

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA : PUBLICATIONS OF THE EGYPTIAN
DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY MUSEUM

ECKLEY B. COXE JUNIOR EXPEDITION TO NUBIA : VOL. I

AREIKA

BY

D. RANDALL MACIVER

AND

C. LEONARD WOOLLEY

WITH A CHAPTER ON MEROITIC INSCRIPTIONS BY

F. L. GRIFFITH

OXFORD: LETTERPRESS AND PLATES

PRINTED BY HORACE HART, AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS

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PREFACE

THIS volume is the first of a series which will record the results of explorations in Egypt planned and financed by Mr. Eckley B. Coxe, Junior, of Philadelphia.

By an agreement made with the University of Pennsylvania in January, 1907, the expedition is to be conducted for five years on behalf of the University, and the antiquities that may be obtained will be presented to the University Museum.

The present authors, as curator and assistant-curator of the Egyptian Department of the Museum, have been charged with the duty of conducting the excavations and publishing the results.

The district selected for their researches has been the southern part of the country that lies between the First and Second Cataracts, and this first volume records the results obtained in the year 1907.

The authors wish on presenting it gratefully to acknowledge the services which Mr. Coxe has rendered to archaeology, and in particular to congratulate him upon having rescued for science much unknown material which might otherwise have been irretrievably lost.

D. R. M.

C. L. W.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE First Cataract, which has now been effaced by the dam at Aswân, formed from very early days the southern limit of Egypt. That it did so was due to conditions partly geographical, partly ethnological. The cataract was never a real barrier to intercourse, but it was always an obstacle. Aswân, even when not actually a political boundary, marked, as it still marks to-day, a dividing line of racial influence and, to a great extent, of racial distribution. The hybrid population of the Nile Valley betrays a steady and almost graded increase in the proportion of negro blood as we move southwards from Middle Egypt. Beyond Aswân the blending of Mediterranean stocks is no longer perceptible; and, though the incursions of Semitic tribes from the Eastern Desert have alloyed the pure type of the Nilotic negro, yet it is here at the entrance of Lower Nubia that we come into direct touch with the Sudân, that we enter what is really Africa by the gate of the Nile.

Geographical and Racial Boundaries.

South of Aswân the geological nature of the country is not that of Egypt, the landscape has changed its character. Already indeed as far north as Esneh the limestone plateau has begun to disappear from sight; the river is no longer shut in by cliffs that seem cut by machinery; the contour of the rocks is more broken, the sand is of a ruddier gold. It is the region of sandstone, and near the place where the sandstone begins may well have been the tidemark to which the negro peoples had overflowed from the south before the First Dynasty. For although the northern of the two kingdoms which Menes united under a single crown may have derived its origin from the Mediterranean or the Orient, yet the southern retained for a long period the unmistakable stamp of African birth. The more we learn of Nubia and the Sudân, the more evident does it appear that much of what is most characteristic in the predynastic culture of Egypt is due to intercourse with the interior of Africa, and to the immediate influence of that permanent negro element which has been present in the population of Southern Egypt from the remotest times to our own day.

The political fortunes of the black races of the sandstone country show strange vicissitudes. Those who lived north of Aswân were reduced to vassalage at an early date by Menes and his successors, nor did they ever succeed in discarding the control of their Egyptian overlords. Throughout history they remain Egyptian subjects, dependent on Egypt alike for prosperity or misfortune. But the country which lay south of the First Cataract was early defined as that of the Blacks, and so it has remained ever since. The geographical divisions of our own day still recognize Nubia as beginning at Aswân, though for actual administrative purposes the frontier of the Sudân is placed at Farâs, about thirty miles north of Halfa.

The Black Races in Egyptian History.

The rulers of Egypt from the period of the Old Kingdom to that of Mohammed Ali have made efforts to conquer and annex the whole valley of the Nile down to Darfûr and Kordofân; but the balance has swung back unflinching to the same pivot; Egypt proper still begins at the Delta and ends at Elephantine. Aswân is still the meeting-place of Egyptians and Africans just as Philae was for centuries the holy place of cults peculiar to each.

It is therefore with Africa rather than with Egypt that this volume will deal, but it is with a portion of Africa bordering so nearly on Egypt as to be intimately connected with it by colonization and intercourse. Lower Nubia, that is to say the region between the First

and Second Cataracts, has fallen alternately under the domination of each of the two great powers between which it was situated. In the earlier days when Egypt was strong and unified, Lower Nubia was subject to the domination of the Pharaohs. The first great Ethiopian kingdom was not founded until Egypt was already decadent, at a time when the weak kinglets of the Delta were unable to retain an effective hold on the southern provinces annexed by their ancestors.

At that date it is probable that Lower Nubia became incorporated with an Ethiopian dominion which stretched from the Sixth Cataract to the First. It was the heyday of the negro. For the greater part of a century, from the accession of Piankhi 741 B. C. to the death of Tirhâkah 663 B. C., Egypt itself was subject to the Blacks, just as in the New Empire the Sudân had been subject to Egypt. But soon the unfailing dynamics of race reasserted their force. No black people has ever permanently maintained its grip on a North African country. From the Atlantic coast to the Red Sea the same phenomena have recurred. If a short-lived and unstable black empire has occasionally extended its limits to within view of the Mediterranean, it has ultimately been repelled all along the line. From Morocco to Tripoli the white North African races have triumphed, they hold the Mediterranean littoral, and have driven the negroes back to their home in the tropics. And so too the Ethiopian was expelled from Egypt, and his capital at Thebes was sacked by the Assyrians.

The Persians soon after succeeded the Assyrians, and white races governed a country that has ever since been subject to the rule of foreigners, but never again of negroes.

*Early
History of
Lower
Nubia.*

So far as our own studies have yet proceeded, we are disposed to think that the chief interest of Lower Nubia will prove to lie in its development from the time of Tirhâkah onwards. For it is not until then that it achieves a distinctive place in history. But it may be well to recall in a few lines what is known of the country before that date. We have already remarked that as early as the First Dynasty the Egyptian frontier had been extended to Aswân. It was maintained at that point throughout the Old Kingdom, and occasional raids were made into the Northern Sudân with the double object of repelling encroachments and of obtaining negro slaves and soldiers.

The kings of the Sixth Dynasty began to prepare the way for a more effective occupation. The country between the First and Second Cataracts was valuable to them, in spite of its barrenness, for two reasons. For it gave access both to the gold mines of the Eastern Desert and also to the caravan routes leading southwards into the far interior. The part immediately south of Aswân was named Wawat, which extended at the time of the New Empire at least down to Ibrim. Beyond this and occupying a region of uncertain limits were Irthet and Mazoi.

Mer-ne-re, a king of the Sixth Dynasty, states that he received in person at Aswân the homage of chiefs of Wawat, Irthet, and Mazoi; and that this was not an empty boast is shown by the fact, recorded in another inscription, that they supplied his officials with timber from the Sudân for shipbuilding. During his reign trade was actively developed by a family of Egyptian nobles at Elephantine who received the title of 'Keepers of the door of the South'. One of them has recorded that he was dispatched on no less than four commercial expeditions into the Sudân, on behalf first of Mer-ne-re and then of Pepi II. Under the latter king two campaigns against Wawat and Irthet were carried out by a noble whose title of 'Governor of foreign countries' suggests aspirations which Egypt was as yet quite unable to realize. For the disorganization which followed the fall of the Sixth Dynasty rendered all dreams of annexation chimerical. It was only on the accession, several hundred years later, of the powerful house of Amenemhat and Sesostris that schemes of territorial expansion became practical. From that date, 2000 or 2500 B. C., may be said to begin the history of Lower Nubia. It has become a province of Egypt.

During the Twelfth Dynasty the political boundary of Egypt was shifted more than 200 miles south of Aswân ; and the frontier fortresses were placed beyond the Second Cataract instead of at the First. The whole intervening country was entirely subjugated. *Lower Nubia as a province of Egypt.*

An unpublished list of place-names, in the possession of Mr. Alan Gardiner, shows that between the southern frontier and Elephantine there were twelve Egyptian forts. One of these twelve forts was south of Semneh and six more lay between it and the Second Cataract. The eighth was Behen (Halfa), between which and Ibrim there were two more. Ibrim itself, of which there will be much to say in a subsequent volume, is mentioned under the name of Miam, and next after it comes Beki, the modern Kubbân. The distribution is significant and suggests that the neighbourhood of the Second Cataract was insecure, but that between Kubbân and the First Cataract it was unnecessary to plant forts.

It must remain for the present an open question whether the influence of Egyptian civilization kept pace with the progress of Egyptian arms. It may well be that the people of Wawat remained almost unaffected by the conquest, except in so far as they were compelled to pay tribute to their masters. And until their actual sites have been explored, it would be rash to speculate on the character or importance even of the actual Egyptian colonies. It is certain, however, that they were few in number, and that nothing like an Egyptianization of Lower Nubia took place at this date. But under the New Empire, between 1500 and 1200 B. C., the foreign Egyptian element was strongly reinforced. Splendid temples were erected at many places; and the government of a territory which extended nominally as far south as Napata on the Fourth Cataract was entrusted to a viceroy with the titles of 'Governor of the South Countries king's son of Cush'. We are concerned with what is only a small part of the extensive dominions of this viceroy, namely, with the southern half of that region between the First and Second Cataracts which is now called Lower Nubia.

Visitors who come to Lower Nubia will remember the great temple of Kalabsheh, the classical Talmis, which is 42 miles south of Aswân and 629 miles from Cairo. It is a useful reference-point for geography, since Kalabsheh is situated precisely on the line of the tropic of Cancer. Seventy miles further up stream is Korosko, where the Nile bends back at an acute angle, forming a reach eight miles long, in which it flows from north to south like the Mesopotamian river which seemed so paradoxical to the Egyptians. At Dirr, now the assize town of Lower Nubia, the river resumes its normal direction, so that boats sailing to the Second Cataract are again borne on their way by the north wind which blows continuously for weeks during the winter season. On the left bank, and almost opposite Dirr, stands the well-known temple of Amadeh, the inscriptions in which show that it dates from at least the time of Thothmes III. *Arcika, the district between Korosko and Amadeh.*

It is with the district comprised in the bend between Korosko and Amadeh, the limits of which are almost exactly conterminous with the El Riga, Er Riga, or Arcika¹ of modern maps, that this first volume of our reports deals. There are no documentary records of any kind, and the archaeologist has no easy task when he essays to fill the blank. Those who a few years ago were maintaining that no ancient cities or cemeteries were to be found in Lower Nubia would certainly not have supposed that Arcika deserved much attention. And yet it has proved that the whole district is full of the records of antiquity.

Our ancient sites are on the left bank of the Nile. On the opposite bank Korosko is historically important as the starting-place of one of the chief caravan routes to the Sudân. The desert road there quits the Nile; which trends west and south from latitude 22½ to latitude 18, and then flows back again north-eastwards to latitude 19½ at Abu Hamid. By cutting off the great bend an expedition can save two-thirds of the distance to Abu Hamid

¹ We have adopted the form Arcika for our title as being easier for purposes of quotation.

and avoid the difficulties presented by the navigation of three cataracts. And so the desert route may have been trodden by many an army.

Now, however, it has fallen almost into disuse. For though no railway has been built between the First and Second Cataracts, which are still connected only by a service of post-boats, the selection of Wady Halfa as the railhead for the Sudân has robbed Korosko of all its former importance. A prosperous village only a few years ago, it is now declining into an insignificant hamlet, important only in the eyes of devout inhabitants as a place of pilgrimage to the tomb of a noted saint. But no change of fortune can deprive the landscape of its singular beauty. The heights near the shrine of the saint are grouped like those of Snowdon. Towards sunset, rich purples tint the blackened rocks of the arid plain and illuminate the deep hollows of the hills; ravine and cliff are cut into deep relief by the fierce rays of the evening light (Pl. 1 a, b, Pl. 2 a). Yet the country is desolate and barren. Those who have seen it may appreciate the witty description of Lower Nubia as a land 200 miles long and 12 feet wide. For the strip of green cultivation extends literally only a few yards from the water on the left bank; and though there are thin lines of palm-trees with patches of corn and lupins, yet it seems incredible that such small crops can support the population of several villages. The wide river flows with a violent current against which no sailing-boat can make its way, and the navigable channel winds in and out between sand-banks which are for ever shifting. The name of 'the Bad Water' which an ancient Egyptian applied to the First Cataract would be quite appropriate for the reach in which our small dahabiyeh made Odyssean wanderings in the year of grace 1907.

*Site of the
Nubian
Castle at El
Gezireh.*

The first of our sites in the Areika district is most easily approached from Amadeh. For a distance of three miles south of the temple the desert of the left bank is bordered by a low line of flat sandstone rocks, behind which rise the mountains of the near horizon. Then suddenly their monotonous outline is interrupted by a wide sandy valley through which a road leads up on to higher ground to rejoin the river again below Korosko. Over the entrance of this valley, and only a quarter of a mile from the water's edge, rises a steep bluff (Pl. 2 b, 2 c). The smoother surfaces of its western side are covered with rude drawings of men and animals, probably of Roman date, and in one place there are several lines of Middle Empire hieroglyphs. A great boulder which must have broken from its bed, like others near it, some thousands of years ago, stands in a conspicuous position midway between hill and river. It can be detected in the photograph (Pl. 2 b), immediately behind the mizzen mast of the dahabiyeh. It is covered with crowded hieroglyphs amongst which on the south side can be read the cartouche and royal titles of a king—Si-Ra An—not mentioned in the usual lists, and on the west side the cartouche of Sesostriis III the first great conqueror of Nubia.

The finding of these inscriptions raised the hope that there might be buildings or other remains of the Twelfth Dynasty in the neighbourhood. Nothing, however, was discovered which could be referred to that date, though a remarkable building of the time of Thothmes III was disinterred from the sand about a hundred yards to the north of the inscribed boulders. A line of unhewn sandstone slabs planted edgewise in the ground was evidently designed to connect the boulder with the south-eastern corner of the building. Part of the space between this line and the river is occupied by the foundations of houses of another style and date. One well-preserved example of these stands just outside the western wall of the Eighteenth Dynasty building; and there is another more ruined a little to the south (see Pl. 13). These houses are of the Roman period and may be dated to the first three centuries A. D. They represent a most remarkable development of local civilization, the existence of which was unsuspected until this year. The principal records of it were obtained from a site two miles nearer Korosko and will be described in later chapters.

CHAPTER II

A NUBIAN CASTLE OF THE EIGHTEENTH DYNASTY NEAR AMADEH

It was in the winter of 1904-5, when the project of raising the Aswân dam was being seriously debated, that one of the present writers made a preliminary tour of investigation in Lower Nubia. In the summer of 1906, Mr. A. E. P. Weigall, the newly appointed Inspector of Antiquities for the southern division of Egypt, made a thorough examination of the whole country between the First and Second Cataracts, a thing which had been done by no official before him. Mr. Weigall's report was not issued until December, 1907, but he generously placed at our disposal all the information that he had acquired. The selection of the site of El Gezireh near Amadeh was due partly to his advice, partly to our own previous observations. That the place had been occupied in ancient days was evident from the existence of three small cemeteries, on knolls at the northern end of the bluff. The position of one of these is indicated by the letter T in Plate 2 c. In the same Plate the letter N shows the position of the castle, the building itself being concealed behind the rubbish heaps thrown out in the process of excavating. The great inscribed boulder, first discovered by Mr. Weigall, to which reference was made in the last chapter, lies between the castle and a modern native house, which can be seen on the right of the picture.

The cemeteries had been thoroughly pillaged by a dealer some years before our arrival. He had left untouched, however, a place where two or three curved lines of small unhewn boulders rising a few inches above the sand could hardly suggest to him that saleable curiosities would be concealed.

This, therefore, was the point at which we began work in January, 1907. There was not the slightest indication of any considerable building, and when we started to dig it was in the expectation of finding a new local type of grave sunk only a short depth in the rock. Beginning, however, according to correct precedent, with what looked like the outside boundary of these graves, we were astonished, after a few hours, to find a massive rubble-built wall a metre thick and still a metre and a half high. It was plain that this could be no cemetery, and we proceeded to extend our clearings by following the line of the wall and searching for corners. Thus more and more construction was gradually discovered, until, at the end of about six weeks' work with a gang of forty men, we had laid bare a building of quite unique character.

It measured 30 metres along the western exterior wall, which was the part first unearthed, and 80 metres from west to east. The plan is unlike that of any building known in Egypt; and the construction, in which rubble and unhewn stone are extensively used, is of a style unknown in Egypt though common in Nubia at the present day. It is a solecism amongst ancient buildings, and its origin and purpose have been difficult to determine. We were at first inclined to regard it as a refuge-town built to shelter Egyptian colonists on the occasion of any rising amongst the native population. Thothmes IV has recorded in an inscription at Konosso that he built at least one town in Nubia with that intention. But more critical examination shows this explanation to be unsatisfactory. The dimensions and the arrangement of the interior suggest rather a more or less fortified dwelling inhabited permanently by a small number of people. The term 'castle', therefore, seems the most appropriate. And it may be called a *Nubian* castle not only because the style of construction is non-Egyptian, but also because the very great majority of the objects found in it are of African and not of Egyptian character.

El Gezireh.

*Discovery of
the buried
Castle.*

Fortunately, however, a few genuinely Egyptian products were interspersed, from which it is possible to fix the general period as that of the Eighteenth Dynasty, and the exact date within a small margin of error as the reign of Thothmes III.

*General
Description
of the Castle.*

The castle, of which the best general idea may be obtained from the photograph in Plate 3 a, is divided into three well-marked parts, lettered A, B, C in the plan (see Pl. 5). They rise in tiers above one another; the floor level of B 10 is about a metre above the highest level of A, while C again is slightly above B. The general ground-level, moreover, is on a slope throughout the entire building, so that the eastern rooms of C stand 3 metres higher than the western rooms of A (cf. section in Pl. 5).

A substantial exterior wall of rough rubble protected by two massive buttresses at the north-western corner encloses A and B, the two lower divisions, in an irregular parallelogram. In C, however, the ground-plan is changed, and the only systematic construction in that part is the series of brick-built chambers at the eastern end. These chambers are enclosed on the east and on part of the south sides by a rubble wall which is of better construction than any other of this sort in the building, but is not in line with the exterior wall of A and B. It stands to a height of 1 metre from its foundations like the western exterior wall of A.

The original height of the exterior and interior walls throughout the castle was of course originally greater than it appears now. It was more than 1.50 m., judging from the evidence of the unbroken slabs which remain in several places, and from the jamb of the door leading into C 23, which was 1.55 m. in height. The walls had collapsed, and for several weeks our workmen were employed in laboriously carrying away by hand some thousands of large stones which encumbered the interior and obscured the plan. When this had been done, however, it was possible to recover the greater part of the original arrangement, which was remarkably well preserved. The construction of the rubble walls is of some technical interest. In places they are almost of the type of concrete, the matrix being mud. They have a good mud rendering or protective facing, which, however, has sometimes disappeared. Most of the rubble walls have chips of stone pressed into the mud surface, like the original kind of 'opus insertum' used by the Romans.

*Western
Division,
termed A.*

Division A (see plan in Pl. 6). The general method of construction employed in this division is that of a series of square piers, sometimes of brick, sometimes of rubble, supporting a roof of wattle and mud. Traces of such a roof were found amongst the débris on the floor in several places. Partitions of rubble or brick were erected to connect the piers with one another and with the exterior walls according as convenience suggested. In this way the interior was divided up into a number of compartments, generally of very small dimensions, which, to judge from the nature of their contents, served as the dwellings of a poorer class of the inhabitants. The flooring was of beaten mud. In the outer wall of A 19 are still visible three windows of almost square shape; in other parts the rooms were probably lighted from the roof or from interior openings.

An inspection of the plan shows that little attention was paid to exactness of alignment either in main or auxiliary walls. In many places, too, the actual construction is slipshod and careless. But that this is not due to want of skill is shown by the excellence of the workmanship in some other parts. For instance, the piers, whether of rubble or of brick, are admirably bonded and are built with great solidity.

As regards the relations and purpose of the rooms in Division A, it should be observed that rooms 1-14 (illustrated in Pl. 3 b) form apparently a single block or insula. The chief approach to them is that which leads in from the north-east corner at the point where A and B are connected by a step. There is also a ramp, lettered A 3, leading up from the interior on to the western exterior wall. The southern half of A, which includes A 15 to A 21, is of a different arrangement and shows no clear system of rooms. It is connected with the block nos. 1-14 by

an open passage leading through no. 11 and no. 14. Along its southern and western sides runs a channel 0.55 m. wide and 0.30 m. deep sloping down to the south-western corner.

Evidences of occupation and domestic life were found in both halves of Division A. Rooms A 8 and A 16 were furnished with clay divans like those used in modern Egyptian and Nubian houses; and on that of A 16 stood a large vessel of unbaked clay. At one end of the same room were brick bins, in one of which a broken household pot was still in position. Between A 15 and A 16 an arc of clay a few centimetres high, built over a stone flagging, is probably such a casing for a handmill as may be seen in any modern Nubian village; and the clay semi-circle in A 4 no doubt served a similar purpose. In A 19 were several circular sandstone pounders, and similar pounders were found in parts of the insula A 1-A 14. The nether stone of a sandstone corn-rubber was found in each of the four rooms A 6, 8, 12, 18. In the floor of A 21 was buried a large pot of rough red ware with incised ornament (not illustrated).

Broken animal bones and charcoal were found at various points. The charcoal lay in a very thick deposit at the floor level and was interspersed with the rubbish down to the level of natural sand. Part of it is no doubt the product of ordinary cooking fires, but part may very possibly be the result of the burning of wooden posts, roof timbers, or other accessories of the structure, during a general or partial conflagration. That a conflagration sufficient to destroy any inflammable furniture occurred at some period during the occupation of the lower tier of buildings termed A is indisputable. For in A 2, 3, 4, 5, the plastered faces of the walls and piers were burned red in an irregular line which was certainly not produced by any cooking-fire. It may be remarked in passing that no hearths were found in the buildings of any part of A. That the conflagration took place before the houses were disused is shown by the fact that brick partitions have sometimes been built up against the walls reddened by fire.

There will be occasion to note presently that conflagrations also occurred in Divisions B and C of the castle.

A stout wall of rubble 0.35 m. wide and rising 1.0 m. to 1.50 m. from the floor of A separates it from B. The wall is supported on the lower side at intervals of from 3 to 4 metres by brick or rubble buttresses and forms a retainer for the platform on which B is built.

Division B. The general methods of construction in B are identical with those employed in A. Four of the original piers were still standing, but the walls attaching to them had been so much destroyed that in only one case, B 9, could the position of a room connected with the piers be determined.

*Central
Division,
termed B.*

But in Division B another principle was used in addition to that of the pier and screen. It is illustrated by the drawing in Plate 4 a, and may be described as an arrangement in plain screen form of unhewn sandstone slabs set on end and bedded into the ground. The slabs were placed edge to edge, and any space between them was filled up with mud and chips of stone. The average height to which such slabs rose was about 0.80 m., but at least sometimes a second row had been added on the top. Rooms constructed on this model are B 5, 6, 7, 8. One well-preserved room, B 4, is built of rubble like the rooms in A. This room has the same floor level as A, which is appreciably lower than that of the other rooms in the division.

In B 3 the floor level is 0.50 m. above that of B 4 and 0.50 m. below that of the adjoining rooms; two high steps lead up from it over a stone sill at its eastern end. In B 10 is a pavement of stone flags, on which in one place there is part of a clay ring like those observed in Division A.

Part of the northern exterior wall of B is built not of solid rubble but of two skins of stone slabs, the interval between which is filled with rubble so rough as to be almost classifiable as concrete.

East of the pier which is shown in the centre of B the whole of that division has been

so damaged by fire that few traces of construction remained. Only masses of powdery ash marked approximately some points where walls had once stood, and any attempt at theoretical reconstruction was hopeless.

All through division B, and all through division A, were found immense quantities of broken potsherds belonging to several types of ware which will be described in a later chapter. There were also many animal bones, some clay stoppers, and clay and pottery figurines (Pl. 8). In B 4 were found two ornamental scarabs of Eighteenth Dynasty type (Pl. 9, Ph. 4061 and 4604); and at a point in the central part of B was found the half of another scarab of the same date (Pl. 9, Ph. 4062).

*Eastern
Division,
termed C.*

The two divisions which have been described so far, A and B, compose a more or less homogeneous unit. The third, however, C, has no organic relation to the other two, although it is connected with them in such a way as to make an apparent whole. Division C exhibits two strikingly discordant ideals of building, the one being that of a formal disciplined architect, the other that of an untutored savage. The quadrilateral of chambers comprised in C 7 to 15 is the work of the first; the congeries of amorphous structures C 1-5, 16, 17, 22 is the product of the second. These represent the extreme types between which A and B might be ranked in an estimate of their architectural value. That there is, however, no appreciable difference between them in date is proved by the fact that objects of the Eighteenth Dynasty were found in all divisions alike, and in none were there found objects attributable to any other period.

Viewing the plan as a whole, it is difficult to resist the suggestion that the boundary wall which skirts C 22, C 20, and C 19, originally formed part of a quadrilateral obtained by producing the north and south walls of B. For if we allow, what is sufficiently evident, that the alignments of these Nubian builders were only approximate, this boundary wall would be a consistent continuation of the plan of A and B, whereas it bears no sort of intelligible relation to the quadrilateral C 7-C 15. The only strong objection that could be urged against such an interpretation is that the boundary wall in question has been built with far greater skill than is exhibited in the lower building. The objection, however, would be fully met by supposing that the boundary wall of C needed repairing, not necessarily very long after it was built, and that more skilful builders were employed upon it.

Whether this suggestion as to the original plan of the castle be accepted or not, it is unquestionable that the brick chambers C 7-15 were erected subsequently to A and B taken as a whole.

As regards the buildings extending from C 1 to C 17 they might be described by any one who has seen the work of negroes in Central or South Africa as typical 'Kaffir' work. The entire want of system or coordination, the absence of any controlling design, the tendency to build in an arc instead of a straight line, and the addiction to circles which are never circular, are characteristic negro traits (cf. Pl. 3 c).

Nevertheless, Division C may be treated and may perhaps be regarded as a single unit. The quadrilateral C 7-C 15 with its carefully built four-sided chambers was probably the residential part. The amorphous chambers between it and the wall joining C 4 and C 17 were probably outhouses and store-rooms. A weak wall of irregular outline unites them to the main divisions, and a narrow door leads into C 23 from the outside.

In C 23 a clay segment on the floor represents the remains of one of those mud cylindrical receptacles used still in modern Nubian houses to contain objects of all kinds; a large jar of unbaked clay was sunk in the floor.

The whole area east of C 2 is built on a platform, which is supported by an irregular but strong retaining wall between B and C. The southern side of C is entirely undefended, and it may be remarked that in C there is no trace of that fortress character which is so

distinctive in A and B. On the floor level of C 16 was found a scarab of Thothmes III, and close beside it a celt of green polished stone exactly similar to those which Cairene dealers have been selling in recent years as 'prehistoric'. *Eastern Division, termed C.*

The most remarkable room in the series C 7 to C 15 is the large oblong compartment numbered C 14. All along the eastern side of it runs a brick bench 0.45 m. wide and from 0.20 m. to 0.30 m. high, in which there are 24 hemispherical cavities averaging 0.17 m. in diameter. Nothing was found in them which would explain their purpose, but it is only natural to suppose that large jars stood in them. It was, in fact, the castle cellar, or perhaps a sort of Biergarten within the castle walls. The round table at the north-eastern corner may have served to stand the jars on from time to time. This room C 14 is connected with C 15 by a wide opening divided into two very unequal portions by a square brick pier.

In contrast to what was observed in other divisions of the castle, the rooms in C are liberally furnished with hearths. In C 8 a semicircular hearth has been built over a fireplace composed of four rectangular compartments. In C 7 there are two rectangular hearths and in C 21 there is one, while between C 10 and C 11 there is a flat hearth. In C 10 and C 11 there are brick benches. Besides the traces of fire which were naturally to be seen on the walls adjoining the fireplaces there were also traces of a general conflagration all through this series of rooms.

Some well-preserved fragments of the roof of C which had collapsed showed that it consisted, like the roof in other divisions of the building, of wattle covered over with reeds and mud.

This is the most intelligible description that we are able to give of the Borj, as it would be called in North Africa, or semi-fortified residence of a native Nubian chief at the time of the Eighteenth Dynasty. We must suppose, though the mere appearance of his castle would hardly suggest it, that he was a man who had acquired some knowledge of Egyptian art and culture.

At the north-eastern corner of the building, in a hole of the boundary wall, he had buried ten mud-sealings to commemorate the foundation (Ph. 4079-4080 in Pl. 9). They represent a conqueror wearing the Nubian ostrich feather, who holds a crouching captive by a cord. Above the captive at the level of the chief's shoulder is the figure of an animal like a dog. The conception and execution of the work are quite Egyptian in character.

CHAPTER III

CATALOGUE OF THE OBJECTS FOUND IN THE NUBIAN CASTLE, PERIOD OF THOTHMES III

THE antiquities which were found in excavating the castle described in the last chapter are not, perhaps, striking in character, but they are of very considerable archaeological interest. All of them with the exception of two of the inscribed clay sealings are now in the University Museum of Philadelphia. So that an inventory of them will be at the same time a catalogue of part of the Museum Collection. We will therefore enumerate the specimens in order.

Throughout these volumes the letters Ph. preceding a number denote that the specimen is in the Philadelphia Museum, while the number by which it is described is the same as that under which it is catalogued in the Museum Collection. When a number is not preceded by the letters Ph. it is to be inferred that the specimen in question is at Cairo.

- Ph. 4001-4018. Illustrated in Plate 8 on scale of about one-fourth.**
- 4001 } Small figures of animals in unbaked clay.
 - 4002 } Similar figures have been found in pre-
 - 4003 } dynastic graves in Egypt, and are often
 - } made by negro tribes in South Africa.
 - 4004 Rudely executed model of a human figure in unbaked clay.
 - 4005 Head of a bird in unbaked clay.
 - 4006 Head of a bird in slightly baked clay.
 - 4007 Part of an animal in slightly baked clay.
 - 4008 Horn of an animal in slightly baked clay.
 - 4009 Well-modelled figure of a sheep in unbaked clay.
 - 4010 Part of a human figure, like 4004, in unbaked clay.
 - 4011 Half of a comb (used to incise pottery?) in soft stone.
 - 4012 Object in unbaked clay, perhaps used as a piece in a game.
 - 4013 Disk in unbaked clay, perhaps used as a piece in a game, or perhaps as a plug for water-jar (cf. 4602).
 - 4014 } Objects in unbaked clay resembling 4012.
 - 4015 }
 - 4016 }
 - 4017 } Disk in unbaked clay, used like 4013.
 - 4018 } Spindle-whorl in unbaked clay.
- Ph. 4019-4032. Illustrated in Plate 8 on scale of about one-third.**
- 4019 } Human figures in unbaked clay, some of
 - 4020 } them very African in style.
 - 4021 }
 - 4022 }
 - 4023 }
 - 4024 }
 - 4025 Head carved in soft stone.
 - 4026 Upper part of male body in red pottery; the incised patterns probably represent tattooing.
 - 4027 } Human figures in unbaked clay.
 - 4028 }
 - 4029 Object of unbaked clay.
 - 4030 } Human foot, wearing sandal, in red pottery.
 - 4032 }
 - 4031 Unknown object, in clay.
- Ph. 4033-4057, not illustrated.**
- 4033 } Small objects in unbaked clay.
 - 4034 }
 - 4035 A fragment of thin bronze or copper.
 - 4036-4041 Small objects in unbaked clay, similar to those illustrated in Plate 8.
 - 4042 Small fragment of an alabaster vase, type unrecognizable.
 - 4043 Fragment of bone, probably used for smoothing the faces of pots in manufacture.
 - 4044 Pottery spindle-whorl.
 - 4045 } Fragments of pottery with incised designs.
 - 4046 }
 - 4047 }
 - 4048 Small object in unbaked clay.
 - 4049 Small fragment of obsidian.
 - 4050 } Figurines in unbaked clay, similar to those
 - 4051 } illustrated in Plate 8.
 - 4052 }
 - 4053 }
 - 4054 Small round stamp of sandstone.
 - 4055 Clay imprint of seal; not legible.
 - 4056 Figurine in unbaked clay.
 - 4057 Large globular bead of fine blue glaze, Eighteenth Dynasty type.
- Ph. 4058. Scarab of Men-kheper-Ra (Thothmes III)**

- in green glaze found in chamber C 16, illustrated in Plate 9.
- Ph. 4059. Sandstone seal, pierced with ring at back for holding, not illustrated.
- Ph. 4060. Small horn in pottery like 4008, not illustrated.
- Ph. 4061. Ornamental scarab of green glaze with ankh sign but no name, Eighteenth Dynasty type, found in Chamber B 4, illustrated in Plate 9.
- Ph. 4062. Fragment of Eighteenth Dynasty scarab of green (?) glaze, scroll pattern but no name, found in central part of B, illustrated in Plate 9.
- Ph. 4063. Sandstone stamp with simple rectilinear pattern, not illustrated.
- Ph. 4064. Clay button not illustrated.
- Ph. 4065-4100. Not illustrated (except 4079-4081).
- 4065 } Clay impression from such a scarab as 4062.
- 4066 }
- 4067 } Fragments of pointed bone, probably used to
- 4068 } incise patterns on pots.
- 4069 }
- 4070 } Flint flake.
- 4071 } Fragment of black pottery shaped into comb,
- } perhaps for use in manufacture of pottery.
- 4072 } Small sandstone celt.
- 4073 } The celt of green stone which was found on
- } the ground level close to scarab Ph. 4058.
- 4074 } Matrix of stone from which flakes had been
- } struck.
- 4075 } Pottery spindle-whorl.
- 4076 } Chip of slate.
- 4077 }
- 4078 } Disks of unbaked clay like 4013 and 4017.
- }
- } Oval seal-impressions in unbaked clay,
- } measuring 0.090 m. x 0.070 m.
- 4079 }
- 4080 } They represent a man, recognizable by the
- 4081 } feather on his head, as a Nubian chief,
- } holding a crouching captive by a rope.
- } Illustrated in Plate 9.
- 4082 } Large globular bead of blue glaze, Eighteenth
- } Dynasty type. The glaze is of exactly the
- } same shade as that on an Amenhotep
- } scarab found in a neighbouring grave.
- 4083 }
- 4084 } Small globular beads of same style and kind.
- 4085 } Half of a large barrel-shaped carnelian bead.
- 4086 } Large discoid carnelian bead.
- 4087 } A green glaze bead.
- 4088 } A chip of ivory.
- 4089 }
- 4090 }
- 4091 }
- 4092 } Green glaze beads.
- 4093 }
- 4094 }
- 4095 }
- 4096 } Two odd halves of two ovoid-oblong alabaster
- 4097 } slabs.
- 4098 } Matrix from which flint flakes had been
- } struck, found a foot below the top surface.
- 4099 } Large rough stone implements found on the
- 4100 } top surface.
- Ph. 4101-4121. Illustrated in Plate 10. Fragments of hand-made pottery baked in an open fire. Interesting on account of the incised designs.
- Ph. 4122-4136. Illustrated in Plate 10. Fragments of hand-made pottery baked in an open fire. Of special interest as being identical in technique and in form with Predynastic Egyptian 'black-topped red' pottery.
- Ph. 4137-4158. Illustrated in Plate 11. Fragments of hand-made pottery baked in an open fire. The fabric is identical with that of the 'Rough' Predynastic ware of Egypt.
- Ph. 4159-4180. Illustrated in Plate 11. Fragments of pottery of several fabrics which resemble one another in being all wheel-made and kiln-burned. They are all well-known Egyptian pots of the Eighteenth Dynasty period, and as such constitute a separate class, viz. *Egyptian Imports*.
- Ph. 4181-4191. Illustrated in Plate 12. Fragments of a ware which is hand-made and has been baked in an open fire. It is of great interest as resembling in the combination of technique and design some pottery of the Protodynastic and of the Thirteenth Dynasty periods in Egypt, and some pottery of the Neolithic and Bronze ages in Europe.
- Ph. 4192-4200. Illustrated in Plate 12. Fragments of hand-made ware baked in an open fire. The pots are all of single type, viz. gigantic basins like those used for burial in the Protodynastic age.
- Ph. 4200-4600. Not illustrated. Fragments of pottery belonging to all the kinds described above.
- Ph. 4601-4603. Not illustrated.
- 4601 } A small pot of class 4a with zigzag lines
- } punched on the upper part.
- 4602 } A large conical pot of class 4a with chevron
- } pattern punched on the neck and dots
- } punched over the body. An oval hole of
- } about an inch diameter had been cut in
- } the body of it and stopped with a plug
- } made of a sherd of Eighteenth Dynasty drab
- } ware.
- 4603 } A bowl of 'black-topped red' class.
- Ph. 4604-4609. Illustrated in Plate 9.
- 4604 } A scarab of green glaze, found in chamber
- } B 4. Illustrated in Plate 9.
- 4605 } Clay impression of a scarab-seal, found in
- } chamber B 4. Illustrated in Plate 9.

