the first morning I rode a donkey over the plain at Kerma on my preliminary inspection. Since sunrise the Egyptians had been out, going over the plain bit by bit. I had spent the night in the irrigation rest-house, which was kindly placed at my disposal by Inspector Gurney. From the house I could see a great mud ruin a few miles to the south, called by the natives the Western or Lower Defûfa (Fig. 1). As I rode towards it the Eastern or Upper Defûfa came into view about five miles to the east. Everything appeared much as Lepsius had seen it on the 20th day of June nearly seventy years ago. The ground was strewn thickly with potsherds, stone implements, and fragments of bone; the mound of potsherds was there, the granite altar — all but the dike along the Nile. This was the western side of the basin. The middle was already green crop-land, irrigated at the last inundation; and the part I was riding over was that most threatened by the next inundation. Our work was clearly marked out for us. The



Fig. 2. The houses on the west of the Western Defûfa, looking southeast



Fig. 3. Fragments of alabaster vessels inscribed with names of kings of the Old and Middle Empires



Fig. 4. The burnt rooms of the Hyksos Period, on the east of the Western Defûja, looking down to the northeast

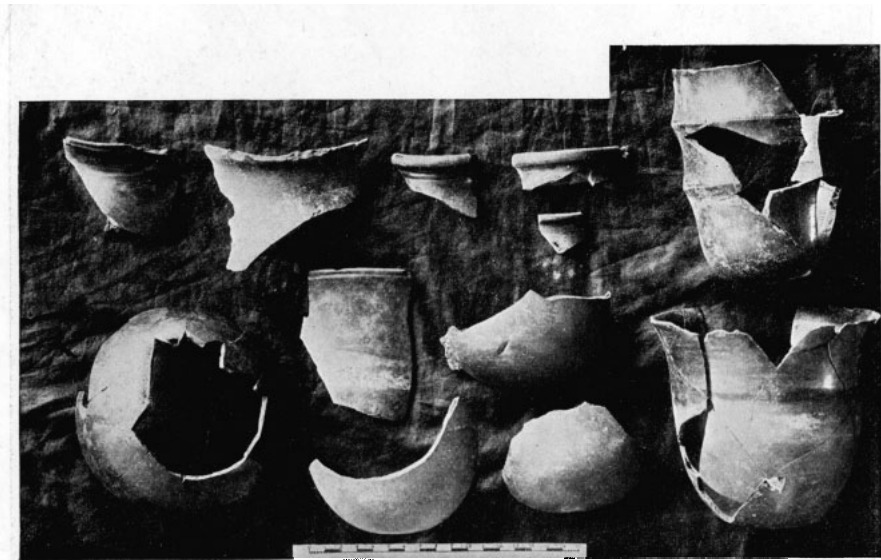


Fig. 5. Samples of pottery from the burnt rooms of the Western Defûja



Fig. 6. Mud seal-impressions from the burnt rooms of the Western Defufa



Fig. 7. Brass bowls, glass jugs and decorated pottery from the Meroitic Cemetery

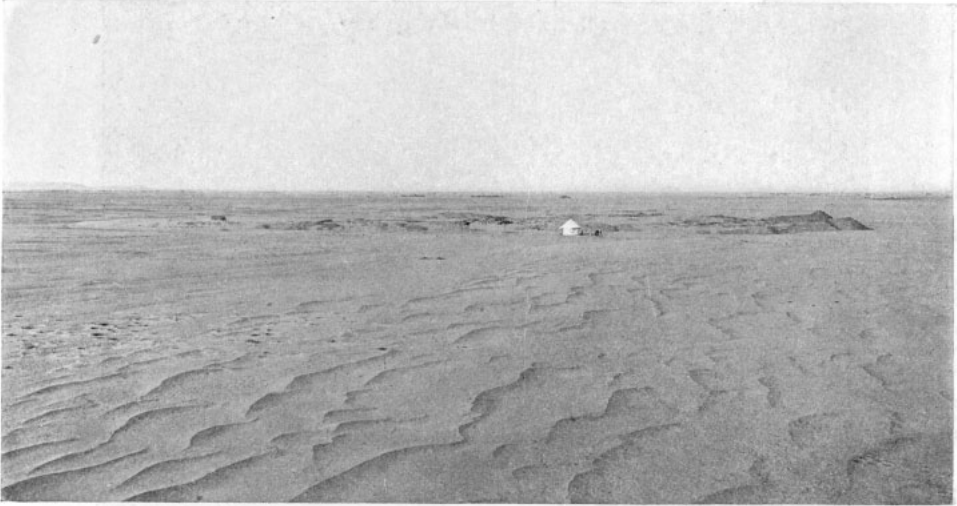


Fig. 8. The Great Cemetery of the Hyksos Period and earlier, seen from the Eastern Defûfa, looking northeast



