

NINTH QUARTERLY REPORT ON THE EXCAVATION
OF GEZER.1 *June*—10 *August*, 1904.

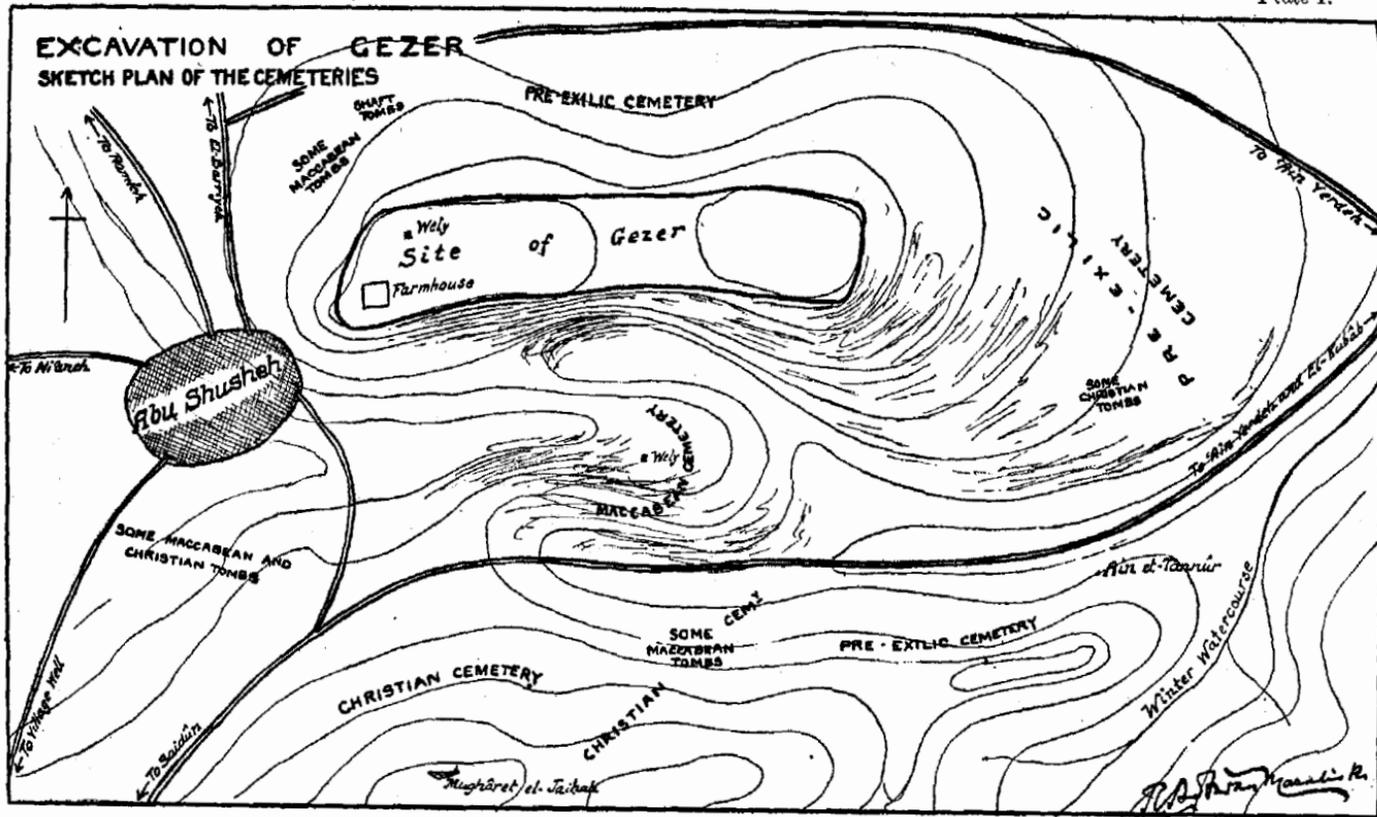
By R. A. STEWART MACALISTER, M.A., F.S.A.

PRELIMINARY.

THE futile imprecations contained in the epitaph of King Eshmunazar, and the more practical but equally futile mechanical contrivances for concealing the entrances to sepulchral chambers found in Jerusalem and elsewhere, show that the plundering of tombs is a very ancient industry in Palestine. Probably at no period—Seleucid, Roman, Byzantine, Crusader, or Arab—were the sepulchres of the dead safe from spoliation. Indeed, all things considered, it is a matter for wonder that any tombs at all are left in the country for examination by the archæologist, anthropologist, and historian.

During the Fund's campaign at Beit Jibrin in 1900, 12 tombs were opened, 10 of which were found to have been already plundered. The fellahin told us that this was about equal to the average of their own successes—a fact which affords the only consolation available for the scientific observer as he contemplates the havoc that has been wrought at that once incomparably important archæological site by Arab rapacity, stimulated by the greed of the Levantine middleman, in its turn excited by Western ignorance and extravagance.

The earlier robbers were no doubt attracted principally by the hope of finding objects in gold or silver, to be melted down for their bullion value. Comparatively speaking, however, only a small number of tombs contain deposits of precious metal, and it is reasonable to conclude that the frequent disappointments which awaited gold-hunters is one of the causes why they left so many tombs unopened. It has been reserved for our own generation to introduce an element which will assuredly hasten the complete destruction of the ancient tombs of Palestine, and of all the precious



scientific lessons they can teach. This is the ever-increasing flood of tourists who yearly visit the country, and who are rapidly demoralising the districts that come more immediately within their sphere of influence—a consequence of “tourist development” that seems to be inevitable in every country throughout the world. Many of these visitors are mere “trippers,” with no real interest in or knowledge of the history of Palestine, as the astounding questions they propound to residents abundantly prove; but all are eager to possess at any price, however exorbitant, what they call “curios” as mementos of their excursion. To meet this demand, a tribe of dealers has sprung up all over the country, each employing an army of agents who ride everywhere, east and west of the Jordan, encouraging the natives to tear in pieces tombs that otherwise might have awaited scientific examination in comparative safety.

Under these circumstances the necessity becomes all the more pressing for firman-holders in Palestine to devote part of the time at their disposal to the cemeteries belonging to their mounds. The experience of the Fund has been that as soon as the excavator's back is turned a crowd of speculators rush in on his site, and it is desirable to leave as few gleanings for them as possible. How much time should be given to this branch of the work depends, of course, on the funds and the number of officers in the staff; in the case of Gezer I judged that a quarter year might profitably be spent exclusively on this investigation, even though it would involve the sacrifice of part of the mound that otherwise would have been excavated. The present report is the record of the main results of this work. Within the period named every tomb of which the slightest trace could be detected above ground has been opened and cleared.

The district round Abû Shûsheh has not a very good name with the professional tomb plunderers, some of whom were in my employ. (I may say that the experience that these rascals had gained was very valuable to me, as they often were able to detect tombs whose surface indications were visible only to a highly practised eye.) They tell me that rarely, if ever, have valuable objects been found in this neighbourhood, and contrast it unfavourably with 'Amwâs, Silbît, Sejed, and Kezâzeh, places where tombs containing (from their point of view) precious plunder have been found in considerable numbers. On the other hand I have been told that a Ramleh dealer has said that formerly the best glass used to come into his

hands from Abû Shûsheh. This probably means merely that it was brought to him by Abû Shûsheh men, or by men who alleged that it was found in Abû Shûsheh. As a general rule the statements of those engaged in the antiquity trade in Palestine regarding the provenance of any object are to be taken as presumptive evidence that it came from anywhere other than the locality named.

Although the Abû Shûsheh tombs, viewed as gold mines, may be inferior, the scientific results of their examination have been highly satisfactory, and it may be claimed for the excavation of Gezer, that for the first time in the course of Palestinian exploration the burial customs of every age of a city's history have been determined.

It has been found that *minutiae* would be out of place in the present report. Thus, the few lamps illustrated have been selected from considerably over a hundred of which drawings have been made; and the same is more or less true of other classes of objects. Moreover, the proper delineation of tomb-plans and deposit-groups require plates larger than the page-limits of the *Quarterly Statement*. I therefore content myself here with an account of general principles deduced, and with drawing and describing typical specimens of the ordinary deposits, as well as the most important of the less usual objects.

On the *tell* itself little work has been done. The tracing of the city wall on the south side was for a time continued; the gang of labourers engaged on this task discovered a fragment of masonry which at present I am inclined to regard as the foundation of the missing Crusaders' castle of Mont Gisart. I have not yet been able to expose it sufficiently for thorough study. As the cemeteries for the present seem exhausted,¹ the work in the trenches has at the moment of writing been resumed.

A few days were lost between the expiry of the original firman, on the 14th June, and the receipt of formal permission to continue the work. Later, in July, I was detained for a fortnight in Jerusalem by illness. Otherwise the excavation has proceeded without interruption.

¹ The best time to search for tombs is the early spring, for reasons into which I entered fully in the first of the present series of reports. Should the excavation of the mound be far enough advanced to justify it, I may keep a gang or two tomb hunting in the opening months of next year. This entirely depends on the funds available.

PART I.—CANAANITE TOMBS.

Situation and Number.—At the point marked “Shaft tombs” in Plate I, at the north-west corner of the *tell*, is a group of three tombs with which our consideration of the cemeteries of Gezer must begin. With these I propose to take into consideration another, found more than a year ago within the walls of the city.

