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Fig. 1. St. Christopher, bronze statuette
Arthur Tracy Cabot Fund

Florentine Master, 1407

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

SUBSCRIPTION ONE DOLLAR

1515, cut in the base of both round, flanking towers, seems also to emphasize that fact and it may be noted that the Congress of Princes, held in Vienna from July 7 to August 2, 1515, is the latest event to be represented in the earliest edition of the woodcut. Publication, however, was delayed until late in 1517 or early in the following year because of squabbles over some points of Maximilian's pedigree and over the names for the three gateways. In printing the first issue the changes made were effected by pasting new names and titles over the old, on separate pieces of paper. On February 17, 1518, Maximilian informed his daughter Margaret by letter that he had sent her a copy of the Arch, and that is the first actual date announcing its appearance.

The Triumphal Arch was but one of five commemorative enterprises to which Dürer gave his time and talents on Maximilian's behalf. Of these only the Prayer-book printed at Augsburg lacked illustrations in woodcut. It is a pity they were never cut as intended, because Dürer decorated the copy for the Emperor with some of his most imaginative and graceful pen and ink designs, and in carrying out this commission had doubtless a much freer hand than in the other four. With Maximilian looking over one's shoulder, so to speak, complete freedom was not easy, since he flattered himself on his impeccable judgment in the arts, and any suggestions he made came close to being commands.

Ambitious, idealistic, and persistent, Maximilian was the best press agent the Habsburgs ever had, and did much to redeem the Empire which his bungling, craven father had left impoverished and degraded. In person he was agreeable and gallant, with charming manners and an ingratiating voice. A fearless soldier, he fought up and down Europe for his kingdom, either with or against most of his princely colleagues, who to a man were a tough lot and well versed in all the darker shades of chicanery. He even joined the English forces when Henry VIII landed at Calais, and for a hundred crowns a day served as one of Henry's captains. He was with Henry at the Battle of Guinegate (Battle of the Spurs), where previously in 1479 he had defeated the French. Dürer's woodcut (Fig. 2) shows him shaking hands with Henry; a little further back he is riding at the head of his company armed with spears, and in the distance the French cavalry is taking to its heels while the town of Terouanne goes up in flames. Maximilian's love of combat, his skill in the hunt and in tournaments, his romantic attachment to the days and deeds of chivalry, and his inordinate vanity encouraged him to see his life and reign in a rosy glow. He had, however, a stubborn, calculating side to his nature, so that he is by no means the impractical dreamer his writings and commemorative projects might make him out to be.

In all these projects, which far exceeded in num-

ber those on which Dürer was employed, there was unavoidably a considerable sameness in the events depicted. The Triumphal Arch combines in one composition a pictorial sampling of all the others. It contains, for example, the beginnings and family tree of the Habsburgs, as shown in the *Genealogy and Austrian Saints*; the adventures of Maximilian, his feats of chivalry and courtship of Mary of Burgundy, as described in *Freydal* and *Theuerdank*; his autobiography and the eventful political happenings of his reign, narrated in the *Weisskunig*; and lastly, the conquests of Austria by war, her territorial possessions acquired by marriage contracts and negotiations, and Maximilian's pastimes and serious occupations, as set forth in the *Triumphal Procession*, a pendant to the Triumphal Arch and like it an impressive monument of pomp and grandeur.

To dismiss Maximilian's Arch for being cumbersome or boring or conglomerate is to lose sight of its most striking virtue. It is a superb expression of human vanity, created with cynical frankness at the high noon of the Renaissance. Ageless as the lust for pomp and power it is moreover disturbingly up to date and fits into this very present by being misleadingly candid and slightly untruthful. With the shrewdness of a modern demagogue, Maximilian used the two most democratic mediums, the woodcut and the printed word, then in their infancy, to impress his people with the importance of himself and the Empire. For while Bryce justly says, "We can now do no more than call up a faint and wavering image of what it (the Empire) must once have been," Maximilian's woodcut of intrigue, aggrandisement, and splendor was a graphic story only too painfully understood in 1518. His wholehearted craving to be the temporal and spiritual ruler of all Christendom reached also to these shores, where it is not generally realized he had staked out a Habsburg claim. In the central part of the Arch, Maximilian's son Philip is shown flanked at the right by coats-of-arms of the Imperial domains, including tentative ones for *Insularum Indiarum et Maris Occidentalis* and *XV^o* (fifteen hundred) *Inseln*. Columbus had discovered America in 1492 and Philip had married Joanna of Castile, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, in 1496, bringing into the Empire with Austria's usual good luck in the marriage market great Spanish possessions. Thus Maximilian, in so far as he could anticipate any value accruing from Columbus's discovery, was forehanded and prepared.