12 CATALOGUE OF OBJECTS FOUND IN THE NUBIAN CASTLE

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>4606 Clay impression of a seal, found in chamber C 1. Illustrated in Plate 9.</p> <p>4607 }
4608 } Clay impressions of seals, found in chamber
4609 } C 14. Illustrated in Plate 9.</p> <p>Ph. 4610-4657. Not illustrated.</p> <p>4610 Clay impression of a scarab-seal with scroll-design of which details are illegible, found in C 17-18.</p> <p>4611 }
4612 } Clay impressions of seals, details illegible.
4613 }
4614 }
4615 }</p> <p>4616 Clay impression of a scarab-seal with scroll design and ankh, found in C 17-18.</p> <p>4617 }
4618 } Clay impressions of seals, details illegible.
4619 }</p> <p>4620 Two clay caps.</p> <p>4621 }
to } Clay animals and figurines similar to those
4640 } illustrated in Plate 8.</p> | <p>4641 Diminutive pot of unbaked clay.</p> <p>4642 Fragment of rough pottery with rude incised drawing of man.</p> <p>4643 Clay figurine of a woman.</p> <p>4644 Clay figurine of a sheep.</p> <p>4645 Small human head modelled in unbaked clay.</p> <p>4646 Small circular clay disk (spindle-whorl?).</p> <p>4647 The pottery plug belonging to 4602.</p> <p>4648 Illegible clay impression.</p> <p>4649 Small bone ring.</p> <p>4650 Blue glass bead found in chamber A 16.</p> <p>4651 Large globular green glaze bead of Eighteenth Dynasty type, found in chamber B 4.</p> <p>4652 Green glaze amulet of New Empire type, found in chamber B 4.</p> <p>4653 Core of a green glaze bead of type of 4651, found in chamber C 14.</p> <p>4654 }
4655 } Duplicates of the large oval clay seal-impres-
4656 } sions which are illustrated in Plate 9 (nos.
4657 } 4079-4080).</p> |
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CHAPTER IV

A STUDY OF THE POTTERY FOUND IN THE NUBIAN CASTLE, PERIOD OF THOTHMES III

THE pottery of the Eighteenth Dynasty castle near Amadeh presents by itself a very interesting and valuable study. As generally happens on the sites of dwellings and towns, the vessels were nearly all broken; but the thousands of fragments enable us to restore in imagination the principal forms, and to decide the important questions of the technique and processes employed in manufacture.

*Dating of
the Pottery
by Egyptian
Wares.*

A representative series of these fragments is reproduced in our Plates 10, 11, 12. A small number of examples can be recognized immediately as being identical with well-known Egyptian pots of the period to which the building of the castle is assigned. They are those which are numbered as 4159-4180. Even without the evidence of the scarabs of Thothmes III, these pieces would have sufficed to date the castle within certain rather wide limits: and we had in fact fixed its date provisionally from the pottery alone even before the discovery of scarabs.

For such wheel-made kiln-burned buff-coloured ware as is represented by Nos. 4160, 4162, 4164, 4165, 4169 is not found earlier than the Twelfth Dynasty. It occurs in the Eighteenth Dynasty, and the use of the ware may continue into the Nineteenth; but the particular shapes here shown are characteristic of the Eighteenth, and not of any later dynasty. Again, while the wheel-made kiln-burned red pots represented by Nos. 4167, 4170, 4171, 4173, 4174, 4175, 4180, belong, indeed, to a class of ware the period of which is not so limited, yet these particular shapes and incised decorations are typical of the Twelfth to Eighteenth Dynasties inclusive, and of no earlier or later period so far as our own knowledge extends.

Similarly the form of the wheel-made kiln-burned ringstands 4178, 4179 is quite distinctive, and could scarcely be earlier than the Twelfth or much later than the Eighteenth Dynasty.

So that on the evidence of pottery alone the site might safely have been dated to a time not earlier than the Twelfth and not later than the Eighteenth Dynasty. But the pottery alone would not have admitted of exact dating within narrower limits; for the wares and the shapes used by the potters of the full Twelfth Dynasty differ very little from those used in the early Eighteenth. The subject has not up to the present been completely studied, so that while we should certainly have inclined to assign the collection of Egyptian pottery viewed as a whole to the Eighteenth rather than to the Twelfth Dynasty, yet we could not have excluded the possibility of the earlier date. Other evidence was needed to delimit the period more exactly, and fortunately this was supplied by the scarabs.

For archaeological purposes it was of great importance to fix the period beyond all question, as in addition to these well-known Egyptian pots we discovered a large number of others, the independent dating of which might have been a matter of extreme difficulty. These pots, which compose the remainder of the collection illustrated in Plates 10, 11, 12, are undoubtedly of local Nubian manufacture, for some of them are of types or of sub-varieties quite

unknown in Egypt; while others are indeed similar to pottery found in Egypt, but only to pottery, which has always been recognized as an imported product.

The Technique of Nubian Pottery, Ancient and Modern.

In respect of technique the Nubian wares differ completely from the Egyptian, and this is a point of great importance. They are hand-made, although the wheel had been in general use throughout Egypt from the beginning of the First Dynasty. And they have been burned not in a kiln but in an open fire, though the kiln had also been known in Egypt from remote times.

That such primitive methods should have been employed in Nubia very many centuries after they had been discarded in Egypt is thoroughly characteristic of that conservative country. At the present time the very same processes are employed in the villages a little south of Aswân, though unknown further north. And it may be remarked that the haematitic bowls manufactured by the women at such villages as Umm Barakât in Lower Nubia are indistinguishable except by their greater thickness from the 'polished red' bowls found in cemeteries of the Nagada type.

We will first classify and discuss the specimens of pottery figured in Plates 10, 11, 12, and then proceed to discuss the technical processes in greater detail. It will be found that the discovery of the process used in firing gives a quite new view of the history of early pottery, and explains the genesis of the famous 'black-topped' ware of the Predynastic period.

Egyptian Imports.

Nos. 4159-4180 inclusive. All made on the wheel and burned in the kiln. They may be divided into two classes according to the clay which has been used, viz.

1. *Pots made of a grey-burning clay.* These are represented in our plates by Nos. 4160 to 4165 and 4169. The surface is often decorated with small embossed studs of clay as in 4162 and 4165 or with rude patterns incised with a stick or straw while the clay was soft.

2. *Pots made of a red-burning clay.* Represented by Nos. 4167, 4170, 4171, 4173, 4174, 4175, 4177, 4178, 4179, 4180. The bowls are commonly decorated with wavy lines incised with straws or sticks while the clay was soft.

No. 4176 is an interesting specimen, as it is a well-known Egyptian shape and wheel-made, but has been burned not in a kiln but in an open fire. It may possibly have been sent up to Nubia from Egypt unbaked and then fired in the same open fire with the Nubian pots.

Nos. 4161 and 4166 are of a red-burning clay which has been faced with a slip of grey clay to make it resemble the buff-coloured ware. This practice is continued after the Eighteenth Dynasty.

Local Nubian Wares.

Nos. 4101-4158 inclusive and Nos. 4181-4200. All made by hand and burned in an open fire.

They may be divided into two main classes, viz.

1. *Non-Haematitic*, viz. Nos. 4101-4105, 4109-4111, 4137-4158, and 4181-4200 except 4187.

2. *Haematitic* (i. e. coated with a wash or facing of a red ferruginous earth), viz. Nos. 4106-4108, 4112-4120, 4122-4136, 4187.

(1) *The Non-Haematitic* may be subdivided according to the colour produced in the process of firing. Thus Nos. 4101, 4102, 4103, 4109, 4110, 4111, 4181-4186, 4188, 4189 have been burned completely black both inside and out in a smoky fire; the blackening is no doubt an effect desired.

In 4105 and 4190 the original purpose may have been to produce a black ware, but the intensity of the fire has burned the black out again and left the outside surface reddish. In 4104 and 4191 the black has been completely burned out, so that the inside and outside surface is actually red. These two pieces, therefore, might be almost placed in the next subdivision, viz. Nos. 4137-4158.

These are pots which have been burned in an open fire that was allowed to die down until the fuel consumed itself without smoke and died down to embers. The effect of this was to burn the surface to the natural brick-red with little or no blackening. *Local Nubian Wares.*

Intermediate between these two subdivisions may be placed Nos. 4192-4200, which are peculiar owing to their great size. It may have been on account of their size that they were fired very carefully and not left longer than necessary. They were removed from the fire while it was still smoky, so that while none of them is wholly black many show a partial though probably unintentional blackening of the red surface. These were large circular vessels similar to those used sometimes for burial by the Protodynastic people.

Apart from the question of firing it should be noticed that the clay of these large circular vessels has a considerable admixture of vegetable fibre. This was put in with the intention of making the clay stable enough to withstand the strain of its own weight. Smaller vases and jars needed no such reinforcement. The clay of which they are composed is always (unless it chanced to be an unusually 'short' clay) mixed with a gritty substance, e.g. sand or powdered pottery, but that is done in order to prevent the cracking of the clay in drying or firing. It is an error to suppose that with vessels of ordinary dimensions the clay ever needed stiffening; this is not the object of adding sand or powdered pottery.

The patterns which appear on the Nubian pottery of both classes, haematitic and non-haematitic, have been incised on the wet or half-dried clay before firing, with a pointed instrument, with a deeply-notched stone, stick, or bone (e.g. 4101-4105), or they have been stamped on with a triangular point (e.g. 4182, 4184).

The subject of incised designs suggests a note on a group of specimens belonging partly to the Non-Haematitic and partly to the Haematitic classes. They are the fragments numbered 4181-4191. In the essentials of technique they do not differ from the other Nubian pots, that is to say they have been made by hand and burned in an open fire. Since they are found with so many other specimens for which the same processes have been employed, there is no doubt of their local Nubian origin, and yet they might easily have been mistaken for 'Mediterranean' imports had they occurred on any site in Egypt proper. And so it may be well to enter a caveat against the supposition that the incised black vases and bowls which are found in Egypt in the Protodynastic period and in the Thirteenth Dynasty are necessarily of 'Mediterranean' origin. There may have been two widely distant centres of manufacture. *With incised patterns.*

The specimens illustrated on Plate 12 (Nos. 4181-4191) vary in colour according to differences in the character of the fire in which they were burned. In some cases the fire has been one which emitted much smoke, and the smoke permeating the clay has blackened it all through, producing a surface which, when polished in the Nubian way with a pebble, is as lustrous as ebony or graphite (such are Nos. 4181 to 4186 inclusive and 4188). In others the interior only has been affected by smoke colour, while the exterior surface remains red, viz. either the natural red of the clay (as in Nos. 4190, 4191) or a more brilliant red due to haematitic slip. On the black-surfaced pieces the incised patterns are filled with a white substance that has been rubbed in after the vase has been fired. This white can be removed by brushing or by washing with water.

In one case (4185) there are traces showing that instead of white a red colouring matter, viz. haematite, was rubbed into the incisions. Another piece (4184) shows a new method in decorating. The incised patterns of the top zone are filled with white as usual, but in the second zone the large triangular panels are alternately incised and plain, and while the surface of the incised panels is left rough that of the plain panels has been carefully burnished. This burnishing might have been done with a piece of bone or pebble. On the black-topped haematitic vases described in the next section the burnished surface was no

Local Nubian Wares.

doubt produced by rubbing with a pebble when the surface of the clay had become almost but not quite dry and before the pot was put into the fire. This is the way in which the modern potters of Lower Nubia still burnish.

(2) *The Haematitic* wares are those which it is the special honour of the Nubian potter to have produced. Mere red-washed haematitic pots have been produced in many parts of the world, but nowhere else than in Egypt and Nubia (except in Cyprus under Egyptian influence) has this beautiful pottery been produced which has a lustrous black border to the red. It was a work of genius. The process by which this remarkable result was obtained has hitherto been wrongly explained. Mr. H. L. Mercer who discovered the secret describes the true genesis of the art in his notes below.

It is to be observed that in comparison with the Predynastic potters the Nubians of the Eighteenth Dynasty caste produced only a small variety of forms, chiefly bowls. There is at least a possible explanation, however, in the very circumstance that it was household pottery which they were producing. The pottery of Nagada and other Predynastic sites was obtained from graves, and graves are generally furnished with more handsome pots. The settlements of the Predynastic time have not yielded many varieties of form in pottery.

The occurrence of black-topped Haematitic ware at so late a date in Lower Nubia may well surprise those who are not familiar with that region. For this manufacture has generally been regarded as distinctive of a single period in Egypt, viz. the Predynastic. But it must be remembered that even in Egypt a 'black-topped red' ware almost identical with the Predynastic has been discovered sporadically on sites dated to between the Twelfth and Eighteenth Dynasties. The first place at which it was noted was Hou, in connexion with certain graves which Prof. W. M. Flinders Petrie has described under the awkward name of 'Pan Graves' in his volume on 'Diospolis Parva'. He pointed out that the furniture of these graves was not Egyptian in character, but that it resembled the work of the Predynastic people.

From this he inferred that the individuals buried in the 'Pan Graves' did not belong to the normal population of that part of Egypt, but to a foreign colony. And an examination of their skulls and skeletons showed this inference to be correct, and showed further that this foreign colony was of definitely negro and negroid origin. It seems reasonable to conclude that it was composed of potters from Lower Nubia, who were brought in on purpose to exercise a peculiar art long forgotten in Egypt, but still preserved in their own country between the First and Second Cataracts.

It was an art which certainly deserved to be perpetuated, for its products are incomparably finer than any which the Egyptian potter produced from the moment that he learned the use of the wheel. In the Middle and New Empires no beautiful pottery is made in Egypt; the only remarkable specimens are imported from other countries, generally from the Aegean. So that it would seem as though the negro and negroid peoples possessed a natural genius for pottery-making which was not shared by the Egyptians of non-negro stock. Seeing that there was a strong negroid element in the population even of Egypt proper during the Predynastic period it may well be that the fine pottery found in cemeteries of the Nagada type was manufactured by the negroid people. And we may even go further and suggest that much of the peculiar art of the Predynastic period in Egypt is actually the art of the African negroes.

The statement of classical authors that Ethiopia was the mother of Egypt was no doubt based on a misconception, but they may unwittingly have expressed an important truth. Later chapters of this volume will show that at any rate in Roman times the negroes of Lower Nubia had developed great skill in drawing and design.

We may conclude this chapter with Mr. H. L. Mercer's account of some experiments conducted, in the presence of one of the authors, at his own pottery works in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. The idea was suggested by a conversation on the practice obtaining among the modern potters in Lower Nubia, Algeria, the Congo, &c., of burning their pottery not in a kiln, but in an open fire. The difference between pottery which has been baked in a bonfire and that which has been baked in a kiln can be detected at a glance by any one who cares to compare the two. In the kiln-burned pottery there are none of those zones of discoloration which characterize the other, and in the body of the clay a homogeneous colour is produced throughout. An open fire must always be changing from a smoky to a smokeless heat, and so the colouring of body and of surface varies in different parts. But it was the discovery that the smoke in a bonfire could be regulated which gave the Nubian potter his opportunity, and Mr. H. L. Mercer by imitating his process has succeeded in producing the exact effects of which the Nubian potter must have been so proud. He says:—

*The Process
by which
Black-
Topped
Pottery is
produced.*

‘We burned within a stone circle of Nubian pattern, or upon an open level protected or not protected from the wind, with chopped straw, corncobs, fine sticks, soft coal, sawdust coarse and fine, and chopped corn stalks. We burned with clear or smoky fires. Regardless of the question of wares made with or without the potter's wheel, we polished with glass bottles instead of pebbles, we rubbed on red ochre (red oxide of iron, haematite, bol) mixed with olive oil, or pure.

‘We abundantly proved that our uncontrolled and therefore usually smoky bonfires burnt the clay in the variegated hues of grey, black, reddish, or buff, common to the ancient pottery of prehistoric America, Germany, and France. That a pebble polish upon a piece of half dry clay retains its lustre after the drying and burning of the clay. That a piece of clay smeared with red ochre will burn red in a moderately smoky bonfire where minus the ochre it will burn grey. And that a lustrous black unglazed pot, whether hand-made or wheel-made (the Bucchero of Ancient Etruria, the black pipe of modern Assiout, or the shining black bowl of the Hungarian peasant, the prehistoric Swiss Lake-dweller or the Modern Zuñi Indian), is reproduced with or without ochre by polishing the vessel with a pebble or its equivalent and smothering it when red hot with coarse sawdust, dry oats, or chipped corncobs.

‘Then having produced unglazed polished vases all black or all red, typical of the prehistoric pottery of ancient America, Europe, Africa, and Asia, we turned our attention particularly to a combination of the two-colour processes in one vessel, namely an explanation of the remarkable polished unglazed black-rimmed red wares brought from Nubia and peculiar to prehistoric Egypt and Cyprus.

‘After a number of failures the ware in question was produced as follows:—

‘Having made a pot of ferruginous clay which in a clear kiln fire would burn red, I rubbed red ochre diluted in water upon it with the hand when half dry. Immediately polishing the surface by rubbing with the circumference of a blown glass bottle in lieu of a pebble, I next thoroughly dried the pot, and then stood it upside down with the rim buried an inch deep in a layer of rather fine white pine sawdust in the centre of which immediately under the vessel I placed a piece of resin of the size of a chestnut. Over the bowl thus arranged I so bent a piece of common wire netting (meshed at about two inches) as to entirely surround and overarch the pot at a distance from it of about two inches. Both wire and sawdust stood within a circle of about three feet in diameter of loosely piled stones about one foot high. Upon this I threw about a bushel of finely chipped dry rye straw so as to fill the stone circle to the brim and entirely cover the bowl and wire. The straw when ignited burnt about three-quarters of an hour, leaving the pot when cool a good duplicate (even to the waving buff-grey zone below the black) of the original specimen.

‘The ancient Egyptian might have varied his fuels, substituted powdered dung or pulverized bark or fibre for the sawdust.

‘He might have improved upon the straw by substituting piles of caked dry manure

(Zuñi Indian process with cow or buffalo manure) or reeds or pith or fibre sufficiently ventilated to be nearly smokeless, or vaulted over the pot so as to burn to an ash without touching it, or crumbling too soon so as to admit cold-air currents. Or he might have covered the pot with charcoal if he knew the fuel—thus variously replacing our makeshift wire and straw. But the principle of his process and ours was probably the same. You produce two kinds of heat widely differing in their chemical effects upon clay—smokeless heat and smoky heat, in one and the same operation. The straw lifted away from the pot by the wire burns fiercely and with too little smoke to stain an ochred as it might stain an unochred pot. When the pot becomes red hot, the sawdust igniting last and smothering its own flame ends the baking in a smoky heat which carbonizes the rim of the vessel already enough heated by the flame from above to fully absorb the blackness of the smoke before the fire goes out.'

CHAPTER V

CEMETERIES AT EL GEZIREH, NEAR AMADEH

IN the first chapter of this volume we have briefly referred to the fact that at El Gezireh there were archaeological remains of other dates than the Eighteenth Dynasty castle. A few hundred yards to the north of the castle there are marked on our plan three small cemeteries. They stand on knolls of disintegrated sandstone a little higher than the level desert. These cemeteries were at first exceedingly difficult to date. They had been entirely rifled, so that the graves when we opened them contained no objects of value but only a few broken potsherds. And these were of the most baffling kind. A few belonged to the most characteristic of those classes which are assigned in Egypt to the First Dynasty. Others were of types known only in the Middle and New Empire. But the most numerous class of all was composed of certain painted wares which had never been observed before. We might never have been able to date these painted wares had it not been for the fortunate discovery of the town and cemetery of Shablul which will be described in the following chapters. From the objects found at Shablul, however, we learned what was the period to which all this pottery must be assigned. It is contemporary with the Roman Empire, and belongs to a hitherto unsuspected local culture which reached its zenith in Lower Nubia during the first three centuries after Christ and may be styled 'Romano-Nubian'. We have found similar fragments lying on the surface at most of the places inhabited in antiquity from Korosko to Wady Halfa.

*General
Character
of the
Cemeteries.*

At first sight some of them might be mistaken for Coptic, and it is worth remarking that the art which they represent is on the one side a direct ancestor of the Coptic, just as on the other it has a cousinship with the New Empire, though its most direct affinities are with the contemporary Graeco-Roman.

With the experience gained from Shablul we may venture to give a fairly confident opinion on the cemeteries of El Gezireh. The most southern, that nearest to the castle, seems to be entirely Romano-Nubian. It contained about 100 graves, many of which had been completely emptied of their contents before we opened them. The only objects that remained in any of the graves were a few potsherds and one unbroken pot, of a style found in Cyprus and figured in the Catalogue of the Cyprus Museum as No. 1057. This single specimen, and a fragment of Eighteenth Dynasty drab ware which may well have been thrown back from the surface into the filling of a grave, were the only specimens which cannot be classed with certainty as Romano-Nubian.

*The
Southern
Cemetery.*

Some remarks on the structural character of the graves may be of value to future excavators. We transcribe them from the field notes of Mr. C. F. Ballcine, who devoted much time and care to the examination of these cemeteries.

The graves may be divided roughly into five classes.

1. Circular pits, in all cases quite plain, with a diameter varying from 1.90 to 0.50 metres and a depth from 0.70 to 0.25 metre.

2. Rectangular pits, of which the average dimensions are 2.00 metres long, 1.00 broad, 1.00 deep: the largest is 2.25 by 1.50 by 1.30 m., the smallest 1.2 by 0.40 by 0.50 m. The smaller and rougher graves of this type are also quite plain; but the better examples have narrow ledges running along the two longer walls some 0.50 m. from the bottom, which supported large irregular slabs of stone, laid across the tomb to close it in.

3. But the most characteristic graves are those of the third and fourth types, in which the body was laid, not in the pit itself, but in a second chamber leading out of the main pit. In the third type the main pit is rectangular, and at the bottom along one of the longer sides is scooped out a trough large enough to hold the body: this trough is often half exposed to view and half hewn out of the wall of the pit, and often extends at each end into the rock beyond the length of the main pit. Often, too, the floor of the main pit, instead of being level, slopes downwards towards the trough. Thus No. 112 has an outer pit 1.60 m. long by 0.85 m. broad, and its depth increases from 0.50 m. to 0.65 m. at the point where the trough begins. This trough, running along the bottom of the longer wall, is 2.20 m. in length, i. e. it tunnels 0.30 m. into the rock at each end; it has a height roughly of 0.50 m., is sunk 0.35 m. below the level of the floor of the pit, and is half exposed to view from above. The inner chamber seems usually to have been closed by slabs of stone, but in this particular instance it was walled in with brick.

4. In the fourth type there is again an inner chamber, but the principle is different. The most correct form, as in the third type, is an outer rectangular pit, about 1.50 by 1.00 by 1.00 m.; but in this case the inner chamber, starting from the bottom of the shorter wall, tunnels downwards into the rock at an angle of about 45 degrees. In this tubular chamber, the body was placed feet downwards with the head near the entrance from the main pit. Often in this type, too, the floor of the outer pit slopes towards the inner chamber, and in some cases there is no real outer chamber at all, but the slope of the inner chamber is continued right up to the surface. No. 104 is a good instance. Here the outer pit is 1.20 m. long diminishing to 1.00 m. at the bottom, 1.00 m. broad, and 0.60 m. deep, shelving to 1.00 m. where the inner chamber begins; the inner chamber, sloping away immediately from the end of the outer pit, is 0.70 m. long, 0.60 m. broad, and 0.40 m. high. In this chamber or shaft was found a mummified girl child, lying on the back, head uppermost, right arm folded across chest, left arm extended. The chamber was closed by a slab. In one example of this type the shaft led out from a circular pit, 1.00 m. in diameter, 0.80 m. in depth.

5. This type is an elaboration of the others: its peculiarity consists in the use of brick barrel-shaped vaulting in the place of stone slabs to close the tomb. The most simple form is that of No. 114. This is a rectangular pit 2.00 m. long, 1.25 m. diminishing to 1.00 m. broad, 1.10 m. deep. Round three sides runs a ledge 0.20 m. wide, 0.35 m. from the bottom; on the fourth side a brick wall takes the place of the ledge. On this ledge rested a brick vaulting which covered the whole, leaving a tomb below the vaulting 1.60 m. long by 0.70 m. wide by 0.50 m. high. In some cases the vaulting rested on low walls of brick built against the sides of the pit instead of on ledges in the rock. This barrel-vaulting was applied to other forms of grave. No. 111, for example, a complex grave, consists of a rectangular pit 1.10 by 0.90 by 1.20 m. lying east and west. Along the west end is a trough of type (2); from the east end at its north corner a recess 0.70 m. long and 0.30 m. wide is hewn out. But this recess, instead of being sufficient for itself, is vaulted over with brick, and, because its 0.70 m. of length is not enough to contain a body, the vaulting is continued into the outer pit itself, until the length of the chamber is increased to 1.25 m.

Occasionally, as in No. 111, more than one type is found in the same grave. No. 111 is unique in being set inside a rectangle 2.50 by 2.0 m. enclosed by a wall of stone. The bricks used in this cemetery were usually 34 or 33 by 17 by 10 or 9 centimetres. It is noticeable that the brickwork was not found in that part of the cemetery where the graves are thickest, but only in the scattered graves on the outskirts.

The cemetery to the immediate north of this, which contained about sixty graves, is mainly of a quite different period. The graves are not of the same structural forms as in the southern cemetery. With a single exception they are all rectangular pits, and this exceptional case (a vertical shaft with grave sloping from it) is the only one in which

the contents of the grave considered by themselves would seem to be of Romano-Nubian date. *The Central Cemetery.*

The fragmentary remains obtained from the other graves (that is to say potsherds, scattered beads, and two or three intact pots) may be classed under three headings, viz.:

(a) Objects that in Egypt would be assigned to the First Dynasty.

(b) Objects that belong to the New Empire, probably to the Eighteenth Dynasty, i.e. the same period as the castle.

(c) Pottery which has hitherto been considered characteristic of the predynastic and protodynastic periods but which on this site might equally well be of the Eighteenth Dynasty.

To discuss these more in detail. Under (a) we should place the contents of at least six graves, viz. those numbered in Mr. C. F. Balleine's notes as 206, 207, 213, 215, 218, 219.

No. 206 contained—Broken bones of three men and one woman, no skulls. Fragments of a black-topped pot with red geometrical patterns painted on a white ground. Large fragment of a dish of the salmon-coloured ware found at Nagada and called 'Late New Race'. Fragment of another pot of the same ware. A bone amulet.

No. 207 contained nothing except a slate palette.

No. 213 contained—A few broken bones, an intact wavy-handled vase of the type known as W 47, five blue glaze globular beads, eighteen white bone discoid beads.

No. 215 contained—an intact pot of the type known as L 53, half a pot of the type known as R 32°, two-thirds of another pot of same type (R 32°). Fragments of a black-topped bowl of the *thin* black-topped ware, its shape that of P1^b.

No. 218 contained—a few broken bones. An intact pot of type known as L 53 f. A complete bowl. Fragments of a black-topped bowl of the *thin* black-topped ware, with geometrical patterns painted on it in red. Fragments of two other unrecognizable pots, a rounded sandstone pounder, a fragment of mother of pearl, two shell discoid beads, and seven carnelian pear-shaped beads.

No. 219 contained—Skull and broken bones of a man, a bowl of the salmon-coloured 'Late New Race' ware, type L 20. Another smaller bowl of same type.

It will be evident to any reader who is familiar with the protodynastic period that such graves must be ascribed, if we follow the analogy of Egypt, to that general period. To be more exact, they would probably belong to the First Dynasty. The question is whether we are justified in using the analogy of Egypt. On the one hand Dr. G. Reisner's recent discoveries of many predynastic and protodynastic cemeteries between Shellal and Kalabsheh show that they do occur in Lower Nubia, at any rate in the northern part of the country. On the other hand, we have seen in the preceding chapters how conservative Lower Nubia is, and how objects which in Egypt are only found at early dates survive in use many centuries afterwards in the country between the First and Second Cataracts. In a subsequent volume we shall have occasion to remark that a pot identical both in its very peculiar technique and in its highly differentiated form with one from a First Dynasty grave in Upper Egypt was found in Nubia in a Romano-Nubian grave in a cemetery that contained nothing earlier than Roman.

So that while it may be granted that these six graves are of protodynastic character it will be well to reserve judgement as to their actual date. One suspicious feature in the pottery is the thinness of the black-topped ware which brings it closer in character to the 'Pan Tomb' ware.

(b) Certain of the graves in this cemetery are almost indubitably of New Empire date. As such may be classed:

No. 205 which contained one globular blue glazed bead, a well-known type never found in early times.

The Central Cemetery.

No. 210 which also contained one bead of the same kind.

No. 211 which contained broken bones, two sherds of that drab pottery which is characteristic of the Eighteenth Dynasty and was found in the castle, and one blue glaze discoid bead.

Probably of the same date are :

No. 201 containing eleven small blue glaze beads, ten discoid in shape and one tubular.

No. 202 containing a number of small blue glazed beads discoid in shape.

No. 204 containing one drab potsherd, one black-topped potsherd, and a number of small blue glaze discoid beads.

(c) Doubtful in date on account of the black-topped pottery, which in this confused cemetery is an uncertain factor, are :

No. 203 containing some bones of a man, a number of small blue glaze discoid beads and sherds of black-topped pottery one of which was incised.

No. 212 containing some broken bones, a number of small blue glaze beads and three sherds of black-topped pottery.

No. 214 containing skull and broken bones of a man, a black-topped bowl of elliptical form and two shells.

These three graves might belong either to the protodynastic or to the Eighteenth Dynasty, but we incline to assign them to the latter.

The Northern Cemetery.

The most northern of the three cemeteries contained forty-four graves, which are of only two structural types, viz. plain rectangular or plain circular pits never more than a metre and a half in depth. Some of the rectangular pits had, as in the southern cemetery, a ledge along the side to support stone slabs which closed them. The cemetery had been so completely rifled that hardly any of the graves any longer contained objects. We obtained, however, a few pots of unquestionable Eighteenth Dynasty style, an alabaster kohl-pot of Eighteenth Dynasty form, and a blue glaze scarab of Amenhotep which showed that some of the graves were of the Eighteenth Dynasty. One grave contained pottery of First Dynasty type, and several contained sherds of painted Romano-Nubian pottery, of which there were also specimens scattered on the surface.

Of the same Romano-Nubian period as the graves in the first of the cemeteries described above are the houses marked A and B upon the map on Plate 43. Detailed plans of these houses, one of which was very perfectly preserved, are shown in Plate 13. At El Gezireh there were only one or two sporadic examples, but we noted many others at various points on the desert edge for twenty miles further up stream. They belong, however, more properly to that part of our subject which will be treated in the following chapters on Shablul.