The Tomb-chambers.—I shall commence with a description of the tomb last mentioned, because, as its importance was not previously recognised, passing references only were made to it in the report (see *Quarterly Statement*, 1903, pp. 190, 315).

Originally the cave was a Troglodyte dwelling, as is proved by the characteristic stairway leading down to it. The principal chamber is very irregular: its maximum diameter is about 27 feet. The cave possesses a second chamber to the left of the stairway: this is remarkable, for, as a rule, second chambers are not found in the Troglodyte dwellings. All traces of the early settlers had been cleared out of the cave, which contained Semitic remains only.

This side chamber, which is 11 feet long and 4 feet broad, is exactly similar to the small chambers at the bottoms of the shaft tombs. At its entrance is a circular pit sunk in the floor, 3 feet 9 inches in diameter, and 1 foot 4 inches deep. Just over, if not in, this pit the body had been laid. The pottery was ranged round the walls of the small chamber: in the principal chamber nothing was deposited, and its earth yielded a heterogeneous assortment of weavers' weights, spindle whorls, pottery fragments, and other objects, evidently remains of the last occupation of the cave as a dwelling, and not to be associated in any way with the interment, unless, indeed, we may guess that the person buried was the occupant, and the former owner of the fragments alluded to. It is by no means impossible that the small chamber was hollowed out specially for the purpose of the interment: in any case the pit seems to have been intended for the body, as in a later tomb, to which more particular reference will be made in the second part of this report.

The tombs outside the walls are shaft tombs: that is, they consist of one small chamber sunk at the bottom of a cylindrical vertical shaft quarried in the rock. In the best example the

chamber is 11 feet 3 inches in maximum length, 8 feet 3 inches in maximum breadth, and 4 feet 3 inches in height: the entrance from the shaft is in the middle of the longest side. The shaft is 6 feet 4 inches in diameter at the top, 4 feet 6 inches at the bottom; its depth is 8 feet. In another tomb the shaft is 7 feet deep, and 5 feet 8 inches in diameter at the top. The third tomb shaft is peculiar; it is rectangular, not circular, and, unlike the circular shafts, is provided with steps. The last named shaft is 8 feet 7 inches long, 6 feet broad. There is no rule determining the orientation of the side chamber with respect to the shaft.

Method of Sepulture.—Unfortunately the damp and salt in the soil has not merely rotted every bone, but actually caused them all to crumble to dust. Nothing recognisable was to be found among the meagre splinters of bone rescued from the tombs on the hillside, and from the tomb in the city there came nothing but a fragment of a pelvis, and pieces of the femur, tibia, and humerus. I worked very carefully through the earth, hoping to find at least a fragment of the skull, but there was not the slightest trace of any other bone. On that account I did not perceive that I had to deal with an interment: I thought that the four bones in question had happened to be deposited by some unexplainable circumstance. Single human bones are not infrequently found in the débris of the *tell*, no doubt with a story attached in each case that we can never hope to know. Fortunately I marked the position of each fragment in the plan that I drew in my notebook, so am now able to say that they represented the interment of a full-grown person, lying on the left side, with the body in a contracted position. The head was pointed in an easterly direction. We may assume that this was the normal attitude impressed on the bodies when buried, though no special importance seems to have been attached to the direction of the head if we may judge from the analogy of the next period.

The Bodies.—As no recognisable bones, with the exception of the four fragments above mentioned, have been recovered from the tombs of this class, no observation regarding the physical characters of the bodies can be recorded.

Deposits.—(A) *Religious Emblems.*—None have been found.

(B) *Food and Drink.*—In three tombs offerings of drink had been left for the dead, and in two were offerings of food; the fourth tomb was empty. The drink offerings can of course only be inferred from the indications furnished by the disposition of the vessels that

presumably contained them. These are large jars, which are always either empty, or filled with the earth that has silted into the chamber and everything it contains. They have all pointed bottoms, and had they been for any reason deposited empty would naturally have been laid on their sides: as care has in every case been taken to place them standing, we may assume that they were left in the tomb full of liquid. Moreover, in nearly every jar so deposited a small jug is found. This can only be explained as a drinking cup, for dipping into the drink filling the heavy standing jar: just as is to be seen to-day at the excavation works, where there is a barrel full of water for the use of the labourers; on the surface of the water floats a tin cup intended for drinking and for lading the water into the small pots distributed among the gangs.

The recognisable remains of food consist of cooked fragments of mutton, identified by the bones remaining. These are placed in saucers or dishes. In the middle of one such deposit a bronze spear-head was left, perhaps to enable the deceased to cut the meat, and another bowl was inverted over the whole, presumably to keep it warm.

(c) *Lamps*.—Reserving fuller details for the concluding memoir, I shall only refer to the lamps which have been found. The distinction between the Canaanite lamps and those of the later periods is worth calling attention to, as it has been erroneously stated that no lamps exist from Pre-Israelite times. The earlier specimens are to be known by the shape of the spout, which is triangular, owing to the lips being only comparatively slightly drawn together. In the later lamps the lips are drawn so closely that the spout is rectangular in shape. The contrast is well shown in the accompanying photograph (Fig. 1).

The deposition of lamps in Canaanite tombs seems to be exceptional. They were found in one only of the four tombs opened. As period succeeds period, the custom is found to grow, and to reach an extravagant degree in some of the latest tombs, where occasionally two or three hundred lamps are to be found. It has been suggested in a previous report that the ceremonial use of lamps may be reminiscent of a sacrifice involving fire, which in the symbolised rite is typified by the lamp. If we might assume this as a postulate, it would be legitimate to infer that the funeral sacrifice had not yet given place to the symbol at the time of the interments we are now describing, and that therefore the lamp had

not yet taken its place in ritual. This, at least, seems a feasible explanation of the scarcity of these objects in the early tombs.

(D) *Implements and Weapons*.—With the warrior in Early Palestine, as all over the world, was deposited his spear; of course, to us represented by the bronze head, the wooden shaft having long since decayed away. One very fine spear-head recalls the series found in the cistern with the mutilated girl two years ago.¹ A curved knife which was found, is, no doubt, for cutting food. There were also some bronze hairpins with a hole in the middle

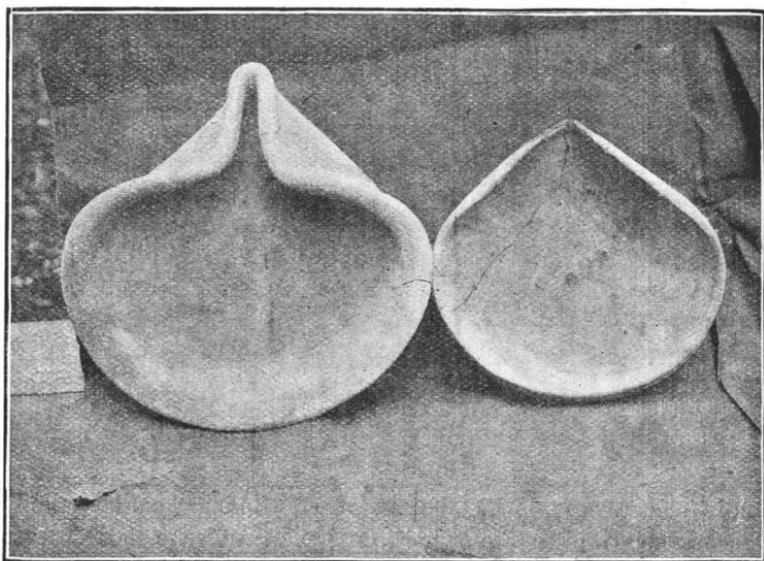


FIG. 1.—Canaanite and Hebrew Lamps. (The Canaanite lamp is to the right.)

of the shank. One of these is handsomely ornamented with rings and knobs. To these may be added a ring, probably meant for mounting a scarab.

(E) *Clothing, Adornment, Amulets*.—Besides the hairpins just mentioned we need only refer to the scarabs (Fig. 2, p. 328). These are steatite, with traces of blue enamel remaining upon them. They appear to be uniformly of about the XIIth or XIIIth dynasties. One scarab is set on a thick bronze ring.

¹ With the difference that this specimen is tanged, while those compared were socketed.

All these objects, with the exception of the curved bronze knife, were found in the tomb that at the beginning of this section we described as having a square entrance shaft instead of one of the usual circular type. Among them is a small vase of green enamelled porcelain, decorated with brown lines; this is a cosmetic pot. There were in the same tomb a scarab in dark brown pottery and two in basalt, which, as they bear no design, have not been drawn. It will be seen that the deposits from this tomb are markedly Egyptian in character: could it have been that of an Egyptian resident buried according to the local rites?

Notwithstanding the prolonged Egyptian domination over Gezer, we can hardly expect to find mummies, as any Egyptian

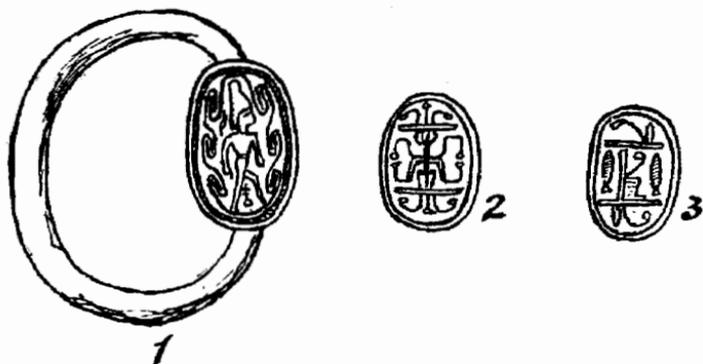


FIG. 2.—Scarabs.

family able to afford the expense of embalming would certainly transfer their dead to Egypt for interment, just as in the converse case the remains of Jacob and of Joseph are recorded to have been carried for burial from Egypt to Palestine.