H. P. R.

A Hippopotamus Statuette of the Middle Kingdom

THERE is many a treasure yet hidden in the old country houses of New England. Taste and amateurship have changed over the years,



Fig. 1. Faience Hippopotamus (before repair)

Martha A. Willcomb Fund

Dynasty XII

new conceptions of what is precious and admirable have been developed, others of bygone days have been discarded. Yet the accumulation of collected items, of souvenirs, of heirlooms often persists longer than the interest lasts, and frequently their dispersal is only brought about by the lack of space which goes with what is generally considered modern living conditions.

However, the faience statuette, here published

for the first time, came to the Museum from its resting place near Boston due to entirely different circumstances. In a way its acquisition was the result of an article on the Predynastic pottery hippopotamus¹ purchased by the Museum a few years ago which the owner of the faience statuette noticed. She graciously issued an invitation to

¹Acc. No. 48.252; *Bulletin M. F. A.*, vol. XLVI, no. 265, October 1948, pp. 64-69.



Fig. 2. Faience Hippopotamus

Martha A. Willcomb Fund

Dynasty XII



Fig. 3.

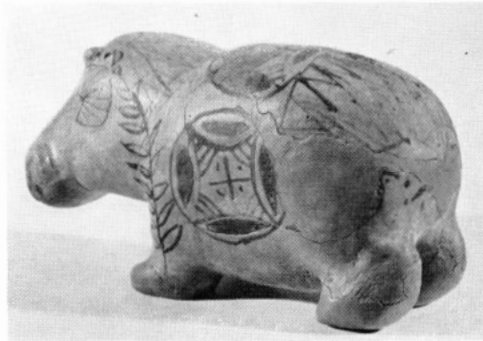


Fig. 4.

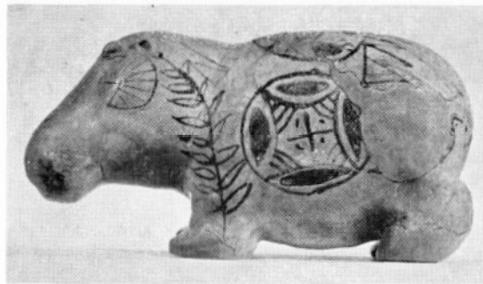


Fig. 5.

Three Views of the Hippopotamus Dynasty XII



Fig. 6. Plant Decoration on the Hippopotamus

view her hippopotamus which, up to then, was known only to the descendants of the collector who had brought it from Egypt nearly eighty years ago. He was Charles Hale (1831-1882), Harvard class of 1846, who had been the American Consul General in Alexandria from 1864 to 1870. The fine bronze aegis acquired by the Museum in 1931¹ had once been in his possession. He was a brother of Susan Hale (1833-1910) who visited him in the winter of 1867/68 on her first trip abroad and who has left us lively descriptions of travels on the Nile in the nineteenth century.²

When the faience statuette first came to the Museum it was in a sad state of preservation (Fig. 1). Its hindquarters had been broken off and insufficiently mended; the two right legs were

missing, and the top of the head with eyes and ears was badly damaged. Due to the skill of Mr. William J. Young, head of the Museum's research laboratory, and of his assistants it has now been expertly repaired (Fig. 2). What little restoration has been done in plaster¹ is carefully outlined and well discernible. Fortunately the soles of both left feet were partly preserved so that there could be no doubt about the height of the other legs and, consequently, of the figure as a whole.²

The hippopotamus (Figs. 1-6) is made of faience, consisting of a body material of powdered quartz to which an alkaline glaze has been applied. This glaze is now of a pale green color which in some places has changed to grey-brown. By its size and modeling, and especially by its rich decoration, the statuette ranks among the **best** pieces of its kind despite the damage it had

¹ Acc. No. 31.195; *Bulletin M. F. A.*, vol. XXIX, no. 176, December 1931, pp. 104-109.