*Fig. 9. Nine scarabs and a small golden crocodile from the Great Cemetery of the Hyksos Period
Minute cup of blue paste with the name of Sesostris I (?), from the Western Defûfa*



Fig. 10. Stela of black granite dated in the thirty-third year of Amen-em-hat III (1816 B.C.), giving the ancient name of Kerma and the number of bricks used in some building (probably the Eastern Defûfa)



Fig. 11. Bust of black granite statuette of a king of the XII. Dynasty, probably Amen-em-hat III



Fig. 12. The Temple, looking north through the axis

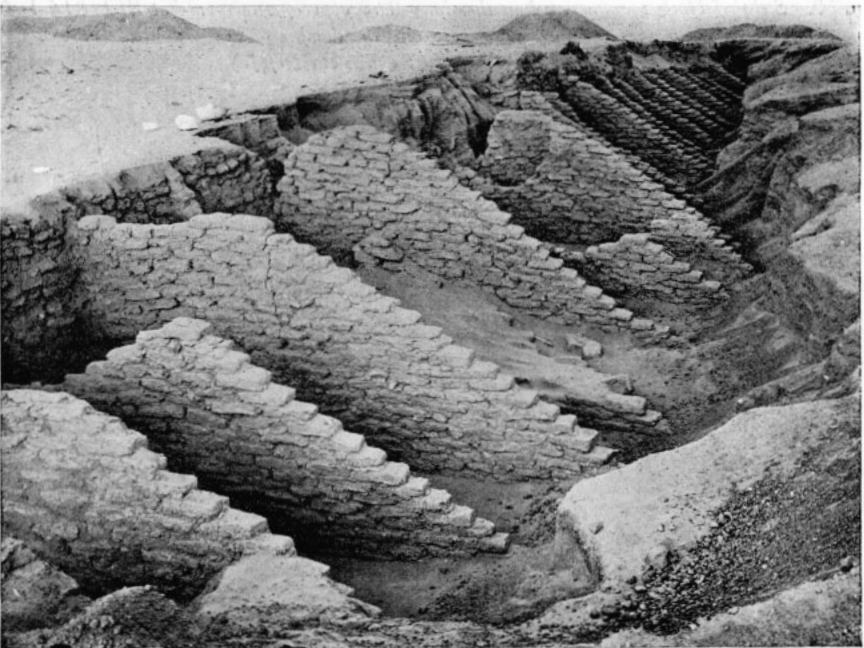


Fig. 13. The foundation or retaining walls of the older building under the Cemetery of the Hyksos Period, looking east



Fig. 14. Black-topped, red-polished pottery, from the Cemetery of the Hyksos Period

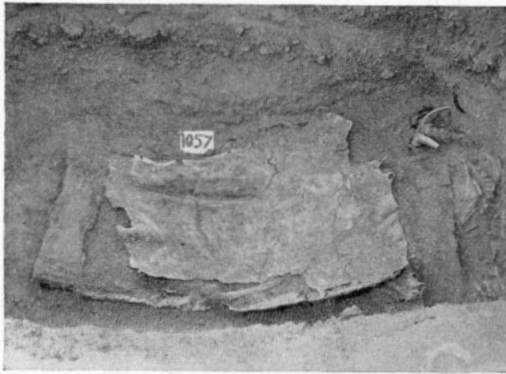


Fig. 15. Grave, Kerma, 1057, the ox-hide cover, looking down to south.



Fig. 16. Grave, Kerma, 1057, the half-plundered burials, looking down to south.



Fig. 17. Grave, Kerma, 1039, a plundered grave, but with stacks of pots in the original position, looking down to south.



Fig. 18. Grave, Kerma, 1065, chief burial intact on bed with sword between his legs, looking south.



Fig. 19. Heads of rams with horn protectors to prevent goring. From the Cemetery.