PART II.—LATE SEMITIC TOMBS.

Situation and Number.—By reference to Plate I it will be seen that the tombs of the later Semitic period are found on the slopes of the *tell*, north and east, and on the hill next to it on the south side. The total number of tombs of this period examined has been 35; but a certain number were found to be empty.

The Tomb-Chambers.—The entrance shafts, characteristic of the earlier tombs, entirely disappear. The doorway is a roughly cut

hole, sometimes rectangular or oval, but usually more or less circular, on an average 3 or 4 feet in diameter. This hole is generally horizontal, being cut in the roof of the chamber; a vertical doorway, cut in the *side* of the chamber, is exceptional. The entrance is never in the centre of the ceiling, but always at one side. It is true that in two or three instances there is a circular hole in the middle of the roof *in addition* to the normal doorway; this is always too high above the chamber floor to permit a person to drop through without injury, and no means of access to the cave through it are provided. It may have been used for lowering the body by means of ropes, as seems to have been done in the mediæval charnel house in Wâdy er-Rabâbi at Jerusalem, the survivors who deposited the body entering the chamber by the ordinary entrance.

Approach to the chamber through the entrance is effected by (a) a simple drop, the height of the roof being here intentionally reduced; (b) a sloping gradient down which it is easy to walk; or (c) three or four roughly cut steps (sometimes mere "toe-holds") made in the side of the chamber under the doorway. In the few cases where the doorway is cut in the wall, there is always a drop to the floor, the entrance being high up in the side of the chamber. This, indeed, will be found to be also the case in the subsequent periods. The doorway was closed by a pile of large rough stones wedged into it, with earth covering all. Doors, whether of wood or of stone, are quite unknown.

Probably the chambers are, in the main, developments of natural caves, which accounts for their irregularity; though it is true that there is not one that does not display some sign of quarrying upon its walls. They are generally approximately circular on plan, and about 20 or 30 feet in diameter. The roof is either flat or curved upwards in a rude dome. Often a pillar (in one case two) is left in order to support the ceiling. In the majority of the tombs there is one chamber only, but some contain two, and a few three. In the last-named case the three rooms are either *en suite* or else the two inner rooms open independently from the entrance chamber. The internal doorways are all large openings, worked without art, with jambs and head cut so as to form a continuous curve. In one tomb there is a series of subordinate chambers and recesses recalling by their arrangement the *chevet* of a French cathedral apse.

Formal graves cut inside the chambers are rare. They are either benches against the walls, or pits sunk in the floor. The benches are from 1 to 2 feet high, and about 3 feet broad. Their upper surfaces are either flat or sunk slightly in the middle. In a few cases a shelf is cut into the wall of the chamber. *Kokim* are quite unknown.

Method of Sepulture.—The bones of this period, though very rotten, are in not quite so hopeless a state as those from the tombs described in Part I. The bodies were laid on the side, with the knees drawn up under the chin. There is no rule of orientation, the heads of bodies in any one tomb pointing in every direction. The bodies, thus contracted, were placed on the rock-floor of the chamber, or on a platform of stones, or else, after the rains had washed silt through the ill-fitting heap of stones at the doorway, on the surface of the earth. Stones and earth were then laid over them. In tombs that have been in use for a long time the dead are often found in several layers, one above the other. It is curious that when special graves were provided in the chambers use was often not made of them; thus I sometimes found a cave with benches on which were no bones, while the floor between the benches contained a large number.

In one tomb the bodies were all placed in three small pits in the floor. Decomposition must have proceeded rapidly, as among the fragments in one of the pits were pieces of no less than six skulls, indicating the number of individuals buried in the receptacle. There is no evidence that the bones, once buried, were ever disturbed again in the tombs under discussion, as was the case in the Post-Exilic tombs. We are not justified, I think, in regarding these pits as in any way equivalent to ossuaries, and must believe that the six bodies were placed in the pit one after the other. As the pit is only 3 feet in diameter and 1 foot 6 inches deep, this would have been impossible unless the previously-buried bodies had in every case completely decayed.

In one exceptional case the body—that of a young person—had been laid on the back, with the tibiae doubled under the femora.

The Bodies.—Hardly a single long bone could, with every care, be recovered whole, and almost all of those *in situ* had lost one or both ends by decay, so that they were useless for measurement. Of

the bones most subject to variation, the femoræ, it may be noticed, are almost always strongly pilastered, the tibiæ platycnemid. No perforated humeri were noticed. The skulls were nearly all imperfect; still, some measurements could be taken, with which, however, it is unnecessary to cumber the present report: they will all be properly tabulated in the final memoir. Three out of six skulls from one tomb were metopic; no other skull found in the graves of any period displayed this characteristic. On Plate II an attempt is made to realise the physiognomy of one or two individuals from this and succeeding periods. The outline of the skull in these diagrams has been drawn with the camera lucida, and used as a basis for filling in the features.

Deposits.—(A) *Religious Emblems.*—These are surprisingly few. A small amulet in green enamelled paste, of very common type, was

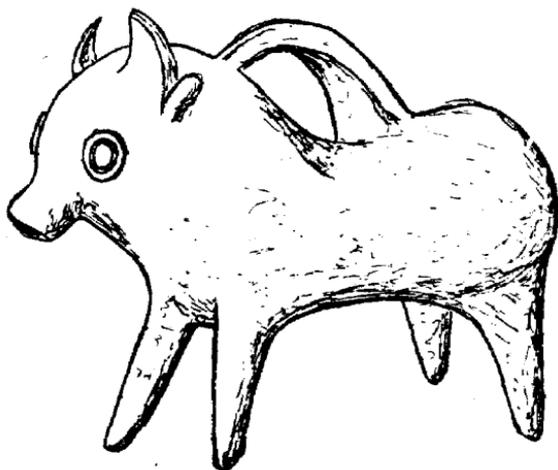


FIG. 3.—Representation of the Cow-Divinity.

found in one of the tombs on the eastern slope of the hill. It is Egyptian in origin, and represents Sekhet. Another tomb, on the northern slope, yielded a great quantity of pottery, jars, bowls, and lamps; among them were a figure of Ashtoreth in coarse yellow ware, and a representation of the cow divinity in the fine pottery commonly called "Phœnician." The former of these is very crude, and hardly suitable for reproduction in the *Quarterly Statement*; it is a vase in human form, the mouth of the vase being

the top of the head of the figure. The legs, which are solid, are disproportionately short, in order to waste as little space as possible from the internal capacity of the vessel. There is a fillet round the head, and bracelets round the wrists; otherwise the body is uncovered. The total height is 10 inches. The cow, shown in Fig. 3 (p. 331), is also hollow; the mouth of the vessel is at the back of the neck of the animal. There is a handle looping over the back. This object is $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches long. It should be stated that the right horn and the forelegs are broken off the original; the fragments of the latter were recovered, but not the former, which is restored in the drawing.

One or two rude animal figures resembling those so commonly found in the *tell* were also found here and there. These may or may not have a religious significance.

(B) *Food and Drink*.—Offerings of food, and probably of drink also, were regularly deposited with the dead. In most of the tombs bowls containing bones of the food-animals were found. In others the rite seemed dwindling to a form, to judge from the minute quantity of meat that the smallness of the bones seem to imply: it is not, however, safe to build any very elaborate theory upon so slender a basis. That drink offerings were left may be assumed, though the indications are no longer so clear as in the previous group of tombs; in the one case where large jars were found they were lying on their sides, and the dipping jugs were not inside them. There were, however, in every tomb a great number of small jugs, resembling the dipping jugs, but placed independently and lying on their sides. These from their shape are obviously unsuitable for solid offerings—though it is true that small bones were found in one or two out of, perhaps, every 50 or 60 specimens—and being deposited horizontally without any stoppers could not have contained fluids. Possibly in this period the fluid offerings were ceremonially poured out, the vessel containing them being left behind in the tomb—either because the funeral use had consecrated it, or else from a materialistic idea of its being of use to the deceased. The enormous quantity of small vessels found in the tombs can only be explained as the accumulation due to many successive interments, at each of which a certain number had been left behind. Many of the deposited jugs were broken—a much larger proportion than in the Earlier period: either the idea had

grown up of liberating the ghost of the object that it might minister to the ghost of the deceased, to which end the vessel was intentionally injured; or more probably the spirit of economy, which reached its culmination in the Christian period, had begun to make its influence felt, and damaged jugs, worthless to the living, were offered to the dead. An idea of the quantity of the vessels found in the tombs will be obtained when I say that the cave which yielded the two divinity figures just described, contained a quantity of vessels of which I selected 76 for preservation—there were at least as many broken duplicates which were not worth while keeping.