² *Letters of Susan Hale*, edited by Caroline P. Atkinson, introduction by Edward E. Hale (Boston, Marshall Jones, 1918). *A Family Flight over Egypt and Syria*, by Rev. E. E. Hale and Miss Susan Hale (Boston, D. Lothrop, 1882).

¹ Eyes and ears, both right legs, part of left feet, and surface patches on the body.

² Acc. No. 51.8; Martha A. Willcomb Fund. Height 10.4 cm., length 20.9 cm., width across shoulders 8.3 cm.

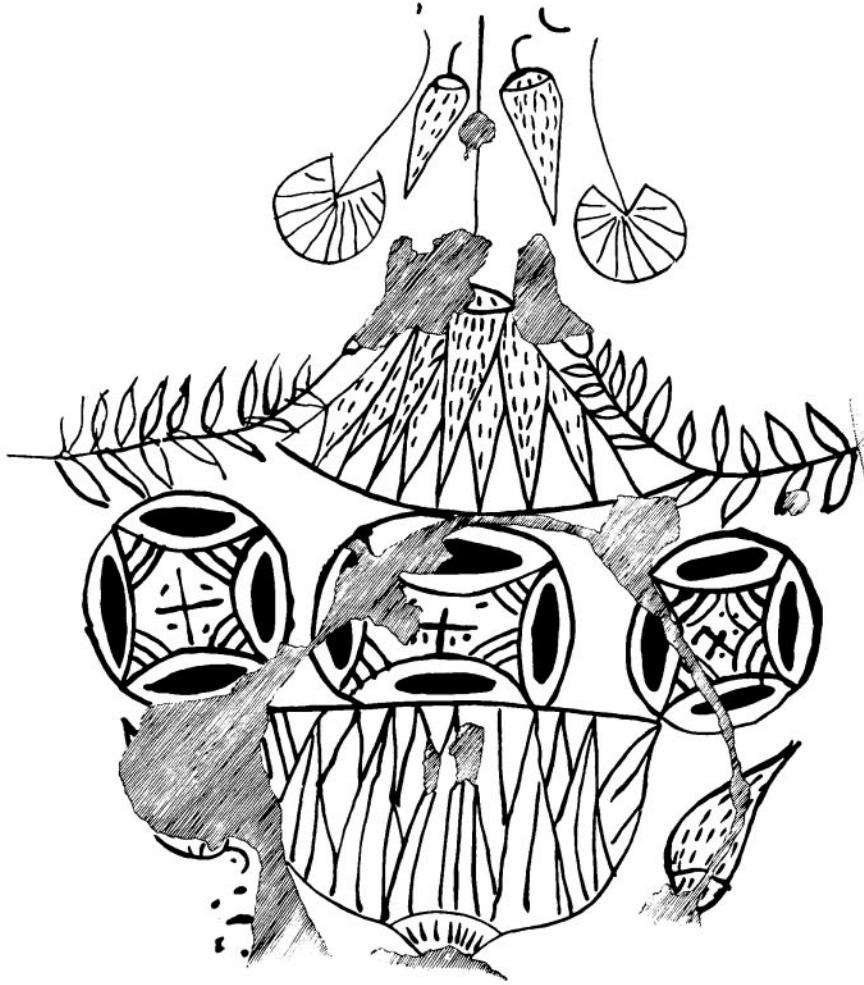


Fig. 7. Plant Decoration on the Hippopotamus

Drawing by Miss Suzanne E. Chapman

suffered.¹ No attempt has been made to restore the decoration which was painted on the body of the animal before the final glaze was fired. Its color is black-brown to light brown; the design is shown in the drawing by Miss Suzanne E. Chap-

man (Fig. 7), which had to be flattened out for reproduction and therefore appears slightly distorted.