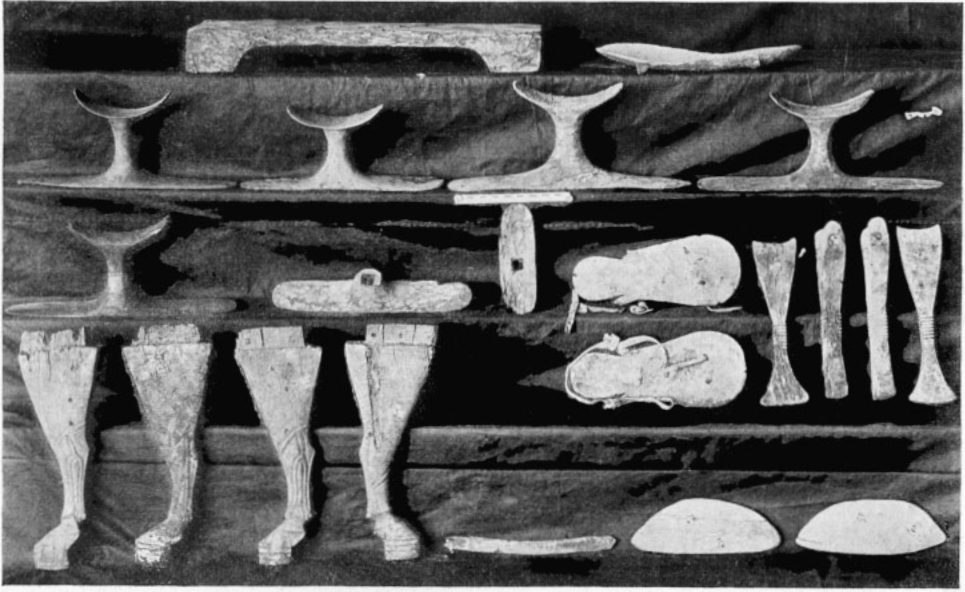


Fig. 20. Stool, dish, head-rests, chair-legs and bed-legs of wood, raw-hide sandals. All from the Cemetery.

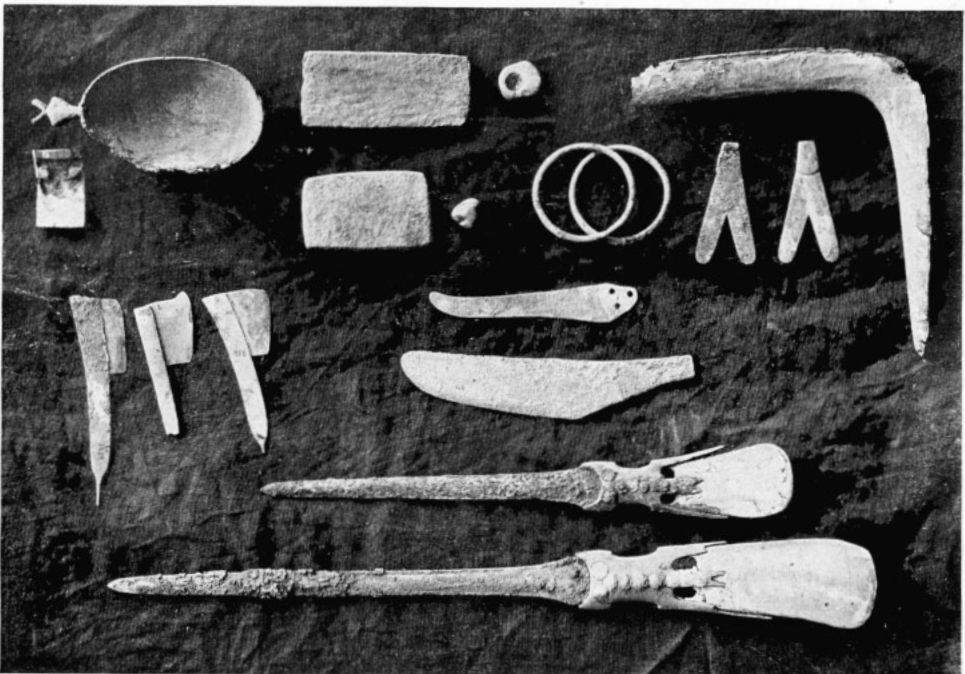


Fig. 21. Wooden dish, kohl-palettes and bronze objects. The ftes are military decorations; the hatchet-shaped tools on the left are razors; the daggers have ivory and tortoise shell hilts and bronze blades. From the Great Cemetery.