There was no special relation apparent between the pottery deposits and the position of the bodies in the cave. Indeed, a pile of pottery was often found in a corner of the cave which contained no bones at all. It may be remembered that, in the Early Semitic deposits that overlay the burnt remains in the Crematorium, by far the largest collection of pottery was found in an enclosure that showed no trace whatever of interments. It would seem that the food offerings were laid at a little distance from the bodies: contrast the curious arrangement sometimes found in Cyprus, in which the hand of the skeleton is actually placed in the dish of food. In one or two cases lamps were found beside the heads of the bodies. One lamp and bowl deposit was found.

(c) *Pottery*.—The types of the deposited pottery (apart from the question of the purpose of their deposition) must now be described. There is a noticeable preponderance of small vessels in contrast with the pottery of the earlier tomb deposits.¹ Much of the pottery—in some cases almost the majority—is of a very superior class of fine ware, which it is common to speak of as “Phœnician.” The characteristics of this ware are—(1) A fine homogeneous clay, without grit or pebbles, generally burnt red; (2) thin sides to the vessels; (3) a slip, creamy white in most of the bowls, glossy dark brown (almost black) in most of the jugs, though the two are often interchanged; (4) in white bowls, a hemispherical body with rounded base and one “wishbone” handle, projecting horizontally from the rim; (5) in black bowls a cyma-shaped body with flat base, and a “wishbone” handle gracefully curved, set on the side below the rim; (6) in black jugs, a globular body with hollow base,

¹ [Representations of the types are reserved for the Memoir.]

slightly conical neck of considerable length, expanding at the top into a conical mouth and one handle, attached to the body and to the neck about a fourth of the way down its length—the neck, it should be said, is, by accident or design, always out of the perpendicular to a greater or less degree; (7) in the black ware a basket ornamentation in white lines; (8) in the white ware a ladder and lozenge ornamentation in black lines. There is a large number of individual varieties, the slip being sometimes slaty blue, with black or light brown painted lines, and in some effective examples dark brown, with dark Indian red lines. Perhaps it is hardly safe to use so definite a term as “Phœnician” to distinguish this ware, until more extensive researches in Phœnicia itself reveal facts which justify us in doing so; but as the term has become established and popularly understood, I shall here retain it, using inverted commas as an indication of the doubt in which I consider its true provenance to be involved. It may be nothing more than a superior variety of local ware.

Lamps occur in every tomb. These are of the type shown in the photograph (Fig. 1); the contrast between the lamps of the two periods has already been pointed out. The base is almost always rounded, very rarely with a projecting disc. Lamps with thick bases, common enough in the Shephêlah *tells* are in any case rare at Gezer, and in the tombs quite unknown.

(D) *Implements and Weapons*.—In the majority of the tombs little or nothing under this heading was found; a handful of bronze arrowheads representing the gleanings from the larger number. One cave, however, is conspicuous above all the others for the number and variety of its contents. Hardly any bones were found in the earth that filled it; one skull, in a very rotten condition, remained to show that there had been interments within it. In the first of the three chambers of which the cave consists, there is a hollow in the floor, oval in shape, 4 feet deep. This was full of vessels and sherds in pottery, including a fine “Phœnician” jar, 11½ inches high, and many other pieces in the same ware. With them were 14 fine copper javelin heads, with long lozenge-sectioned tangs, and narrow leaf-shaped blades, about 4 to 5 inches long; fragments of a bronze sword; and, above all, a magnificent scimitar in the same metal, 23 inches long (Fig. 4). This fine weapon is quite unique in Palestine. The handle is flanged for receiving hafting

plates of ivory, of which the corroded traces are visible. Above this part is a straight portion, rectangular in section, above which is a curved blade ornamented with longitudinal ribbing. The cutting edge is on the convex side of the blade.

In the second chamber of this cave is a smaller pit, but it contained nothing. The earth above it, however, was rich in antiquities. From the whole cave (exclusive of the pit) no fewer than 131 javelin heads of the same type as those from the pit were extracted, as well as a bronze dagger, and an armlet of wire, twisted into a very ingenious plait. The pottery was of the same character as that from the pit; on the floor of the innermost chamber were five large jars, and with them a graceful three-handled vase, $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, decorated with spirals, apparently an imitation from a Mycenaean original. There was also a fragment of a bird-headed



FIG. 4.—Bronze Scimitar.

rattle, like that figured in Bliss, *M.M.C.*, Fig. 175, and *Excavations in Palestine*, Plate XXXI, Fig. 13.

(E) *Clothing, Adornment, Amulets.*—These also are meagre. A few common-place bronze rings and bracelets are to be recorded, some of them found actually on the skeletons, and others apparently deposited, like the food-vessels, away from the dead. The bronze armlet of twisted wire has already been mentioned. In the same cave were some bracelets of glass, a material which, owing to its friable nature, is rarely found in such early remains. These are triangular in section, the base of the triangle being naturally towards the wrist, of white colour (possibly a result of chemical change), ornamented with stripes of yellow, blue, and green across the outer edge. There were also half-a-dozen pins, with thick club-like heads, these were deposited in the pit that yielded the scimitar. They are possibly shroud pins, such as are found in the later periods.

In Fig. 5 (p. 336) will be found drawings of a small collection of cylinders and scarabs from the tombs of this period. There are two Assyrian cylinders, found together in one of the tombs on the hill

to the south, and one Egyptian from another cave; the last is the only inscribed object from the whole series of Pre-Exilic tombs, if we except one of the two scarabs, which bears the ring of Psammetichus I. This scarab is in bone, which circumstance explains the rather amorphous drawing of the hieroglyphs. It is probably associated with a secondary interment. The other scarab is a relic of the middle kingdom, and was found in the same tomb—a striking example of the uncertainty attaching to dating by scarabs, especially in deposits not on Egyptian soil. The seal, which was found in the same tomb as the Assyrian cylinders, is of a well-known type. It is in rich blue glass; a fragment of the bronze

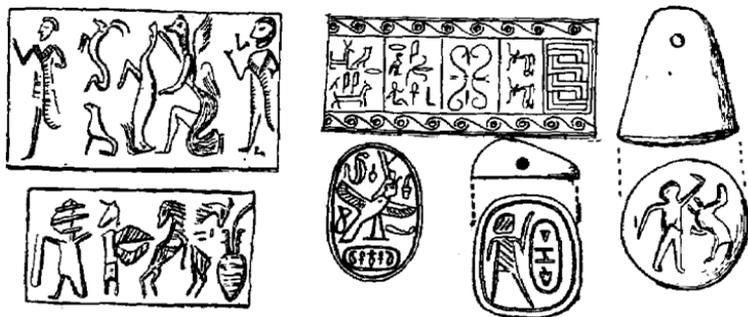


FIG. 5.—Cylinders and Seals.

wire by which it was once suspended still remains in the hole provided for it.

PART III.—MACCABEAN TOMBS.

Situation and Number.—There is only one exclusively Maccabean cemetery around Gezer—namely, on a little knoll of rock south of the hill, on the summit of which is the village threshing floor. The remaining tombs are scattered in various places, as the plan (Plate I) will show. In all, 35 of the tombs opened appear to be assignable to this period. Unlike the earlier tombs (the contents of which are less attractive to thieves, and which require more trouble to plunder as they are generally full of earth) the tombs of this and of the succeeding era have been greatly damaged in comparatively recent years by robbers.

The Tomb Chambers.—These are quarried with much greater art

than in the preceding periods. A fundamental difference is seen at once in the doorways, which are always vertical, cut in the side of the chamber, and never, as in the Hebrew period, cut in the roof.

In the absence of roof entrances the Gezer tombs resemble the contemporary tombs at Jerusalem. Those at Beit Jibrin are, however, quite different. There a square shaft, opening in the roof of the chamber, is the normal type; it is covered by long slabs which are practically unknown at Gezer.

As the tombs are excavated in the sides of gently sloping hills, it follows that some device had to be adopted in order to obtain a rock-scarp high enough to contain the outer face of the doorway. This is effected in one of two ways. In the small tombs that form the majority of the series a stairway is sunk in the rock in front of the place chosen for the door, from about 5 feet to about 8 feet deep, rectangular, and containing from one to eight steps. On the level of the lowest step the doorway is cut. By filling the stairway shaft with earth the tomb can be concealed. This stairway differs from the shafts of Canaanite tombs in being always rectangular, always provided with steps, and as a general rule shallower, longer, and narrower: the skill displayed is also much superior in the later graves.

The second method of obtaining a high rock-scarp consists in cutting a large open level court into the side of the hill, the depth of which, of course, gradually increases from front to back. This is the usual course adopted in the Jerusalem tombs, but at Gezer it is followed only in some half-dozen of the largest and most costly excavations. Above this forecourt or vestibule there was erected a monumental structure resembling in general character the familiar memorials in the Kedron Valley at Jerusalem. These, it is hardly necessary to say, have long since been pilfered, stone by stone, to build the tumble-down huts of ignorant and soulless fellahin. Only one was found that still preserved any of the masonry—the two foundation courses on one side. It is interesting, though tantalising, to endeavour mentally to reconstruct these little shrines, which must have been exceedingly quaint and curious structures. The data for such a reconstruction are the masonry just alluded to—by far the finest and most carefully executed piece of building yet found on the *tell*—and the sinkings cut along the edge of the rock to receive the foundation-stones. This gives us at least

an idea of the outlines of the walls. Some conception can thus be gained of their plans, as the study of the indents of lost brasses in mediæval churches gives some idea of the design of the missing memorial.