THE NILE NEAR KOROSKO



(a) Dahabiyeh, with hills of Korosko in the distance



(b) View near Shablul, with hills of Korosko in the distance

See p. 1

BETWEEN KOROSKO AND AMADEH, SITE OF NUBLIAN CASTLE



(a) View of the Western Hills seen from the Cliffs below the Castle



(b) Dahiabiyeh moored near the Castle



(c) View of the Cliff above the Castle

NUBLIAN CASTLE NEAR AMADEH: PERIOD OF THOTHMES III



(a) View looking from the North-east Corner

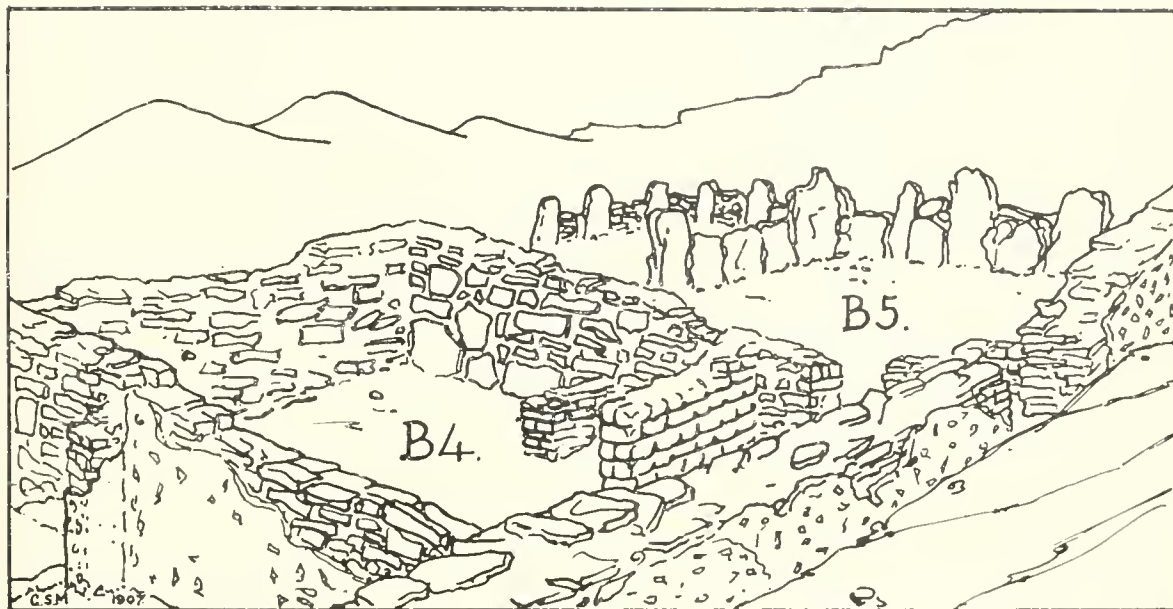


(b) View of the North-west and South-west Corners



(c) View of the Northern Circular Building

NUBLIAN CASTLE NEAR AMADEH: PERIOD OF THOTHMES III



(a) Two rooms in the Central Division

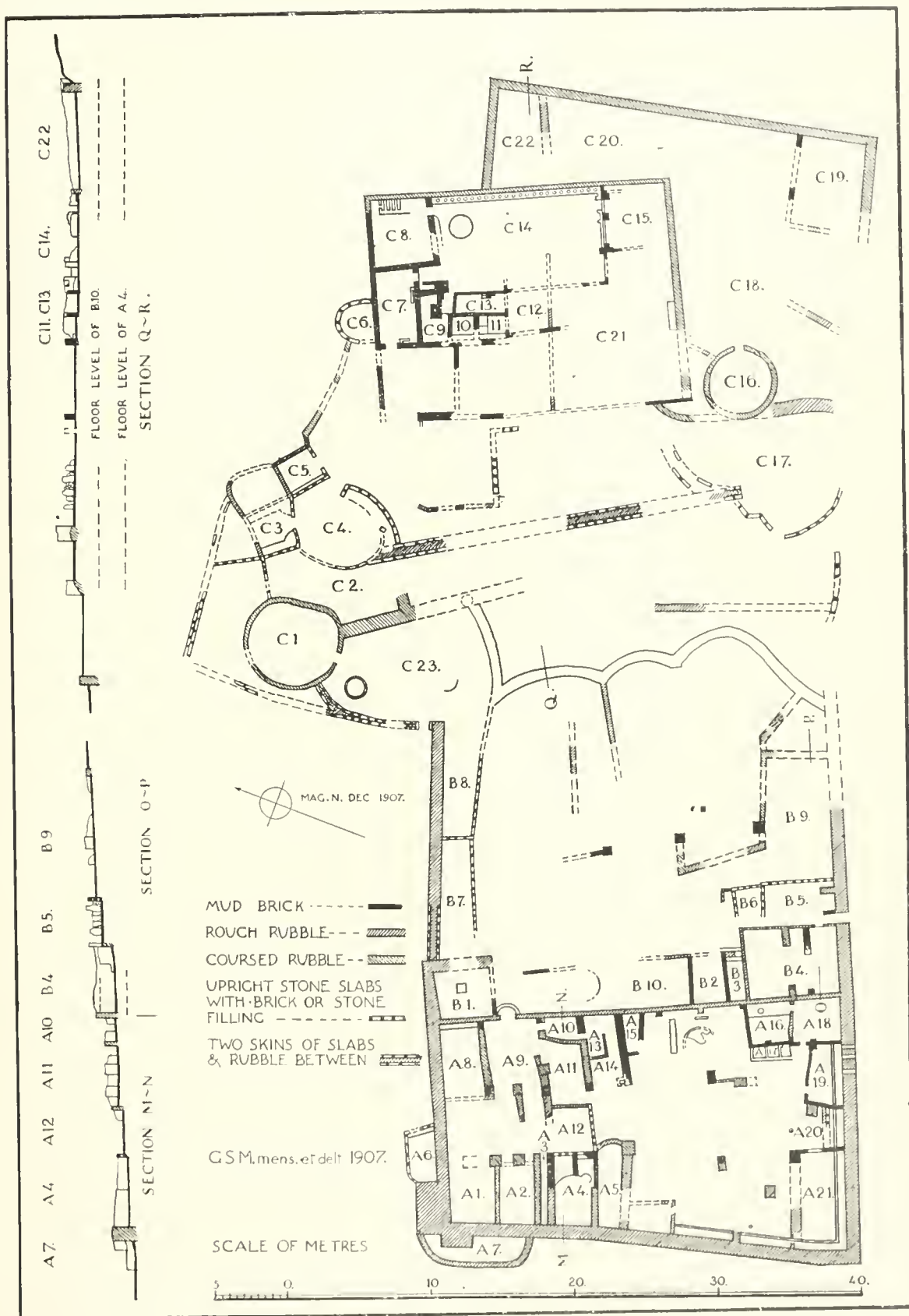
See p. 7

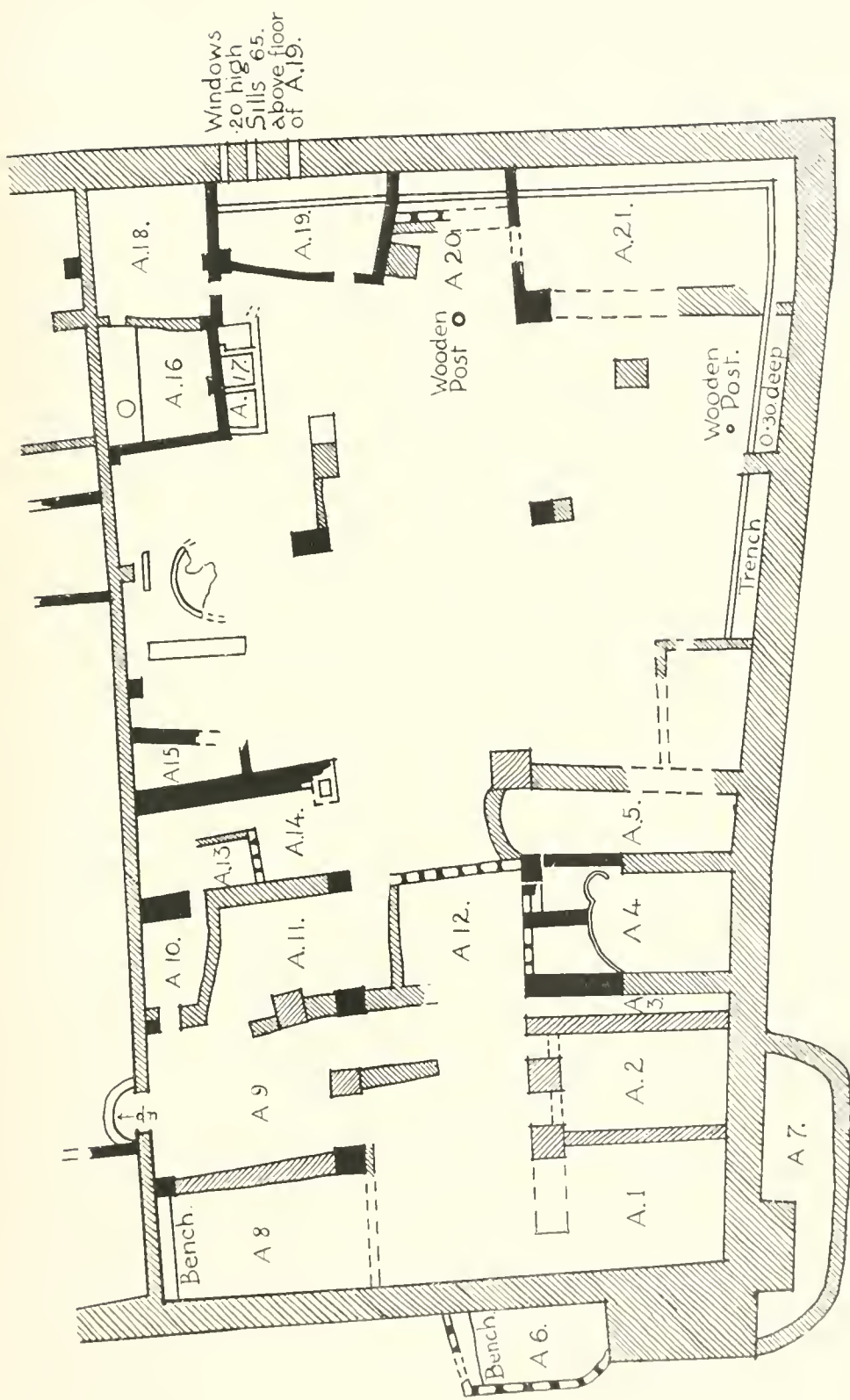


(b) View of the Castle as seen from the Cliff

See pp. 5-9

PLAN OF THE NUBIAN CASTLE NEAR AMADEH: PERIOD OF THOTHMES III



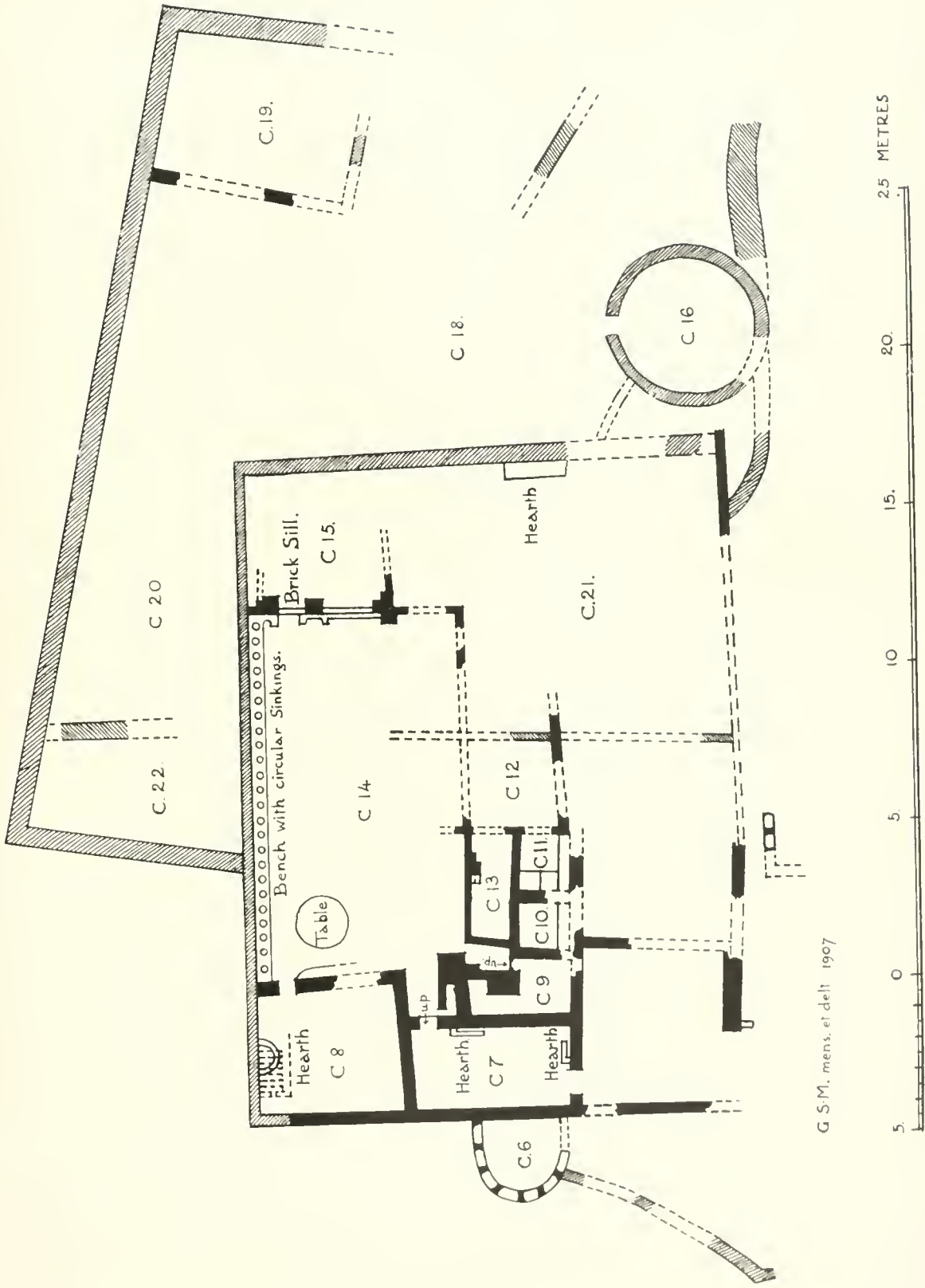


GSM mens of dell 1907



PLAN OF THE WESTERN DIVISION OF THE NUBIAN CASTLE NEAR AMADEH
PERIOD OF THOTHMES III

See pp. 6, 7



PLAN OF THE EASTERN DIVISION OF THE NUBIAN CASTLE NEAR AMADEH: PERIOD OF THOTHMES III
See pp. 8, 9

CLAY AND POTTERY FIGURINES FOUND IN THE NUBIAN CASTLE NEAR AMADEH
PERIOD OF THOTHMES III



Ph 4001 to 4018

See p. 10

Scale about $\frac{1}{4}$



Ph 4019 to 4032

See p. 10

Scale about $\frac{1}{3}$

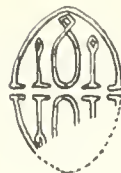
NUBIAN CASTLE NEAR AMADEH; PERIOD OF THOTHMES III



Ph 4606



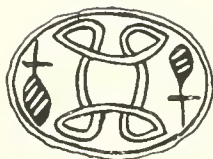
Ph 4605



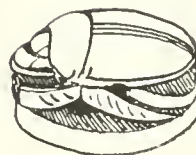
Ph 4607



Ph 4608



Ph 4604



Ph 4609



Ph 4058



Ph 4061



Ph 4062

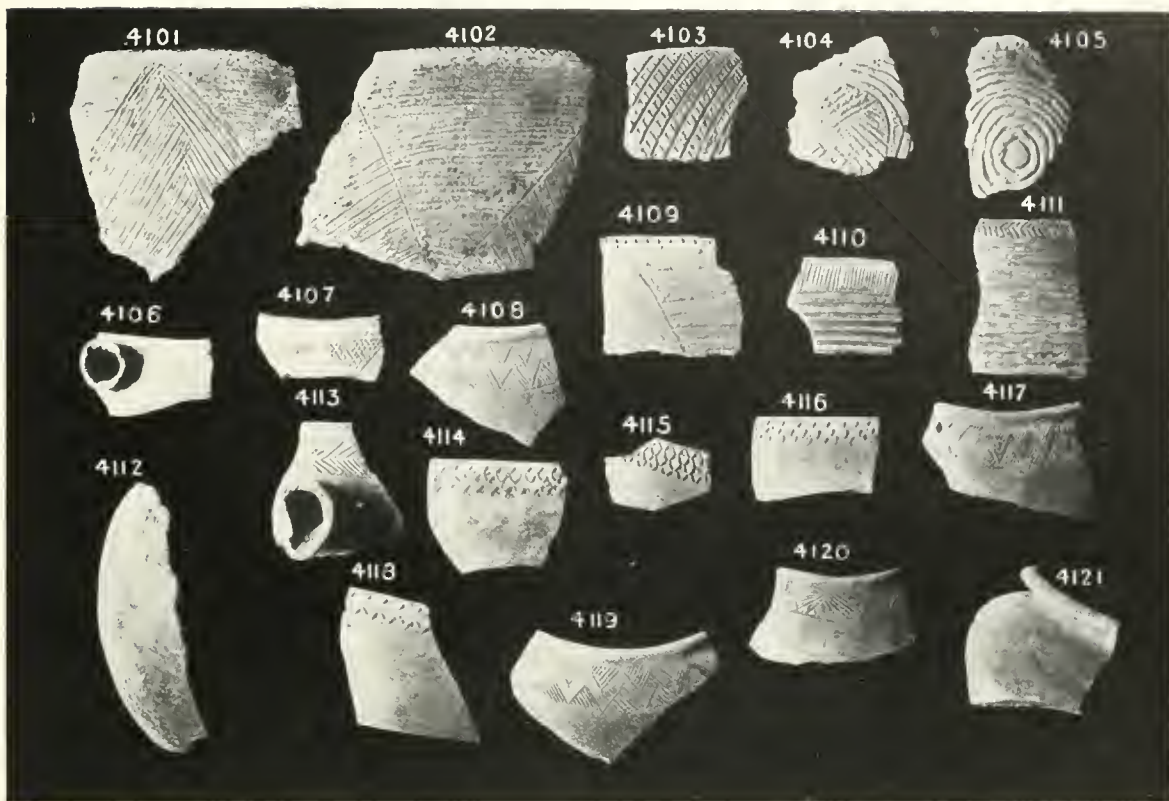
(a) Scarabs and Impressions of Seals found in the Castle

See pp. 11, 12



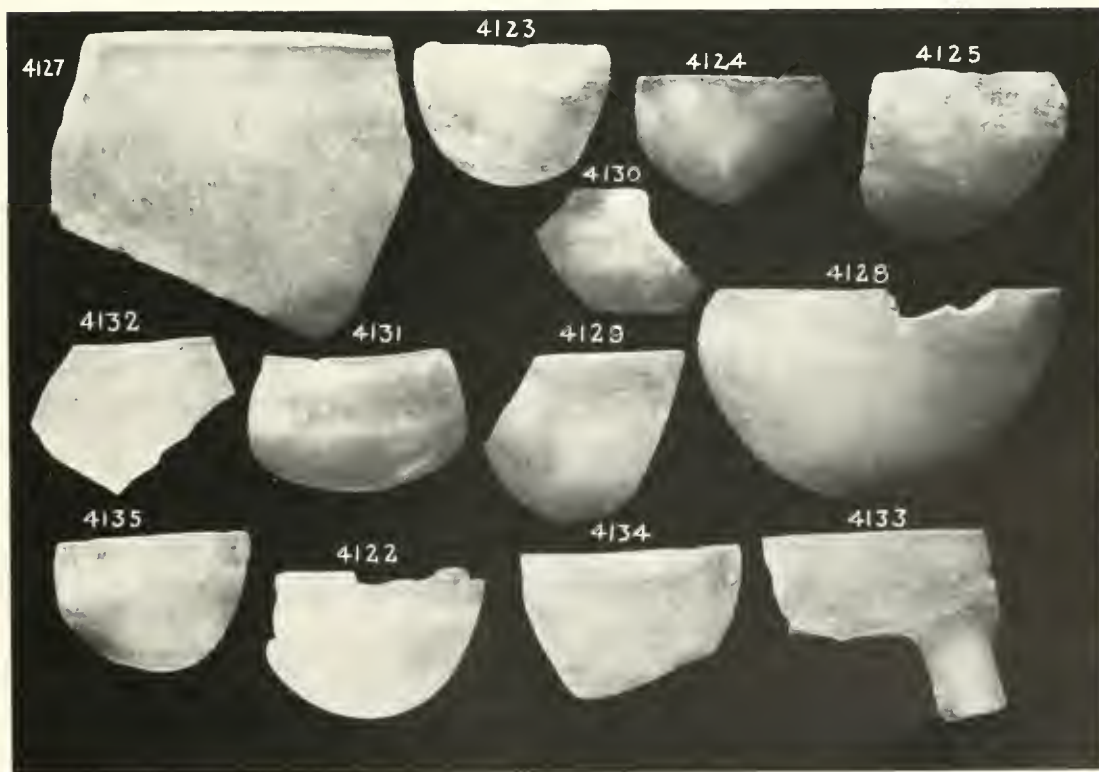
(b) Clay Sealings found under Eastern Wall of the Castle