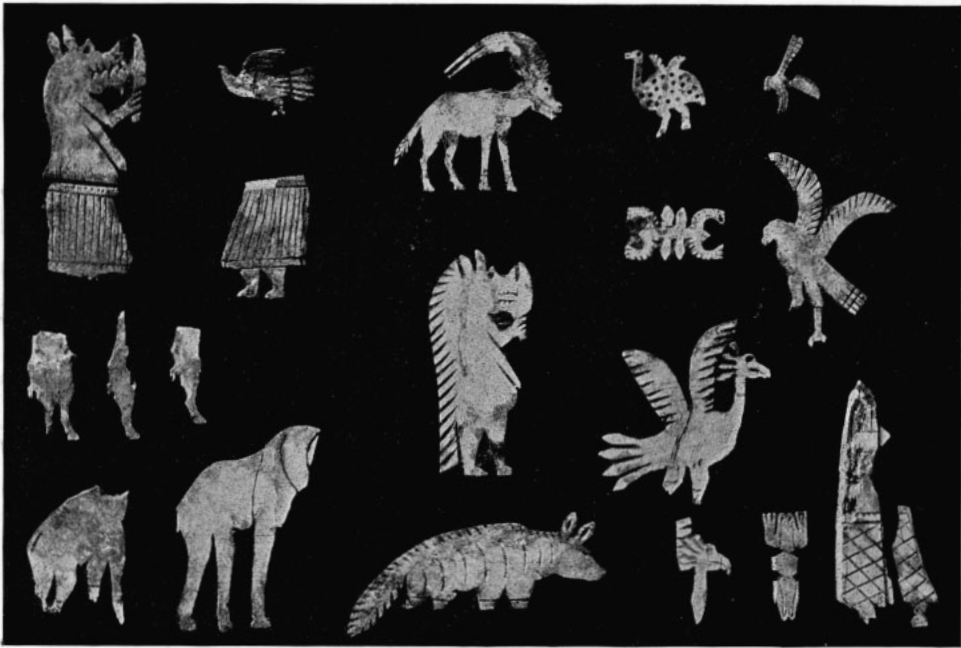
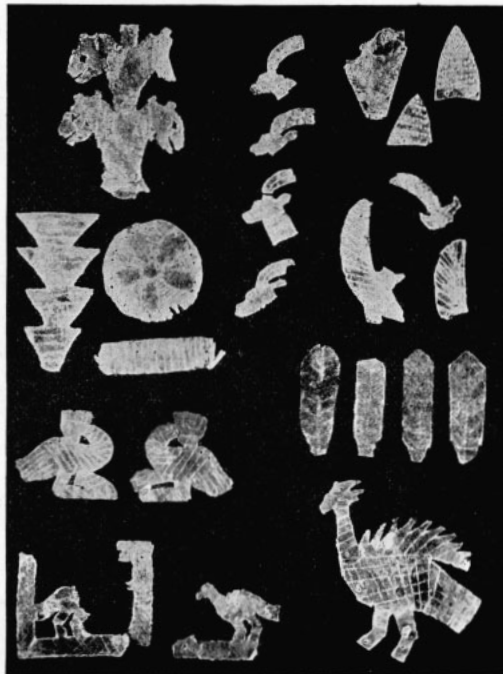


Fig. 22. Bone and ivory inlay pieces, decorations from wooden furniture.



*Fig. 23. Mica ornaments sewed on caps and dresses
From the Cemetery of the Hyksos Period.*

first thing was to examine the Western Defûfa and "the plain of potsherds."

We pitched our only tent beside the Defûfa and the Egyptians camped there, the older men inside and the younger under the edge of the top cover. A few local workmen turned up, but we never got more than fifty together on any one day. The time was too short to discipline and train them, and they were a poor lot.

A number of potsherds and other objects were picked up on the surface, and the object register was started with these. Most of the potsherds appeared to be Nubian C-group. Four trenches were begun immediately round about the Defûfa "to determine the character of the debris and the presence or absence of graves" (Diary, February 12). All but one of these trenches showed the layer of surface potsherds and other fragments to be about 40 to 100 cm. thick, resting on a sub-soil of Nile mud and with no trace of graves or structures. But in Trench 2 we came on a maze of burnt brick walls (Fig. 2) and among them a fragment of an inscribed alabaster cup with the name of Pepy I, the king under whom was born the Impy whose un plundered tomb we had just found at Giza. From this moment we were no longer free agents, but taken in the grip of a system and controlled entirely by the problem before us—the unraveling of the history of the Defûfa.