The doorways are well cut, square (though sometimes underneath an arched recess) and rebated for stone covers. The cover is almost invariably a moveable flat slab, sometimes itself rebated, so that it fits the doorway as a glass stopper fits the neck of a bottle. Only in one tomb was a swinging stone door found; circular rolling stones seem to be unknown in this period, though two or three examples were found belonging to the next.

The doorway being always raised so as to be just under the roof of the chamber, there are always three or four steps inside leading down from it to the floor.

I have found it convenient in my notes to devise a nomenclature for the walls of the tomb-chambers which shall be independent of the cardinal points. The names I have found convenient are "door wall" for the side containing the entrance to the chamber from outside or from an outer chamber; "back wall" for the side opposite the door wall; and "right" and "left" wall for the side respectively to the right and left of a person entering from without.

The plans of the Gezer tombs are invariably simple. The maximum number of chambers is three, and even this is very exceptional; the great majority consist of one room only. False doors, passages imitating *kôkîm*, concealed cover-slabs, and all the other ingenious devices for misleading thieves which are so conspicuous a feature of the Jerusalem tombs, are never found at Gezer.

In all tombs of the Maccabean period the receptacles provided for the dead are *kôkîm*, that is, long narrow shafts running into the walls at right angles. These are round or (more commonly) square headed; triangular heads, as at Beit Jibrîn, are unknown. In another respect the *kôkîm* differ in the two places: those at Beit Jibrîn are nearly always rebated at the entrance for cover-slabs, which is not the case at Gezer. The *kôkîm* in the latter district do not appear to have been closed.

Kôkîm, as a rule, are only adapted for one body each, though sometimes they are wide enough for two. At Gezer they are often

singularly short, and can only have partially received the body, which must have projected into the chamber. In some cases pairs of adjacent *kôkîm* are, as it were, extended into the tomb chamber by a prolongation of the partition between them in the form of a dwarf wall. I have never seen anything analogous at either Jerusalem or Beit Jibrîn.

In all the best executed tombs, as at Jerusalem, the *kôkîm* are not on the level of the floor, but of that of a bench that runs round the wall, about 1 foot high and 2 feet across.

The normal number of *kôkîm* in a chamber is nine, three on each wall except the door wall. There are sometimes six only, two in each wall. In one there are eight, four on each of the side walls, the back wall being occupied by two doors leading to subsidiary chambers. In one or two there are additional *kôkîm* in the door wall, on each side of and below the level of the entrance; in one there are *kôkîm* running diagonally from the angles of the chamber.

There is one unique chamber in which the walls are cut back into a series of apses, from each of which *kôkîm* radiate. In the previous section I mentioned a tomb recalling the *chevet* at the east end of a French cathedral. The same comparison might be used in this case: it is not a little curious that the two tombs are side by side, and, indeed (by the accidental prolongation of one of the *kôkîm*), actually communicate. Possibly the later tomb is an adaptation of a previously existing Hebrew tomb. In any case it remains quite exceptional.

Kôkîm in more than one row, as in the unusual case of the "Tombs of the Judges" at Jerusalem, are never found at Gezer. At Jerusalem there are countless examples of tomb-chambers containing both *kôkîm* and arcosolia, but of this there are only two examples at Gezer. One of these is quite insignificant, as it contains but one *kôk*.

Where there is more than one chamber the subsidiary apartment may contain *kôkîm*, but as a general rule it is merely a small, plain store-room designed for the reception of the ossuaries, of which I shall speak directly.

Method of Sepulture.—This was very simple. The body, probably arrayed in a shroud fastened with pins, and decked with cheap ornaments, is placed at full length in the *kôk*, head inwards.

The pottery and other objects deposited were either placed with the body inside the *kók*, or else ranged against the wall of the chamber, or against the side of the bench running round the room.

It is clear that in a tomb-chamber with nine *kókím*, after nine interments—or if the *kókím* were large, after 18—the receptacles would all be filled up, and the tomb would be useless for future burials. Sepulture on the floor of the chamber, as in the ruder pre-exilic days, was never thought of in the Maccabean or Christian epochs. The family owning the tomb would therefore be obliged to cut new chambers, or to remove the remains of the earlier interments. The expense involved in quarrying chambers was, in most cases, sufficient to determine them to follow the latter plan.

The custom of removing the bones of the dead to make room for new interments, though at first sight singular, is by no means confined to one period in the history of Palestine, or even exclusively to Palestine itself. In Cong Abbey in Galway, to mention but one instance, is an exact analogy: this is an ossuary chamber, where bones found in the course of digging graves in the overcrowded cemetery are placed. In some villages of Mount Lebanon an even more primitive custom prevails. There the dead are buried in a series of caves, which, when full, are sealed one by one. When all are thus closed, the first is reopened, the bones it contains are cleared out and thrown away, and the cave is then ready for fresh interments. The rotation occupies a sufficiently long time to allow for the complete decomposition of the bodies before the cave is required again.

The bones in the Gezer caves were collected and deposited with greater or less care in the stone chests, which are well known under the name of "ossuaries." At a very early stage in the examination of the Gezer tombs an observation was made, which subsequent developments proved to be an absolutely invariable rule, namely, that ossuaries are *never* found in tomb-chambers that have no *kókím*, and are found in *all* unrifed chambers that display those receptacles. This rule does not seem of universal application. I know nothing of ossuaries from Beit Jibrîn, and am not sure that they were in use there at all; at Jerusalem ossuaries have, I believe, been found in tombs with arcosolia. It was, however, striking that if at

Gezer the least scrap of an ossuary made its appearance in clearing out a tomb-chamber full of earth, it was quite safe to prophesy that *kôkîm* would be discovered when the wall surface was exposed.

Only two of a large number of ossuaries could possibly have been intended for the bones of more than one person. These measured 3 feet 4 inches by 1 foot 2 inches by 1 foot. The average measurements were, at Gezer, about 2 feet by 9 inches by 8 inches. On the whole they are rather shallower than ossuaries from Jerusalem. Some measuring about 1 foot in length are so small that they must have been intended for children.

In filling the ossuaries the long bones were ranged at the bottom, and the other bones placed over them. In one a small bottle of blue glass had been placed with the bones, and an occasional worthless bronze bracelet was found, but otherwise nothing but the bones was deposited within them. In many no care seems to have been taken to arrange the bones neatly, or even to avoid breaking them. About half of the ossuaries found had no lids, the others had flat, hog-backed, or roof-shaped covers.

The sides of the ossuaries are either plain (the majority) or ornamented with painted or incised lines. The paint used is invariably a dull brick red, and the coloured decoration consists of very roughly drawn frets, zigzags, and other simple geometrical patterns, or else of a uniform wash over the whole surface of the box. At Jerusalem a collection of ossuaries is an interesting study, on account of the almost endless variety of ornamental patterns they display,¹ but at Gezer there is no such variety. That dullest and most mechanical of conventional ornaments, the sexfoil in a circle, made by stepping a compass with fixed radius round the circumference, is the universal basis of the decoration, and almost the only differences between the different specimens lie in the number of such circles, and the exact disposition of the zigzags with which the interspaces are filled. Even this uninspired decoration is confined to one side and one end of the case. In roof-shaped lids there is sometimes a rosette on one pediment, but otherwise the lid never displays ornament except occasional painted lines.

¹ A selection of types of ossuary ornamentation will be found illustrating a paper in the *Reliquary* for July last.

Inscribed ossuaries are common at Jerusalem, and accordingly every fragment of ossuary was carefully cleaned in the hope of finding writing. This search was meagrely rewarded by two Hebrew graffiti, in each case the name and parentage of the original owners of the bones deposited in the boxes. Both of these inscriptions came from one tomb, where was a large hoard of ossuaries, about 20 in number, all badly broken. Many had decoration, rather more elaborate but not more interesting than the usual commonplaces. It is curious that one of the two inscribed ossuaries was that of a child. We can but guess why the child's name was preserved and those of the 18 or 20 adults allowed to pass into oblivion.

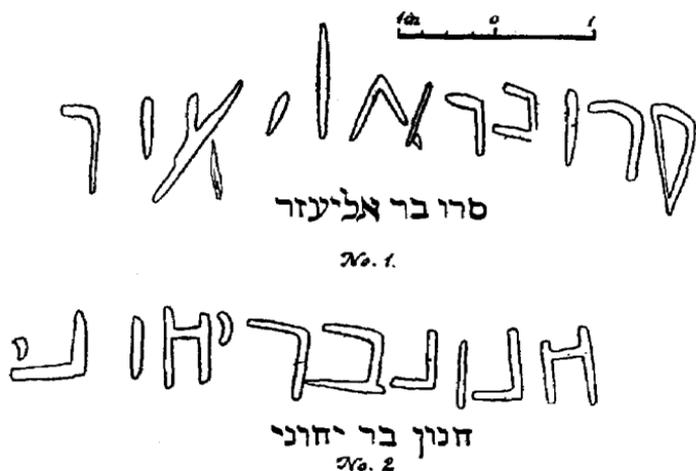


FIG. 6.—Ossuary Inscriptions

Possibly his bones were the only child's remains in the tomb when the sepulchre was cleared, and so were easily identified; or possibly he was the nearest relative, or an object of special affection to the person who emptied the *kōkim*. Facsimiles of the inscriptions, traced from rubbings, are shown in Fig. 6. They commemorate respectively "Saro, son of Eliezer" (the child), and "Hanun, son of Jehoni." The names Eliezer and Hanun, are found in the Old Testament, but not the others.¹

¹ [סרו] suggests a connection with the Palmyrene סרי (שרי) יחוני, probably from יחוניה "may Yah be gracious," *cp.* Hananiah, &c., is interesting because it illustrates the custom of giving children names related in form to those of their kinsmen (*see* G. B. Gray, *Hebrew Proper Names*, p. 8, *sq.*).—Ed.]

