



RECORDS OF THE PAST

VOLUME IV

MAY, 1905

PART V



RECORDS OF THE PAST

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THE PYRAMID AND SPHINX

Photograph by Frederick B. Wright



OFFERING CHAPEL, WITH BARREL-VAULT AND WINDOWS (X), OF A STONE
MASTABA OF THE REIGN OF CHEOPS

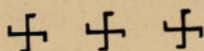
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THE WORK OF THE HEARST EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA IN 1903-4*

THE Hearst Egyptian expedition of the University of California was one of several sent out in 1899 to different countries through the liberality of Mrs. Phoebe A. Hearst. Peru and California, and subsequently other regions, were the scenes of the correlated archæological explorations. At the same time large collections of Greek and Roman antiquities, and others illustrative of primitive peoples in America and the other continents, were formed. In 1901 these varied archæological and ethnological explorations were formally combined into a department of anthropology of the University, and the great collections systematically amassed were brought together for the formation of a museum in charge of the department. The work of the department has since that date been prosecuted both in the field and at the University, where instruction has been organized and the collections prepared, recorded, and arranged in temporary buildings, pending the hoped-for erection of a permanent museum. The Egyptian expedition has been in charge of Dr. George A. Reisner and has been carried on continuously since 1899. Dr. A. M. Lythgoe has been associated with Dr. Reisner in this work. Explorations have been prosecuted at 4 different points in Egypt. The first work was done about 400 miles south of Cairo, in the desert east of the ancient

*Based on reports from Dr. George A. Reisner.

Coptos. Here flint-working camps of the prehistoric period and subsequent quarries of Ptolemaic and Roman times were explored.

During the following year excavations were made on the opposite bank of the Nile at Dêr-el-Ballas. Here a large town site of the XVIII Dynasty was cleared and a mass of material illustrative of that period obtained. In 1901 work was commenced at a third point, at Naga-ed-Dêr, 300 miles south of Cairo, at the edge of the eastern desert. The greater part of the excavations here were in a series of cemeteries of the predynastic and earlier dynastic periods, but work was also done in Coptic cemeteries dating to the period of Justinian. The systematic clearing of the first group of cemeteries has given results of unique importance, the discoveries made and the collections obtained having been so complete that every stage of the early development of Egyptian civilization was followed in unbroken sequence to the end of the Middle Empire. The burials at this site were found in an unusual condition of preservation, and thus have provided a splendid opportunity for the determination of the race of these earliest inhabitants of Egypt. The excavations at Naga-ed-Dêr were not completed until August, 1904, so that mention of their conclusion is made in Dr. Reisner's present report.

The fourth point at which excavations were made by the expedition was at the Pyramids of Gizeh, where a concession had been obtained which gave to the expedition one-third of the pyramid field, including the third pyramid and its temples. The concession for the other two-thirds had been granted the German and Italian governments. During 1903-4 the work of the expedition was especially directed to this concession, and it is with the excavations here that Dr. Reisner's present report is chiefly concerned. It will be seen that after preliminary work had been done in a cemetery of the III and early IV Dynasties, in a wady which it was subsequently necessary to use for a dumpheap, the main excavations were made in a great cemetery of mastabas dating from the reign of Cheops through the IV and V Dynasties, with a few subsequent burials of inferior type to the end of the VII Dynasty. The results of the excavations are summarized by Dr. Reisner in an illustrated report, too lengthy for publication in full in RECORDS OF THE PAST. The following statements by him are excerpts from some of the more interesting passages in his report.

DR. REISNER'S REPORT

The plan formed by the Hearst Egyptian Expedition of the University of California for the year 1903-4 provided for the concentration of all excavations at the Great Pyramids of Gizeh. At the same time it was necessary for Mr. Lythgoe and Mr. Mace to remain at Naga-ed-Dêr in order to remove burials already exposed, to make maps of the cemeteries designated as 7000, 3500, and 200, to unroll and photograph the Coptic mummies, and to photograph a mass of pottery, beads, scarabs, and other small objects. In the course of this work a large

number of very fine colored embroideries came to light which had adorned the tunics and caps of the Coptic mummies. At the same time Mr. Davies devoted 3 months to copying the inscribed tombs and painted coffins of the old empire. Finally, 140 boxes of antiquities were packed for shipment to California.

At Gizeh it was determined to clear the section of the great cemetery west of the mastaba known as Lepsius 23, the largest mastaba in the field. The huge bulk of this mastaba had caused the drift sand to bank up on its west side; and it seemed probable that the tombs under this thick covering of sand were less plundered than those in the district further west or than those nearer the pyramid.