A series of walls were excavated on the west side, showing foundations of four periods of occupation. Fragments of inscribed alabaster gave us the names of Nefer-ka-Ra, Pepy I, Amenemhat I, and Sesostri I (Fig. 3), proving that the place was occupied from the beginning of the VI. to the XII. Dynasty. We followed the outline of the Defûfa around its four sides, but it was a solid mass like the under part of a fortress. On the east there was a series of rooms filled with the ashes and coals of a great conflagration (Fig. 4), and on the floor were pots and pans (Fig. 5), bone implements, pieces of ostrich egg, over a thousand seal-impressions in mud (Fig. 6), and many other remains of the last occupation—that which ended in fire. The seal-impressions fixed the date to the Hyksos Period.

Round about the Defûfa were heaps of ashes, slag, unfinished faïences, unfinished pottery, unfinished stone beads, and lumps of raw material,—red hæmatite color (for painting pottery), gray *tertiak* (for glazing pottery), lumps of malachite, natural rock crystals (for making beads), ostrich egg-shell (for making disc-beads), and mica (for making ornaments for caps and dresses). The mud seal-impressions must be considered in this same connection. They had been affixed to doors, boxes, pots, and baskets, being placed over a string knot and impressed with scarab and other seals (Fig. 6). The abundance of the mud seal-impressions showed that they had been in use for practical purposes probably connected with trading. From all this material it is only fair to conclude

that the fort was the center of a trading and manufacturing post, at any rate during the Hyksos Period, and probably as far back as the VI. Dynasty.

While the work on the Defûfa proceeded, a small gang was detailed to search "the plain of potsherds." To my surprise there was no ancient cemetery in it. It was a *plain of potsherds*, nothing more. The layer was never more than a few centimeters deep, and under it was the dark subsoil, possibly alluvial. But finally we came on a late cemetery—a thoroughly plundered burying ground of the first and second centuries A. D. (Fig. 7). The burials were only just under the surface; and unprofitable as it was, this cemetery taught us one thing—the plain had been denuded about three feet since the second century A. D. It was clear that the layer of potsherds lay on a denuded surface far below that on which lived the men of their day. The potsherds were for the greater part of types known to be as ancient as the Hyksos Period; and as they were so freely mixed with household implements and animal bones, the layer, it seems, must be all that remains of a wide-spread town of that early date. The houses have disappeared to the last vestige throughout the great plain. Only the Defûfa itself remains and the few walls buried under the debris fallen from that mass of mud brick.

Four weeks went in this examination of the western side of the basin. The men worked like machines. The registers were fully kept—the diary with its sketches, the object register with near a thousand drawings, the photographs of work and objects, the register of photographs, the plans and notes on buildings, and the card record of each grave. In the end the outline of the history of the site had been pieced together from scraps. Artistically speaking not a single thing had been found—not a thing which could be placed on exhibition in the Museum. I am sure that few realize the difficulties of such a situation, in which only the routine of habit and past experience supplies the courage to go on. During the time from February 28 to March 12 it appeared that the whole trip would probably be a failure from the point of view of the Museum collections. The time that remained seemed too short to bring success, for I had planned to be in Halfa again on the 26th of March. The only cheering thing was the fact that we were on the site of a great town of the Hyksos Period and earlier,—that we had found the period at any rate for which we had come to the Sudan. Then at noon on March 11 I shifted the work to the eastern side of the basin (Fig. 8), confident that the flooding of the western side could not rob us of any material of value.

I ordered the men to clear the first stone ring (No. III) north of the Eastern Defûfa. By evening it was finished. The ring of stones was only on the surface. It did not appear to be a retaining wall such as surmounted the Nubian C-group