When filled with the bones the ossuaries were deposited either in a special ossuary chamber, or when such a place was not provided, on the floor of the tomb-chamber. Sometimes they were piled up, to their destruction; for the stone, already soft, is ruined by the damp, and the box is cracked and crushed even by the weight of its own lid, to say nothing of other objects placed upon it. A few lidless ossuaries were placed standing on end against the wall, which offered a rough and ready substitute for a cover. In one or two tombs the very purpose for which ossuaries were provided was defeated by placing them in the *kôkîm*; in one remarkable case a tomb-chamber was found to contain 11 *kôkîm*, nearly every one full of ossuaries, placed end to end. There were also several in the middle of the floor of the chamber.

The Bodies.—Not many bones from the tombs of this period were recovered in a complete state. The measurements will be given in the memoir; I cannot see that they display any peculiarity calling for special notice in the present report.

The deposits in the Maccabean tombs differ little from those in the Christian tombs, and space will be saved by describing both together.

PART IV.—CHRISTIAN TOMBS.

Situation and Number.—The Christian tombs are almost all concentrated to the south of the modern village—an indication that this was the dwelling place of the community to which they belonged. They are clustered in great numbers on the hill slope under the great cave known as Mughâret el-Jaiyah. In all 38 tombs of this period have been examined.

The Tomb-Chambers.—In general design these do not differ greatly from those of the previous period, and save for the following points of difference the description already given would apply to these also. The great forecourt is not found, nor are there any traces of memorial buildings, except in one example, which is in other respects anomalous. In one or two cases the roof, instead of being flat, is vaulted. In three cases there is or was a small rolling stone closing the door. The main distinction between Maccabean and Christian tombs, however, lies in the substitution of *arcosolia* for *kôkîm*. A few Christian interments were found in tombs with *kôkîm*, but the distinction is usually so sharply

maintained that in every case the Christian burials are probably secondary adaptations of Maccabean tombs, the previous occupants having been unceremoniously cleared out.

The arcosolia are on the whole wider than at Jerusalem, being as a rule adapted for more than one person. The normal plan allows three, one in each wall except the door wall. Usually the arcosolia are single benches ranged in a row round the chamber; but they are often grouped in threes around a small rectangular bay with vaulted roof running at right angles to the chamber. In one exceptionally fine tomb there are a number of the more ordinary arcosolia, and two benches in a chamber of this kind. These were possibly for the heads of the family who owned the tomb.

The tables of the arcosolia are either flat or slightly sunk below the edge, or in rare instances turned into fixed sarcophagi by being hollowed out to about the level of the chamber floor. This is the most common form of grave at Beit Jibrîn, but at Gezer it is very unusual.¹ Cover slabs are universally laid over the Beit Jibrîn tombs, but at Gezer I found one example only.

At Jerusalem the Christian tombs often display a cross, but only two of the Gezer Christian tombs bore that symbol. Another had a rude linear representation of the seven-branched candlestick, and another two marks resembling Ordnance survey bench marks inverted, and difficult to explain. Inscriptions seem never to have been cut on the walls or doorways.

Method of Sepulture.—The body, wrapped in a shroud, was laid at full length on the arcosolium. There was obviously no account taken of orientation, as the arcosolia themselves point in all directions: the same remark, of course, applies to *kôkîm*. Though at one end there is almost always a slightly raised step or bench, meant as a support for the head of the corpse, the interment is sometimes so carelessly performed that the feet rest upon it.

The difficulty which led to the invention of ossuaries was solved in a different manner in the Christian tombs, where (at Gezer, though not at Jerusalem) ossuaries are quite abandoned.

¹ The discovery of such a tomb is probably the historic basis (if there be any historic basis) for the singular story of the tomb of Moses recently reprinted in the *Quarterly Statement*.

EXCAVATION OF CEZER

GEZERITE FACIAL TYPES.



PRE-EXILIC



POST-EXILIC

P. A. ...

In tombs with arcosolia either the bodies were piled one above another on each bench till they could hold no more, so that a receptacle meant for two might possibly be made to bear five or six; or else one of the arcosolia was set aside to serve the purpose of an ossuary, and all the dried bones piled up upon it without any attempt at arrangement or order.

The Bodies.—A fine collection of bones from tombs of this period has been formed, and they are still under examination. For the present it will suffice to say that the characteristics already given for the Hebrew bones require to be reversed in order to apply to those of the Christians. The femora are not very conspicuously pilastered, nor are the tibiæ platycnemic. Perforated humeri are fairly common. The facial type, which I have endeavoured to realise on the lower part of Plate II (p. 345), is remarkably uniform, the deep nasal notch, concave nose, and wide face being specially constant features: so also is the rectilinear setting of the lower incisors. This type is distinctly in the minority among the modern inhabitants. The race was not unmixed with other blood. One skull seems to me to be that of a negro.

On the whole they were not a healthy people. The large number of undeveloped bones proves that infant mortality was very considerable. Several of the bones are pathologically interesting. The right humerus, femora, fibulæ, and left tibia of one man showed changes due to advanced periostitis probably syphilitic in origin. For this information I am indebted to Drs. Wheeler and Masterman, who examined the specimens.

Deposits in Maccabean and Christian Tombs.—(A) *Religious Emblems.*—Possibly the Syrian occupation of the city under Bacchides is responsible for a figurine of Ashtoreth from one of the Maccabean tombs, displaying a conception of the mother-goddess no less crude than we find in pre-exilic strata. No other trace of Ashtoreth worship has been found in post-exilic Gezer: an analogous, but much more refined, statuette was discovered in a contemporary tomb at Tell Sandahannah (see *Excavations in Palestine*, p. 139).

In the Christian tombs religious emblems are less common than might have been expected. Figures of crosses are confined to the ornamentation of lamps, and have not been found independently. The two seal-rings in bronze (Fig. 7) are the most interesting objects from Christian tombs. They bear a male and a female head

respectively. There can be little doubt that the former represents our Lord; the second, probably, is meant for the Virgin Mary. The tomb-deposits which included the first of these were dated by a coin about 350 A.D. The coin, unfortunately, was much defaced; for examining and dating it I must record my obligations to Dr. Merrill, U.S. Consul at Jerusalem.

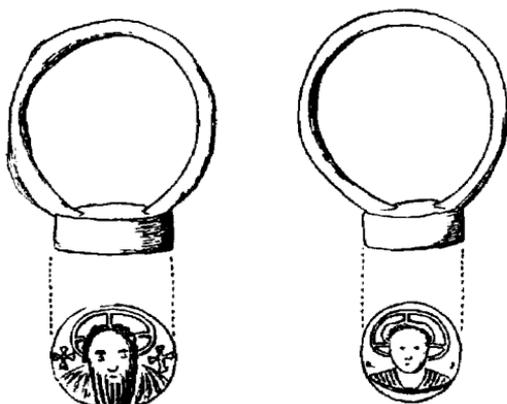


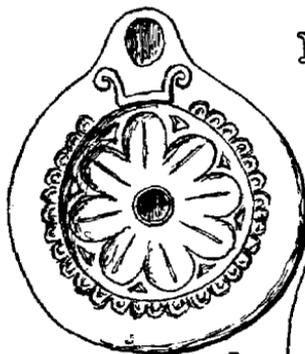
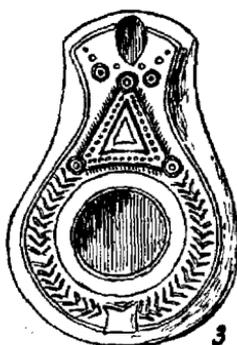
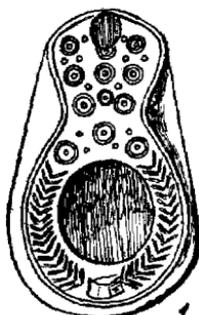
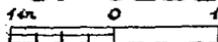
FIG. 7.—Bronze Signet Rings.

(B) *Food and Drink*.—In a few of the Maccabean tombs cooking pots (as Plate IV, Fig. 3) were found, but whether it is safe to base any theories upon them regarding the deposition of food is problematical. I am inclined to think that the practice had been abandoned.