PAINTED LIMESTONE STATUES OF A-MES (?) AND THE ROYAL
BOWMAN PEN

THE EXCAVATION OF THE WADY CEMETERY

Before attacking this part it was necessary to find a suitable place on which to dump the rubbish excavated from the cemetery. The wady to the north was manifestly the most convenient spot. But we had first to find out what lay buried under the sand of the wady. Therefore, on December 9, 1903, having brought down 75 of our workmen from Keft, we began cutting a number of holes, extending, at intervals of about 10 meters, from the lowest part of the wady to the cliff marking the northern edge of the great cemetery. At a depth of from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 meters we came on the tops of rough structures of unhewn stone and of brick. The excavation of one of these showed an early type of

small mastaba and accidentally revealed a still older mud-brick mastaba underneath. It was clear that it was necessary to excavate a section of this cemetery in order to obtain sufficient material to determine the date, the relation of this cemetery to the great cemetery, and the characteristics of its burial-customs and furniture. Therefore, the field railway having arrived, and also 50 more men from Keft, a large space 40x30 meters in area was cleared of sand. This work revealed a surface of decay,—*i. e.*, a surface formed in antiquity by the decay of the upper parts of the mastabas. The upper parts of the mastabas fell to pieces owing to the action of the weather and the debris filled in the spaces between the mastabas, forming a lumpy, uneven surface of broken walls and hard packed sandy mud. The surface of decay was broken by several long dumpheaps running down from the cliff above, which were manifestly formed by dirt being thrown over the cliff in clearing the plateau above for the construction of the large mastabas of the great cemetery.

Enough of the wady having been cleared for all practical purposes, and the extent of its cemetery having been ascertained by digging, the dumpheap of the main excavation was run as an embankment straight across the wady. Thus a number of graves which could only have added to the quantity of material obtained were covered up, probably for the benefit of a future generation of archæologists.

THE MASTABAS OF THE WADY CEMETERY

The mastabas were found, as we had seen from the first, to be built on two levels of different periods, and to be of two corresponding types. The type of the older lower level is a small isolated single-burial mastaba, with two, usually simple, offering niches on the valley side. In front of the niches is a small court marked off by a low mud wall. The mastaba is built either of mud-brick or of small stones, well plastered with mud and coated with pink lime plaster. The later type, built on the level of the tops of the earlier type, is a larger mastaba of a construction similar to that of the earlier type. But the southern niche is usually compound; and the mastabas either contain more than one burial, or they are grouped in family complexes.

On cutting into the ancient dumpheaps described above, it was found that the mastabas of both types extended practically uninjured under these dumpheaps. The heaps themselves, though, of course, they are not uniform throughout, consist in general of an upper stratum of clean disturbed geological gravel, a middle stratum of decayed mud-brick (or plaster) and limestone chips, and a lower stratum of sandy dirt. Thus at a period subsequent to that of the wady cemetery the plateau above was cleared, and there was thrown over, first dirt, then the remains of structures of mud-brick and plastered stone, and finally the geological deposit from just above the solid rock. Furthermore, this clearing of the plateau was manifestly in preparation for the construction of Lepsius 23, which occupies a space 100 meters long by 45 wide just above the wady cemetery.



VIEW EAST ALONG THE SOUTHERN EDGE OF THE CONCESSION



LOOKING OVER SECTION I OF THE EXCAVATIONS

Thus when Lepsius 23, a tomb of the IV Dynasty, was built, the wady cemetery was already in existence and the plateau above was already occupied by tombs which contained mud in their construction. Later, tombs of both wady types were found on the plateau in places where they did not stand in the way of the stone mastabas. Therefore we have in the wady a cemetery of the early IV or late III Dynasty which probably once extended over the plateau as well as over the wady.

THE EXCAVATION OF THE GREAT CEMETERY

We began work on the great cemetery January 14, 1904. A way for the railway parallel to and about 20 meters from Lepsius 23 had been made on January 12-13 by cutting down and filling in the inequalities from the southern limit of our concession to a mound at the north end of Lepsius 23, which seemed a suitable place to begin the dumpheap. A double track was laid, with two connected turntables at each end; and 8 cars were started running the circuit of this double track. The cars were loaded on switches at the south end adjacent to the actual excavations, run out loaded one at a time on the east track, dumped at the turntables on the north end, and brought back empty on the west track. Thus an endless chain of cars was formed, dumping half a ton of dirt a minute when running smoothly. As the dumpheap grew to the north, the northern pair of turntables were moved out 2 meters at a time by shoving in short rails. Seventy-two men were engaged in the actual excavations and in loading the cars; 16 men, 2 to the car, were employed in running the cars, and 23 men were required to handle the dirt on the dumpheap. As the dumpheap advanced into the valley and the height of the heap increased, the turntables were moved less often, and only about 15 men were required on the dump. This system was utilized during the whole season and proved extremely practical. As the men in the wady became free, extra cars were put on and each gang was increased proportionally.