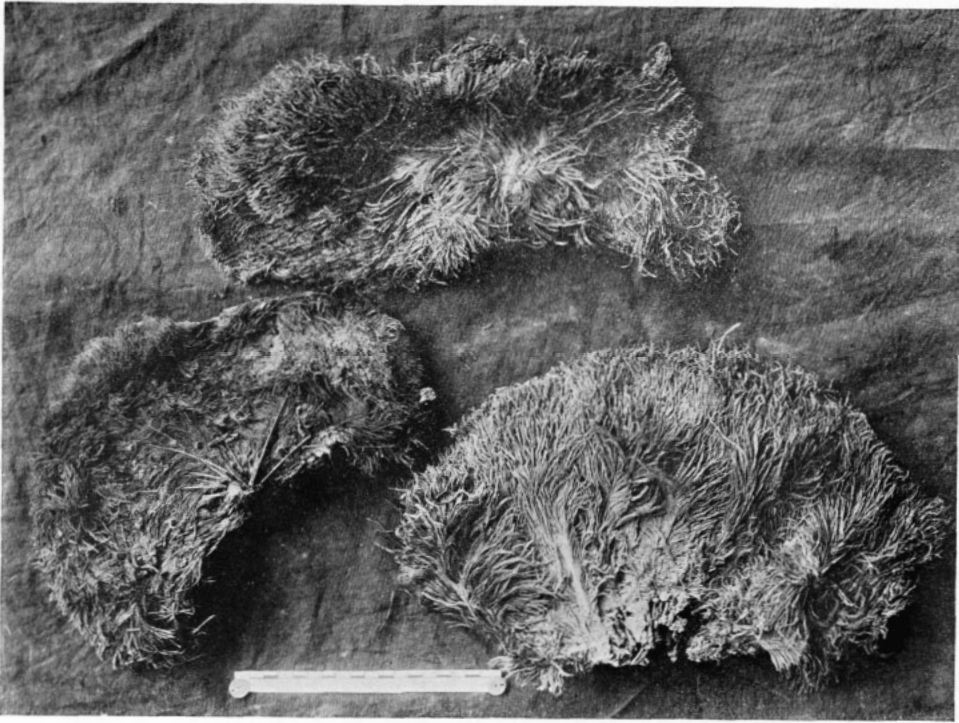


Fig. 24. Ostrich feather fans, natural color. From the Great Cemetery of the Hyksos Period.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

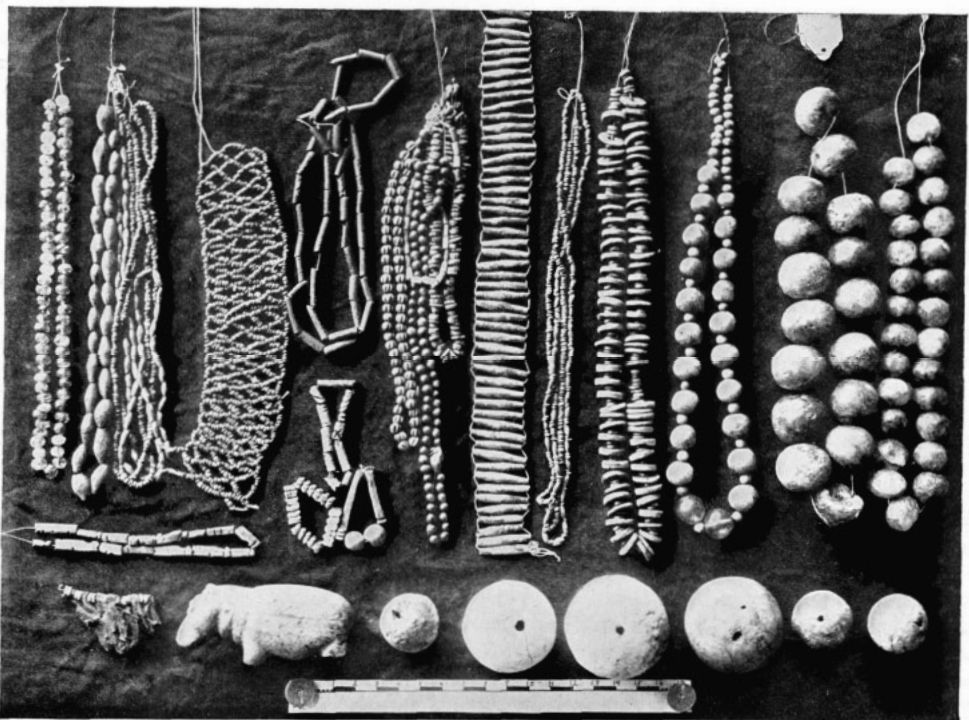


Fig. 25. Beads and amulets: (1) green glazed rock crystal, (2) blue faience, (3) bracelet of blue faience, (4) blue faience, (5) carnelian, beryl and blue faience, (6) girdle of blue faience, (7) and (8) blue faience, (9) blue faience and two amethyst beads, (10) and (11) blue-glazed quartz. All in the original order of stringing.

graves. Yet in the very middle was a plundered pit like a C-group pit in size, proportions, and orientation. The next ring examined was further east (No. X), and before sunset of the 12th, although only a dozen plundered graves had been opened, I knew I had the cemetery of the garrison of the Hyksos Period and that the trip was to be a success in every way.