POTTERY FOUND IN THE NUBIAN CASTLE NEAR AMADEH
PERIOD OF THOTHMES III



a) Ph 4101-4121

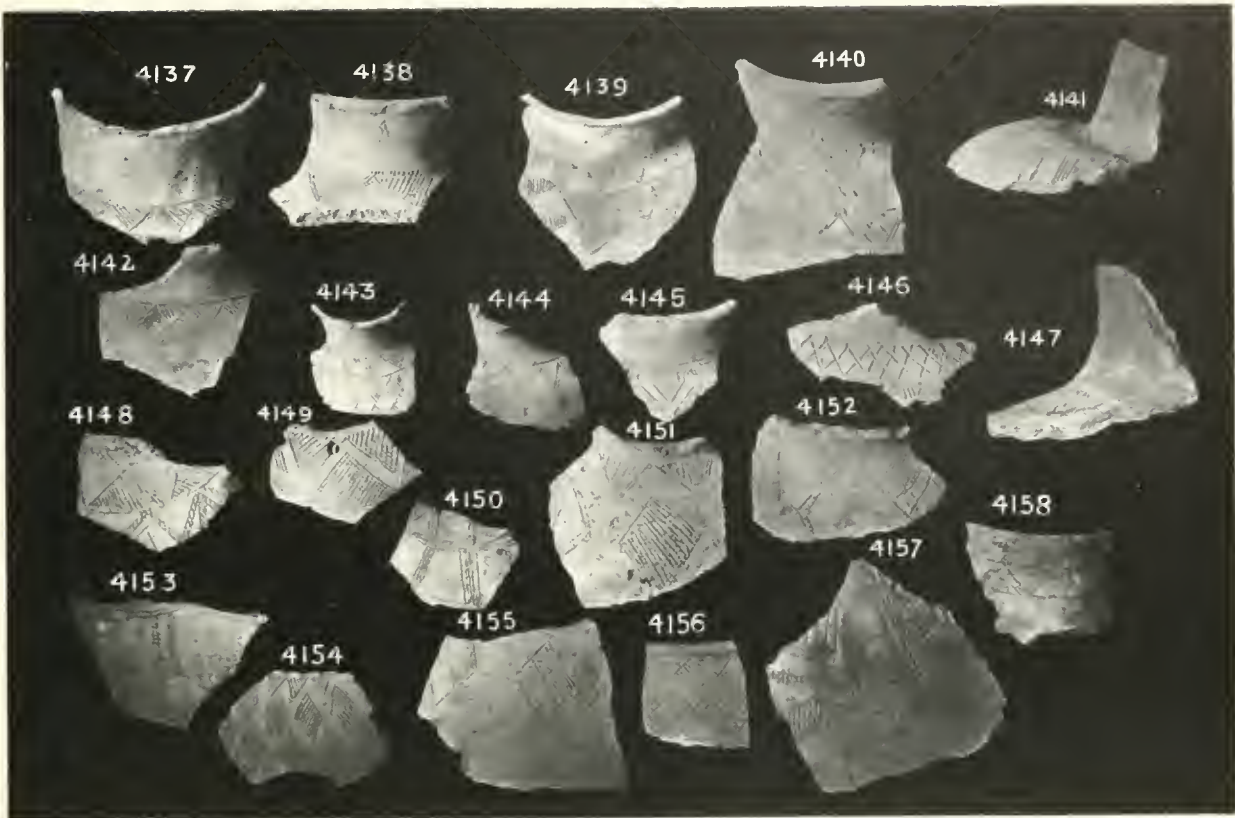
See pp. 11, 14



b) Ph 4122-4125, 4127-4135

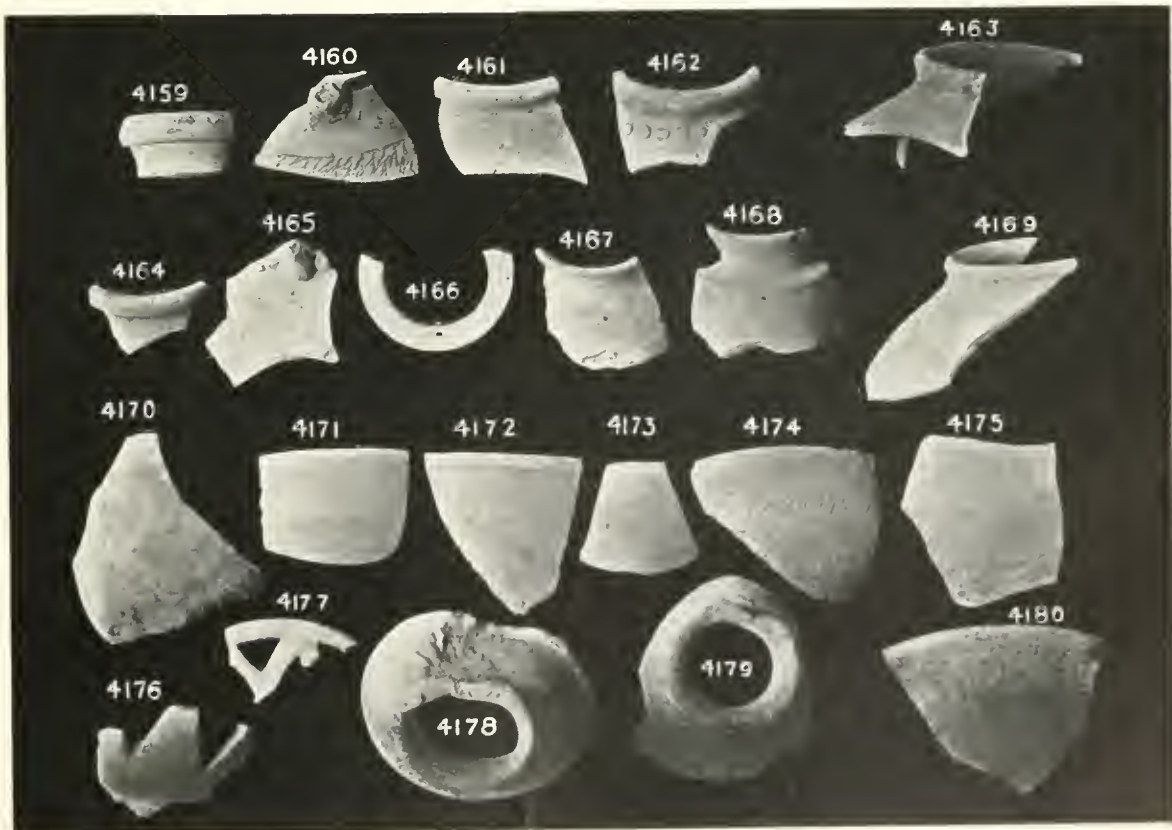
See pp. 11, 14, 15, 17

POTTERY FOUND IN THE NUBIAN CASTLE NEAR AMADEH
PERIOD OF THOTHMES III



a Ph 4137-4158

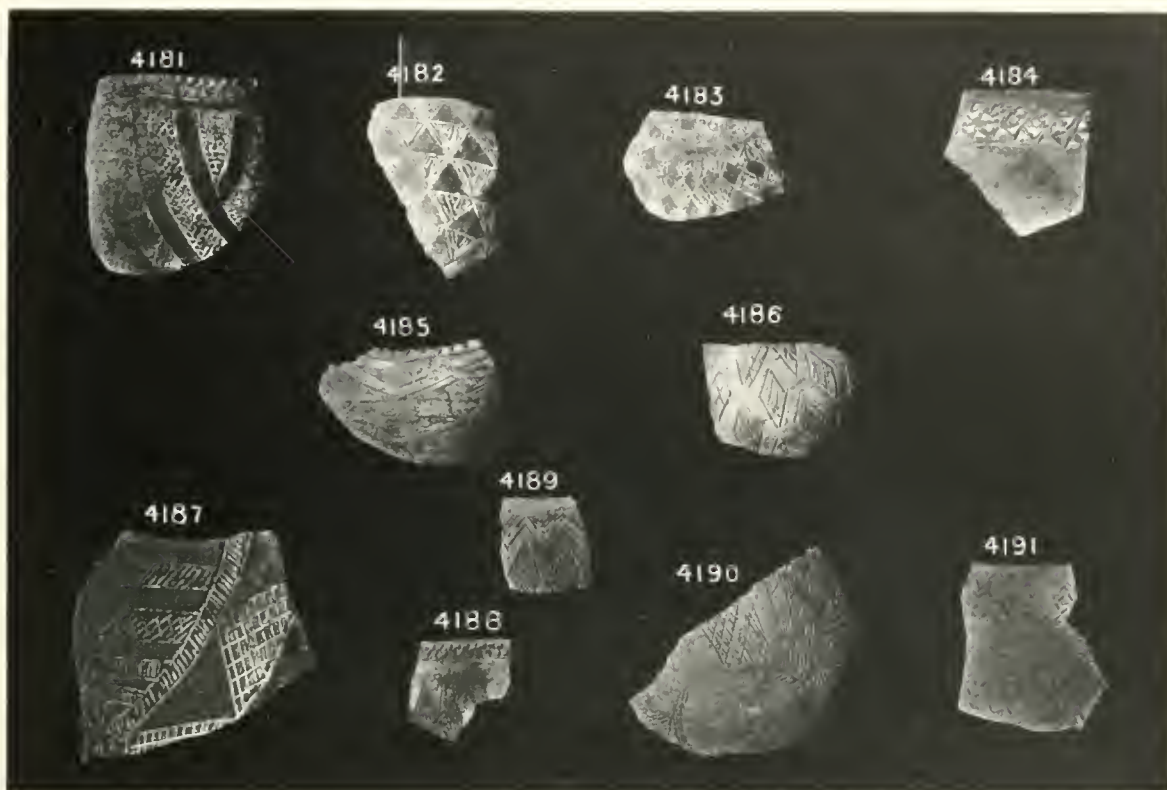
See pp. 11, 14



b Ph 4159 4180

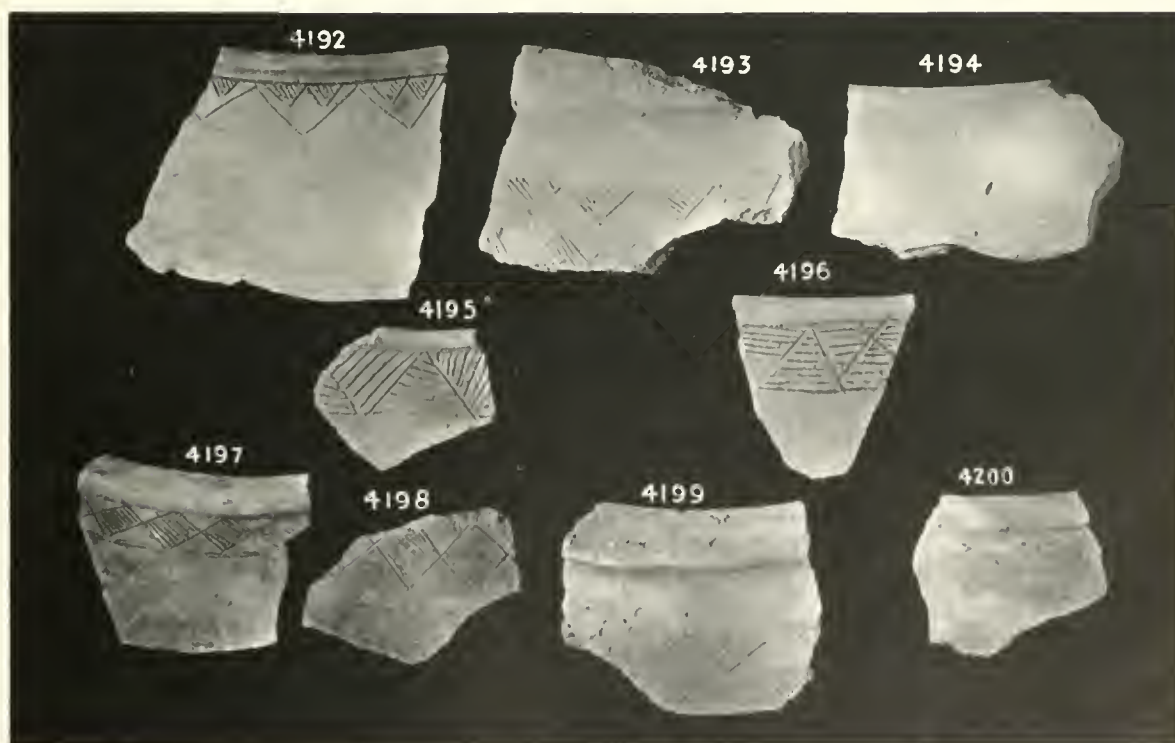
See pp. 11, 13

POTTERY FOUND IN THE NUBIAN CASTLE NEAR AMADEH
PERIOD OF THOTIMES III



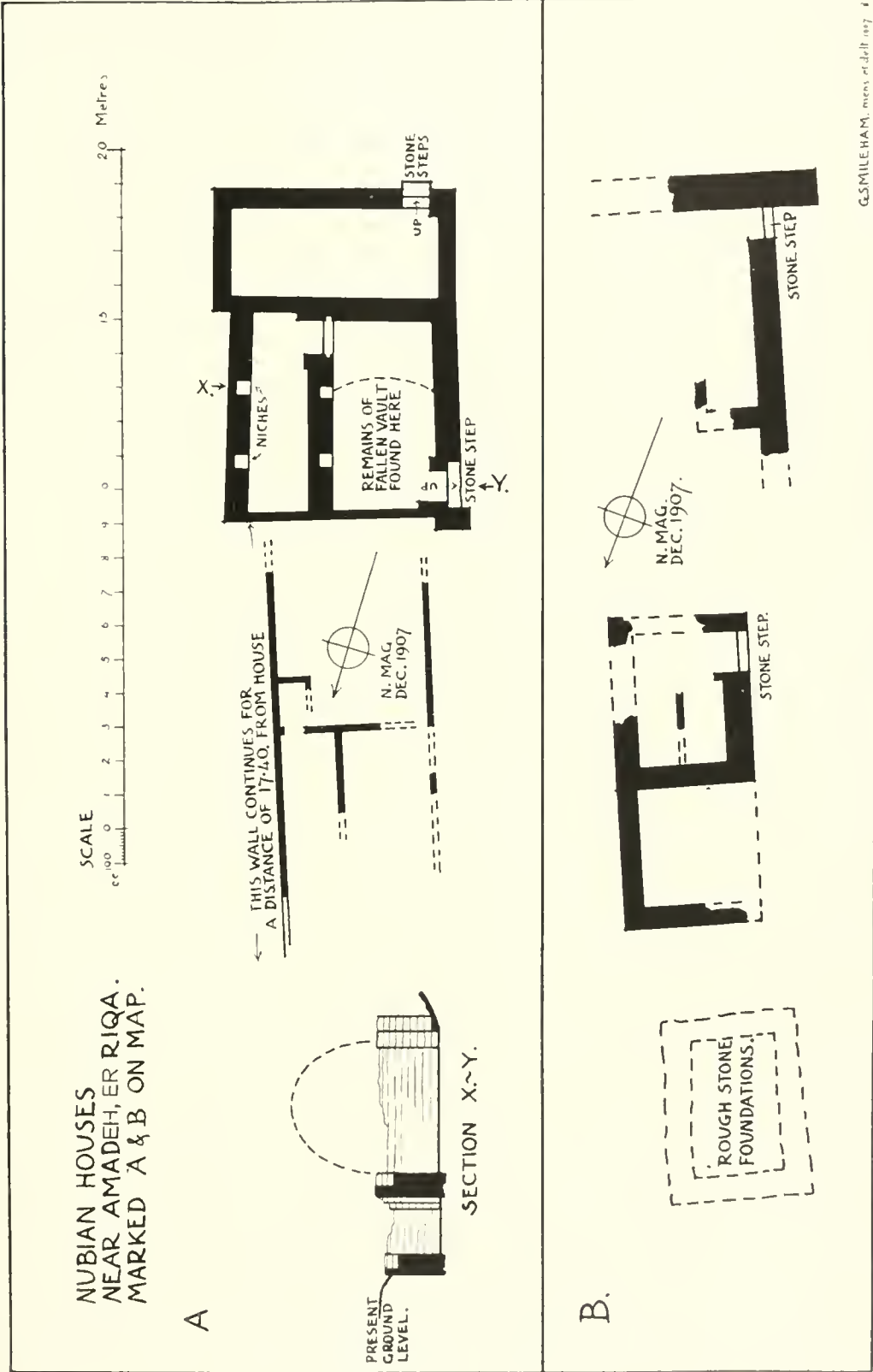
a) Ph 4181 4191

See pp. 11, 15



b) Ph 4192 4200

See pp. 11, 15



TWO PLANS OF HOUSES OF ROMAN DATE NEAR THE NUBIAN CASTLE

CHAPTER VI

THE CEMETERY OF SHABLUL

THE photographs on Plate 1 show a wide stretch of the river with the hills of Korosko *Site of Shablul.* in the background. The dahabiyeh is moored against a high bank on the lower slopes of which the Nubian women grow a scanty crop of lupins. Above the lupins is a steep sandbank, and behind the sandbank is sheer desert. But in this desert there must have been once a flourishing community, for the traces of ancient houses extend for nearly half a mile northwards, from the point shown in our picture to a modern hamlet marked on the map in Plate 43. Close to the anchorage of the dahabiyeh are the 'well'¹ and 'river wall' noted on the map and illustrated in Plate 42. Just behind these 'House C' and 'House D' mark the southern limits of the ancient town.

We excavated several foundations of houses in this ancient town, but found that it would not repay the labour of digging to continue. The type of house closely resembles that found two miles further north near the Nubian castle at El Gezireh, of which plans are given in Plate 13. Strewn on the top and in the buried rooms were numerous fragments of pottery, the most interesting of which are reproduced in Plates 24-31.

Of far greater value and importance than the town was the ancient cemetery near it. *The Cemetery.* This was of a kind which has never been observed before in Egypt or Nubia. When we first saw the site there was little trace of the lines of tombs that appear in our Plate 15. An even slope of sand strewn with fragments of pottery covered all the constructions which were afterwards laid bare by our work. A dealer who had employed a gang of men some years previously to pillage this district had made one or two trial holes, but failing to detect anything of interest had moved to the eastern side of the slope. There he had found graves and ransacked every one. But the really important division of the cemetery of which they formed part he had not detected and it fortunately remained unspoiled.

Our attention was first attracted by two courses of finely dressed masonry which were visible at the end nearest to the ancient houses. They proved to be the north-eastern corner of the large tomb that was afterwards numbered 27. Starting from this point we found the western edge of the cemetery and cleared back, terrace by terrace, to the cliff. To-day the site appears as shown in the photographs of Plate 15. In many of the tombs the walls were so unsafe that they have been filled in again level with the surface; but several which were in good condition have been left open to be studied by any traveller who may pass that way.

The graves that we excavated on the western slope of the hill were of two principal types, viz. (1) Rectangular pits lined with a single thickness of brick and covered with an arched roof of primitive construction. The roof in its poorest form might be made of two lines of bricks resting against one another at an angle of about 45 degrees; more often it *Types of Graves.*

¹ Of the purpose of this well we obtained no satisfactory explanation. It is well built of hewn sandstone worked in the same style as the masonry of the tombs, and has an outlet on to the river front. It is

evidently contemporary with the tombs, though it much resembles a modern sakyeh in general appearance. The 'river wall' is simply a retaining wall to keep the sand back from the bank.

Types of Graves.

was made of three bricks, viz. one resting horizontally on two others sloped at 45 degrees, and sometimes of four bricks. (2) Rectangular pits lined with brick and covered with an arched roof of brick which was sometimes of more elaborate construction, five bricks being occasionally used to form the arch of the vault though three was more usual, and four also occurred. On the ground level a quadrangle of masonry was built round these pits to a height of about a metre or a metre and a half (cf. photos in Pl. 15 and Pl. 41). In the ruined state which they presented when we found them it was difficult to say whether these enclosures had been covered in any way. We judged from the appearance that the space between brick and masonry had been filled in with earth and rubbish so as to make a flat top, but this is uncertain. There was no trace of any superstructure within the enclosure and there was certainly nothing in the nature of a brick pyramid, for the débris of any pyramid would have been easily recognizable.

The quadrangles of masonry averaged about 3.50 m. each way. They were built of hewn sandstone with dry joints, the stone being dressed on the outer surface after being laid. The outer face of each stone had been dressed finely with a chisel for a width of about .04 m. from the joints, the rest of the face being dressed only with a hammer. On the interior of the walls the faces of the stones were left rough. There is a decided batter in the stone walls. Careful attention was shown to bonding.

The finest enclosed tombs were those in the western rows where the ground was comparatively level. Behind these the tombs that were built against the slope of the hill (cf. photo in Pl. 15b) were less carefully enclosed, the natural rock formed the back and sometimes part of the side wall. In this part of the ground similarly the pit tombs were less carefully bricked or sometimes not bricked at all, but cut back like caverns into the hill.

Brickwork.

With regard to the brickwork it should be remarked that the style of vaulting was the same as that used in Egypt; that is to say, with rings of bricks set on edge, each brick leaning over on to the one laid previously. Probably the vaults were built without centring. The bricks were not made or cut with radial joints, but the triangular spaces left were packed out with chips of rough sandstone or potsherds.

The bricks were of sun-dried mud, sometimes mixed with straw, and the average size was .34 m. x .17 m. x .10 m. Generally care was taken to ensure a good bond, but sometimes a straight joint was to be found running through several courses. Walls—especially the end walls of vaulted graves—were often built with alternate courses of headers on end and stretchers laid flat (e.g. back wall of Tomb 27 in Pl. 40). Mud mortar was always used.

Dimensions of Graves. Their contents.

The dimensions of the actual graves, whether enclosed in masonry squares or not, were comparatively uniform. They were of such a size as to contain one or more bodies extended at full length with their equipment of water-jars and small objects. A length of about 2.0 m. with a breadth of .70 m. to .90 m. was common and the sides were generally .50 deep, over which the vault rose to heights of .50 m. or .70 m. more.

It is difficult to say what was the usual furniture of a tomb. Only two graves, 5b and 7b, were found intact, and these were of the less important kind. The large tombs had all been rifled in ancient times. In or near each important tomb there must have stood (to judge from the number of fragments) a portrait statue and a stela or offering-table, generally inscribed. In each tomb also there must have been several large water-jars of shapes like those shown in Plate 23, Nos. 4, 5, 6. The entry 'water-jars' in the list of tombs below always refers to one of these three types or to another (described as 'the usual' water-jar) which has a tubular mouth like 4 but is shaped more like the modern Ballâs. The water-jars with these tubular mouths were often painted with concentric stripes of light colour on the red body-ground. Besides these there must often have been smaller jars and vases both of rough kinds, such as those shown in Plate 23, and of finer wares beautifully painted. Of the latter we

found numerous fragments, which are illustrated in Plates 24-31. The small tumbler of buff ware (Pl. 24, No. 2, and Pl. 25, No. 7) was evidently a favourite form.

The catalogue of tombs and their contents is given below. It starts with No. 5, as the numerals 1-4 were used for the neighbouring houses. As all the tombs, with two exceptions, had been rifled a great many of the objects were found outside or between them. Such objects are not mentioned in the account of the tombs, but are entered with any possible details of position in the catalogue of objects given in the next chapter.

CATALOGUE OF TOMBS

No. 5. A square of sandstone blocks, dressed with hammer and chisel on the outside, enclosing an oblong brick grave covered with a barrel vault of brick. The stone enclosure measured 3.50 m. × 3.50 m., the brick grave 2.10 m. × 0.90 m. Height of side walls of the brick grave 0.50 m.; depth from top of roof of brick grave to its floor 1.20 m.

Rifled out; contained only skull and bones ♀ young and some sherds of water-jars painted in bands. (View in Pl. 15 b.)

No. 5 b. Oblong brick grave without any stone enclosure. Measured 2.0 m. × 0.90 m. Height of side walls (four courses of brick) 0.50 m. Depth from top of roof to floor 1.0 m. The roof was a vault formed of four bricks, viz. one brick slanted from each side and two wedged in between them. (View in Pl. 15 a.)

Unrifled. Contained body of a child wearing the bracelet of glass beads and stone pendants numbered Ph. 5065; the body of a smaller infant without any objects; bodies of two adult ♀, extended full length, heads at west. By the head of the child were the sherd of painted ware Ph. 5042, a small rough pot, a shallow bronze bowl Ph. 5041, and an iron spoon Ph. 5043. Near its feet was the small vase Ph. 5044. At the waist of one of the women was a small rough pot and the wooden kohl-stick Ph. 5045. In front of the arms of the other woman were the water-jar Ph. 5046, and the pitcher Ph. 5047. These objects are shown in Plate 21: the bracelet is shown in Plate 22.

No. 6. Tomb of same type as No. 5, viz. an irregular square of sandstone masonry enclosing a vaulted brick grave. The vaulting arch of the grave was composed of three bricks, viz. one slanting from the top course of each side and a third laid horizontally across.

Rifled. No contents except a few broken bones.

No. 7. Tomb of same type as No. 5, an irregular square of sandstone masonry enclosing a vaulted brick grave. (Views in Pl. 15 a.) The vaulting arch of the grave was composed of three bricks, viz. one slanting from the top course of each side wall and a third laid more or less horizontally across. In

the rubbish above the brick vault was found the sculptured head Ph. 5018 (Pl. 19).

Rifled. Bones and skull ♀ in confusion. Contained fragments of a glass bowl Ph. 5055; two large water-jars of type in Pl. 23, No. 5; a tubular bead of blue glass.

No. 7 b. Oblong brick grave like 5 b without any stone enclosure. Measured 2.0 m. × 0.65 m. Height of side walls (four courses of bricks) 0.50 m. Depth from top of roof to floor 0.78 m. The roof was a vault formed of three bricks. (Views in Pl. 15 a and Pl. 21.)

Unrifled. Contained two bodies ♂ extended full length, heads at west, wrapped in several folds of linen with a tasselled fringe. The position of the objects found is shown in the view of the grave, Plate 21, and the objects themselves are illustrated in a group on Plate 21. They are:

Ph. 5048. Large bronze bowl.

Ph. 5049. Bronze dipper of Roman style.

Ph. 5050. Small bronze cup.

Ph. 5051. Bronze lamp of Roman style.

Besides these there was a water-jar 0.33 m. high of ribbed red ware.

No. 8. Tomb of same type as No. 5. (View in Plate 15 b.) The arch was of the three-brick style.

Rifled and contained only a few bones ♂ and a water-jar of the type shown in Pl. 23, No. 15.

Nos. 8 b and 8 c. Two plain pits cut in the rock 1.30 m. deep. At 0.25 m. from the bottom was a ledge on which rested the barrel vault of three bricks. Depth from top of vault to floor 0.75 m.

Rifled, a few bones in each. In 8 b was an iron bracelet Ph. 5057 (not illustrated).

No. 9. Tomb of same type as No. 5. The vault of the grave was built of four bricks.

Rifled. Contained only a skull, part of a leg bone and half the head of a sandstone statue Ph. 5036 (not illustrated).

No. 10. Tomb of same type as No. 5. The vault of the grave was built of four bricks.

Rifled. Contained only a skull and some bones ♂ with six water-jars. Inside the eastern stone wall just below the masonry and above the brick vault was found an unscripted offering-table.

- No. 11.** Tomb of same type as No. 5 but double the usual length from north to south (7.25 m.) and containing two brick graves instead of one. In both brick graves the vault was built of five bricks.
Rifled. 11 a contained bones of ♂ and five large water-jars; 11 b contained two skulls, viz. one adult and one young, and corresponding bones; and the head of a sandstone statue Ph. 5025 (not illustrated).
- No. 12.** Tomb of same type as No. 5. The vault was built of three and a half bricks. Brick buttress and tumbled stone and brick between No. 12 and No. 12 b suggest such a platform or court as seen outside No. 17.
Rifled. Contained bones ♀ without head and four water-jars, viz. two of type shown in Pl. 23, No. 4, one of which was plain and one painted with bands of light colour; one of type shown in Pl. 23, No. 6; one of type shown in Pl. 23, No. 15.
- No. 12 b.** Oblong brick grave without stone enclosure.
Rifled and containing only some bones ♂.
- No. 13.** Tomb of same type as No. 5. The vault was built of three bricks.
Rifled. Contained some bones ♂, three water-jars of usual type and one water-jar of type shown in Pl. 23, No. 15.
- No. 14.** Tomb of same type as No. 5. The vault was formed of two bricks slanted against each other.
Rifled. Contained some leg bones. In the south-west corner inside the enclosure but above the grave was the stela Ph. 5103 (Pl. 33).
- No. 15.** Tomb of same type as No. 5.
Rifled. Contained only two leg bones of a young person, two plain red water-jars and, broken in two pieces, the inscribed stela Ph. 5112 (Pl. 35).
- No. 15 b.** Oblong brick grave without stone enclosure. Vault formed of three bricks; at the east end grave was closed with a stone slab instead of bricks.
Rifled. Contained only skull and a few odd bones.
- No. 15 c.** Oblong brick grave without stone enclosure.
Rifled. Contained fully extended skeleton ♀, with head at west end, and two plain red water-jars of type shown in Pl. 23, No. 4.
- No. 16.** Tomb of same type as No. 5.
Rifled, no contents. (View in Pl. 15 b.)
- No. 16 b.** Oblong brick grave without stone enclosure.
Rifled. Contained bones of a child, the green and blue glass beads Ph. 5064 (Pl. 22).
- No. 17.** Tomb of same type as No. 5. (View in Pl. 15 b.) Vault formed of four bricks. In front of the western stone wall a brick wall 0.75 m. high ran out at right angles for 1.25 m. At the end of this wall was a square brick base one course high and measuring 0.35 m. each way. A brick pavement extended for 2.50 m. in front of the western wall and along a little more than half its length (cf. plan in Pl. 14).
Grave rifled. Contained a few broken bones, three large water-jars of the type shown in Pl. 23, No. 6, and one of the type shown in Pl. 23, No. 15. In the broken front wall was found a plain sandstone offering-table, uninscribed and uncarved.
- No. 18.** Tomb of the same type as No. 5. Vault of three and a half bricks.
Rifled. Contained bones ♂ and, in the middle of the enclosure just north of the centre of the brick vault and above the vault, the inscribed stela Ph. 5114 (Pl. 36) lying face upwards.
- No. 19.** Tomb of the same type as No. 5.
Rifled. Contained skull and bones ♂, five water-jars, viz. three of type shown in Pl. 23, No. 5, and two of the usual type, also a very small rough pot.
- No. 20.** Tomb of the same type as No. 5.
Rifled. Contained three water-jars of the same two types described in tomb 19.
- No. 21.** Tomb of same type as No. 5.
Rifled. No contents.
- No. 22.** Tomb of the same type as No. 5.
Rifled. Contained bones ♀, three large water-jars, and part of head of sandstone statue Ph. 5023 (not illustrated).
- No. 22 b.** Tomb of same type as No. 5.
Rifled. No contents of any kind.
- No. 23.** Tomb of same type as No. 5.
Rifled. Contained some leg bones ♀, and two large water-jars, viz. one plain of type shown in Pl. 23, No. 4, but more spherical, and another more elongated and painted on shoulder with bands of colour.
- No. 24.** Tomb of same type as No. 5, except that the natural cliff takes the place of the eastern side of the stone wall.
Rifled. Contained skull and bones ♂, three water-jars of the same types noted in tomb 23, two of them painted with bands of colour.
- No. 25.** Tomb similar to No. 24, viz. a stone enclosure without any back wall. The natural cliff made a back wall unnecessary. The grave itself was cut back 1.30 m. into this cliff. The part of the grave outside the cliff was vaulted with brick in the usual way.
Rifled. Contained a few broken bones ♂, the blue glass beads Ph. 5073 (not illustrated), and at south-west corner just below the top of the stone wall and so above the grave the fragment of sculpture Ph. 5007 (Pl. 17).
- No. 26.** Adjoined No. 25 and was similar to it in construction except that a back wall of brick was built on the cliff at the east end. As in No. 25 the grave was partly inside, partly outside, the cliff and vaulted with brick in the usual way.
Rifled. Contained only skull and broken bones ♂, and small painted vase of type shown in Pl. 25, No. 7.
- No. 27.** This tomb is the largest and, with the exception of No. 38, most elaborate in the whole cemetery, having a frontage of 8.0 m. In general type it belongs to the same class as No. 5, but, being built

- against the cliff it has no back wall of masonry. The back wall is formed in part of the solid rock, but where the face of the sandstone slopes away from the vertical a filling of brickwork (four courses, stretchers and headers on end alternately) has been inserted. The vault had been completely destroyed, the remains of it can be seen in the photograph Plate 41, another detail of its front part is drawn on Plate 40. The stone masonry can be studied in Plate 40 and in Plate 41: the gap in the front wall is not a door but a hole broken by plunderers.—No contents.
- No. 28.** Tomb of same type as No. 5.
Rifled. Contained only four water-jars. In rubbish above the grave was a large jar of black ware, and lying in front of the western wall was a miniature door-frame of sandstone.
- No. 28 b.** Oblong brick grave without any stone enclosure. The detail of the vaulting, which is typical of the three-brick style of vaulting, is illustrated in Plate 40.
Rifled. Contained skull, a few broken bones, and a flat-bottomed water-jar of a type not illustrated.
- No. 28 c.** Oblong brick grave without any stone enclosure precisely similar to 28 b.
Rifled. Contained one skull and bones ♀ and the leg bones of another person, also a painted pot shown in Pl. 23, No. 1, painted with the design shown in Pl. 29, No. 1, the pot shown in Pl. 23, No. 2, and a water-jar of the type shown in Pl. 23, No. 4 painted with blue bands.
- No. 28 d.** Oblong pit cut in the disintegrated sandstone. Measured 2.0 m. × 0.55 m. and 0.80 m. deep. Was not vaulted but closed by large stone slabs across the top.
Rifled. Contained extended skeleton ♂ disturbed and two water-jars of the usual type.
- No. 28 e.** Oblong brick grave without any stone enclosure. Rifled. Contained bones disturbed of ♀ and ♂ and a set of blue glass beads with one long gilded bead Ph. 5068 (Pl. 22). Also in south-east corner of the grave the head of a sandstone statue Ph. 5013 (Pl. 18), and in the middle of the grave the inscribed offering-table Ph. 5115 (Pl. 36) and the fragment of sandstone statue Ph. 5032 (not illustrated).
- No. 28 f.** Oblong brick grave.
Rifled, contained only pelvis and some odd bones ♂.
- No. 29 a, b.** Tomb of same type as No. 5, containing two brick graves. The northern of the two graves was rifled and contained only a few bones ♀. The southern was also rifled and contained disturbed bones ♂, two plain water-jars, another painted with bands and another painted with figures of four guinea-fowls, also the head of sandstone statue Ph. 5015 (Pl. 18).
- No. 29 c, d.** Plain pits closed by stone slabs laid on top.
Rifled. No contents.
- No. 30.** Tomb of same type as No. 5. Details of the vaulting illustrated in Plate 40. View in Plate 15 b.
Rifled. Contained only skeleton ♂.
- No. 30 b.** Oblong brick grave without any stone enclosure.
Rifled. Contained skulls and bones of ♂ and of young ♀ in confusion; also just above the south-east corner of the roof the painted and inscribed stela Ph. 5116 (Pl. 37), and in the grave the glass bottle Ph. 5053 (Pl. 22), and the head of sandstone statue Ph. 5016 (Pl. 18).
- No. 31.** Tomb of same type as No. 5. Inside the stone enclosure but at a higher level than the vaulted roof was the uninscribed offering-table Ph. 5117 (Pl. 37).
Rifled. Contained only one skull ♂, one non-adult skull, and some odd bones.
- No. 31 b.** Pit cut 1.40 m. deep into sandstone. Half-way down was a narrow ledge on which rested large stone slabs closing the grave. No brickwork. Contained bones of a child, two painted pots, viz. Ph. 5069, Ph. 5071 (not illustrated), the wooden kohlpot Ph. 5070 (not illustrated), and the fragment of a glass bottle Ph. 5072 (Pl. 22).
- No. 31 c.** Oblong brick grave without any stone enclosure.
Rifled. Contained nothing.
- No. 32.** Tomb of type similar to No. 5, but built roughly on the slope of the hill; the enclosure wall was of stone on two sides only (west and south), and the stone was not dressed. On the east side the enclosure wall was of brick two courses high, on part at least of the north side it was also of brick but had fallen into ruin. The grave was a plain pit without brickwork closed by slabs of stone.
Rifled. No contents in the grave.
- No. 33.** Tomb of same type as No. 5, but built roughly against the slope of the hill with unfaced stones. Brick grave, vaulted with two bricks.
Rifled. Contained few bones ♂ and a small tumbler of buff ware painted with two guinea-fowls (style of Pl. 25, No. 1). Lying face down in rubbish at eastern end above the grave was an inscribed offering-table, viz. Ph. 5111 or 5108.
- No. 33 b.** A rough hole cut back into the cliff like a cavern 1.0 m. high, 2.30 m. long, 1.0 m. to 1.50 m. wide. The door was closed by bricks. Contained two extended skeletons ♀ (heads at south) and one of a child, and the glass bottle Ph. 5053 (Pl. 22). Just above and outside the grave on the west was the painted and inscribed stela Ph. 5121 (Pl. 38).
- No. 34.** Tomb of same type as No. 5, but built roughly against the slope of the hill. Had west wall of stone masonry and one or two stones of masonry on south, but no rear wall. Brick grave vaulted with three bricks. Contained extended skeleton ♀ with head at west, and two plain water-jars. At the east end within the enclosure and just above the grave

was the headless statue of sandstone Ph. 5000 (Pl. 16), and in the centre of the enclosure the inscribed stela Ph. 5107 (Pl. 34).

No. 36. Tomb of same type as No. 5, but built roughly against the slope of the hill. Brick grave of usual character. Just inside the north-west corner of the enclosure was the offering-table Ph. 5132 (not illustrated).

No. 37. Rectangular pit cut in the sandstone to depth of 0.85 m. roofed with stone slabs. Measured 2.15 m. \times 0.70 m. Along its western front a rough wall of undressed blocks. Contained two skulls and a few odd bones σ^7 .

No. 38. This was a large and elaborate tomb standing on a separate knoll apart from the rest of the cemetery about thirty metres north of tomb 27. It was of the same general type as the standard graves in the cemetery, that is to say a brick vault enclosed by a rough square of dressed sandstone masonry. The peculiarity, however, is in the vaulting. Instead of being roofed with a single vault the brick grave is roofed

with two, one inside the other, as shown in Plate 41. Each vault is composed of five bricks, or of four entire and two half-bricks as the rings are made to break joint. At the north-east end two extra rings of brickwork are built up on the outside, resting on the upper vault, in true arch form (see Pl. 40, 41). The bricks used for vaulting have often ribs on their sides on a slight curve to serve as a key; this feature can be seen in the photographs of tomb 27 and tomb 38 on Plate 41. Outside the tomb were found two small fragments of an inscribed stela and a small fragment of a small sandstone statue. Inside the grave were some scattered bones, a small bronze dish (diameter 0.83) incised with concentric circles, two Roman amphorae with long handles, and, whole or in fragments, eight water-jars of shapes similar to those in Pl. 23, Nos. 4, 5, 6. One of these water-jars had been painted with bands, and on the fragments of another were figures of frogs (compare design on Pl. 28, No. 1).

Graves on the east of the hill. On the east of the hill, continuous with the graves which we excavated and forming part of the same cemetery, there had been cut a number of poor graves for persons of less wealth or distinction. Every one of these had been opened and plundered by a dealer two or three years before we arrived, although he had failed to find the important graves on the west slope of the hill. We reopened them all, but obtained nothing except a few bones and fragments of pottery. In this part there were no stone enclosures; the graves were of three types, viz.

(a) Rectangular pits 2.0 m. \times 1.0 long and 1.50 m. deep, roofed with rough sandstone slabs resting on a ledge cut round the pit.

(b) Rectangular pits cut into the slope of the ground so that the west end was deeper than the east, and sometimes actually shelved downward. Varied in depth from 0.50 m. to 1.0 m. No covering of slabs.

(c) Roughly circular pits averaging about 0.90 m. in diameter, the sides generally undercut so as to give the pit a flattened globular form. Depth about 0.50 m.

CHAPTER VII

CATALOGUE OF THE OBJECTS OBTAINED FROM THE CEMETERY AT SHABLUL (100 B. C. TO A. D. 300)

Statues and Parts of Statues.

- Ph. 5000.** Headless sandstone statue of a human figure with the body of a bird. The figure bears a sistrum in its right hand and is clothed in a long garment down to the feet.
Height 0.360 m.
Found inside tomb 34. With one exception statues of this kind have never been found before. That exception is a specimen noted by A. E. P. Weigall in *Annales du Service*, tom. vii. 2, 1906, in his 'Report on the excavation of the funeral temple of Thoutmosis III at Gurneh'. The statue is headless and is described, pp. 136, 137, as a 'remarkable fragment of an alabaster statuette showing the King partly covered by the wings of a bird'.—The bird-body of these Nubian statues is, in our opinion, a representation of the 'Ba'. Plate 16.
- Ph. 5001.** Headless sandstone statue of a human figure with the body of a bird. The figure is that of a man clothed in a long robe holding a long staff in his right hand and a curved baton in his left.
Height 0.320 m.
Found under the northern exterior wall of tomb 18, outside the tomb. Plate 16.
- Ph. 5002.** Headless sandstone statue similar to the last, but the bird-body has been broken off.
Height 0.360 m.
Found on the ground level in front of tomb 23. Plate 17.
- Ph. 5003.** Fragment of sandstone statue of the usual kind (i. e. a human figure with body of a bird).
Height 0.27 m.
Found on ground level between tombs 17 and 18, exactly in the middle of the southern wall of 18. Plate 17.
- Ph. 5004.** Sandstone statue of usual kind, complete except for the lower part of the bird's body. The figure is that of a man clothed in a long robe, holding a wand in his left hand, and a curved object in his right.
Height 0.520 m. The head and the body were found some distance apart, viz. the head on the ground level outside the north-west corner of tomb 24, and the body on the ground level outside the eastern wall of tomb 22 b. Plate 20 and Plate 17.
- Ph. 5005.** Head and upper portion of the trunk of a sandstone statue of the usual kind. The head, which had originally been made separate and fastened on dowels (cf. photo of the trunk in Pl. 17), was found at some distance from the trunk. This was lying outside the south-east corner of tomb 22 b.
Height of the two fragments together 0.29 m.
Plate 20 and Plate 17.
- Ph. 5006.** Fragment of a sandstone statue showing an arm.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular tomb. Plate 17.
- Ph. 5007.** Fragment of lower part of a sandstone statue of the usual kind.
Height 0.220 m.
Found inside the tomb 25. Plate 17.
- Ph. 5008.** Fragment of a sandstone statue of the usual kind.
Height 0.150 m.
Found on ground level outside southern wall of tomb 18. Plate 17.
- Ph. 5009.** Fragment of sandstone statue showing a hand holding a wand. Measures 0.080 m. × 0.110 m.
Found a metre above the ground level outside the north-west corner of tomb 17. Plate 17.
- Ph. 5010.** Fragment of sandstone statue showing the right arm folded across the breast, the hand clasping a long staff, while the left arm is extended at the side.
Height 0.130 m.
Found in the empty space north of tomb 14, three metres from the north-east corner of the tomb. Plate 17.
- Ph. 5011.** Pedestal and feet of a sandstone statue, the pedestal incised with a mark like A.
Height 0.190 m.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular tomb. Plate 17.
- Ph. 5012.** Head of a sandstone statue with a fragment at the side of it which shows that it had been a double statue with two heads. Remains of a stone head-dress, perhaps in the form of a disk.
Height 0.180 m.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular tomb. Plate 18.
- Ph. 5013.** Head of a sandstone statue.
Height 0.140 m.
Found inside the grave Sh. 28 c. Plate 18.
- Ph. 5014.** Head of a sandstone statue, dowelled at top to receive some sort of head-dress.