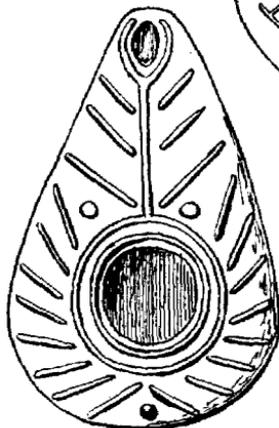
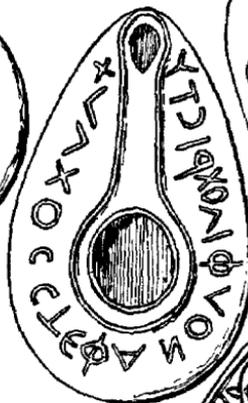
(c) *Pottery and Glass*.—Except the few cooking pots in the earlier tombs, pottery dwindles in importance after the Exile. In two cases large water-jars were found just inside the door (connected with lustration?). Lamps, however, are found in every tomb, sometimes in large numbers. A very small selection of these are drawn on Plate III (p. 348). Fig. 5 represents a form practically confined to the Maccabean tomb; the shapes of Figs. 1-3 are common to tombs of both epochs, while the shapes of Figs. 6-9 are more commonly found in Christian tombs. Simple patterns like Fig. 8 recur with monotonous frequency; but there is an endless variety of ornament, and hardly a tomb was opened that did not add one or two new types to the record. Figs. 1-3, with some 20 or 30 others, many of them equally elaborate, came from one tomb. The inscribed lamp (Fig. 6) is interesting, as, with the exception of the

EXCAVATION OF CEZER

LAMPS



הארץ 188



R. A. S. P. 1888

two ossuary inscriptions, its legend is actually the only memorial found in the whole series of over 100 tombs. The inscription reads, *Λύχνυος Στεφάνου Φιλοχρίστ(ο)υ*, "The lamp of Stephanos Philochristos"; and as it is reasonable to presume that it was buried with its owner, we are thus enabled to put a name on the tomb where it was found. This tomb was one of the richest of any period; the deposits drawn out cover three large sheets of drawings. A coin found within it is assigned by Dr. Merrill to Constans (337-350) or Constantius II (337-361). The magnificent lamp, Plate III, Fig. 9, came from the same tomb.

A few other inscribed lamps were found. The Hebrew inscription, Plate III, Fig. 4, was stamped on the bottom of a lamp found in a Maccabean tomb, of type similar to Fig. 5. The letters seem to spell *חזר כנן*, whatever that may mean.¹ Numerous examples of the common inscription *ΦΩΣ ΧΥ ΦΕΝ ΠΑCΙΝ*, most of them strangely blundered, have come to light, and one bearing an inscription new to me, *ΚC ΦΩΤΙCΜΟC ΜΟΥ*, "The Lord is my light." In the lamp figured (Plate IX, Fig. 7) notice how the potter has ingeniously concealed the letters *PROP* (perhaps his initials) among the ornamental scrolls. This is the only Roman inscription found at Gezer. Of the inscription *ΛΥΧΝΑΡΙΑ ΚΑΛΑ*, common in Jerusalem, not one specimen appeared.

No doubt these lamps had partly the practical purpose of giving light to the persons who conducted the burial, but the number found shows that this was not the only end they served. It is likely that some ceremonial use still survived from the older customs. Importance seems to have been attached to the *position* of the lamps within the chambers; at least, it was very noticeable, that frequently a lamp was placed exactly in each corner of the apartment, on the floor, just against the sides of the surrounding bench. Evidently such care would not have been taken had the lamps been intended merely to light the tomb. Lamp brackets in the sides of the tombs are not very common.

Glass now assumes primary importance as a tomb deposit. The vessels in glass, at Gezer, are neither so numerous nor so handsome in the Maccabean as in the Christian period. The commonest form is a hemispherical bottle, with slightly hollow base, and a neck some-

¹. [?? *חזר כנן*, as though "one sees well," an Aramaic legend.—Ed.]

times extravagantly long and narrow. Specimens are found of all sizes, from 1 inch to 6 or 7 inches high. They are probably ointment pots; though it is quite within the region of possibility that my untutored labourers may be right in calling them candlesticks, a purpose they would admirably serve.

Though as we have said food deposits are not found in the post-exilic tombs, a yet more curious and less intelligible form of deposit becomes highly developed. This is that of toilet requisites. We saw that in one of the earliest of the tombs opened an Egyptian cosmetic pot was found. Nothing analogous could be identified in any of the tombs of the Hebrew period: except for the one Egyptian vessel, which is not absolutely certain, the custom seems, at Gezer, to be a post-exilic development. The decking out of the corpse with the ornaments that had been its property during life, and the deposition of costly offerings with it in the tomb, are intelligible expressions of human affection; but it is difficult to conceive the psychological condition that induces a community to evolve the idea that the decaying dead had need of toilet requisites, though at the same time rejecting the ancient idea that they had need of food offerings to sustain them.

However that may be, the fact remains that now for the first time glass kohl pots make their appearance in the tombs, in some cases with spatulæ inserted, intended for the application of that singularly repulsive cosmetic. These pots are either small single vessels ornamented with pinched-in sides, or else double vessels, with handles at the sides, or a single handle looping over the top. These double vessels are one of several classes of receptacles to which it seems hopeless to expect that people will cease to attach the preposterous name "tear-bottles."

The best pieces of glass—none, be it admitted very remarkable—came from tombs of the Christian period. Except a three-handled beaker and a handsome little vase from the tomb of Stephanos, nothing out of the common was discovered. The beaker is probably a cosmetic vase, for the curious fashion of depositing kohl pots and spatulæ still persists. The standing tube in the middle of the vessel is probably a socket for receiving a bronze spatula. The vessel had originally three handles, two of which happened to break off. One of these was never replaced; instead of the other a fine handle of quite different glass, and evidently originally made for quite a different style of vessel, was fastened on.

The rough and ready repair just mentioned of course detracted from the value of this vessel—already less than it might have been, as owing to careless workmanship it was not made truly symmetrical. This leads me to speak of a strange characteristic of these late deposits—their parsimoniousness. Very seldom indeed was a vessel of glass found perfect, if we except certain common and presumably inexpensive forms. All the best vases were broken, and that they were deposited in that state, and not destroyed by subsequent accidents (*e.g.*, the fall of fragments from the roof), was shown by the absence of some of the pieces even from tombs that had never been opened since the last interment had been made in them. In fact, a yet further depth of meanness was reached in several of the latest sepulchres, where bits of glass were placed with the dead that did not even pretend to belong to each other. In one grave were 15 such pieces, as disconnected as might so many fragments be if picked at random from the top of a wall. Had there been other objects of greater value placed in the tomb with them I should have suspected that they had been intended to wound the fingers of unwary plunderers—a purpose that I happen to know they well serve—like the poisoned thorns in the Chinese treasure of one of Mr. Wells's short stories: but as there was nothing of the kind, we must regard this collection of fragments as an economical attenuation of the custom of depositing glass vessels with the dead.

I may here refer to a class of object that first makes its appearance in the Maccabean tombs. This is a small box of limestone, of which I have already described and illustrated a specimen in a previous report (January, 1904, p. 25). One example, ornamented with a roughly drawn bird and a ship has since come to light from a Maccabean tomb, and several from Christian sepulchres. In describing the example first found, I ventured on the guess that it was a portable altar, arguing from an analogous object found at Beit Jibrin. My faith in this interpretation, never very strong, was shaken by a distinguished Babylonian explorer, who kindly wrote to me on the subject, making a counter suggestion derived from his experience that the object might have been a jeweller's furnace. It was not easy to come to any decision on the subject while one specimen only was known, and that one broken and found mixed with waste rubbish in the corner of an outside vestibule. As more specimens appeared, however, it became clear that the object, whatever it

might be, must have some more radical connection with burial than my correspondent's suggestion allowed. At last a perfect example was found *in situ*, containing charcoal and an ash deposit much resembling the deposit left by incense. The meaning of these strange objects then became clear. The atmosphere of decomposition in the chambers while they were still in use must have been sometimes unspeakable, and if it happened to be necessary to open a chamber for a fresh interment before the bodies previously buried had fully decayed, some neutralising agent must have been required for the comfort of those whose duty compelled them to enter the tomb-chamber.

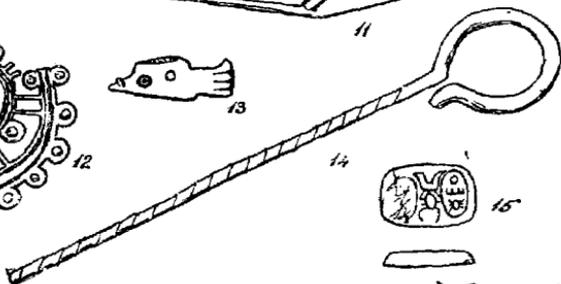
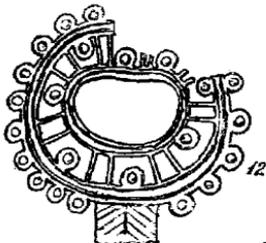
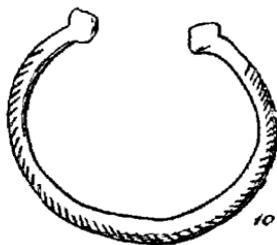
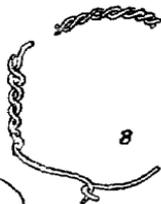
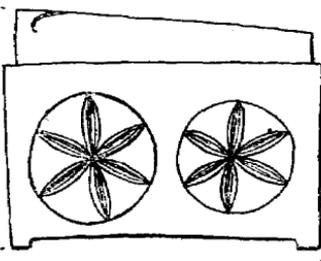
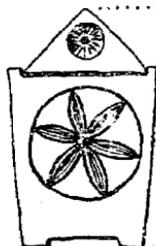
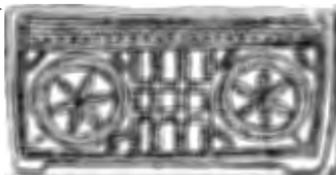
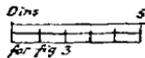
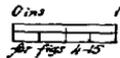
(D) *Implements and Weapons*.—A few bronze and iron arrow-heads, and iron knives, are found from time to time, but these are not common. The spatulæ of bronze, already referred to, are very common in tombs of both periods. A typical example will be found, Plate IV, Fig. 11. Fig. 14 on the same Plate is a pin of glass, possibly also meant for applying kohl. Fig. 9 is one of a number of small keys that were not uncommon.