Permit me to recall the time in which this garrison held Kerma. By 2600 B. C. the Egyptian had already begun his exploitation of the Upper Nile and had been led in military force as far as the present Province of Dongola, the richest area between the Assuan border of Egypt and the tropical Sudan. Gold he certainly brought away, and cattle; ivory, ostrich feathers and eggs, ebony, skins, resins, spices, and incense — all came through the province in trade if they were not produced here. Much of the valuable material brought down by these expeditions was probably of the nature of tribute or blackmail levied on the tribes of the Sudan. It is doubtful if anything of corresponding value was given in return. But Sebni, one of the Egyptian commanders, who led an expedition hither, took "ointment, honey, clothing, oil" to make presents. At Kerma the only certain traces left of these Old Empire military expeditions are the fragments of alabaster vessels with the name of Pepy I. Just west of the Western Defúfa, in an area about thirty feet square, in a layer of debris only about a foot thick we found fragments of several hundred stone vessels of the Old Empire, and other fragments were found all over the site. It is quite possible that these were distributed as royal gifts to those chiefs who were properly subservient, or, intended for this purpose, they may have been used in trade by the leader of the expedition. In any case, the great mud-brick fort was probably built by one of these Egyptian expeditions and held by them during their stay. Kerma is one of the places from which the Um-en-Nabâdi gold mines may be reached; it holds the northern entrance of the rich province of Dongola and would have been a most suitable base of operations for such an expedition.

The greater part of our knowledge of the Egyptian expeditions to Nubia in the Old Empire comes from the inscriptions which the governor of the South, Harkhuf, had carved on his tomb at Assuan. His expeditions were under Menera and Pepy II, successors of Pepy I. But the inscription of Uni, of the time of Pepy I, distinctly states that the king raised levies of soldiers among the fortresses of the negroes of Nubia. It is, therefore, probably only a chance that no account of expeditions of Pepy I to Nubia have been found, and equally a matter of chance that no inscriptions of Menera and Pepy II were found at Kerma.

During the period of depression in Egypt which followed the reign of Pepy II, it is probable that the Nubian tribes went their own way undisturbed. In the Middle Empire, however, the exploitation

of Nubia by Egypt was resumed and placed on a more secure footing. Sesostri III set up a boundary stone at Kummeh, south of Halfa, forbidding any negro to pass northwards by land or water except traders and official messengers. This stone marked the southern border of Egypt, but as a matter of course, not the limits of Egyptian activity. The region to the south was certainly laid under tribute and held in subjection by regular garrisons, both during this reign and the succeeding one. At Kerma we found a few fragments of alabaster vases with the names of Sesostri I and Amenemhat I, and a minute frit cup (Fig. 9) with the name of Sesostri (which one is uncertain). Near the door of the building No. II there was a fragment of an inscription dated in the thirty-third year of Amenemhat III (Fig. 10).^{*} Scattered over the surface of mounds IX and X we picked up fragments of perhaps twenty-five royal statuettes of the Middle Empire. These had all been intentionally smashed and in some cases burnt with fire. In mound XI there was a small building, apparently enlarged and restored and last occupied in the Hyksos Period, that is, in the time of the men buried in the garrison cemetery. So it is quite clear that Kerma was held by the kings of Egypt during the Middle Empire, and that the five buildings now marked down in mounds I, II, IX, X, and XI were built or reconstructed during that time.

Thus we come to the Hyksos Period itself. Much has been written about this period in Egypt, but our real knowledge is small. An unidentified race came in, apparently from Asia, conquered and held Egypt for perhaps a hundred years. But we do not know how far south they held it, nor how their administration was organized. In the Nubian Survey we had a glimpse of a southward movement of Egyptians during this period, bringing with them the pots and pans, the ornaments and utensils, and, of course, the burial customs of Egypt.

So we come back to Kerma, and here in the Hyksos Period is a colony of men, not negro, and yet not using Egyptian furniture nor Egyptian burial customs. They razed the buildings of the Egyptians of the Middle Empire (Fig. 12); they smashed the statues of Egyptian kings of the XII. Dynasty (Fig. 11); and they made their graves in the debris of an ancient mud-brick structure (Fig. 13). They were apparently a fierce and capable race. Their pottery, manifestly made locally, is the finest and most beautiful pottery ever made in the Nile Valley. In fact I know nothing equal to it previous to the fine, polished paste-wares of the Greeks (Fig. 14). Their burial customs are revolting in their barbarity. On a carved bed in the middle of a big circular pit the chief personage lies on his right side with his head east (Figs. 15-18). Under his head is

^{*}By a curious coincidence about the same time the expedition found at our old site of Naga-ed Der a grave stela dated in the thirtieth year of Amenemhat III.