- Height 0.170 m.
Found on the ground level outside the south-east corner of tomb 14. Plate 18.
- Ph. 5015.** Head of sandstone statue with remains of head-dress.
Height 0.180 m.
Found inside the tomb 29. Plate 18.
- Ph. 5016.** Head of sandstone statue.
Height 0.140 m.
Found inside the tomb 30 b. Plate 18.
- Ph. 5017.** Head of sandstone statue.
Height 0.120 m.
Found in a hole under the middle of the north wall of tomb 16. Plate 18.
- Ph. 5018.** Head of sandstone statue showing that a rosette-shaped stud was worn in the ear.
Height 0.150 m.
Found in the rubbish covering the vault of tomb 7. Plate 19.
- Ph. 5019.** Part of double-headed statue of sandstone, one of the two heads much damaged.
Maximum height to fracture 0.220 m.
Found on the ground level outside the north-east corner of tomb 16. Plate 19.
- Ph. 5020.** Head of sandstone statue.
Height 0.130 m.
Found on ground level outside north-west corner of tomb 24. Plate 19.
- Ph. 5021.** Half the head of a sandstone statue.
Height 0.120 m.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular tomb. Plate 19.
- Ph. 5022.** Head of sandstone statue.
Height 0.120 m.
Found outside the west wall of tomb 21 at about one metre from its southern extremity. Plate 19.
- Ph. 5023.** Part of the head of a sandstone statue.
Height 0.110 m.
Found inside tomb 22. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5024.** Part of the head of a sandstone statue.
Height 0.120.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular tomb. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5025.** Head of a sandstone statue of character very similar to 5020.
Height 0.140 m.
Found inside tomb 11. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5026.** Fragment of a sandstone statue showing part of the robe.
Height 0.180 m.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular tomb. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5027.** Fragment of a sandstone statue much damaged. Shows the same peculiar turn of the arms as 5002.
Height 0.240 m.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular tomb. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5028.** Fragment of a sandstone statue showing bust of a woman with pendulous breasts.
Height 0.120 m.
Found on ground level one metre from the west front of tomb 11. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5029.** Fragment of a sandstone statue showing upper part of the trunk of the figure and part of the bird-back.
Height 0.200 m.
Found on ground level one metre from the west front of tomb 12. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5030.** Fragment of a sandstone statue showing only the lower part of a long dress.
Height 0.140 m.
Found near tomb 19. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5031.** Fragment of a sandstone statue showing bust and part of the bird-back. The right arm folded across the breast holds a long staff, the left arm is extended at the side.
Height 0.150 m.
Found just above ground level outside the east wall of tomb 18. Plate 20.
- Ph. 5032.** Fragment of a sandstone statue showing lower part of figure of a man in long robe.
Height 0.300 m.
Found inside tomb 28 e. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5033.** Fragment of a sandstone statue very similar to 5032.
Height 0.200 m.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular tomb. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5034.** Fragment of a sandstone statue showing the tail of the bird-body. The tail is formed like that of a hawk.
Measures 0.300 m. × 0.250 m., so that the statue must have been of unusual dimensions.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular tomb. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5035.** Fragment of head of sandstone statue resembling 5016.
Height 0.160 m.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular tomb. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5036.** Head of a sandstone statue resembling 5022.
Height 0.120 m.
Found a little above the ground level outside the east wall of tomb 9. Not illustrated.
- Nos. 5037 to 5040 inclusive have not been used in the catalogue.
- Objects from the tomb numbered 5 b.*
- Ph. 5041.** A small bronze bowl, diameter 0.150 m.
Plate 21.
- Ph. 5042.** Potsherd found buried as a sherd in the grave. It was evidently preserved for the sake of the drawing of a guinea-fowl which does not show in the illustration. Plate 21.

- Ph. 5043. Small iron spoon.
Length 0.100 m. Plate 21.
- Ph. 5044. Small bronze vase.
Height 0.100 m. Plate 21.
- Ph. 5045. Wooden stick, possibly a kohl-stick,
carved at the end into form of an uracus.
Length 0.250 m. Plate 21.
- Ph. 5046. A red water-jar painted in light bands.
Height 0.260 m. Plate 21.
- Ph. 5047. Pitcher with handle, unpainted.
Height 0.240 m. Plate 21.

Objects from the tomb numbered 7 b.

- Ph. 5048. Large bronze bowl with a base ring
below.
Diameter 0.200 m.
Height 0.125 m. Plate 21.
- Ph. 5049. Bronze dipper of Roman style, perforated
at the bottom in a scroll and fret pattern.
Diameter 0.145 m.
Height 0.110 m.
Length of handle 0.140 m. Plate 21.
- Ph. 5050. Small bronze cup.
Diameter 0.085 m.
Height 0.070 m. Plate 21.
- Ph. 5051. Bronze lamp with head of a lion on handle.
Roman style of a kind known in first century B.C.
Length including handle 0.135. Plate 21.

Glass, beads, &c.

- Ph. 5052. Glass bottle of Roman manufacture found
in tomb 30 b.
Height 0.090 m. Plate 22.
- Ph. 5053. Glass bottle of Roman manufacture found
in tomb 33 b. Plate 22.
- Ph. 5054. Fragment of glass of Roman manufacture
which shows a fluted jug-handle.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular
tomb. Plate 22.
- Ph. 5055. Fragments of thick green glass which
must have formed part of a wide bowl. The glass
has been incised with diagonal lines which may have
been intended to be filled with colour.
Found in tomb 7. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5056. A black glass bead with a band of white.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular
tomb. Plate 22.
- Ph. 5057. Iron bracelet.
Found in tomb 8 b. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5058. Worked stone flake, of a transparent
yellow stone.
Not found in relation to any particular tomb.
Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5059. Fragments of a small glass bottle of
Roman manufacture.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular
tomb. Not illustrated.

- Ph. 5060.) Fragments of glass of Roman Manufacture.
Ph. 5061.)
Ph. 5062.) Not found in apparent relation to any
Ph. 5063.) particular tomb. Not illustrated.

- Ph. 5064. Set of coloured beads, blue and violet.
Found in tomb 16 b. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5065. Bracelet of blue glass beads with pendants
of quartz, carnelian, and haematite, and a peculiar
glass fastener.
Found on the child in tomb 5 b. Plate 22.
- Ph. 5066. Lozenge-shaped bead of rock crystal.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular
tomb. Plate 22.
- Ph. 5067. Bead of black glass with scroll designs in
white.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular
tomb. Plate 22.
- Ph. 5068. A set of blue glass beads and one long
bead of gilded glass from tomb 28 e. Plate 22.
- Ph. 5069. Small pottery bowl of thin buff ware
painted with lotus-buds alternately red and black in
a chain.
Found in tomb 31 b. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5070. Wooden kohl-pot in form of a column.
Height 0.150 m.
Found in tomb 31 b. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5071. A painted vase from 31 b (shape similar to
Pl. 23, No. 16). Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5072. Fragment of a glass bottle of Roman
manufacture.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular
tomb. Plate 22.
- Ph. 5073. Small blue glass beads.
Found in tomb 25. Plate 22.
- The numbers from 5074 to 5099 have not been used
in the catalogue.

Stelae and Offering-tables.

- Ph. 5100. Sandstone offering-table carved with liba-
tion vases and with two figures of frogs. The margin
inscribed with several lines of Meroitic script.
Measures 0.390 m. × 0.340 m.
Found on ground level immediately outside the
south-east corner of tomb 23 lying face upwards.
Plate 32.
- Ph. 5101. Sandstone offering-table carved with liba-
tion vases and loaves. The margin inscribed with
one line and in places with two lines of Meroitic script.
Measures 0.290 m. × 0.290 m.
Found on ground level three metres in front of
western wall of tomb 25, lying face upwards on
a miniature door-frame of sandstone. Plate 32.
- Ph. 5102. Sandstone stela inscribed with eleven lines
of Meroitic script.
Measures 0.320 m. × 0.280 m.
Found about 0.300 m. above ground level between
tombs 22 and 12.

- Ph. 5103.** Sandstone stela inscribed with nine lines of Meroitic script.
Measures 0.420 m. × 0.300 m.
Found within the south-west corner of tomb 14 at level of lowest course of masonry and so above the vaulted grave. Plate 33.
- Ph. 5104.** Sandstone stela inscribed with eight and a half lines of Meroitic script.
Measures 0.310 m. × 0.320 m.
Found on ground level about a metre in front of western wall of tomb 14. Plate 33.
- Ph. 5105.** Sandstone stela inscribed with ten lines of Meroitic script.
Measures 0.270 m. × 0.250 m.
Found on ground level 0.750 m. in front of the middle of the western wall of tomb 23. Plate 34.
- Ph. 5106.** Sandstone stela inscribed with eleven lines of Meroitic script.
Measures 0.310 m. × 0.220 m.
Found about 0.300 m. above ground level immediately outside the south-west corner of tomb 32. Plate 34.
- Ph. 5107.** Sandstone stela inscribed with ten lines of Meroitic script very irregularly written.
Measures 0.420 m. × 0.290 m.
Found within tomb 34 at the level of the lowest course of masonry and just in the centre of the tomb. This is the same tomb within which was found the statue numbered Ph. 5000. Plate 34.
- Ph. 5108.** Sandstone offering-table inscribed round the margin with one line and with two lines of Meroitic script.
Measures 0.360 m. × 0.350 m.
Found lying face down in the rubbish above the tomb 33, at eastern extremity of the tomb (see also 5111). Plate 34.
- Ph. 5109.** Sandstone offering-table inscribed round the margin with one line and with two lines of Meroitic script.
Measures 0.360 m. × 0.310 m.
Found on ground level immediately outside the centre of the southern wall of tomb 33. Plate 35.
- Ph. 5110.** Sandstone stela inscribed with two lines of Meroitic script, other lines may have been obliterated.
Measures 0.370 m. × 0.300 m.
Found on ground level exactly midway between tombs 16 and 17. Plate 35.
- Ph. 5111.** Sandstone offering-table rudely carved with loaves. The margin inscribed with two lines of Meroitic script.
Measures 0.330 m. × 0.340 m.
Doubtful whether it was this specimen or Ph. 5108 that was found in rubbish above tomb 33. Plate 35.
- Ph. 5112.** Sandstone stela in two fragments which join together and then measure 0.290 m. × 0.210 m.
Inscribed very rudely with seven lines of Meroitic script.
Found within the vaulted grave of tomb 15. Pl. 35.
- Ph. 5113.** Sandstone offering-table carved with representation of amphora and loaves.
Margin inscribed with two lines of Meroitic script, much rubbed.
Measures 0.340 m. × 0.350 m.
Found on ground level one metre outside north-west corner of tomb 11. Plate 36.
- Ph. 5114.** Sandstone stela inscribed with twelve lines of Meroitic script.
Measures 0.350 m. × 0.440 m.
Found lying face upwards in the middle of tomb 18 about 0.750 m. above the brick vault. Plate 36.
- Ph. 5115.** Sandstone offering-table with two miniature staircases carved in the interior of the depression.
Measures 0.380 m. × 0.320 m.
Found in the middle of the tomb 28 e above the bones but below the arched vault. Plate 36.
- Ph. 5116.** Sandstone stela painted with two full-length figures in red executed in a Nubianized Egyptian style. Above the figures, which are much rubbed, and in the space between them is an inscription in Meroitic characters. The figure on the right seems to be making offering to that on the left.
Measures 0.370 m. × 0.280 m.
Found just above the south-east corner of the roof of tomb 30 b. Plate 37.
- Ph. 5117.** Sandstone offering-table inscribed round the margin with two lines of Meroitic script, much rubbed.
Measures 0.340 m. × 0.260 m.
Found within the stone enclosure of tomb 31 but some feet above the vaulted roof of the grave itself. Plate 37.
- Ph. 5118.** Sandstone stela inscribed with Meroitic script, much rubbed.
Measures 0.240 m. × 0.230 m.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular tomb. Plate 37.
- Ph. 5119.** Sandstone stela without inscription, painted with a small full-length figure in red with a blue wig. In his left hand he holds a curved object like that seen in the statue Ph. 5001.
Measures 0.330 m. × 0.240 m.
Found immediately outside the centre of the northern wall of tomb 24 about 0.40 above ground level. Plate 38.
- Ph. 5120.** Sandstone stela without inscription, painted with a full-length figure in red executed in quite Egyptian style. The head and shoulders of the figure are obliterated.
Measures 0.380 m. × 0.330 m.
Found on ground level one metre outside the western end of the southern wall of tomb 18. Plate 38.
- Ph. 5121.** Sandstone stela with a single line of Meroitic characters along the top edge. Painted with a full-length figure in red executed in Egyptian style; the apron that he wears is white.

- Measures 0.310 m. × 0.230 m.
Found at western end of 33 b just above the grave.
Plate 38.
- Ph. 5122.** Sandstone stela without inscription, broken. Painted with a figure of Anubis in black, the legs were in red as shown by the colouring just above the fracture. The libation vase is outlined in red.
Measures 0.300 m. × 0.180 m.
Found lying face downwards against the south-eastern corner of tomb 23. Plate 38.
- Ph. 5123.** Sandstone offering-table without inscription. Carved with two libation vases, oval receptacle, and four loaves.
Measures 0.320 m. × 0.250 m.
Found 0.75 above ground level midway between tomb 17 and tomb 8. Plate 39.
- Ph. 5124.** Sandstone offering-table without inscription.
Measures 0.320 m. × 0.230 m.
Found about 0.30 m. above ground level between tomb 7 and tomb 7 b. Plate 39.
- Ph. 5125.** Sandstone offering-table without inscription. Four miniature staircases carved in the interior of the depression.
Measures 0.320 m. × 0.260 m.
Found on ground level immediately outside south-west corner of tomb 21. Plate 39.
- Ph. 5126.** Sandstone offering-table without inscription. Rudely carved with four loaves.
Measures 0.250 m. × 0.220 m.
Found one metre outside south-east corner of tomb 21. Plate 39.
- Ph. 5127.** Not used in the catalogue.
- Ph. 5128.** Sandstone offering-table, without inscription. Roughly incised with loaves and libation vases.
Measures 0.400 m. × 0.400 m.
Found in rubbish near tomb 22 b. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5129.** Sandstone offering-table without inscription, carved with loaves and an ornament of chevrons on spout.
Measures 0.230 m. × 0.200 m.
Found in empty space three metres north-east of tomb 14. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5130.** Fragment of sandstone with a few signs in Meroitic script.
Measures 0.160 m. × 0.080 m.
Not found in apparent relation to any particular tomb. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5132.** Sandstone offering-table, very rough. No inscription or sculpture.
Measures 0.260 m. × 0.220 m.
From tomb 36. Not illustrated.
- Nos. 5131 and Nos. 5133 to 5250 have not been used in the catalogue.
- Pottery.*
- Ph. 5251-5261.** Fragments of painted pottery from houses and cemetery of Shablul. Of these Nos. 5253, 5254, 5259 are from houses, the remainder are from the rubbish of the cemetery in no apparent connexion with any particular grave.
Plate 24, in which 5251 is No. 1.
5252 is No. 2.
5253 is No. 3.
5254 is No. 4.
5255 is No. 5.
5256 is No. 6.
5257 is No. 7.
5258 is No. 8.
5259 is No. 9.
5260 is No. 10.
5261 is No. 11.
- Ph. 5262-5270.** Fragments of painted pottery from the cemetery of Shablul. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5271-5280.** Fragments of painted pottery from houses and cemetery of Shablul. Nos. 5272, 5273, 5274, 5275, 5279 are from houses. No. 5277 is from a particular tomb, viz. tomb 26.
Plate 25, in which 5271 is No. 1.
5272 is No. 2.
5273 is No. 3.
5274 is No. 4.
5275 is No. 5.
5276 is No. 6.
5277 is No. 7.
5278 is No. 8.
5279 is No. 9.
5280 is No. 10.
- Ph. 5281-5285.** Fragments of painted pottery from houses and cemetery of Shablul. No. 5285 is from a house.
Plate 26, in which 5281 is No. 1.
5282 is No. 2.
5283 is No. 3.
5284 is No. 4.
5285 is No. 5.
- Ph. 5286-5290.** Fragments of painted pottery from Shablul. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5291-5301.** Fragments of painted pottery from Shablul, of which Nos. 5292, 5299 are from houses.
Plate 27, in which 5291 is No. 1.
5292 is No. 2.
5293 is No. 3.
5294 is No. 4.
5295 is No. 5.
5296 is No. 6.
5297 is No. 7.
5298 is No. 8.
5299 is No. 9.
5300 is No. 10.
5301 is No. 11.
- Ph. 5302-5310.** Fragments of painted pottery from Shablul. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5311-5315.** Fragments of painted pottery from Shablul, of which No. 5315 is from a house.
Plate 28, in which 5311 is No. 1.
5312 is No. 2.

- Plate 28, in which 5313 is No. 3.
5314 is No. 4.
5315 is No. 5.
- Ph. 5316-5320.** Fragments of painted pottery from Shablul. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5321-5331.** Fragments of painted pottery from Shablul, of which 5322, 5324, 5327, 5328 are from houses, and No. 5321 is from the tomb 28 c.
- Plate 29, in which 5321 is No. 1.
5322 is No. 2.
5323 is No. 3.
5324 is No. 4.
5325 is No. 5.
5326 is No. 6.
5327 is No. 7.
5328 is No. 8.
5329 is No. 9.
5330 is No. 10.
5331 is No. 11.
- Ph. 5332-5340.** Fragments of painted pottery from Shablul. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5341-5348.** Fragments of painted pottery from Shablul, of which No. 5344 is from a house.
- Plate 30, in which 5341 is No. 1.
5342 is No. 2.
5343 is No. 3.
5344 is No. 4.
5345 is No. 5.
5346 is No. 6.
5347 is No. 7.
5348 is No. 8.
- Ph. 5349-5350.** Fragments of painted pottery from Shablul. No. 5349 is from the tomb 13. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 5351-5362.** Fragments of painted pottery from Shablul, of which Nos. 5351, 5354, 5355, 5356, 5357, 5359, 5360 are from houses.
- Plate 31, in which 5351 is No. 1.
5352 is No. 2.
5353 is No. 3.
5354 is No. 4.
5355 is No. 5.
5356 is No. 6.
5357 is No. 7.
5358 is No. 8.
5359 is No. 9.
- Plate 31, in which 5360 is No. 10.
5361 is No. 11.
5362 is No. 12.
- N. B.—Owing to an oversight in numbering two or three more of the fragments of pottery attributed in these plates 24-31 to the cemetery may really have come from the houses. The error, if it has occurred, is of slight importance.
- Ph. 5363-6517.** Fragments of painted pottery from the cemetery and houses of Shablul, the very great majority being from the cemetery. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 6518-6528, 6530-6534, and 6538.** Handles and fragments of Roman amphorae, which are of some value for dating. They were found in the rubbish of the cemetery thrown out from the graves. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 6537, 6539, 6540, 6542, 6543, 6549, 6550.** Pots from cemetery of Shablul.
- Plate 23, in which 6537 is No. 16.
6539 is No. 2.
6540 is No. 15.
6542 is No. 3.
6543 is No. 14.
6549 is No. 17.
6550 is No. 4.
- Ph. 6538, 6541, 6544 to 6548, 6551, 6552.** are rough pots from the cemetery of Shablul, duplicates of those illustrated on Plate 23.
- Ph. 6553-6612** are, with the exception of 6562, 6566, 6570, 6585, 6604, 6607, 6611 (which are illustrated in Plate 23), fragments of painted pottery from Shablul. Not illustrated.
- Ph. 6562 is illustrated in Plate 23, No. 7.
Ph. 6566 ,, ,, ,, Plate 23, No. 10.
Ph. 6570 ,, ,, ,, Plate 23, No. 9.
Ph. 6585 ,, ,, ,, Plate 23, No. 8.
Ph. 6604 ,, ,, ,, Plate 23, No. 13.
Ph. 6607 ,, ,, ,, Plate 23, No. 12.
Ph. 6611 ,, ,, ,, Plate 23, No. 11.
- Ph. 6613-6619** are fragments of Roman glass from Shablul. Not illustrated.

CHAPTER VIII

THE POTTERY OF SHABLUL

ISOLATED examples of Nubian painted pottery have turned up at various times, and have found their way into various museums; of the provenance of these, however, of their age, or the circumstances of their finding, nothing was known; they were vaguely classed as 'late' or 'Roman' or 'Coptic', and received little more attention. The year's work at Shablul has for the first time produced a mass of material giving something like a conspectus of the pottery in use in a limited area, and within a fairly definite period. The variety of technique and the eclectic range of ornament displayed may make classification very difficult, but must command all the greater interest; when external influences seem to be at work they point to countries far remote and to periods far removed from one another, while at the same time a certain unity of feeling pervades the whole series. Perhaps the outstanding feature is a love for natural and, in particular, for vegetable forms; these are sometimes represented with startling realism and drawn with a freedom of hand that descends into carelessness: sometimes they are treated with a traditional and laborious convention. But these two so different styles existed side by side, and are found upon the same vessel, and this being so it is perhaps more easy to see contemporary objects in those also which recall the products of predynastic or Eighteenth Dynasty Egypt, of primitive Ionia, or of Rome.

General Features.

But before discussing the decoration in detail it is necessary to speak of forms and colouring.

The painted pottery of the Shablul site shows a curiously narrow range of shapes: nearly all the perfect vessels and the fragments to which any shape at all can be assigned belong to one of two types characteristic of, if not peculiar to, Nubian potters. The first of them is figured on Pl. 23, figs. 3 and 4, and consists of an elongated sphere giving vertically an oval, and horizontally a circular section, at the top of which is a small tubular neck; there is no proper base and no handle;¹ the form both in its type and in its variations suggests a gourd. The second most popular form is that of the goblet or tumbler; the walls of this are thin and generally straight, sometimes curved out at the lip, and are bevelled in below to a base slightly flattened but still so rudimentary that the tumbler is none too steady. Pl. 23, fig. 8, Pl. 25, figs. 1 and 7, and all the figures on Pl. 27 belong to this type.

Shapes.

Besides these two there is a flat saucer-shaped vessel with interior decoration (e.g. Pl. 24, fig. 6) and a very peculiar bottle (Pl. 23, fig. 1) whose shape suggests the modern Gulla. On other shapes the decoration, if there is any, is confined to plain bands of colour, as is the case with Pl. 23, fig. 13, a small jug of a common Roman type, and with Pl. 23, fig. 17, one of a pair of large vessels of a not very determinate but on the whole Roman shape. The small bowls, Pl. 23, figs. 7 and 10, are plain, the latter being of red ware, perhaps intended to be in imitation of the Gaulish *terra sigillata*; the coarse jug, Pl. 23, fig. 12, is plain also, but a very similar example in the British Museum is covered with a coarse whiteish slip and has floral decoration closely resembling that of Pl. 30, fig. 6. A straight-sided two-handled bottle with a good base and rim in the Berlin Museum, and a squat jar with leaf ornament in the British Museum, give further proof that the range of shapes for

¹ In the British Museum are two specimens showing an elongated variety of the gourd type, fitted with two small ring-handles at the shoulder.

*Varieties of
Material
and Tech-
nique.*

painted ware was not quite so restricted as the Shablul material would lead one to suppose. If the shapes are comparatively few the varieties in material are very many. A rough classification of the principal types is here given: some of these pass insensibly into one another, especially in the case of (*b*) and (*c*), while some individual specimens, such as those on Pl. 23, fig. 1, of which mention has been made already, and on Pl. 29, fig. 7, stand so clearly apart that it is not necessary to include them as types of Nubian work at all. The main divisions are:

(*a*) Rough hand-made pottery, represented by fragments of a very large jar of unrefined ill-baked clay, covered with a coarse slip on which are painted cows and lotus-buds (not figured); and by some pieces of black incised or punctured ware, one of which shows a very geometrical dotted drawing of an ostrich.

(*b*) Wheel-made pottery with a coarse but firm texture: this includes much of the unpainted pottery and Pl. 29, fig. 11, where the design is in matt black on the plain drab clay.

(*c*) Wheel-made pottery with a firm hard texture and a more or less coloured and burnished surface. Very many of the tumbler-shaped pieces belong to this class. The clay is finely levigated, and the turning skilful, so that the walls are thin and fairly true, while considerable heat is used in the baking. The brownish tint of the surface is the natural colour of the clay brought out by burnishing. The pigments used are black and red.

(*d*) Pottery of soft white clay with a purplish tint on the surface: finely levigated but often lightly baked and very friable (e.g. Pl. 24, figs. 1, 2, 6, 8, Pl. 25, figs. 1, 7, Pl. 29, fig. 3), though sometimes of a firmer texture, as in Pl. 24, figs. 3, 4, 7. The stamped ware is nearly always of this type.

(*e*) Pottery of drab or reddish clay with a haematitic surface more or less burnished: most of the gourd-shaped pots, like Pl. 23, figs. 3 and 4, belong to this type.

(*f*) Drab or red pottery with a cream-coloured slip over the whole surface, e.g. Pl. 24, figs. 10, 11; Pl. 25, fig. 6.

(*g*) Pottery of very smoothly levigated red clay covered with a white slip which for hardness, brilliance of surface, and durability can only be compared with the contemporary *terra sigillata* of Roman Gaul. The few specimens of this are either plain, ribbed, or cross-hatched with brown paint.

The colour-scheme is throughout obedient to conventions founded on the nature of the surface to be coloured. Thus the drab pottery when decorated at all is decorated only with the purplish-brown that does duty for, and when thickly used has the appearance of, black. The vessels of class (*c*) with their finer surface have touches of red or of orange, and red or orange is also used on the white slip of class (*f*). In dealing with the softer white fabric the decorator has turned to account the deficiencies of his material. Brown or purple are the only colours used: the loose grain of the clay lets the pigment run, and so this is laid on with a certain breadth or even coarseness of touch producing either, when the paint is thin, the matt tone of Pl. 24, fig. 6, or, where it is stiffer, the gradations from deep sienna to creamy white that add so much to the Japanesc-like drawing of Pl. 24, fig. 2. When the better-glazed surface allows, as on Pl. 24, figs. 3, 5, the lines are finer, and the paint (which is now like an enamel and will flake off) acquires a brilliance impossible on the porous ground; and here touches of orange or scarlet are introduced. Of the pottery with a deep red ground the coarser specimens are decorated with black alone, relieved occasionally by flecks of white, but where the surface has been highly burnished, as in the examples on Pl. 28, blue, yellow, and white are all employed as well to give a rich polychrome effect.

It has been said that the style of drawing varies greatly, but the difference is largely due again to technical conventions. Naturally the rougher surfaces of coarse pottery are

more carelessly treated, and the most elaborate technique is reserved for the finely-burnished red ware. On the former, then, the artist draws what comes most obviously into his head—and this is usually some form of floral ornament, and draws it in the manner most natural to his hand—and this is a sketchy or impressionistic realism. How close was his observation of nature may be seen from the specimens here reproduced; the vine-leaf of Pl. 25, fig. 6, with its red autumn tint, the various kinds of plants on Pl. 30 and 31, blocked in with such truth that the species can often be identified, the birds of Pl. 24, fig. 2, and Pl. 27, fig. 1, all, in spite of their rough-and-ready treatment, betray that affectionate regard for the living thing which comes out so strikingly on Pl. 24, 19, in the carefully-drawn head of the pasturing deer, and in a large and fine pot¹ in the British Museum that shows giraffes grazing upon tree-tops.

The Decoration, (a) Realistic.

But when he sets himself to a more laborious and elaborate style, he changes with it his feeling for things: he adopts a rigid and traditional conventionalism which clearly from its carefulness had not his sympathy. On the finest red pottery we have, then, a class apart; the ground of the pattern is covered with a wash of ill-fixed creamy white on which the details are carefully mapped out in black; blue and yellow are also used with broad effect; the result, as seen on Plate 28, is startlingly unlike anything else in the series—the fragment of a hawk (fig. 4) is purely Egyptian in treatment, as is the crocodile (fig. 2), while the curious figure (fig. 3), representing perhaps the Ba bird, or more probably the winged knot pattern, is again due to the tradition of the Lower Nile. But these characteristics do not mark the work as belonging to a separate period; over the crocodile, with its painful and almost mathematical lines, came a panel of floral work, black on red, in the freehand style usual to the subject; the two styles are contemporary, but the more careful technique is involved with the traditions of Egyptian art wherein care and exactitude so clearly figure, while the freer naturally accompanies the worker's own ideas. How greatly his style changed when once he shook off those traditional ties is best seen by comparing two examples giving the same subject. In Pl. 28, fig. 2, the crocodile is the conventional product of the later Empire, coarsened indeed and barbarized, but unmistakable; he is divided up into sections, each of which has its formal geometric markings; the tail is short and fat, the legs powerless, and the whole is like a caricature in a child's play-book. In Pl. 26, fig. 1, there is the same beast sketched from life, not taken from a traditional repertoire; the drawing is rough and bold; the creature stands up and waves its tail, upon which is perched the 'trochilus' bird observed by Herodotus:² ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἐς τὴν γῆν ἐκβῆ ἕκ τοῦ ὕδατος ὁ κροκόδειλος καὶ ἔπειτα χάμη, ἐμβαῖτα ὁ τροχίλος ἐσδύνων ἐς τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ καταπίνει τὰς βδέλλας. The difference between the two figures is remarkable, and yet so far as date goes they might have been the work of the same man.

The Decoration, (b) Conventional.

Mention has been made of the stamped wares, an example of which is given on Pl. 29, fig. 3. The stamps employed usually represent either a more or less degenerate Uraeus snake or, as in this instance, a symbol curiously like the cross and crescent of a later date: the evolution of the pattern from a recognizably Egyptian original to a very far-removed derivative is shown by the comparison of figs. 1-5, on Pl. 29. That this style of pottery, which is almost always of thin and well-turned white clay, is contemporary with the other types with which at first sight it has not much in common, is shown by an example³ in the Berlin Museum on which, below a border of stamped ornament, is painted decoration much like that of Pl. 25, fig. 9. Of the lotus-flower here represented the sepals are of a type not uncommon in New Empire art: another New Empire treatment of the lotus is seen on Pl. 24, fig. 1, and Pl. 26, fig. 3, where the three sepals with the two petals between are of the Eighteenth to Nineteenth Dynasty type, which is after-

Origin of designs.

¹ B. M. No. 30712, from Argin.

² Herod. ii. 68. 8.

³ Invoice No. 4603. We are indebted for this reference to Prof. H. Schäfer of Berlin.

*Origin of
designs.*

wards translated into Greek art. As for other elements of design for whose originals we might look to later Egypt, there is the Uraeus snake on Pl. 24, fig. 8, the eye on Pl. 24, fig. 7, the Dad sign with the sun's disk above it on Pl. 25, fig. 1, and on several other examples, the Hathor head on Pl. 24, fig. 6, and Pl. 25, fig. 5, and perhaps on Pl. 30, fig. 7 the corn that is so prominent in the New Empire cult of the dead. Several pieces recall intimately the Tell-el-Amarna pottery; the fragment of a hawk on Pl. 28, with its curious blue colour scheme, the outline drawing of a quadruped, too fragmentary to be reproduced here,¹ the treatment of colour bands on several of the plainer specimens and the naturalism of others, remind one of that isolated and transitory phase of Egyptian art. But the Nubian series cannot be understood as a product of the Egyptian art of any one period; sometimes the resemblance is rather with the most remote ages. Thus Pl. 27, fig. 10, is to be compared with the Nagada types, and several other examples, of spotted snake-spirals, for instance, or cross-hatched trees, have a distant likeness to that more primitive style. On the other hand, Greek influence is unmistakably at work. The scheme by which birds or animals are arranged in processional rows (Pl. 25, fig. 1, and Pl. 29, fig. 9) reminds one of early Greek pottery, Proto-Corinthian or Samian, which in its turn is derived from Asia; the three-petalled flower or seed-vessel of Pl. 26, fig. 2, and Pl. 27, fig. 2, is, according to Professor Meurer, not Egyptian at all, but Greek; the ivy wreath (e.g. Pl. 27, fig. 6) is purely Hellenistic, as is the general love for garland patterns. As Professor Schweinfurth says, everywhere is a mixture of Greek and Egyptian elements, and a great deal would point to a back-wash from hither Asia, Ionia, and the Greek colonies, where Egyptian motives underwent subsequent modifications and then were returned in a new shape to the country of their origin.

In some examples, again, as in Pl. 29, figs. 1-5, 6, and 11, there is a nearer approach to what may be called Coptic art. The Roman influence has exerted itself over forms rather than over decoration, but the use of the stamp and the employment of slip in high relief are both familiar processes to the Roman potter.

But after allowance has been made for all these borrowings there yet remains one element unexplained, the originality that informs the whole. It has been said that naturalism is the keynote of the series, and the naturalism of style is most prominent just where the subject must necessarily be local and not copied from foreign sources—when it is the crocodile, the guinea-fowl, the giraffe. The last two, like the ostrich (which is rudely represented on a fragment of punctured black ware), have disappeared from modern Nubia; and it is difficult to think that the guinea-fowl at least ever thrived there, though its occurrence upon the pottery is frequent enough: nowadays it is to be sought as far south as Abyssinia.

It would seem that we have to do with a people loving nature, observing it, and trying to represent it faithfully, as, after his lights, did the Nagada potter, and as did the Egyptian in that interval of emancipation from precedent for which Tell-el-Amarna stands. At heart unsophisticated and primitive—occupying much the same position in the scale of culture as did the predynastic Egyptians—this people is subject to the mixed influences of civilizations already formed, and contact with them develops at a late date phenomena which there had come to light early in their history. Thus the art forms of Rhodes or Naukratis that resulted from the intercourse of Ionia and seventh-century Egypt spring up again from the influence of Greece and Egypt upon Nubia, and those of the Eighteenth Dynasty flourish there a second time in the Roman age. Certainly it is to this last date that the Shablul pottery must be assigned, though on the material at present to hand no more than the limits of its chronology can be fixed. We are dealing with wares unclassified and practically unknown hitherto, the evidence from former discoveries is neither voluminous

¹ Compare British Museum No. 4863, a fragment with cross-hatched panels and an outlined rabbit.

nor precise, and unfortunately the present site has not yet yielded such definite criteria for dating as might be desired. Taken by themselves the types do not show any clear historical sequence or development; one piece may look later than another, but this only in isolated instances too few to form the basis of a theory which would at the best be highly subjective. On the other hand, the ground in which the fragments lay had been so thoroughly disturbed that there is seldom external evidence for regarding any objects as contemporary: untouched tomb-groups are sadly wanting. The homogeneity of the pottery in general would demand that the period assigned for its production be not prolonged beyond the barely necessary limits, and it remains only to state what these limits are.

Chronological evidence.

Among the unpainted fragments are the upper parts of amphorae, in some of which the smooth necks and long handles point to a Ptolemaic date, while the ribbed necks and ring-handles of others suggest rather a Roman origin. As these were doubtless imported, there is no absolute proof of their being strictly contemporary with the objects with which they are found, and it is only as a terminus *post quem* that they can be called in evidence. The small jug on Pl. 23, fig. 13, is of distinctly Roman form, as is the bowl, figure 10, on the same plate, which has already been mentioned as being perhaps a local imitation of *terra sigillata*; Pl. 23, figs. 15 and 17 give a type which, though widespread in time and place, is yet characteristic of Roman potters everywhere. The blown glass would naturally be assigned to a Roman date, though such an attribution is perhaps arbitrary and hypothetical: the small fragments of glazed ware found were also late and for the most part agree well with that from dated Roman sites in the Fayûm.