The pattern of water plants was intended to convey an idea of the natural habitat of the beast. It was probably based on original observation: the hippopotamus rising from the waters of a swamp or of a muddy river bank, covered with the flora of the Nile. The sight must have appealed to the craftsman who introduced this novel method of decoration at the time of Dynasty XI (ca. 2050 B.C.), and this standard design was continued during Dynasty XII (ca. 2000-1785 B.C.) after which no more faience statuettes of hippopotami were made.

Dr. L. Keimer of Cairo, in his *Nouvelles recherches au sujet du Potamogeton lucens L. dans l'Égypte ancienne et remarques sur l'ornementation des hippopotames en faïence du Moyen Empire*,¹ was the first to make a thorough study of the motifs used in the decoration of hippopotamus statuettes, and he discovered the scheme which generations of craftsmen followed with hardly any

¹ The bibliography of these faience hippopotami is fairly extensive; the interested reader may consult:

L. Keimer, in *Revue de l'Égypte ancienne*, 2 (1929), pp. 214-225. *id. ibid.*, 3 (1931), pp. 38-40.
Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 26 (1931), pp. 153-155.
 J. Capart, *Documents*, 11 (1931), pl. 45, pp. 43-44.
Bulletin of the Rhode Island School of Design, 19 (1931), pp. 3-4.
Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Bruxelles, Département égyptien. Album (1934), pl. 53, p. 11.
 Fr. W. von Eissing, *Ägyptische Kunstgeschichte*, vol. I, Text (1935), pp. 161-162; vol. II, Erläuterungen (1938), pp. 136-137.
 O. Koefoed-Petersen, in *From the Collections of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek*, 2 (1938), pp. 61-64.
Bulletin of the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 27 (1939), p. 23.
 J. Capart, in *Bulletin des Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire*, 11 (1939), pp. 109-112.
Atlantis, 13 (1941), no. 1, p. 26.
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Ancient Egyptian Animals* (1942), figs. 21-22.
 Hans Demel, *Ägyptische Kunst* (1947), pl. 1.
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Ancient Egyptian Animals* (1948), fig. 33.
 Guy Brunton, *Matmar* (1948), pl. XLIII, no. 17.
 E. Riefstahl, *Glass and Glazes from Ancient Egypt* (1948), p. 10.
Bulletin M. F. A., vol. XLVI, no. 265, October 1948, pp. 65-66.
 Encyclopédie Photographique de l'Art, *Le Musée du Caire* (1949), fig. 78, p. 23.
 John D. Cooney, in *The Brooklyn Museum Bulletin*, 12 (1950), no. 1, pp. 8-10.

¹ *Revue de l'Égypte ancienne*, 2 (1929), pp. 210-253.

variation. Its basic principle is symmetry of the motifs employed, and true enough the Boston hippopotamus offers no exception. To begin with the plants drawn on the animal's head, we see buds of *Nymphaea caerulea* SAV. (Blue Lotus) rising above each nostril. They are flanked by lily pads, but it is impossible to state if they are leaves of *Nymphaea caerulea* SAV. (Blue Lotus) or of *Nymphaea Lotus* L. (White Lotus) since the Egyptians did not distinguish between them.¹ The line running from the mouth over the forehead is the stem of *Nymphaea caerulea* whose blossom is displayed on the neck between and behind the ears. On either foreleg a strand of *Potamogeton lucens* L. (Pondweed) curves up toward the ear. The curious motif in the center of the back, which is repeated on both sides, is the half-open blossom of *Nymphaea caerulea* or *Nymphaea Lotus* as seen from above.² Here as so often in two-dimensional representation the Egyptian develops a pure ornament from a common object, and it is characteristic of his artistic sense that he should derive this almost abstract motif, a variety of the rosette, from the flower whose different aspects he so widely employed.

The "croup" of the hippopotamus is adorned with the blossom of *Nymphaea Lotus* as its curving outline lends itself well to cover the ample expanse of the animal's hindquarters. Buds of *Nymphaea caerulea* are prominently displayed on the haunches. It should also be noted how carefully the craftsman indicated the lines and dots with which the sepals of *Nymphaea caerulea* are marked in nature and by which this species is easily distinguished from *Nymphaea Lotus*.