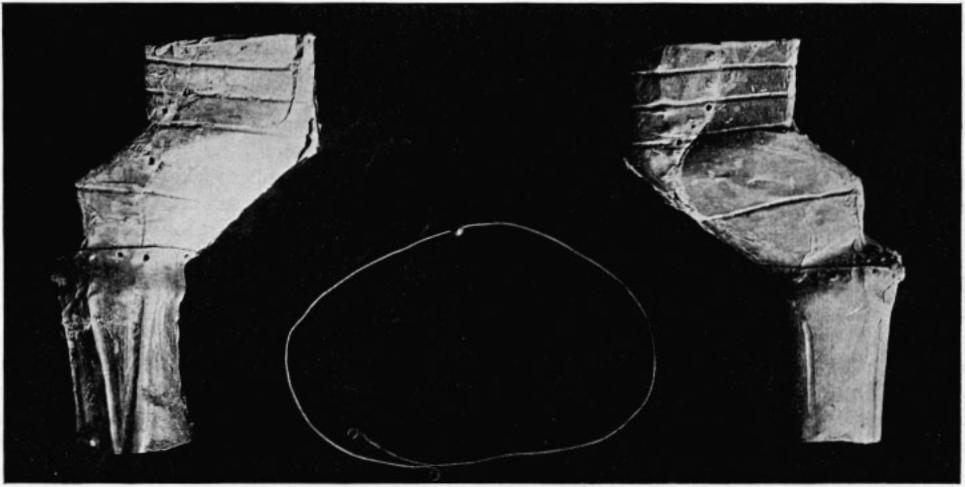


Fig. 26. Beaten gold cases which covered wooden bed-legs and a gold necklet with a single red carnelian bead.

a wooden pillow; between his legs a sword or dagger; beside his feet cowhide sandals and an ostrich feather fan (Figs. 20-26). At his feet is buried a ram, often with ivory knobs on the tips of the horns to prevent goring (Fig. 19). Around the bed lie a varying number of bodies, male and female, all contracted on the right side, head east. Among them are the pots and pans, the cosmetic jars, the stools, and other objects. Over the whole burial is spread a great ox-hide (Fig. 15). It is clear they were all buried at once. The men and women round about must have been sacrificed so that their spirits might accompany the chief to the other world. None of them, so far as I could observe, bore any marks of violence. Several had their fingers twisted into their hair or had covered their faces with their hands. One woman had struggled over on her back and was clutching her throat. But most of them lay composed as if minded to die quietly, according to the custom of their fathers. I could not escape the

belief that they had been buried alive. Who are these people? There are, it is true, a few negroes among the women; but the chief men are all broad headed and straight haired. If they are Egyptian, whence comes the strange pottery and the awful burial custom? It is hoped to submit the bones to Prof. Elliot Smith, who will without doubt be able to say whether the men were Egyptians or not. If they are neither Egyptians nor negroes, then there are many possibilities—Arabs, Libyans, a mixed band of adventurers from the north, or even Hyksos. The name of Sheshy, supposed to be a Hyksos king, is found on several of the seal-impressions. But it is not possible at present to reach any safe conclusion on the race of the men of Kerma. The expedition hopes to return there the coming winter and with favoring chance to unravel the mystery. There are other mounds north of the cemetery of the Hyksos Period and they may give us remains of the earlier garrisons.
G. A. R.

The "Liber Studiorum" of J. M. W. Turner

Third Exhibition of New Accessions, March 25 to May 4

THE exhibition recently opened is devoted to a selection from the "Liber Studiorum" collection bequeathed to the Museum by the late Francis Bullard.

Much has been written about Turner and this remarkable series of mezzotint landscapes, and exhibitions of the "Liber" have repeatedly been held, of late years, both in the Museum and at Harvard. While, therefore, the novelty of the subject could hardly be expected to arrest the attention of visitors, lovers of prints cannot fail to be impressed by the beauty of impressions and the wonderful completeness of this collection. Collectors know the difficulty of obtaining fine impressions of the first published state of many Liber prints. In the Bullard Bequest they will find not these alone, but also etchings, one, two

or more engraver's proofs, besides later impressions of nearly every subject. The Museum feels justly proud of a collection which not only outranks any other of the present day, but is conceded to be the most comprehensive ever brought together.

While naturally this element of completeness will appeal most strongly to the specializing student and collector, the modifications which often occur between the earliest proof and the plate as published, really make of the same subject a chain of subjects, each endowed with characteristics and a fascination all its own. Take for instance *Cheston Castle, River Wye* (Case 20). The early engraver's proof shows us a darkish dawn; the features of landscape and edifices are seen in broad masses, and above all is a lowering sky.