More certain evidence, however, is given by a tomb-group from the cemetery of Shablul (tomb 7 b), figured on Plate 21. Here were the large gourd-like pots with black-and-white bands which in both form and colour are typical of their whole class; they do not seem to mark any particular stage in the series, but in a simple way sum up its main characteristics, while their decoration of parallel bands is carried on into many of the most complex specimens of the polychrome ware. With these was a bronze lamp; its long nozzle with volutes at either side is of a type assigned in clay specimens to the latter part of the second century B. C. The curved handle with the lion's mask makes it rather later (this is found in very many examples of the first century A. D. from Pompeii and elsewhere) and the lamps can fairly well be attributed to the first century before or after the Christian era. This date is supported by the other two bronze vessels found in the tomb: their forms are not very definitive, but would agree well with a date of about the beginning of the Christian era, while the fact that the three were found together disposes of the likelihood of any one being a survival.

A fragment of a one-handed cup-shaped vessel of brownish-yellow clay with slip ornament in high relief (fig. 7 on Pl. 29) is of a recognized third-century type; similar examples come from the Harit cemetery and are noted in Grenfell and Hunt's *Fayum Towns*. But the same date is more certainly given by fig. 8 on Pl. 29: this is a fragment of a painted plaster mask, of which part of the left side of the head and the left eye only are preserved; but this is enough to fix the coiffure as belonging to the period of Julia Domna and J. Mama; the regular deep waves of her hair on coins and statues is unmistakably rendered, and as the style was a pronounced and a short-lived one the date of the manufacture of this mask can tolerably well be assigned to between 220 and 250 A. D.

Naturally in the case of an imported article the term of manufacture gives only a terminus *post quem*; but it is none the less of value. This is the latest date that can be fixed, and it gives for the pottery a fairly wide range; against prolonging this we have the negative evidence of the lack of anything distinctly Christian. The stamped terra-cotta slab on Plate 29, fig. 6, looks late, and may have been part of one arm of a *crux gemmata*, but that is mere conjecture; otherwise Christian emblems are conspicuous by their absence.

It is to be hoped that chronological evidence will be increased by future discoveries, but in the meantime it can only be said that the dates of the Shablul wares fall between the first century B. C. and the third A. D., limits which will probably be narrowed hereafter, but are the least precarious at present.

PLATE 24.¹

Notes on
Plates.

Fig. 1. Two fruits of *Mimusops Persea* in combination with the lotus (*Nymphaea caerulea*). Prof. Meurer has remarked a similar conventionalizing of the three lotus-sepals on mummies of the New Kingdom. White paste, lightly baked, with powdery surface and matt colouring.

Figs. 2, 6 (Hathor head), and 8 (Uraeus snakes) are of similar texture to 1, though in the second the colour of the clay is warmer and the paint thicker.

Figs. 3, 4, 5, 7 are of a firmer clay, better baked, and in 3 and 5 the paint is enamel-like and flakes off the surface of the pottery.

PLATE 25.

Fig. 1. A tumbler-shaped vase (complete) with two guinea-fowls between Dad signs surmounted by the sun's disk. A precisely similar arrangement occurs on a gourd-shaped vase in the British Museum: separately, both motives are common. This arrangement of animals, &c., in rows is characteristic of a good deal of Nubian pottery; cf. Pl. 26, fig. 1; Pl. 27, fig. 1; Pl. 28, fig. 2; Pl. 29, fig. 9; and see p. 38. White clay, porous with powdery surface.

Fig. 2. Fragment of 'tumbler' with cow, firm well-baked white clay with polished surface.

Fig. 3. Yellow clay, hard and fine.

Fig. 5. Hathor head: fragment of a large 'tumbler' vase, whitish clay, well baked with firm surface.

Fig. 6. Vine-leaf; reddish clay with creamy slip.

Fig. 7. Network pattern, compared by Prof. Schweinfurth to early Greek work. Soft lightly-baked white clay with powdery surface and matt colouring.

Fig. 8. Prof. Schweinfurth remarks that these are not necessarily the leaves of any plant native to Egypt, this being a case in which he sees strong foreign influence. He suggests, however, Myrtle, Apricot, Henna (*Lawsonia*) or Habq (*Zizyphus Spina-Christi*). A gourd-shaped vase in the Berlin Museum is similarly decorated. The treatment recalls the use of single leaves as 'Streumuster' on Romano-Egyptian tapestries of the fifth century.

Fig. 9. Stylized lotus (see p. 37). Reddish clay with white slip.

Fig. 10. Ivy-leaves.

PLATE 26.

Fig. 1. Crocodiles attended by 'trochilus' birds; fragment of a gourd-shaped pot; see p. 37.

Fig. 3. Cf. Pl. 24, fig. 1.

Fig. 4. Vine-leaf.

Fig. 5. Prof. Schweinfurth suggests *Chrysanthemum coronarium*, commonly used for garlands, &c.; in any case a northern, not a Sudanese type. Fragment of coarse straight-sided 'tumbler' vase.

PLATE 27.

All fragments of 'tumbler' vases.

Fig. 6. Greek ivy motive.

¹ We are much indebted to Prof. Schweinfurth of Berlin and Prof. M. Meurer of Rome for numerous notes on individual motives of ornament: in particular,

Prof. Schweinfurth has identified for us many of the plant forms represented.

Fig. 10. An ornament found upon the Nagada pottery and upon primitive N. Aegean wares: it is closely allied to the similarly distributed N N N type.

Fig. 11. Egyptian motive of hanging flower-petals: the pointed examples are lotus; for the rounder Prof. Schweinfurth suggests mallow or poppy.

PLATE 28.

Fig. 1. A frog.

Fig. 2. Possibly the Ba bird, of which a number of stone representatives were found in the cemetery, or more probably a highly stylized form of the winged knot device.

Fig. 4. Fragment of a hawk.

All these are of highly-burnished red ware.

PLATE 29.

Figs. 1-5 show the development of an ornamental motive which in its later forms becomes the cross and crescent. In its origin it may be composed of the Nile key (which appears alone on Pl. 30, fig. 4) and the half-moon of the Astarte cult, which also, on some of the stamped ware, appears alone. Prof. Meurer, however, sees here a reflection of the Mycenaean pillar and 'horns of consecration', the latter being here combined into the crescent form. Fig. 3 is part of a 'tumbler' vase of whitish clay, lightly baked and powdery, with bands of pink and stamped ornament. Fig. 2 is of very fine brown paste; figs. 4 and 5 have a yellowish-white slip laid over a light red body.

Fig. 6. Fragment of ornament stamped in terra-cotta: possibly the arm of a crux gemmata.

Fig. 7. Cup of drab clay with ornament in highly-raised white slip. Third-century Roman style.

Fig. 8. Fragment of plaster mask, showing left eyebrow and part of wig: the hair is dressed in the style of Julia Domna and Julia Mama, 220-250 A. D.

Fig. 9. Prof. Schweinfurth suggests doves: perhaps rather Egyptian geese.

Fig. 10. This seems to represent some composite calycine flower-head, either artichoke (*cynara*) or thistle, the two bracts being against the supposition that it is a tree. On the other hand there may be here an echo of the Tell-el-Amarna convention by which a tree is represented ringed about with an earth mound meant to keep the water to its roots.

Fig. 11. There seem to be here a bird in a shrine, a table of offerings, and a row of small altars with offerings upon each: the upright objects between the altars might be either flowers or, more probably, repetitions of the God symbol ntr. For the somewhat birdlike object above, Prof. Schweinfurth suggests a fly-whisk, comparing with it the drawing of a palm-branch in early Coptic art.

PLATE 30.

Black paint on red clay, with occasional use of white.

Fig. 2. Flower of *Acacia nilotica*.

Fig. 3. Either *Tamarix nilotica*, a copy from an Egyptian design, or the low bushy clump of *Phragmites*.

Fig. 4. A flower-like adaptation of the Nile key, or of the early Coptic crux ansata which was developed out of it.

Fig. 5. Probably some species of conifer.

Fig. 7. The periclinium of corn (*Centaurea depressa*).

Fig. 8. Ivy. In later art the climbing tendrils of the ivy were transformed into curving branches. The heart-leaved ivy is that most commonly represented, together with its berries.

PLATE 31.

Black paint on red clay, with occasional use of white.

Figs. 1, 2, 4, and 7. Ivy leaves.

Figs. 3 and 10. Probably clover.

Figs. 5 and 6. These might represent either leaves or fruit: for 6 Prof. Schweinfurth suggests cherries.

Figs. 8, 9, and 12. Prof. Meurer thinks that these are ivy leaves seen in profile: in some cases, however, these are not connected by stalks (e.g. Brit. Mus. No. 4920) and look much more like seed-pods.

Fig. 11. This example seems to show that the very favourite motive of rows of dots connected by one or more lines passing through them is based upon some floral original, though the species of that cannot be determined. Cf. Pl. 29, fig. 9, Pl. 24, fig. 11.

CHAPTER IX

MEROITIC INSCRIPTIONS

BY F. LL. GRIFFITH

THE expedition of 1907 has produced an abundance of funerary inscriptions in the Meroitic cursive alphabet. This hitherto rare form of script is still undeciphered, but one may hope that the new texts may be sufficient, even in the absence of a bilingual key, to enable scholars to find the interpretation after adequate study. Meanwhile, as a preliminary, it may be useful to survey the material previously available and the position reached by research in regard to Meroitic. While attention was concentrated on Egypt and the decipherment of its abundant writings, it is not surprising if few students gave more than a passing thought to this obscure corner of the subject. But now that the secrets of hieroglyphics have been wrested from the monuments of Egypt and a numerous band of scholars is engaged in Egyptology, their ambition extends more to other cognate studies. And the present time is singularly favourable to such research. Nubia and the Sudan, the whole area comprised in the Meroitic Empire, after being closed for many years by Mahdiism, is open to a more active life than ever through British enterprise and influence. Interest is therefore reawakened in the history of the country, while the Egyptian Government on the one hand and British officials and explorers on the other are promoting researches into its antiquities.

The earliest publication of a Meroitic inscription known to the present writer is that by the French architect Gau in his *Antiquités de la Nubie, Inscriptions*, Pl. 14, no. 44. It represents four very short lines from the temple of Dakkeh (Pselcis), perhaps a graffito on the temple walls. This appears not to have been observed by any other traveller. Gau was in Nubia in the earlier half of the year 1819, and reached the Second Cataract. A graffito on a column in the temple of Soleb (L. D., VI, 7, no. 25) was badly published by two Cambridge tourists, Waddington and Hanbury, in *Journal of a Visit to some parts of Ethiopia*, Plate opposite p. 286. Their Nubian journey, made in 1820-1, resulted in the discovery of the temples and other monuments of Gebel Barkal.

*Previous
discoveries
of cursive
inscriptions.*

Fr. Caillaud, an explorer of whom France may well be proud, taking advantage of Ismail Pasha's fateful expedition, travelled through Nubia and the Sudan in 1820-2, and explored and surveyed most of the Meroitic sites. He published five inscriptions in the Meroitic alphabet. Two of these, in the *Texte* of his *Voyage à Méroé et au Fleuve Blanc*, Tome III, Pl. 5, nos. 1, 2, are from the pyramids of Begerawiyeh (Meroe) = L. D., VI, 8, nos. 38, 40 (now in Berlin); no. 3 is from a girdle wall at Mesawwarat (Wady es Sofra) = L. D., VI, 10, no. 50; and on Pl. 6 are two inscriptions from the painted shrine of a pyramid at Gebel Barkal = L. D., VI, 7, nos. 26, 27, cf. V, 19. Caillaud's copies are useful for confirming Lepsius' copies and restoring the signs injured or mutilated at the time of Lepsius' visit.

It seems that neither Burckhardt, nor Champollion, nor Rosellini, nor Hoskins, to name some of the more conspicuous among the early explorers of Nubia and the Sudan, recorded any inscriptions in the Meroitic alphabet.

To the Prussian expedition under Lepsius we owe by far the largest and best collection. Fifty-three are facsimiled in the plates of his great *Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien*, Abth. VI, Bl. 1-11. They were collected in a year's survey of the monuments of Nubia in 1843-4. The most northerly are from Philae, and consist of five inscriptions from the gate of Hadrian (not earlier therefore than 120 A.D., and perhaps very much later), and a series belonging to a processional scene of barbarous execution in a chamber of the court of the Great Temple. In the temple of Kalabshch (Talmis) Lepsius copied the longest text yet found (of thirty-four lines, and no doubt of historical import, like the Greek inscription

in the same temple recording the Nubian King Silco's triumph over the Blemmyes). The pyramids of Barkal, Kurru, and Begerawiyeh provided a few short inscriptions.

After Lepsius no more inscriptions in cursive Meroitic were published to the end of the century. Recently, in 1907, Dr. Budge has figured two funerary tablets in the British Museum (*Egyptian Sudan*, vol. II, Pl. opp. p. 444 and on p. 445); and a rock tablet of twelve lines discovered by Mr. Weigall at Agaybeh (near Medik) is in Mr. Weigall's *Antiquities of Lower Nubia in 1906-7*, Pl. XLIX, cf. p. 97 (the photograph was evidently taken under bad conditions), and a funerary tablet from Amadeh, *ibid.*, Pl. LII.

*Meroitic
and other
inscriptions
of Nubia.*

Until their decipherment is effected opinions are likely to differ as to the language and precise origin of the Meroitic texts. They have been found throughout the Nubian Nile valley from Philae in the north to Naga in the eastern desert, about fifty miles north-east of Khartum. The earliest inscriptions of Nubia are hieroglyphic records of the Egyptian Pharaohs and officials; they are followed by those of Ethiopian kings which begin in the eighth century B. C., and continue until late, becoming more and more barbarous. At length the 'Meroitic' hieroglyphic inscriptions, written in a peculiar alphabet or syllabary of a small number of characters, appear, on the pyramids and temples of the Meroitic kings above the Second Cataract, parallel with barbarous Egyptian hieroglyphic. Meroitic cursive also occurs alongside of these other scripts in the shrines of the Ethiopian pyramids. It probably continued in use almost to the fall of paganism, when alphabets founded on the Greek took its place. Mercenaries of the army of Psammetichus had left records in Early Greek, Carian and Phoenician as far south as Wady Halfa and Abu Simbel, where also a few later Greeks wrote their names. A fragmentary Latin inscription was actually found by Caillaud on a wall at Mesawwarat. But apart from these, Greek as well as Egyptian demotic inscriptions throughout pagan times are closely confined to the Dodecaschoenus, which extended from the First Cataract to Maharraka, and was long under the influence of Egypt. While Nubia was probably still pagan in the sixth century B. C., Silco, the petty king of Lower Nubia, set up his memorial in the temple of Talmis in Greek. Immediately thereafter, when Nubia became a Christian state, the records are some in Greek, some in Coptic, some in the native Nubian, but written in an alphabet little modified from the Greek and Coptic by the addition of a few letters. Finally, a few graffiti are known in Abyssinian Geez and in Arabic, which latter, since the triumph of Islam throughout these regions, has become the only written language of the natives.

*Opinions
of scholars.*

We may next consider what progress has been made hitherto towards the decipherment of the Meroitic language, and note the opinions expressed by scholars as to the language in which the inscriptions are written. Gau's inscription was published without comment. Messrs. Waddington and Hanbury (p. 289) describe theirs simply as 'in a character unknown to us, though most resembling Greek'. Caillaud characterizes those which he discovered as being 'en caractères éthiopiens' (*Texte*, III, p. 374). Lepsius, on the other hand, trained as a philologist and epigraphist and supplied with abundant material, grasped the problem of these inscriptions firmly from the beginning, although he was not able to solve it. In his *Briefe* (p. 218, twentieth letter, written from the Pyramids of Meroe in 1844), after referring to the debased hieroglyphic of the Nubian monuments, he describes 'an Ethiopic-demotic writing, similar to Egyptian demotic in its forms, but with a very limited alphabet consisting of no more than twenty-five to thirty characters'. It was to be read from right to left, and the words were regularly divided from each other by double dots. He anticipated that decipherment would not be difficult, and that it would reveal an indigenous language. The separation of words, which does not occur in Egyptian, he considered might have been borrowed from 'Roman' writing. At the same time he notes the rare 'Ethiopian-Greek' inscriptions (having letters borrowed from the Coptic alphabet), which Prof. Schaefer

has recently shown to be true Nubian. Lepsius considered that there is much ancient Ethiopian blood in the widely spread Barabra race, that the language of the Ethiopian kingdom was without doubt Nubian (a variety of which was to be found in Kordofan), and that, although in the Nile valley Nubian was confined to the stretch from Aswan to Dar Shaigieh above Dongola, place-names proved that it had formerly extended to the province of Berber and even further south. In the twenty-eighth letter (p. 266), when describing his studies in three languages—Nuba, Kungâra of Darfur, and the Bêga language of the Bisharin—Lepsius again refers to his conviction that Nubian was the language of the Meroitic kingdom. In the plates of the *Denkmäler*, issued about fourteen years later, the Meroitic inscriptions bear the colourless designation 'Meroitisch-Aethiopische Inschriften'.

Returning to the subject in 1880, Lepsius took a different view of the language of Meroe. In that year he published a *Nubische Grammatik*, with an important Introduction classifying the languages and peoples of Africa. In the preface to the book he explains that he had added much to his stock of the Nubian language since the great expedition, and regrets that he had not realized at that time that Bêga was the language of the kingdom of Kush, for then he would have devoted his chief energies to it instead of to Nubian; whereas his Bêga collections were insufficient to form the basis of a grammar. At the end of the Introduction he gives his view of the Meroitic language and inscriptions. According to him a removal of the capital from Napata southward to Meroe in the time of Ergamenes marked the time when Meroitic writing in the native language came to the front; while a true Nubian writing began to be employed only after the Nubian King Silco had conquered the Bêga-Blemmyes in the sixth century. The processional scenes at Philae, referred to above as being accompanied by inscriptions in Meroitic cursive, he would connect with one of the treaties made between the Blemmyes, Nubians, and Romans in the period from the end of the third to the middle of the fifth centuries A. D. It is a misfortune that Lepsius published no study of the Meroitic inscriptions, and indeed gives no clear sign that his change of opinion was due in any way to closer examination of the texts.

In 1887 Heinrich Brugsch began a series of articles entitled 'Decipherment of the Meroitic Records' in the *Zeitschrift für Aegyptische Sprache*. In two articles he discussed the hieroglyphic texts in the opinion that their language was Nubian. To this view Reinisch (and Dümichen) expressed his adherence; but although Brugsch's articles contain some weighty remarks, the readings proposed are by no means convincing, and the promised continuation, in which the cursive inscriptions were to have been dealt with, never appeared.

The Ethiopian or Meroitic hieroglyphic was discussed again by Erman in the same journal in 1897. He pointed out that, as far back as 1858, Lepsius had silently established, in the *Königsbuch*, equations between Egyptian and Ethiopian hieroglyphs in various cartouches of an important king and queen, and had thereby furnished the starting-point for Brugsch as well as for an earlier effort by Birch. Arguing from these, Erman proposed, very plausibly, a certain number of further equations, but he cautiously gave no opinion as to the language of the inscriptions. He traced the beginnings of the Meroitic syllabary in the spelling of the names of Ethiopian kings of the Twenty-fifth Egyptian Dynasty, in the eighth century B. C.

In 1894 W. Max Müller, discussing the question 'Who were the ancient Ethiopians?' in a remarkable essay in the *Oriental Studies of the Oriental Field Club of Philadelphia*, considered that they were a negro race, possibly of Nubian speech, and rejected Lepsius' Bêga theory. Four years afterwards the late Prof. Krall, having collected the Ethiopian proper names and place-names mentioned on the monuments, agreed with Max Müller that the nomadic untamable Bêga-Blemmyes could not have been the ruling element in the half-civilized Ethiopian kingdom, and preferred the Nubian theory. Prof. Schaefer, who has given special attention to the earlier monuments of Ethiopia, and to whom we owe many important observations,

has pointed out a variety of details in the inscriptions which can be explained by Nubian; and, especially after establishing the fact that Nubian was the language of Christianity from Aswan to the Blue Nile, was convinced that the pagan Meroitic inscriptions must likewise be in Nubian. Thus the opinion of scholars is now generally in favour of Lepsius' earlier view.

The cursive alphabet.

Although inscriptions in Meroitic cursive have long been known, and have been privately studied by sundry scholars, hitherto no table of the alphabet has been published. Dr. MacIver, when asking me to supply this want, put at my disposal photographs of over seventy funerary stelae and altars found last season in the necropolis at Anibeh, besides several representing monuments at Berlin already published in Lepsius' *Denkmäler*. I have also utilized Lepsius' copy of the great Talmis inscription, which presents some interesting forms.

Repetitions of formulae at the beginning and end of the funerary inscriptions are of great service in equating the varying forms of the signs. A few doubtful points remain, and perhaps they will not be cleared up until decipherment of this unknown script is completed. Interchanges of signs take place which in some cases must be due to grammatical and other variations of the words; there are instances, however, which seem rather the result of carelessness and of similarity of form or of sound.

	Certain.	One instance.	Conjecture.	Variants.
1 / / /				
2 // // //				
3 /// ///				
4 ///, ///, ///, ///, ///				
5 ω, ω, ω				
6 υ, υ, υ				
7 ρ, ρ, ρ, ρ, ρ, ρ, ρ				
8 ρ, ρ, ρ, ρ				
9 ς, ς, ς, ς				
10 ς, ς, ς, ς				
11 ς, ς, ς, ς, ς				
12 ς, ς, ς, ς				
13 ς, ς, ς, ς				
14 ς, ς, ς, ς				
15 ς, ς, ς				
16 ς, ς, ς, ς				
17 ς, ς, ς, ς				
18 ς, ς, ς				
19 ς, ς, ς				
20 ς, ς, ς, ς, ς, ς, ς		$(=1+)$		
21 ς, ς, ς, ς				
22 ς, ς, ς, ς, ς, ς, ς				
23 ς, ς, ς				

For these hieroglyphic equivalents see pp. 49-50.

The sign numbered 23 in the table is substituted for 1 in a few cases, and 2 for 3 when followed by 23 in careless writing. 9 and 10, which frequently follow each other, are not always written distinguishably; 12 (which occurs in each of the two initial words of the funerary formula) seems to be distinct from 13, and 14, though often of the same form as 13, is usually written smaller¹; 16 is confused with 13 and 14. 17 and 18 interchange, but must be distinct; 1 following either of these makes a ligature with it. 20 is always followed by 1; this group is very common, and the apparent exceptions met with can always be explained away². 20 is remarkably variable; the last is the form used in the Talmis inscription (L. D., VI, Pl. 6). The last form but two in 22 occurs on a tablet from Anibeh; the last two are on a group of Isis and Horus from Merawi (L. D., VI, Pl. 7, no. 28, Berlin no. 2258). 23 is frequently ligatured with a sign preceding it by a prolongation of the horizontal stroke.

The alphabet thus appears to consist of twenty-three letters, all of them common. It is impossible that so few characters should make a syllabary. We are here undoubtedly dealing with an alphabet; but one cannot decide from the number of characters alone whether it is purely consonantal, like most Semitic alphabets, or expresses vowels as well. For instance, the Christian Nubian writing, though it has the usual notation of vowels, employs only twenty characters in ordinary native words beside the combination $\sigma\tau$ for *u*; and even here σ and ω are interchangeable and seem alike in value, so that twenty characters would represent the language sufficiently. There are, however, three very rare letters besides, namely ξ , ϕ , and ζ , each used in one or two words only. On the other hand, an elaborate notation of consonants alone, in a language where the consonantal system is highly developed, might easily employ over thirty letters.

The separation of words by double dots $:$ is an important feature of the Meroitic cursive writing. The amount of punctuation varies, but it is seldom altogether absent. Upright lines which must be numerals occur in some of Lepsius' texts. A group of eight such, divided into two fours IIII IIII occurs in the Talmis inscription (l. 8), and groups of three and four in each of two nearly identical inscriptions at Berlin from the pyramids of Begerawiyeh (L. D., VI, Pl. 8, nos. 38, 40); and a fragment (*ibid.*, Pl. 11, no. 51) exhibits a remarkable succession of such strokes. In another inscription (*ibid.*, Pl. 3, no. 9) a single upright stroke may be a separation line rather than a numeral. The photograph of an ostrakon from Anibeh shows groups of dots, e. g. $\bullet\bullet\bullet$, which may represent numerals of some sort.

Punctuation and numerals.






Turning now to the contemporary Meroitic hieroglyphic, it is important to discover what relation it bears to the cursive. The latter (like all Egyptian cursive, except the earliest) is invariably written in horizontal lines from right to left. The hieroglyphic, on the other hand, like the Egyptian hieroglyphic, is most frequently in columns. Like the Meroitic cursive, it separates words, employing for this purpose a triplet of dots $\circ\circ\circ$. Being intended mainly for decoration, and belonging to a very debased age and a barbarous people, the texts in this hieroglyphic are formal and limited in range and contain many inaccuracies. Brugsch made out an alphabet of twenty-three signs with variants; but \dagger is certainly used as a word-sign, and Erman recognized two determinatives and two more word-signs amongst the few of which he considered that he had established the meaning. It is to be remembered that most of the inscriptions are injured and that we have practically only one copyist to depend on for each.³ Under such circumstances it is impossible to construct a full and satisfactory sign-list.




Meroitic hieroglyphic.

¹ The hieroglyphic equivalents now set at rest any doubt as to their distinctness.

² One composite hieroglyph is the equivalent.


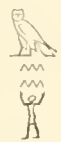
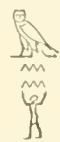



³ Beyond the texts from the temples of Amara, Naga, and Ben Naga, and cartouches, &c., from the pyramids of Barkal and Begerawiyeh, facsimiled by

examination sufficed to show that the first two groups upon it were a hieroglyphic transcript of the cursive formula—thus , written, like the cursive inscriptions, from left to right; and in the light of this equation it was easy to find two other key-words :43/55 6 1/4: =  and :43/55 3 4 0/4: = . Moreover, the last word of all.  is probably :1 5 3 5/3:, frequent at the end of cursive texts. Unfortunately, the group preceding this was quite illegible to me on the original, and equally so upon a squeeze which I owe to Dr. Möller's kindness; but it seems possible that, if signs were really ever engraved on this irregular part, a special squeeze of it may still reveal the reading, with the help of the cursive parallels. The next group, however, is  upon the squeeze, and this must be a slight variation of :5/5/6: which usually precedes the word last quoted from the cursive texts. There are other groups on the stone, but they do not belong to the formulae and therefore do not yield equations readily.

The first result of this comparison is to establish the fact that cursive spellings correspond to hieroglyphic sign by sign. Probably, therefore, the hieroglyphs can be reduced to an alphabet of about twenty-three characters with their homophones, as Brugsch thought. The idea that word-signs occur in them, apart from such rare and exceptional cases as the , is now very improbable, since one of the signs which Erman very plausibly argued to be such, namely , is seen to occur commonly in the limited cursive alphabet, where there is no room for that class of signs. The case against determinatives is also very strong, and the cursive equivalent of , in which Erman proposed to see the determinative of divinity, is another very common sign occurring in various positions in the words. If there were determinatives at all they must have been very few. The separation of words would greatly diminish the value of determinatives in reading. It is, however, possible that some of the signs had more than one power according to their position.







Secondly, we learn that the hieroglyphs on the altar are to be read in the direction in which the figures face. This, which is contrary to the rule for Egyptian, upsets some of Erman's suggestions regarding the inscription; but on the other hand it fits with his ingenious discovery that the inscription round the base of the ram of Soba is to be similarly read. These two are the only horizontal inscriptions known in Meroitic hieroglyphic, the rest being in vertical columns. How far then is the principle which they seem to establish to be applied? In the columnar inscriptions two or more signs may be placed side by side; are these then to be read as in Egyptian, or as in the horizontal Meroitic? The latter seems *a priori* the probable way. If we put the matter to the test of facts we find variants of





Direction of writing.

the common group  written ¹, , , and ² in the vertical texts, and, in the horizontal inscriptions,  (both on the offering table and on the base of the ram).








¹ In the inscription of the goddess Sati at Naga, L. D., V, 58, cf. 60.

² At Naga in the queen's name, l. c., 57, 59, 67.





So also  in vertical inscriptions, L. D., V, 66 b, &c., occurs as  in the title of Isis (?), ibid., 58 and as  in the horizontal inscription of the offering table. Likewise  , twice in vertical columns, L. D., V, 66 b, d is  in the inscription of Khous (ibid., 61), which is precisely parallel to the instance in 66 b.

The columnar inscriptions face normally to the left in order to be read from right to left: but, as in Egyptian hieroglyphic also, it is permissible to turn the figures the opposite way for decorative effect, and then the signs are to be read from left to right. Likewise, as in the case of Egyptian work, the unaccustomed direction sometimes led to mistakes: thus the cartouche of the queen in L. D., V, 57, was to face the left  and the artist began it so, but the lower half he turned to the right  from habit. At the same time he furnished us with another instance to prove our rule; for the usual grouping  L. D., V, 55 c., &c., &c., he gives us a new arrangement .

The universal rule, therefore, for the hieroglyphic of Meroe is that the signs are to be read in the direction towards which the figures face.¹

The table of the cursive alphabet on p. 46 shows a column of ten hieroglyphic equivalents ascertained by repeated equations; four more, though depending on single instances, find confirmation also in their form. The equivalent of  is not only very natural in itself but is precisely like the demotic (Egyptian) equivalent of  (which seems derived from the hieratic for  @, as Mr. H. R. Hall, I believe, first pointed out). No. 7 seems a very good cursive rendering of . No. 13 is closely like hieratic or early demotic renderings of a vase , , an outline of which seems to be represented in the hieroglyph. No. 14 shows likewise the usual hieratic and demotic forms of . Thus the equivalents of fourteen signs, more than half of the cursive alphabet, seem certain.

Relation of Meroitic to Egyptian and other scripts.

It is remarkable that the cursive equivalents of the first hieroglyphic column in the table do not agree with hieratic or demotic forms, except 12 which is closely like the demotic for . It must be remembered that for hieratic and demotic the hieroglyphic originals faced to the right. Most of the Meroitic hieroglyphs are symmetrical; but in the case of 14 we can be almost sure that it has been taken over from hieratic or demotic, and not derived independently from a sign facing to the left . On the other hand , very scarce in Egyptian cursive, is likely to have an independent history, and the cursive form rather suggests the direction to the left. The same may be said of 18; a tail to the right like that seen in 17-19, though permissible in hieratic, is exceedingly rare in demotic, except with  and its ligatures. For the present also I venture to equate 16 with a sign turned to the left, on account of the striking similarity of form, though it must be confessed that the groups in which it occurs by no means confirm this equation as yet.

The Meroitic alphabet seems no very natural descendant of the old Egyptian. It must be an intentional and more or less artificial selection, such as might have been made, probably

¹ When a number of (short) columns form a continuous inscription as in L. D., V, 58-62, a decided tendency is manifest to arrange them to succeed each

other on the same principle: but the arrangement is obscured by injuries and blunders.

by some foreign adviser, at any time after the Semitic alphabet had been invented. Before it began to be used for inscriptions on stone, the cursive alphabet may have had a long history as a writing on papyrus or on skins, and we may hope for the discovery of such documents in the excavations now being carried on in Nubia. As yet the only ink writings found in it are on pottery; they are brief and fragmentary, and apparently of the same age as the stone inscriptions.

Separation of words is not common in ancient writings. It is not found in Egyptian hieroglyphic, hieratic, or demotic. Persian cuneiform separates words by an oblique wedge, and in Aramaic writing of the Persian period the words are usually spaced apart. It is conceivable that the influence of Persia or of the Jewish colony of Elephantine on the Ethiopian civilization is to be seen here. Or again, the idea may have come from Arabia through Abyssinia; the South Arabian alphabets separate words by upright lines, and the Ge'ez 'Ethiopian' writing of the Abyssinian church actually employs pairs of dots for the same purpose.

The signs of the cursive alphabet may have changed greatly since their adoption before they assumed the forms shown in the stone inscriptions. As yet there is no example that can be proved to be earlier than the Roman rule in Egypt. But it is likely that the alphabet was developed some centuries B.C. It is worth observing that the cursive hieratic writing of the Theban documents under the Twenty-fifth or Ethiopian Dynasty (called 'abnormal hieratic' in my forthcoming *Catalogue of Demotic Papyri in the John Rylands Collection*, pp. 12 et seqq.) is of a peculiar character. This type continued in use at Thebes through the Twenty-sixth Dynasty, until the reign of Amasis, when it was finally ousted by a different form from the north. Egyptian demotic was developed from the northern cursive; while the Meroitic alphabet, if from any such source, is probably derived from the Theban form, if not from some yet more specialized type characteristic of Ethiopia itself.

Until the signs have been read and the inscriptions interpreted, not much can be safely asserted regarding the history of the writing. So far, the only clear clue to the reading is that which Lepsius discovered in the hieroglyphic texts, and which was subsequently utilized by Birch, Brugsch, and Erman. A sculptured base for supporting the bark of a deity, brought by Lepsius to Berlin, had been dedicated in the temple of Ben Naga by a king and queen who inscribed their names upon it in both Egyptian and Meroitic hieroglyphs (L. D., V, 55 a).

Values of signs.

The king is in the Egyptian



His name is found on his pyramid at Meroe spelt



(L. D., V, 25.)

The Meroitic version on the altar gives



elsewhere variants occur with



(ibid., 66, 67, 60, &c.)

The queen is in the Egyptian



with variants at Gebel Barkal

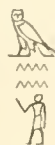


(ibid., 15 c, g, k.)

In the Meroitic this is



with variants elsewhere



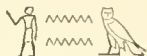












(ibid., 67), &c., and





















(ibid., 66 b),








(ibid., 57), &c.