The method of excavating was that which we have followed for 4 years—namely, first of all to clear away the sand to the surface of decay, to make notes and photographs of this surface, and then to cut away the debris of decay to the surface on which the cemetery was built. As a rule, only those burial pits were opened which gave evidence of having been plundered.

During the course of the excavations a number of statue chambers were brought to light and immediately opened in order to prevent damage by weather or by thieves to their contents. Six interesting stelæ were found in position. Two inscribed offering chambers were found and one which was painted. Three of the plundered pits which were opened contained interesting or valuable antiquities. A most interesting series of inscribed offering stones was found in position in front of offering niches. And finally a number of statues and inscribed stones were found in the debris of the cemetery streets.



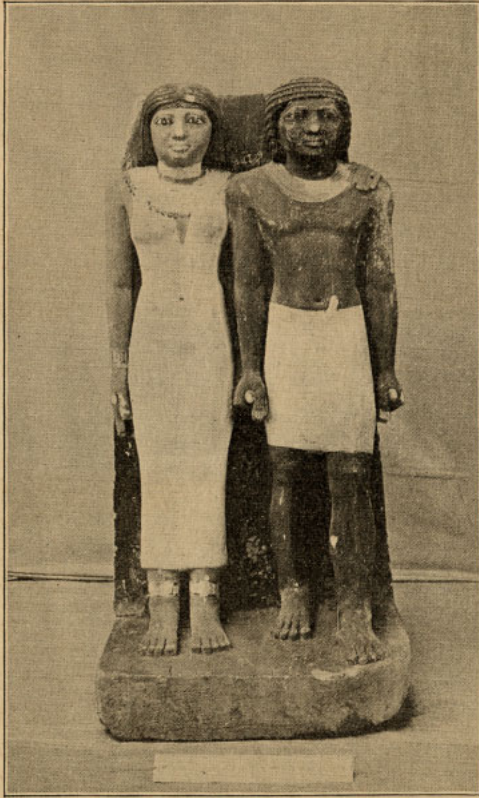
STONE JAR, PROBABLY CONTAINING ENTRAILS, FROM A WOODEN COFFIN
IN THE PIT OF A IV DYNASTY MASTABA



SOUTHEAST CORNER OF A STONE-CASED MASTABA, WITH TWO NICHEs ON
THE VALLEY SIDE, THE SOUTHERN ONE ENLARGED TO FORM A
CHAMBER, IV DYNASTY

TYPES OF MASTABAS IN THE GREAT CEMETERY

Having by this systematic excavation established the chronological basis which is necessary to give point and value to the archaeological material, the next step was to collect the archaeological material itself and to register it as far as possible both by notes and photographs. Maps, plans, and sections were made of the separate mastabas and groups of mastabas; and also drawings and photographs showing the detail of construction and the offering chambers, the statue chambers, and the burial chambers so far as opened. The work of clearing the burial chambers is as yet hardly begun. So our results for the time being concern mainly the superstructure of the mastaba and the history of its development.



SENNUW AND HIS WIFE. PAINTED
LIMESTONE. IV DYNASTY

First of all, it must be remembered that the earliest mastaba was of mud-brick, using wood as an accessory in its construction, and varying in size and elaboration according to the wealth and fancy of its builder. But, whatever its form, it always fulfilled two functions—(1) it protected a burial, and (2) it provided a place for the presentation of the ancestral offerings. This mud-brick mastaba had developed into two types before the genesis of the stone mastaba. One type—that of the large mastaba—was characterized by the development of the southern offering niche into an offering chamber. The other type—that of the small mastaba—had, instead of an offering chamber, an inclosed open court along the whole front. At the beginning of the IV Dynasty there was a combination of these two types, in which the offering niche-chamber was walled up (concealed) and an external chapel built around a small niche in the outside wall marking the position of the concealed chamber (Medum type). The great stone mastabas of the unified plan are modeled after this combined type (Medum type). The other tombs, it may be said in passing, are copied partly from the type of the large mud-brick mastaba, partly from the type of the small mastaba, and partly from combinations of the two.