There are four different positions in which the hippopotamus was modeled during the Middle Kingdom: standing, walking, recumbent, and sitting on its haunches with the head raised and turned to one side and the mouth wide open. The last-named attitude is obviously derived from the motif of the hippopotamus at bay, found in many Old Kingdom reliefs, when the animal has been attacked with harpoons and roars in pain and fury at the hunters. But as has been stated frequently,³ the hippopotamus hunt is never shown in reliefs and paintings of the Middle Kingdom although the animal, peacefully minding its own business, is often depicted in swamp scenes. It is only during the New Kingdom that hippopotamus hunting appears once more in tomb decorations, though it is limited to Dynasty XVIII up to the reign of King Amenhotep II (ca. 1430 B.C.),⁴ and then is performed only by the master himself and not, as in the Old Kingdom, by harpoon-wielding servants.

¹ *loc. cit.*, p. 234.

² *loc. cit.*, p. 238-242.

³ M. Wegner, in *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Instituts für Ägyptische Altertumskunde in Kairo*, 4 (1933), p. 74. Hans Wolfgang Müller, *Die Felsengräber der Fürsten von Elephantine* (1940), p. 44.

⁴ Nina de Garis Davies and Alan H. Gardiner, *The Tomb of Amenemhat* (London, 1915), p. 28. Norman de Garis Davies, *The Tomb of Puyemrê at Thebes*, vol. I (New York, 1922), p. 50.

Surely there must be a connection between the absence of hippopotamus hunting scenes and the presence of these faience statuettes in tombs of the Middle Kingdom. In order to throw some light on this problem, reference has to be made once more to the Predynastic hippopotamus statuette in the Museum's collections. When it was published¹ this writer carelessly used the expression "hunting charm" in discussing the significance of the figure. Shortly thereafter he received several long letters from Dr. Walter Federn of Forest Hills, L. I., an outstanding scholar in the field of ancient Egyptian religion, who seriously and quite convincingly disputed that this, as well as any other Egyptian hippopotamus statuette, could be characterized by such a term. Dr. Federn called it an idol; he stressed the religious significance of the animal in Predynastic and Dynastic times and pointed out that the problem concerning the meaning of these statuettes lay much deeper than this writer had indicated.

The pages of the *Bulletin* are not the place to present an exhaustive study of ancient Egyptian religious beliefs anent the hippopotamus, but it may be said that its cult was widespread from Predynastic to Roman times.² Originally worshipped as one of the mighty beasts indigenous to the Nile valley, it became an animal sacred to Seth and thus shared in Egyptian mythology the fate of that god in his contendings with Horus. The hippopotamus hunt and subsequent sacrifice of the animal were certainly an old ritual rather than a sport,³ and from Dynasty XIX the hippopotamus was occasionally worshipped in surroundings similar to those of the cow of Hathor.⁴ At least on two occasions faience statuettes of a hippopotamus were found inside a coffin under the feet of the deceased⁵ which may, or may not, indicate a protective function. It still leaves open the question whether the figure itself represents a deity.

Though this writer is far from grasping the true meaning of the hippopotamus statuette in its religious connotation, at least it can be stated definitely that the animal figure did not serve as a hunting charm, especially since there is no indication that the hippopotamus was ever hunted during the Middle Kingdom, ceremonially or otherwise. It seems, therefore, quite appropriate to call the faience statuette an idol, and turning to Webster for the incomparable definition of the term we find "Idol . . . a representation or symbol of a deity or any other being or thing, made or used as an object of worship . . ." which leaves the problem open for further discussion elsewhere.

BERNARD V. BOTHMER

¹ See above p. 99, right, note 1.

² H. Kees, *Der Götterglaube im alten Ägypten* (Leipzig, 1941), p. 13.

³ H. Kees, in *Nachrichten von der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*, 1942, no. 2, pp. 79-80.

⁴ Guy Brunton, *Qau and Badari III* (London, 1930), p. 18, pl. XXXII-XXXIII fig. 6. H. Kees, *loc. cit.*, 1943, no. 11, p. 438.

⁵ A. Mariette, *Les Papyrus égyptiens du Musée de Boulaq*, vol. II (1872), p. 7. I owe this reference to Dr. Walter Federn.