The king's name is evidently to be read *Ntk-'Mn*, and the queen's apparently *Try-'Mn*. The name of Ammon, is thus  in Meroitic, *Ntk* is   , and *Try* (?) is . For *Try* neither the Egyptian spelling nor the Meroitic variants are as clear as might be desired. In the former, the  is merely the usual unpronounced addition to names of queens and goddesses in late writing; but it is not easy to say precisely what is meant by . The Barkal inscriptions seem to show a single  (cf. the spelling of Shabataka, Tirhakah, &c.), and the  is doubtful. In the Meroitic variants in *L. D.*, V, 59 and 62 there are additional elements which are rather disconcerting; a variant in 67 with  in the latter part of the cartouche is due merely to a careless misreading , i.e. , for , by the sculptor.

From these cartouches we learn the following values:—

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1.  = <i>n</i> , Eg.  . | 5.  = <i>t</i> , <i>to</i> , <i>tcu</i> (?), Eg.  ,  . |
| 2.  = <i>t</i> (?), Eg.  . | 6.  = <i>r</i> (?), Eg.  . |
| 3.  = <i>k</i> , Eg.  ,  . | 7.  = <i>y</i> , Eg.  . |
| 4.  = <i>m</i> (Eg.  , <i>m</i> in  <i>mn</i>). | 8.  = ? |

*Relation to
Egyptian
values.*

If 2 is *t* it is curious that 5 should represent the same value. One cannot avoid the suspicion that 2 has the proper contemporary value of the Egyptian , namely *g* (?), the Coptic σ : α . The value of 7 may be derived from the Egyptian , , and *g*, *k* for  may be on the acrophonic principle from the Egyptian *gb*. It is remarkable that the group for the name of Ammon (which is confirmed by its occurrence in the sculptures with the figure of the god) has no sign to represent the initial vowel or consonant. The spelling of this name seems to show that there is no precise notation of vowels in the Meroitic alphabet. The final  may represent some final vowel or consonant in the Meroitic pronunciation, or be a determinative, as Erman suggested. Whatever difficulties may be raised, the reading of the first seven letters and their association with the sculptures make the hieroglyphic texts a trifle less obscure than the cursive. It is unfortunate that the values of only 3, 4, and 7 can as yet be applied to the decipherment of the latter.

There are many points that might be discussed and perhaps elucidated, but the memoir must not be delayed; and indeed, it will be better to wait until the whole of Dr. MacIver's rich material is available, which will probably be the case next winter. Meanwhile those who wish to familiarize themselves with the Meroitic inscriptions may be referred to Lepsius' plates, and to Prof. Erman's discussion in *Zeitschrift für Aegyptische Sprache und Altertums-kunde*, 1897, pp. 152–65. They will find Erman's essay very suggestive; but they must bear in mind the rule above given, that the reading is in the direction in which the signs face. This rule upsets several ingenious combinations, and will be found to put many details in a new light. Brugsch's article, *ibid.*, 1887, pp. 1–32 and 75–97 may also be consulted with advantage.

Beside the increase of material in Meroitic cursive through Dr. MacIver's discoveries, scholars have now many other advantages over Lepsius in approaching the problem of decipherment. The modern languages of North-east Africa are being steadily investigated and recorded in grammars and dictionaries, very different from the meagre vocabularies, each of a few dozen ill-authenticated words, which formerly represented most of them. As to the

*Recent
progress in
North-east
African
philology.*

Beḡa languages, Almquist has published a grammar and vocabulary of the language of the Bisharin (Bedawiye), and Reinisch a fuller vocabulary of the same. Prof. Reinisch, whose gift of tongues is inexhaustible, has likewise dealt with other Hamitic languages spoken to the eastward of the Nile valley. Thus the descendants of the language of the Blemmyes and of its congeners are scientifically known. The author of the *Fihrist* states that the Beḡa possessed a writing of their own, though he had never seen it.¹ Several Blemmy documents on leather have been found in Egypt; they are written in Greek, but contain valuable evidence in native proper names, which show an abundance of aspirates, and a group $\chi\alpha\rho\alpha$ as a common element.² The letters $\chi\alpha\rho$ are conspicuous in the copy of an ostrakon found by Mr. Quibell at Sakkara (Memphis), apparently in an unknown tongue, and possibly we have here a specimen of their language eight or ten centuries old.

*Beḡa-
Cushite.*

Considerable advance has also been made in the study of the Berber languages by recent writers such as Stumme and René Basset. There can be little doubt that westward of Nubia in ancient times peoples of Berber-Libyan speech were in contact with the Nile valley. The word for water, *aman*, used by the modern Berbers from Siwa to Morocco, has been adopted into the Mahass dialect of Nubian.

*Berber-
Libyan.*

The above Hamitic languages, whether eastern or western—Cushite or Berber—are inflected and possess two genders. The negro languages of the south are still very imperfectly recorded. They are agglutinative, and some make no distinction of gender. With them linguistically may be grouped the Nubian language: and in regard to this an immense advantage has been gained in the last three years, through the discovery of writings containing an older and purer form. In 1906 Dr. Carl Schmidt of Berlin obtained two MSS. in Egypt which he recognized to be in an older form of Nubian. Prof. Heinrich Schaefer, with great acuteness, speedily deciphered them, some Biblical texts furnishing the necessary key. The MSS. are not later than the eleventh century, and the translations which they contain may have been made as early as the sixth: at any rate they take us back to an age approaching that of the Meroitic inscriptions. Moreover, the rare inscriptions from Nubia and the Sudan in Greek characters, but neither Greek nor Coptic, are shown to belong to the same script and language. As these are found both at Soba on the Blue Nile and in Lower Nubia, it is clear that Nubian was the standard tongue of all the Christian kingdoms in the southern part of the Nile valley.³

*Negro and
Nubian.*

Mr. Rustafjaell, the owner of a third MS. of Christian Nubian, since acquired by the British Museum, permitted me to study it while it was in his possession; and, through the great kindness of Prof. Schaefer, I have been put in possession of copies of all the material at Berlin. A considerable portion of the ancient vocabulary found in these MSS. is preserved in the modern dialects of Nubian,⁴ though much has been replaced by Arabic. The changes in detail are very extensive, but the leading characteristics of the language have remained the same. It was agglutinative and without distinction of gender. Its most marked feature, which should reveal itself even in an unknown script when carefully scrutinized, is that there

¹ Ét. Quatremère, *Mémoires Géographiques et historiques sur l'Égypte*, II, p. 156, quoted by Lepsius, *Nubische Grammatik*, p. cxxvi.

² Krall, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Blemmyer und Nubier*, 1898; Crum, *La Nubie dans les textes coptes*, (*Recueil de Travaux*, Paris, vol. XXI, 1899, p. 223); cf. Krall, *Ein neuer Nubischer König* (*Wiener Zeitschrift f. d. Kunde des Morgenlandes*, XIV, 233).

³ For all this see Schaefer and Schmidt *Die ersten Bruchstücke christlicher Literatur in altnubischer*




Sprache: Sitzb. of the Berlin Academy, 1906, p. 774; also *ibid.*, 1907, p. 602. Eutychius and two Arab authors refer to Nubian writings (see *Nubische Grammatik*, pp. cxxi–cxxiii).

⁴ An ostrakon from Kench, published by Erman in *Aeg. Zeitschr.*, 1897, and containing a short list of words in Old Nubian with the meanings in Coptic, may belong to the Kenus dialect; all the other documents show a closer connexion with the dialect of Mahass.

are no prefixes of any kind, the whole mechanism of the language being provided by suffixing agglutinative elements to the root.

*Meroitic
probably not
Nubian.*

On examining the Meroitic cursive inscriptions (which, like the hieroglyphic, appear to be all in one and the same language) one frequently meets with groups alike in the middle portion but differing in one letter or in two letters at the beginning as well as in the termination. There are short roots in Nubian consisting of a single vowel or a vowel and a consonant; but it is improbable that the short element at the beginning should be in so many cases the root of the word. In most cases it must rather be a grammatical prefix. When decipherment is effected these groups may somehow prove to be in accordance with Nubian grammatical structure; but at least they seem to me to present a strong argument against the prevailing view. The Meroitic hieroglyphic texts likewise do not suggest Nubian structure.

Brugsch and Schaefer have recognized Nubian roots in names recorded by classical writers for the Upper Nile and its tributaries, and even for an island in the Red Sea. Schaefer, too, has found them in the name of the island Takompso, placed by Herodotus at the south end of the First Cataract region, or Dodecaschoenus, as well as in several words and names in the earlier Ethiopian inscriptions.¹ The case for making Nubian the written language of the Meroitic empire, as it was of the later Christian empire, is indeed strong, but the arguments can be met. Eratosthenes in Strabo makes the *Noûβau* like the Blemmyes, *subject* to the Ethiopians. The name of the Ethiopian king Tirhakah, which is certainly not influenced by Egyptian, contains an aspirate, an exceedingly rare sound in Christian Nubian and in the aboriginal words of the modern dialects. Out of about twelve personal names of the later kings and queens of Ethiopia whose cartouches are preserved in Egyptian hieroglyphic, three contain strong aspirates , , , two of them in combinations which, as the late Prof. Krall pointed out,² recall the Blemmy element *Xapa*.

As to the curious misuse of genders by the native scribe writing Egyptian on the Ethiopian stela of Nestosen, where even the word 'mother' has the masculine article, the scribe may have spoken the genderless Nubian; but, after all, every schoolmaster knows how the simplest rules of gender may be violated in composing in a foreign language, even when the writer has to observe them in his mother tongue.

Meroitic may belong to the Hamitic or to the negro group of languages, or even to the Semitic. To learn that Hamite nomads from the eastern desert once founded an empire in the valley of the Nile and acquired a veneer of settled civilization, would perhaps not be more surprising than the fact that a nation which (probably indeed under the lead of a foreign ruling caste) pioneered the world in material and intellectual culture, were the ancestors of the Egyptian fellahin.

¹ Schaefer's observations on Ethiopian matters will be found *Aeg. Zeitsch.*, 1895: 96, 101 et seqq. (esp. 113), 114; 1896: 91, 92; 1904: 147; 1906: 48; *Die Aethiopische Königsinschrift des Berliner Museums*, 1901 (esp. pp. 69, 75); *Urkunden der älteren Aethiopenkönige*, erstes Heft 1905, zweites Heft 1908 (esp. pp. 105, 122). Cf. also W. Max Müller, article

'Ethiopia' in Cheyne's *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, and Leipoldt, *Aeg. Zeitsch.*, 1902-3, p. 138 (confusion of Blemmyes with Nubians in Christian records).

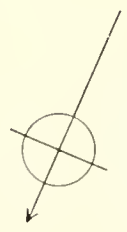
² *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Blemmyer und Nubier* (*Denkschriften* of the Vienna Academy, Bd. XLVI, 1898), a valuable collection of material and observations.

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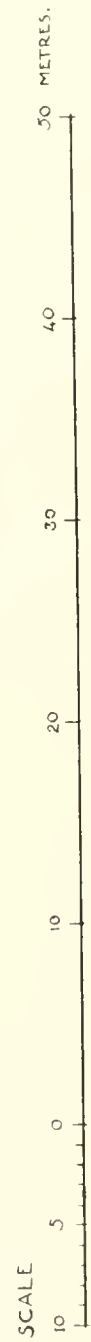
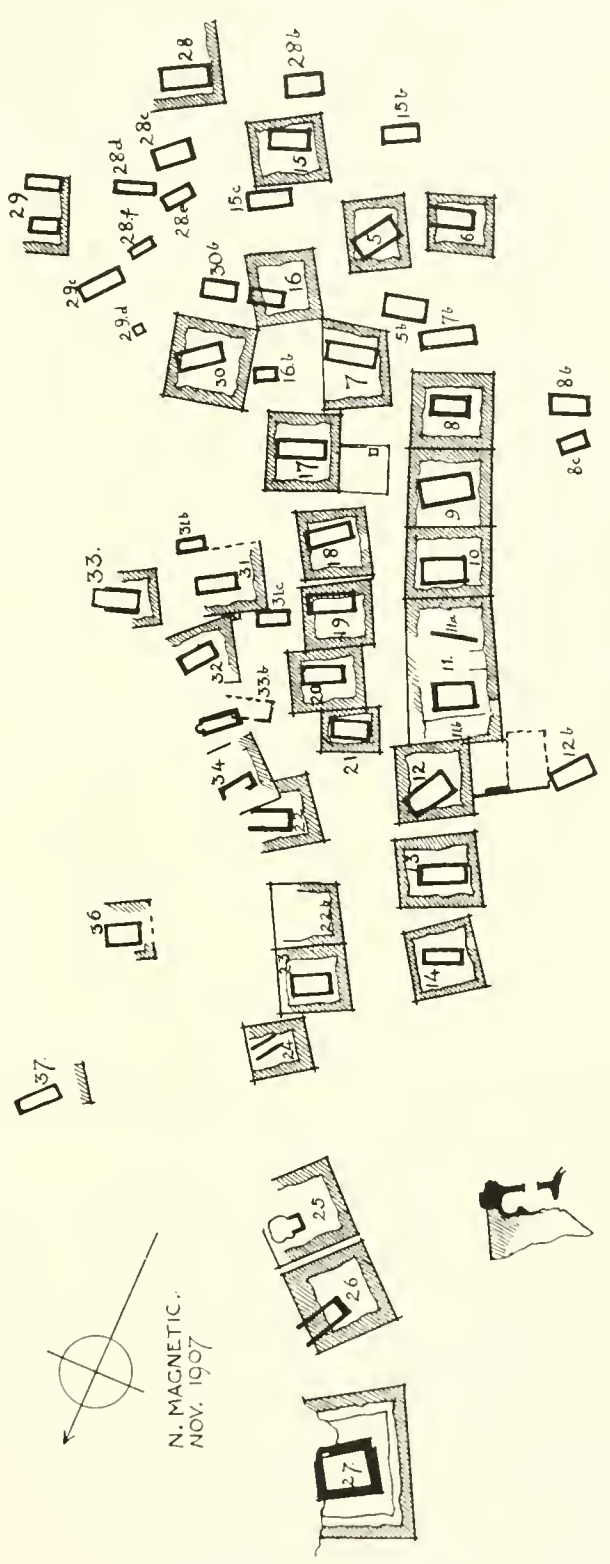
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PLAN OF NUBIAN CEMETERY
SHABLUL, ER RIQA DISTRICT.



N. MAGNETIC.
NOV. 1907



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PLAN OF THE NUBIAN CEMETERY AT SHABLUL

THE NUBIAN CEMETERY AT SHABLUL

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



(a) View of Southern End of Cemetery, showing Graves 8, 17, 7, 7^b, 5^b



(b) View of the Cemetery from the Southern Side, showing Graves 27, 8, 7, 5, 17, 18, 30, 16

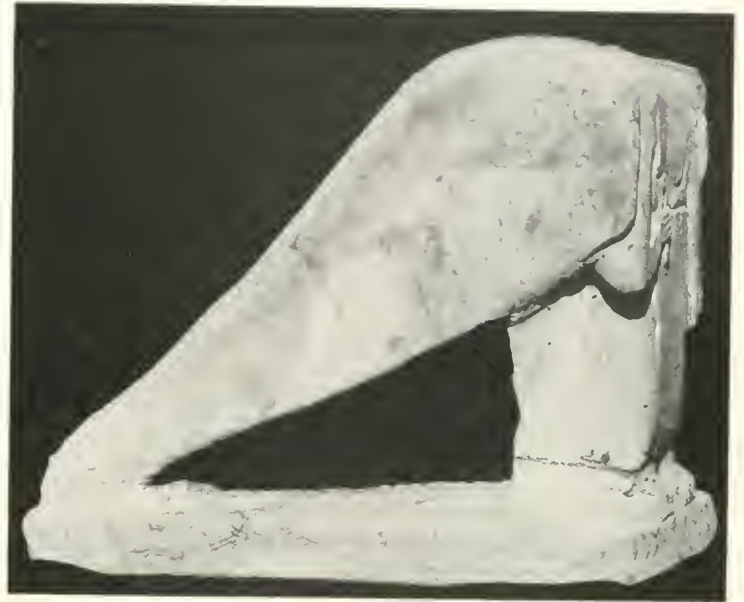
SCULPTURED SANDSTONE FIGURES FROM SHABLUL

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



Ph 5000

See p. 29



Ph 5000

See p. 29



Ph 5001

See p. 29



Ph 5001

See p. 29

SCULPTURED SANDSTONE FIGURES FROM SHABLUL

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



Ph 5002



Ph 5003



Ph 5004



Ph 5005

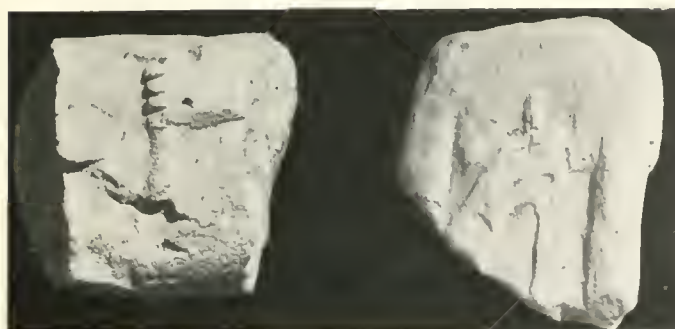
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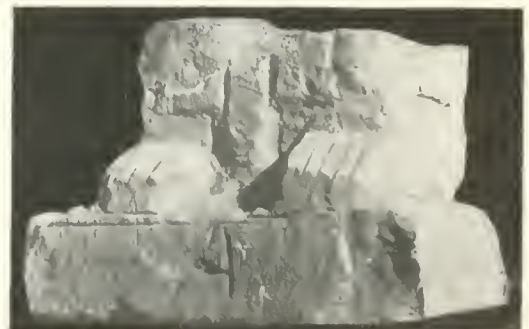


Ph 5008



Ph 5009

Ph 5010



Ph 5011

HEADS OF SCULPTURED SANDSTONE FIGURES FROM SHABLUL
(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



Ph 5012



Ph 5013



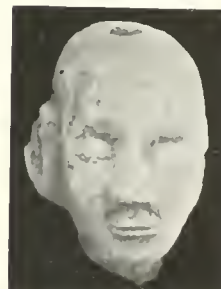
Ph 5014



Ph 5015



Ph 5016



Ph 5017

HEADS OF SCULPTURED SANDSTONE FIGURES FROM SHABLUL
(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



Ph 5018



Ph 5004



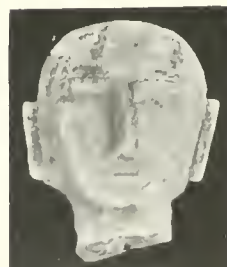
Ph 5019



Ph 5020



Ph 5021



Ph 5022



Ph 5004

See p. 29



Ph 5005

See p. 29



Ph 5031

See p. 30

SCULPTURED SANDSTONE FIGURES FROM THE NUBIAN CEMETERY AT SHABLUH

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)

THE NUBIAN CEMETERY AT SHABLUL

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



(a) Contents of grave '5b'

Ph 5041-5047

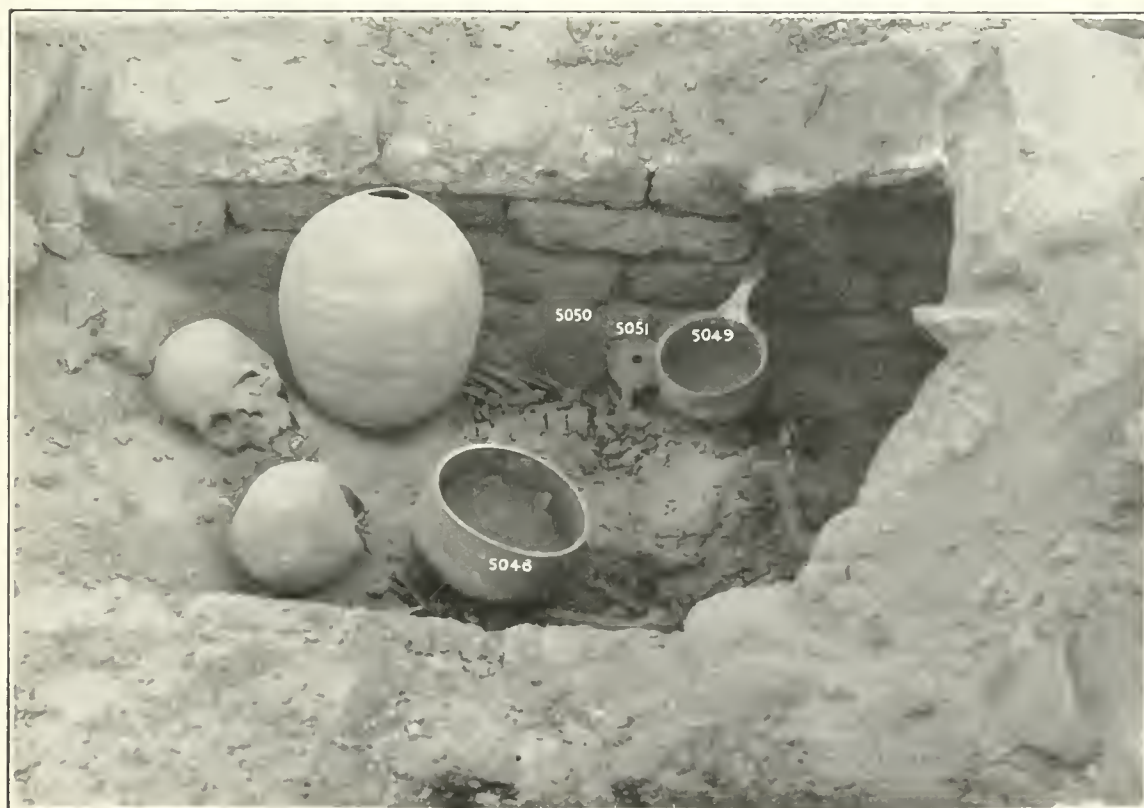
See pp. 30, 31



(b) Contents of grave '7b'

Ph 5048-5051

See p. 31



(c) Grave '7b', showing objects in position

See pp. 25, 31

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



Ph 5053

Ph 5059

Ph 5054

Ph 5052

a) Glass Bottles of Roman manufacture

See p. 31

Ph 5067

Ph 5056

Ph 5072



Ph 5065

(b) Bracelet of Blue Glass Beads with pendants of quartz, carnelian, and haematite



Ph 5068

Ph 5073

(c) Glass Beads and a Glass Bottle

See p. 31



1

2

3

4



5

6



7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17

TYPICAL FORMS OF POTTERY FROM SHIBLUL
 (100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)

See pp. 31, 35

PAINTED POTTERY FROM SHABLUL

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



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6



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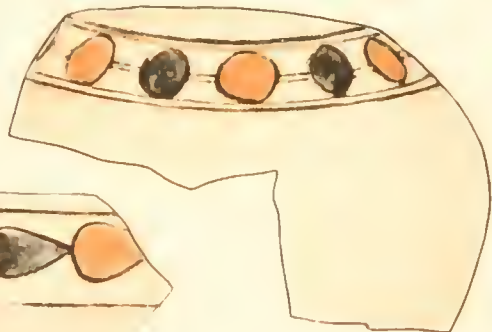
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(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



PAINTED POTTERY FROM SHABLUL

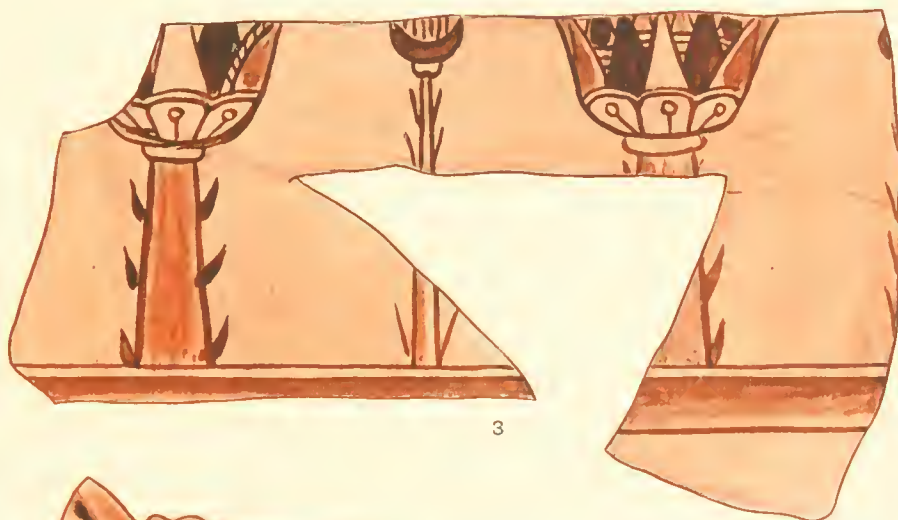
(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



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(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



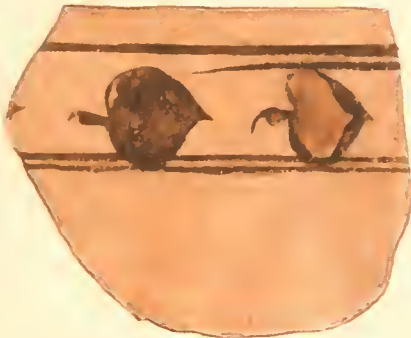
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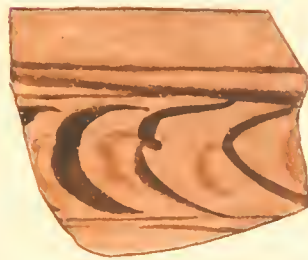
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(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



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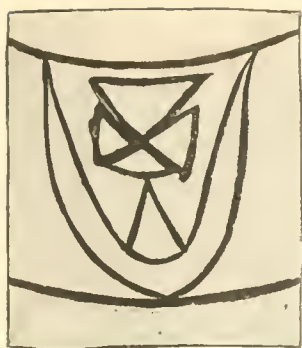
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PAINTED POTTERY FROM SHABLUL

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



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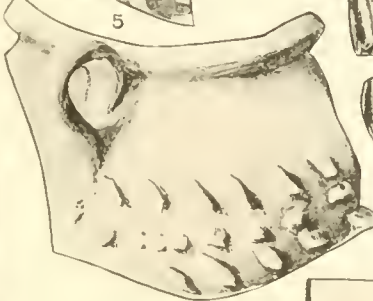
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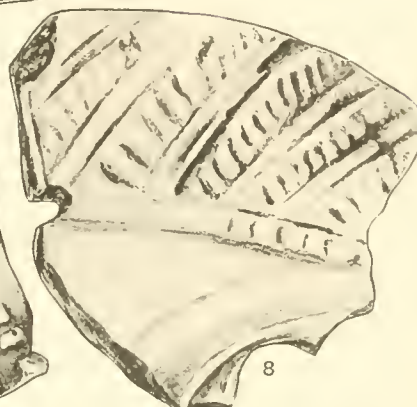
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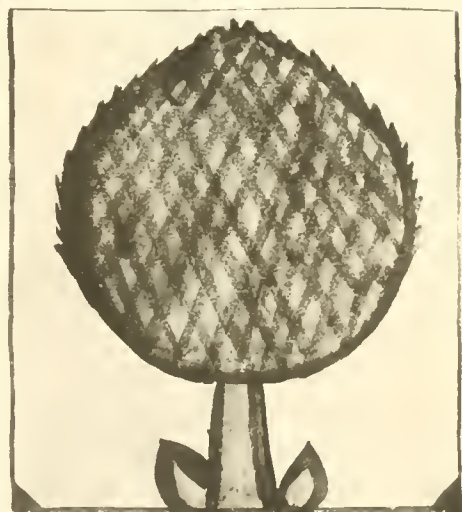
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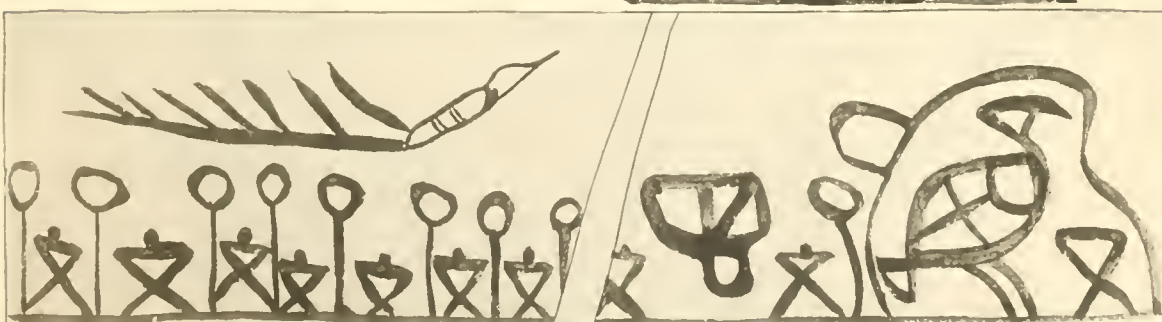
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PAINTED POTTERY FROM SHABLUL.