(E) *Clothing, Adornment, Amulets*.—The dead were wrapped in shrouds, which, of course, have completely decayed; the bronze pins with which they were fastened remain. Other garments and ornaments were also left on the body. Belt-buckles (Plate IV, Fig. 7) of bronze, and bracelets, of which Figs. 8, 10, represent two specimens out of many, are universal. So are beads, of which there is an immense variety; I cannot at present, for want of space, attempt to give any description of the various types. The feet were probably shod; the leather has all vanished, but the small shoe-tacks remain. Large nails found in the graves admit the possibility of some sort of coffin having sometimes been used, but in any case this must have been exceptional. In one tomb where the conditions, whatever they may have been, had kept the chamber unusually dry, I noticed on the face of one of the skulls some minute fragments of a substance resembling leather, which crumbled when touched. It is possible that this was a chance survival of a little of the skin of the face, but more probable that it was part of a mask with which the face of the corpse had been covered.

A large number of iron rings and bracelets were also found. There were many iron finger-rings with signets, but corrosion had entirely eaten away the design in every case, if indeed a design ever existed.

EXCAVATION OF GEZER

POST-EXILIC TOMB DEPOSITS



Recherches archéologiques

Coins, always the smallest copper pieces available, were common in the Christian tombs. They all, so far as could be deciphered, belonged to the fourth century, with one or two stray exceptions. A few of the latest tombs yielded Byzantine coins.

Gold was not found at all in the Maccabean tombs, and in the Christian tombs was limited to two small earrings and two beads. Lead (possibly a cheap substitute for tomb use) was found as an ornamental metal. The ornamental object (Plate IV, Fig. 12) is in that material.

The frequency with which small bells of bronze (whether of the ordinary shape or closed sheep-bells, *see* Figs. 4, 5, of Plate IV) is very remarkable, and not easy to explain. They may simply have been a popular ornament, like rings or bracelets.

Of amulets I may select for special mention the little figure of a camel (Christian) cut from a flat disc of bronze, of which two specimens were found (Plate IV, Fig. 6); the fish in ebony (Maccabean), Fig. 13; the scaraboid in white paste, with the ring of Tahatmes III, of course, a late revival (Christian), Fig. 15; and the little yellow glass pendant (Fig. 8, below), bearing stamped



FIG. 8.—Inscribed Glass Amulet.

upon it in reversed letters the inscription *εὐτυχῶς τῷ φοροῦντι*, "with good luck to the wearer!"

In addition to tombs, the hill-slopes searched were found to contain cisterns, olive-presses (including a splendid example with a floor in white mosaic), and one columbarium, the first found in this neighbourhood. For the present, however, I must hold over the description of these antiquities.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES ON THE EIGHTH REPORT.

(*Quarterly Statement*, pp. 194, *ante*.)

P. 195. *The Seventh Stone in the High Place Alignment*.—With reference to the observation that this stone may have come from Jerusalem, and the suggestion that it may have been a battle trophy, it is at least an interesting coincidence that we learn from two letters from 'Abd-Ḥiba in the Tell el-Amarna collection that there was an enmity between Gezer and Jerusalem (Nos. 180, 183). The Jebusite sheikh informs the Pharaoh that the Gezerites are in league with the latter's enemies, as the surest means of turning him against them. This certainly is an indication that 'Abd-Ḥiba had a private grudge against the town complained of.

P. 220. *Pottery Objects*.—Bowls with pomegranates (or similar objects) and birds modelled alternately on the rim are found in Cyprus, see Myres and Richter's *Catalogue of the Cyprus Museum*, Plate II, Fig. 44, where cups take the place of pomegranates.

P. 223. *Metal Objects*.—The lead pellet is a *glans* or bullet for use in a sling.¹

P. 237. *The Provenance of the Tablet*.—The following facts will, I hope, convince any doubters that the tablet published in the last report really belongs to Gezer :—

(1) I doubt whether an Arab workman could obtain a broken cuneiform tablet in Jerusalem without difficulty. I have only heard of one specimen of cuneiform writing coming into the market there during the last five years. This, there is every reason to believe, was a forgery, but the dealer modestly demanded £10 for it.

(2) No one profited pecuniarily by the discovery except the labourer in whose section of the trench the object was found. He had no idea of the nature of the object, which he seemed to think was a sort of file or nutmeg-grater. I assessed a very moderate *bakhshish* for the find, with which he was perfectly contented.

(3) The tablet was not extracted from the ground by the labourer, but by the foreman, who is a reliable man, and who

¹ [Professor Petrie, who had also written to this effect, remarks that hundreds of these Greek sling bullets are found in Egypt. He suggests that the anchor with which they are stamped may be the Seleucid Government mark.—Ed.]

brought it to me in the tents without having cleaned the earth still clinging to it.

(4) When I first began the excavation I was troubled a little by attempts at "salting," but the total ignorance of the fellahin as to the nature and relative chronology of antiquities made such attempts pathetically futile. When they found that a man who "discovered" a Cufic coin, or a modern apothecaries' weight, or a scrap of Byzantine carving in early Amorite débris, was promptly dismissed, these tricks soon came to an end. That fortune favoured a hypothetical "salter" in the present case to the extent of leading him to deposit an inscription (not knowing it to be such) in exactly the proper stratum is simply unthinkable. Though I confess that my own knowledge of cuneiform is limited to some 30 or 40 of the commonest signs as conventionalised in printed books, and that I was unable to decipher a word of the inscription, yet I could have given the date, correct to within 200 years, when first reporting the discovery, had I seen any necessity for doing so; arguing from the evidence of the associated antiquities.

(5) There is one more argument, from internal evidence, which may be valid. If the governor's name be really Egyptian, the tablet reveals exactly the state of matters that we might have expected to find in Gezer at the time. Egypt still retains the suzerainty over the city which she has had since the days of Solomon (for it is not to be supposed that the giving of the city as a dowry to Solomon's Egyptian wife at all implied handing it over to Solomon himself); but the power of Assyria has grown to such an extent that the Egyptian "mayor" is under the thumb of a domineering Assyrian garrison, and is of so little account that his name comes fifth on the list of witnesses.

This, of course, assumes that Hurwasi was actually mayor of Gezer. Mr. Johns says that "undoubtedly the scribe said of what town he was mayor," but the name of the town is lost by the fracture of the tablet. I would ask, entirely to elicit information and without any thought of offering criticism, whether it is necessary to assume a lost town name? The tablet is certainly fractured at the point indicated, but after a careful examination of the original, and in view of the clumsiness of cuneiform script, I should like to be assured that there is sufficient room in the fracture for any probable word following *hazanu*. If the scribe merely named "Hurwasi the mayor" without qualification, the probability that

he was mayor of the town in which the tablet was written would be strengthened.

P. 210. *The Inscribed Weight*.—On reconsidering the question, I have come to the conclusion that the symbols as represented on p. 209 are printed upside down, and that they should be given as $\mathfrak{Q}|$, $\mathfrak{Q}||$, $\mathfrak{Q}\perp$, and $\mathfrak{Q}\perp$. Semitic syntax requires the numeral to precede the substantive in all ordinary cases, and Semitic epigraphy requires the writing to read in the direction from right to left. Both these requirements are satisfied by adopting this suggestion, and the resemblance to the Greek abbreviation, which I still regard as misleading, disappears.¹

INSCRIBED WEIGHTS.

By Professor A. H. SAYCE, LL.D.

IN his last report (*Quarterly Statement*, July, 1904, p. 209), Mr. Macalister describes a fresh weight, found by himself at Gezer, with a character upon it which he erroneously identifies with the late Greek cursive \mathfrak{g} . With this, however, it can of course have nothing to do. It is, in fact, the Cypriote \mathfrak{X} *ro*, and the inscriptions quoted by him read *ro* I, *ro* II, *ro* IV (?), and *ro* VIII (?). The last (No. 6) is incorrectly given, since the facsimile published in *Excavations at Jerusalem*, p. 267, has $\mathfrak{Q}\perp$, not \mathfrak{T} . In Cypriote, \mathfrak{A} has been supposed to represent the numeral V, but it would appear from Mr. Macalister's argument that it ought rather to be IV, unless, indeed, \mathfrak{V} is IV and \mathfrak{A} is V. At the same time $\mathfrak{||||}$ and $\mathfrak{|||||}$ are found in Cypriote texts. Another Cypriote numeral is $\mathfrak{+}$, which Mr. Macalister suggests may represent $\frac{3}{4}$. \perp has not yet been met with in

¹ [Mr. Macalister accompanied his paragraph with a defence of his interpretation of the inscribed weight which we have held over. Now that the amounts of the weights are published, Professor Petrie writes that he fully agrees that the sign \mathfrak{g} must have another and earlier meaning beside that of *uncia*.—ED.]