MASTABAS WITH EXTERNAL CORRIDOR EXTENDING THE FULL LENGTH OF THE VALLEY SIDE OF THE STRUCTURE AND OPENING AT THE END. MUD-BRICKS AND STONE. V DYNASTY TYPE



STONE-FACED MASTABA WITH RUBBLE CORE AND NICHES ON THE VALLEY SIDE. IV DYNASTY



WHITE HEAD OF KA-NOFER FOUND IN THE BURIAL CHAMBER OF A MASTABA OF THE REIGN OF CHEOPS

The stone mastabas of the early IV Dynasty—that is, of the reign of Cheops—are large filled mastabas, similar in proportions to the long, rectangular, filled, mud-brick mastabas with stairways, of the III Dynasty. The retaining wall is built of vertical courses, each set back 5 to 10 cm. from the edge of that beneath. The filling and the construction of the walls proceeded practically *pari passu*, as in the filled mud-brick mastabas. These earliest stone mastabas have on the valley side an external offering chamber like the pyramids and like the earliest mud-brick mastabas of Medum and of Saqqarah. The chapel is, like all funerary offering places in Egypt, on the valley side, not, as hitherto stated, only on the east side. It is built onto the finished mastaba, and centers about the southern offering niche which is always, theoretically and approximately, opposite the burial chamber. These chapels all show marks of enlargement and repairs. This fact, taken in connection with the fact that the later mastabas built in the neighborhood do not encroach on the chapel, shows that the ancestral worship was maintained for years after the funeral, probably by the usual testamentary endowment.

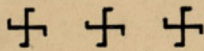
Structurally these chapels are of especial interest because they are of mud-brick and roofed with mud-brick, with the ordinary Egyptian barrel vault. The chamber is lighted by slits in the brickwork on the north end. The walls are finely plastered with a hard pink plaster.

The pits of all the main mastabas have been plundered in modern times. We opened 4 of these pits. They are immense square vertical shafts cut into the solid rock and continued above into the body of the filling by cleanly built masonry. This masonry did not reach the top of the mastaba. The mouth of the passage to the chamber was closed by an enormous slab of stone and the passage itself by masonry. The chamber lies to the south of the pit, is cut in the solid rock, and lined

with a beautifully finished masonry of fine white limestone. The place for the coffin, which appears to have been of wood, was a long rectangular depression usually on the west side of the chamber. In the chamber of tomb G 1203 was found the beautiful head shown in the accompanying illustration, and in all the pits fragments of alabaster ware and pottery are found.

Such are the main characteristics of the early stone mastabas. The results confirm the dating of our tombs at Naga-ed-Dêr, and extend the history of the mastaba founded on the Naga-ed-Dêr material down to the VI Dynasty.

BASED ON REPORTS FROM DR. GEORGE A. REISNER.



AN AMERICAN'S RECENT DISCOVERIES IN EGYPT

FOR ages Egypt has been the rich storehouse for treasure-seekers. There were grave-robbers in the days of the Pharaohs ready to profane the tombs of their rulers and priests for the sake of gain, and every conqueror of the country since has gone plundering over it. Finally came the scholars, as eager for antiquities as ancient robbers or the present day Fella, seeking for knowledge as the others for wealth, but finding too often that they were centuries too late. Petrie tells of spending weeks with a large force of workmen in penetrating the pyramid at Hawara. The work in its hardships resembled quarrying for rock. The reward of the perseverance, toil, danger, and expense was the assurance that the tomb was that of Amenemhat III, and the finding of a few charred bones and a bit of lazuli. Tomb-robbers with infinite labor had tunneled into the secret chambers ages before. Then at Illahun months were passed in attacking the pyramid of Usertesen II, only to find the clear traces of the spoilers. These are but hints of the repeated experience of the archæologists in the field.

Over against such disappointments are the rich and marvelous finds which have rewarded the legitimate digging. We think of Naukratis, the unaltered town called Ha-Usertesen-hotep, Abydos, and a hundred other rewarding sites. The remains of the great kings removed at an early day from their noble vaults in the long valley back of Thebes for fear of robbers were finally brought before the world, just in time, we remember, to prevent the priceless loot being sold piecemeal by the natives.

In view of these facts, the remarkable find described below emphasizes the immensity of rich archæological material stored away in ancient times and hints at the treasures still awaiting the uncovering by the spade of the searcher.