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



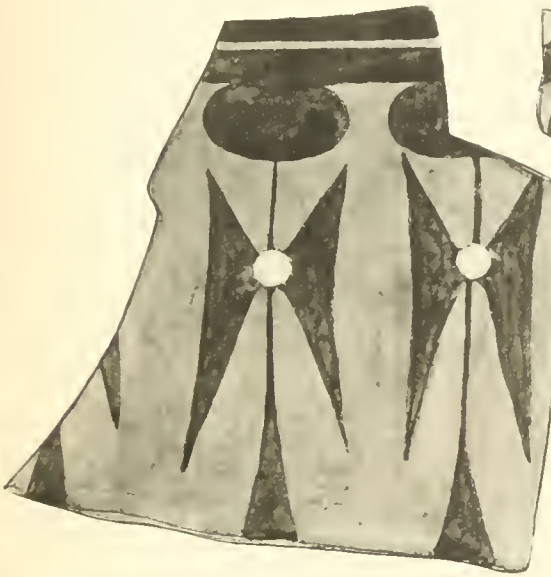
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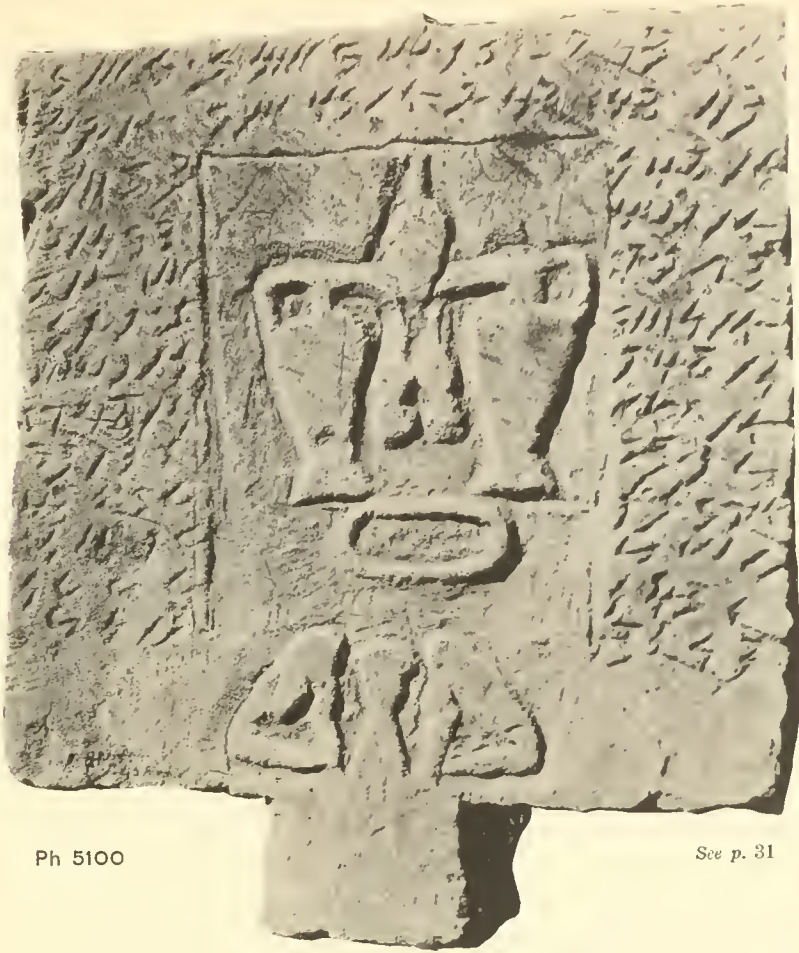
PAINTED POTTERY FROM SHABLUL

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



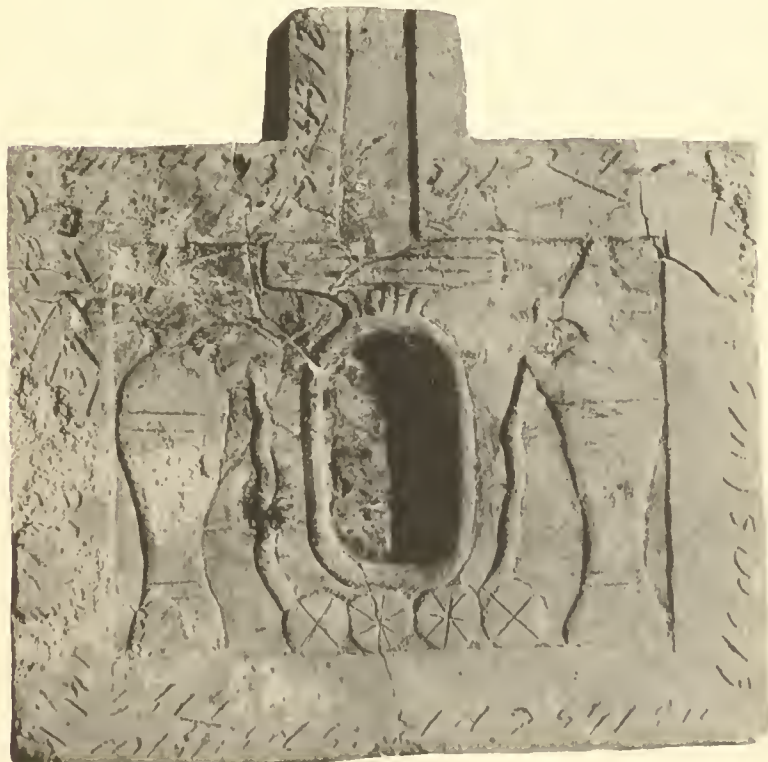
OFFERING-TABLES WITH MEROITIC INSCRIPTIONS FROM SHABLUL

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



Ph 5100

See p. 31

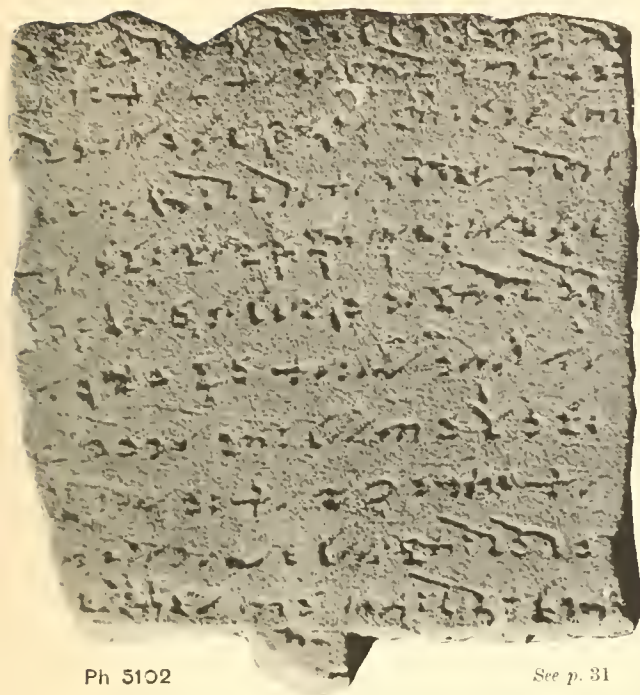


Ph 5101

See p. 31

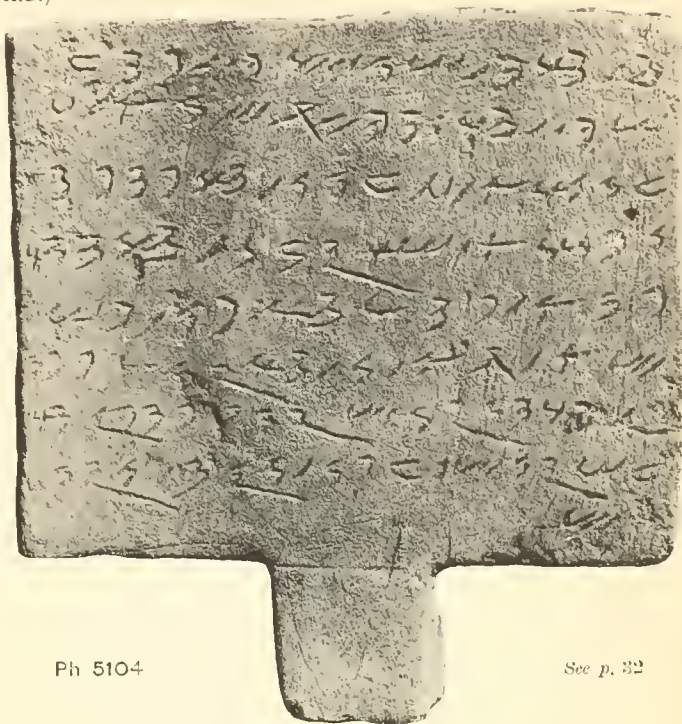
STELAE WITH MEROTTIC INSCRIPTIONS FROM SHABLUL

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



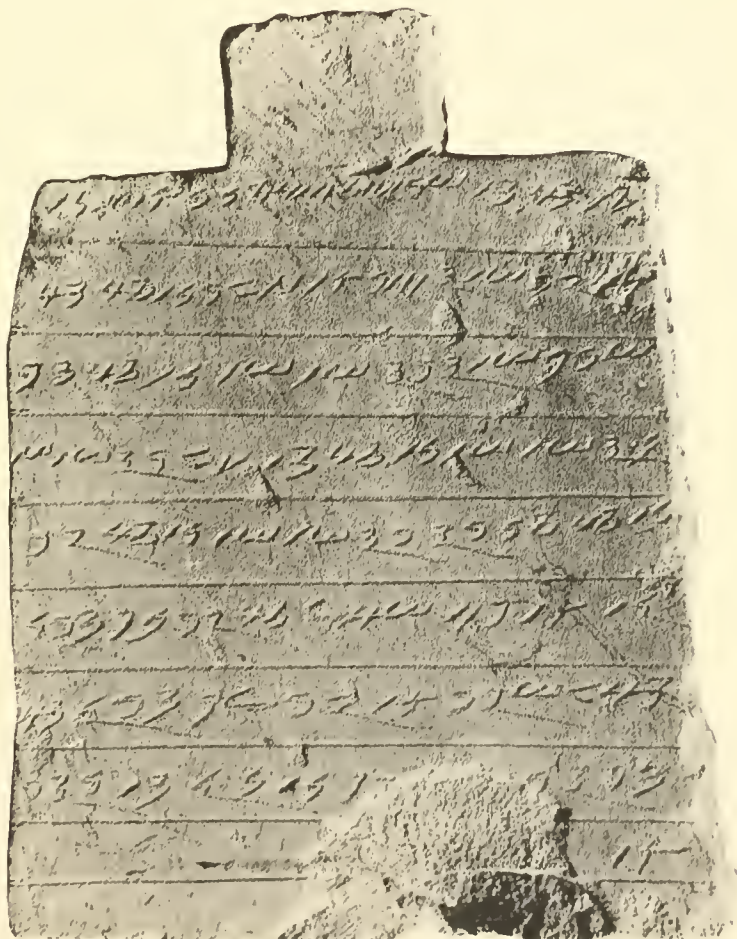
Ph 5102

See p. 31



Ph 5104

See p. 32



Ph 5103

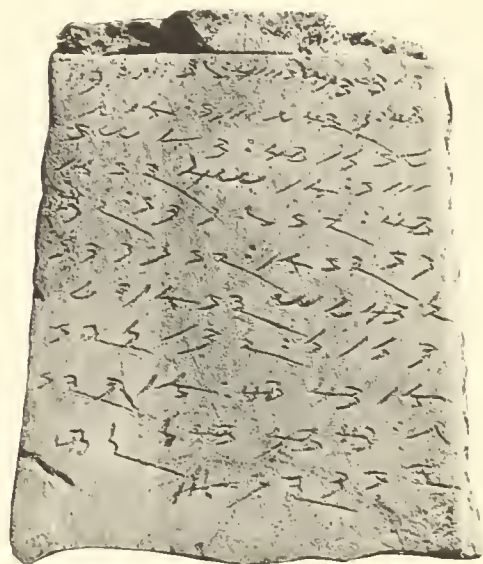
See p. 32

STELAE AND OFFERING-TABLE WITH MEROITIC INSCRIPTIONS FROM SHABLUL
(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



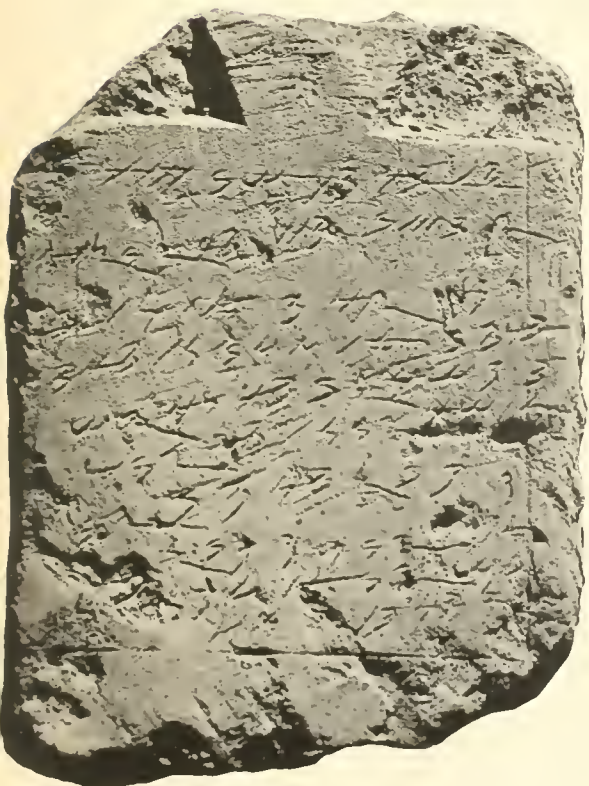
5105

See p. 32



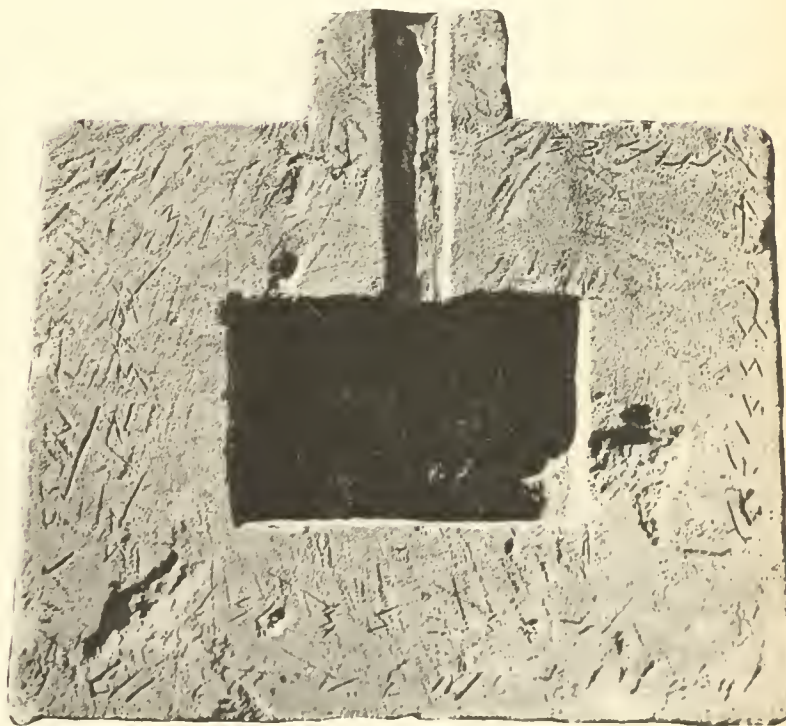
Ph 5106

See p. 32



Ph 5107

See p. 32

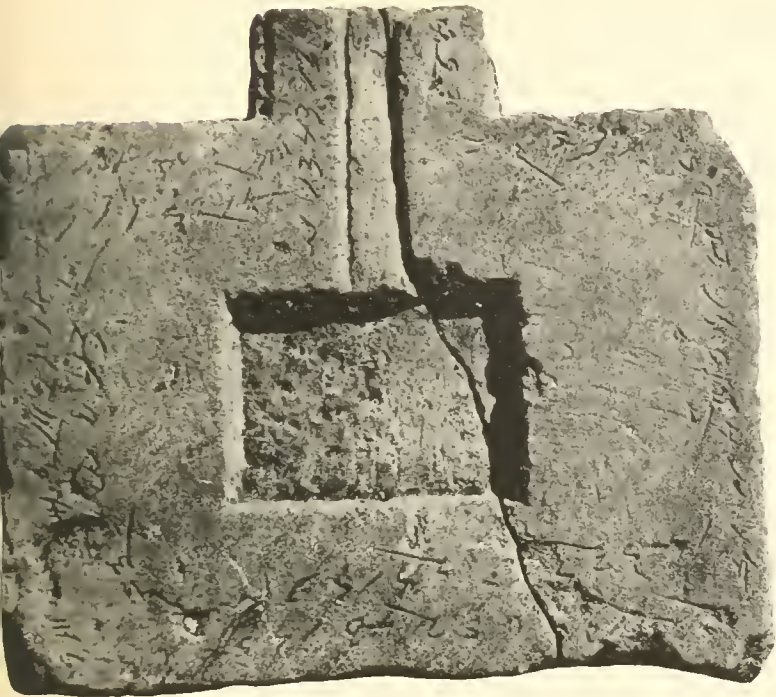


Ph 5108

See p. 32

STELAE AND OFFERING-TABLES WITH MEROITIC INSCRIPTIONS FROM SHABLUL

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



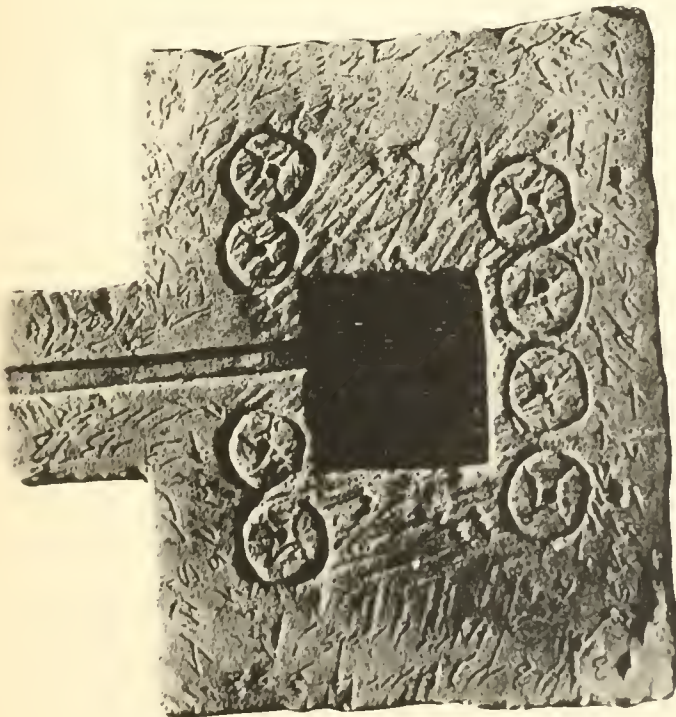
Ph 5109

See p. 32



Ph 5110

See p. 32



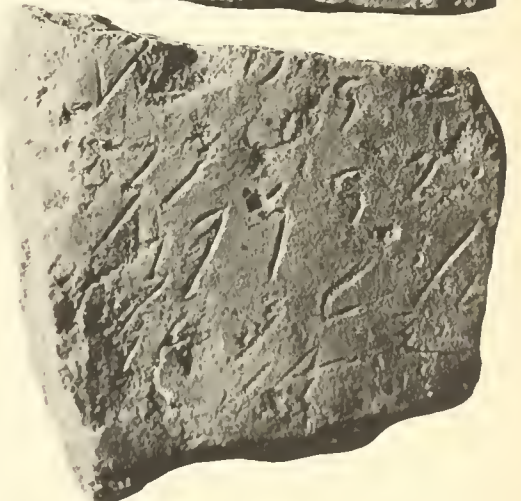
Ph 5111

See p. 32



Ph 5112

See p. 32

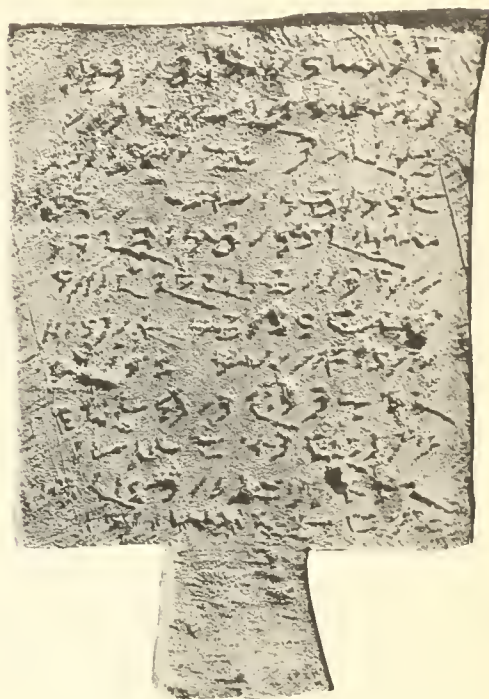


STELA AND OFFERING-TABLES WITH MEROITIC INSCRIPTIONS FROM SHABLUL
(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



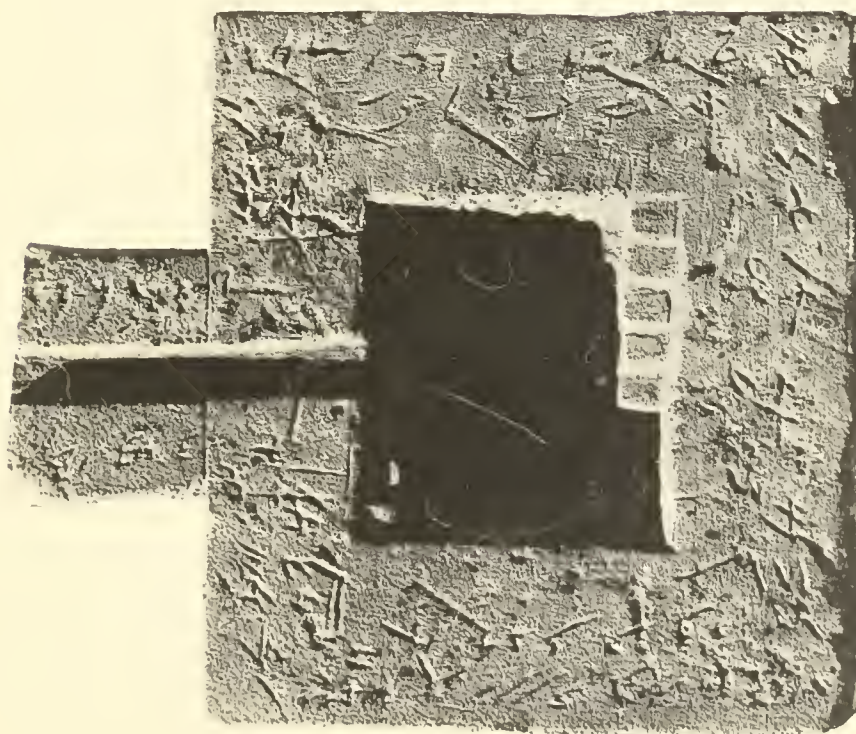
Ph 5113

See p. 32



Ph 5114

See p. 32



Ph 5115

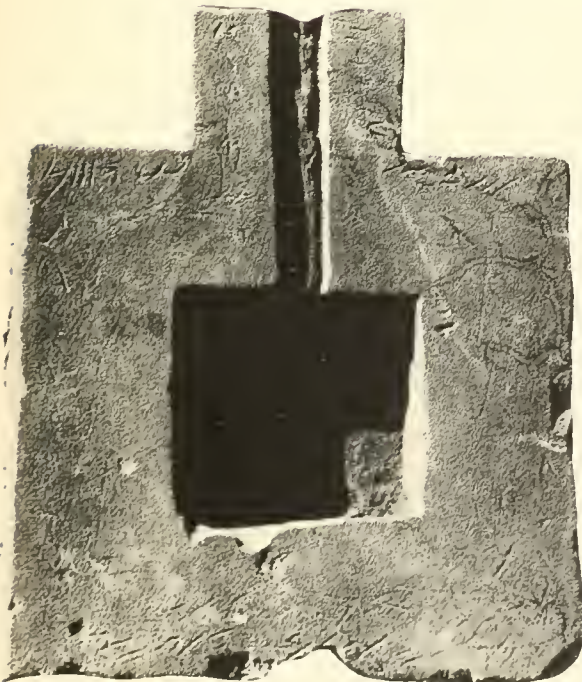
See p. 32

STELA AND OFFERING-TABLES WITH MEROITIC INSCRIPTIONS FROM SHABLUL
(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



Ph 5116

See p. 32



Ph 5117

See p. 32



Ph 5118

See p. 32

PAINTED STELAE FROM SHABLUL

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



Ph 5119

See p. 32



Ph 5120

See p. 32



Ph 5121

See p. 32



Ph 5122

See p. 33

OFFERING-TABLES FROM SHABLUL

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



Ph 5123

See p. 33



Ph 5124

See p. 33



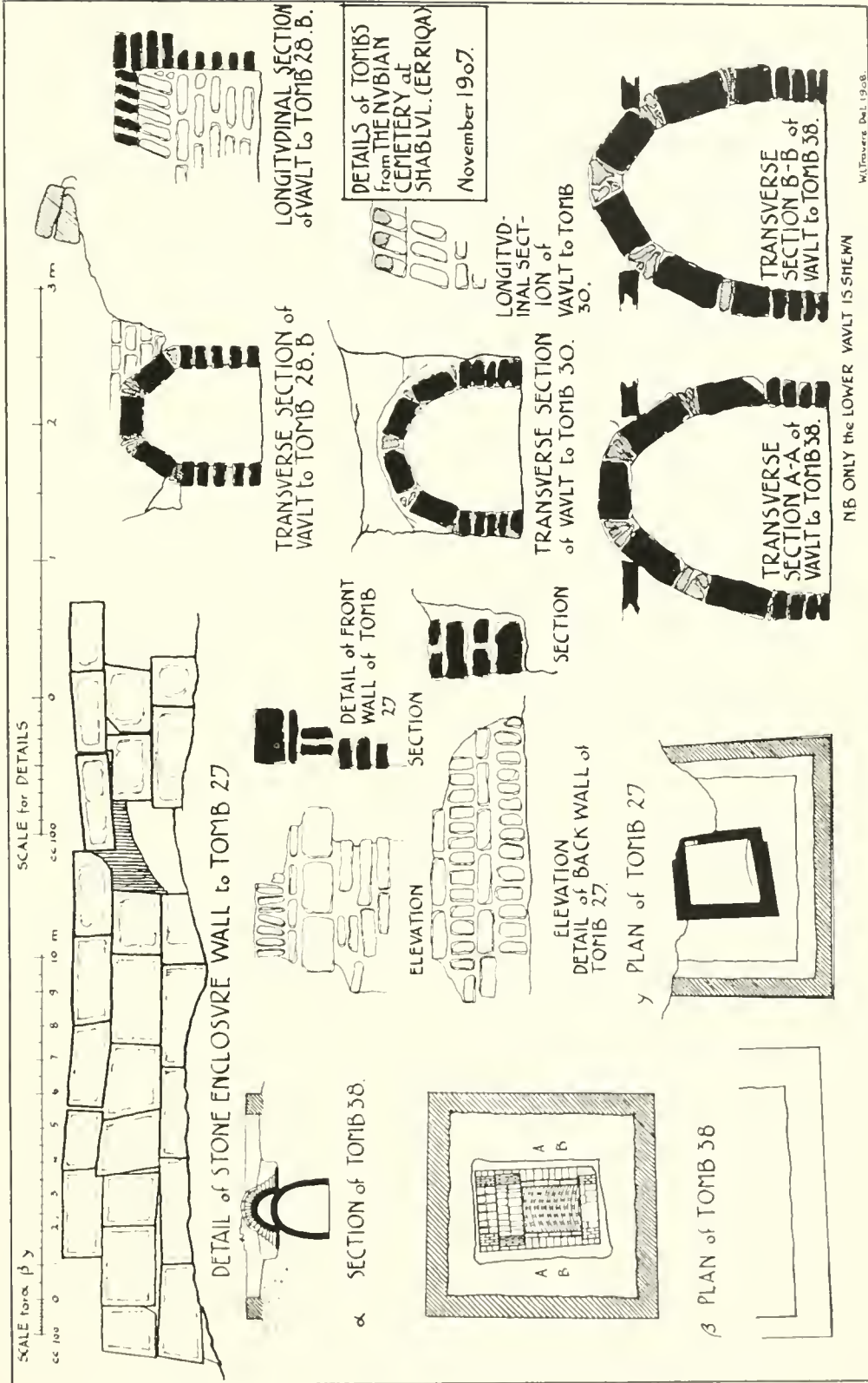
Ph 5125

See p. 33



Ph 5126

See p. 33



THE NUBIAN CEMETERY AT SHABLUL

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)

Architectural Details

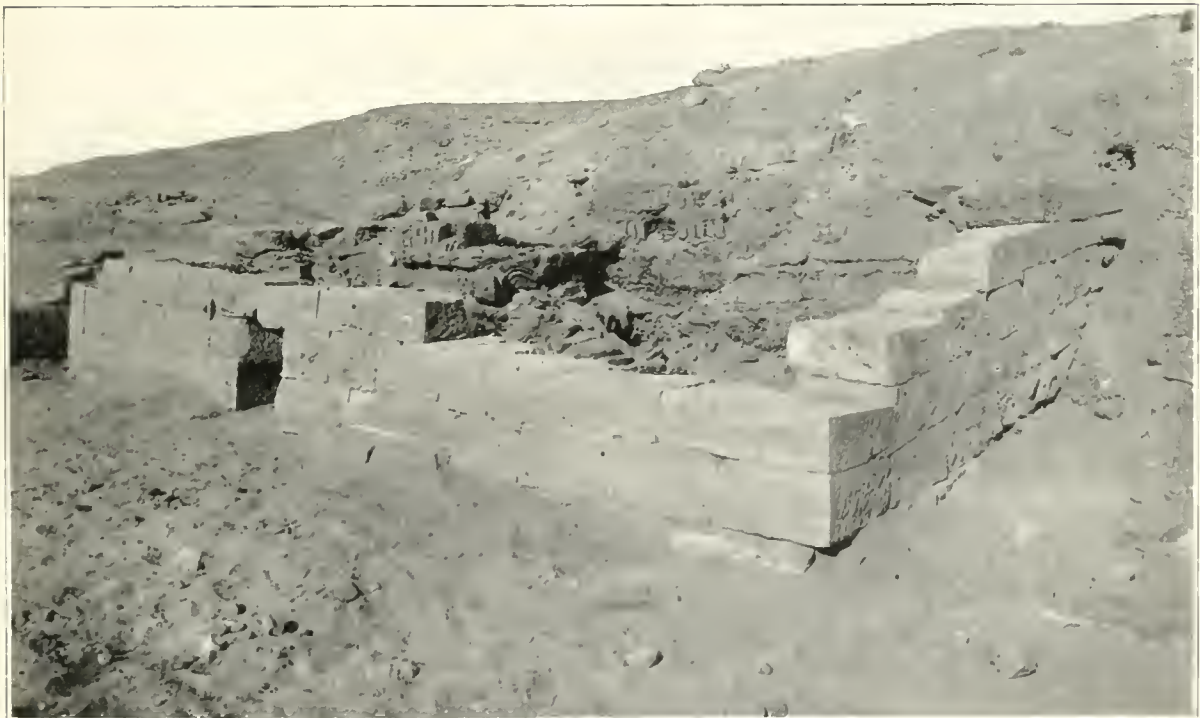
THE NUBIAN CEMETERY AT SHABELUL

(100 B.C. TO 300 A.D.)



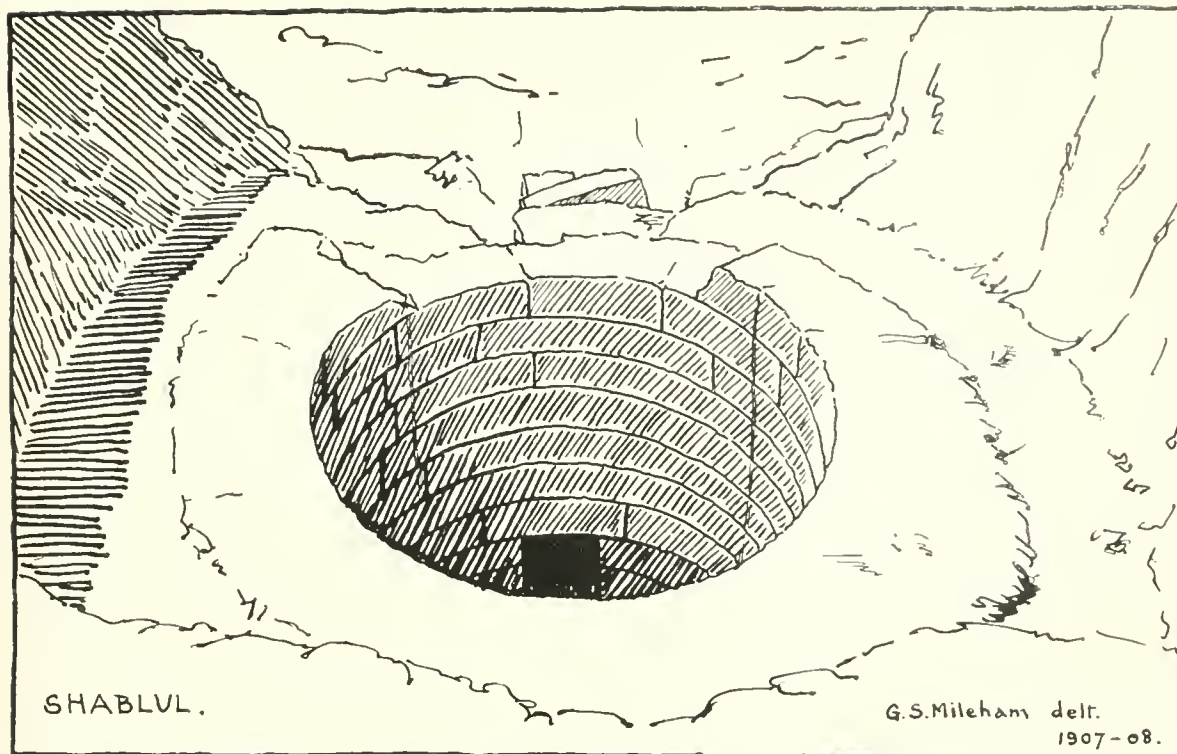
(a) View of Tomb 38, showing the brick vaulting

See p. 28



(b) View of Tomb 27, showing stone enclosure-wall and brickwork of vaults

See pp. 26, 27

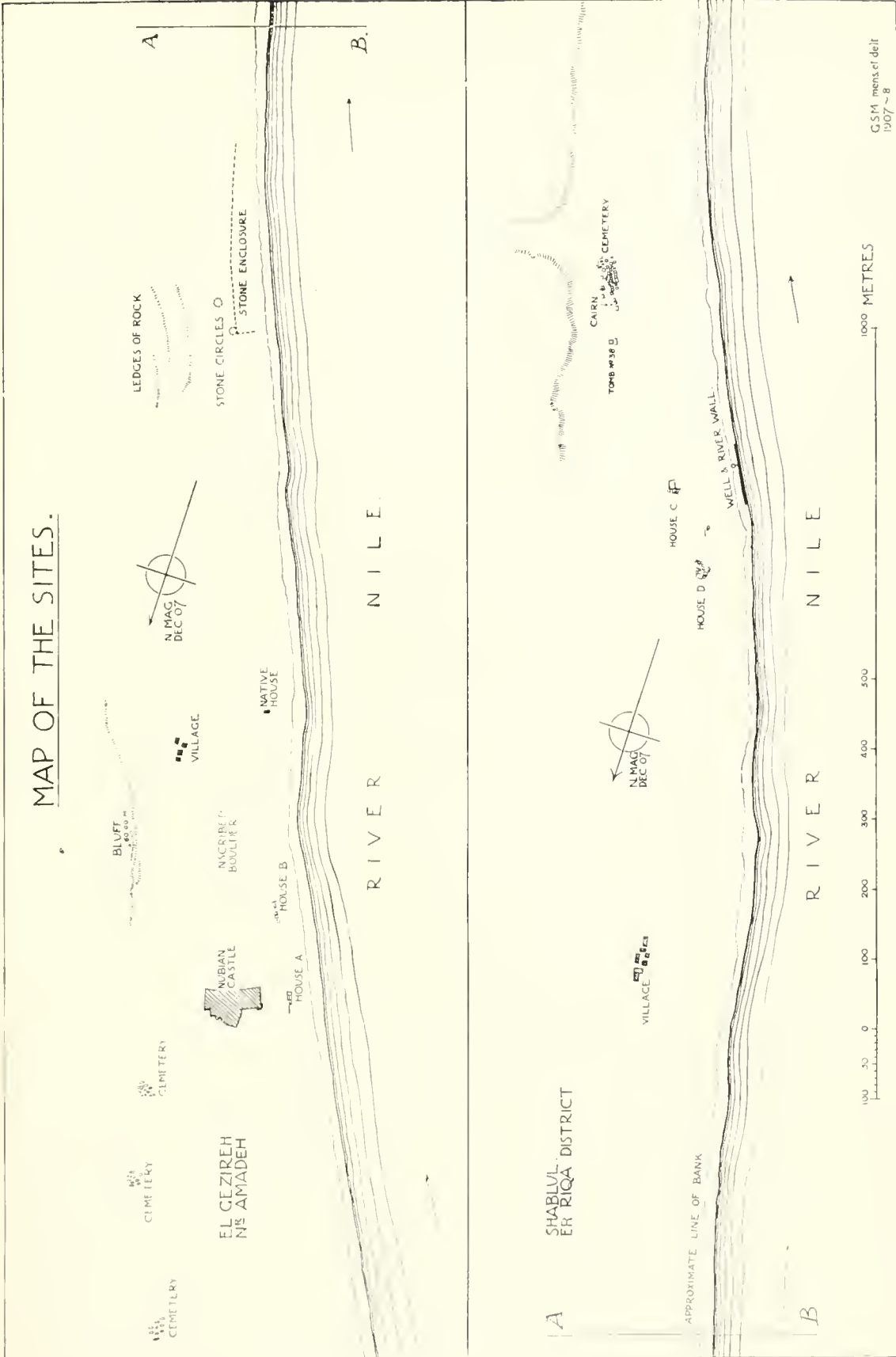


(a) Stone-built well on the river front at Shablul



(b) Stone retaining wall on the river front at Shablul

MAP OF THE SITES.



GSM mens. et delit
1907-8





