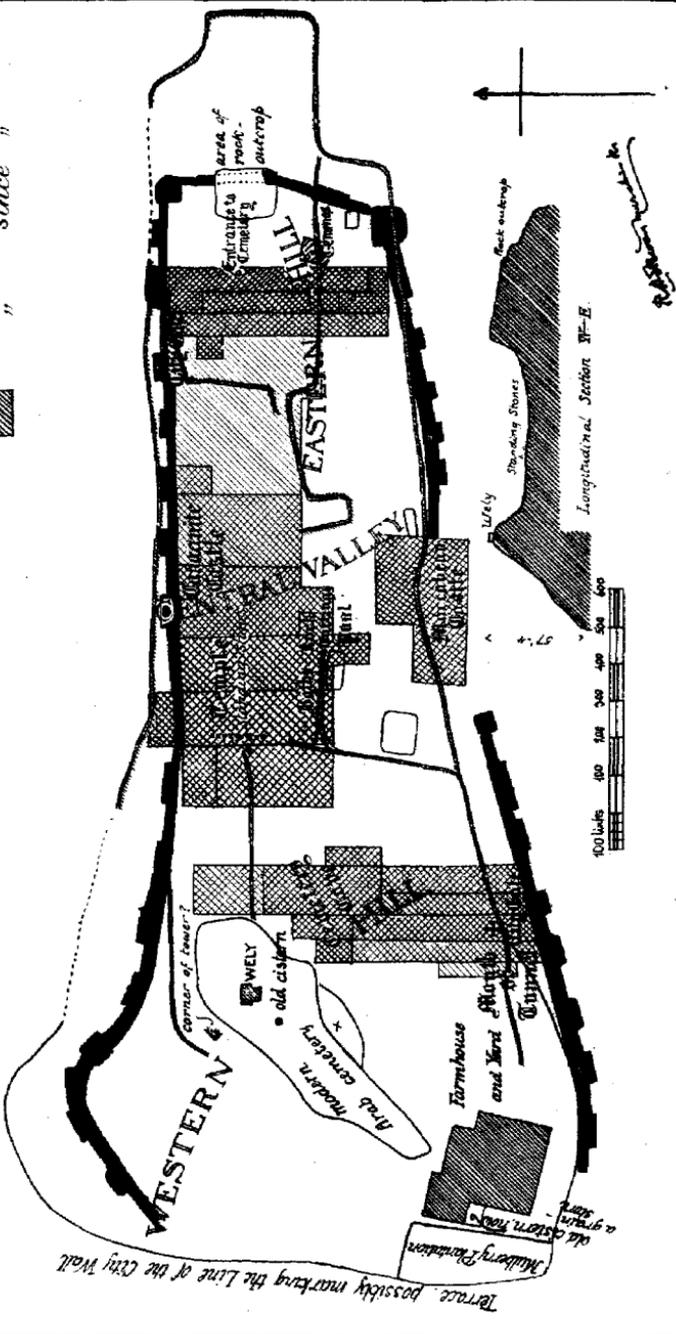


EXCAVATION OF CEZER

PLAN OF THE SURFACE

■ Excavated before 1906 Report.
 ▨ " " since "



Terrace, possibly marking the line of the City Wall

Harrison and others: Haras, 1906, p. 11.

TWENTY-FIRST QUARTERLY REPORT ON THE
EXCAVATION OF GEZER.

Eighth of the Second Series.

11 November, 1908—10 February, 1909.

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

I REGRET to have but little progress to report this quarter, owing to the severity of the winter—probably the most unfavourable for our work that we have had since the excavation began. The weather in December was for all practical purposes one continuous downpour, and in January it was little better. Though I was on the ground the whole time, except for ten days at Christmas, for fully half of the three months active work was either seriously hindered or rendered quite impossible.

Under the circumstances all I have been able to do has been to complete the trench joining the pits in the Central Valley and the Eastern Hill, and to prepare the ground for the new trench I hoped to dig on the Western Hill. This, which is at the moment of writing in progress, I now fear will be impossible to complete, at least at its full width of 40 feet. The plan (Plate I) will show the position and extent of the area turned over.

The results even of such work as has been done have been on the whole discouraging. The most important discoveries have been a small fragment of a document in cuneiform characters, picked up by the foreman on the surface of the ground; and an Egyptian statue.

§ I.—SOME ADDITIONAL NOTES TO PREVIOUS REPORTS.

(1) I find on further enquiry that I have incorrectly rendered the name of the wely whose shrine I described in the October

Quarterly Statement, p. 278. Instead of *Jaub'ás*, read throughout *Ju'bás* or *Jo'bás*. The 'ain should precede the *b*; and the vowel following the *J* is *qamma*, not *fetha wáw* as I had previously thought. In pronunciation it inclines rather to an *o* than to a *ɶ* *u* sound.

(2) The object figured on p. 24, *ante*, I now know to be a horse-bit, and to have nothing to do with the bronze pots found in the same cistern. In referring, for quite a different purpose, to Schlemm's *Wörterbuch zur Vorgeschichte*,¹ I came upon an illustration of an identical object under the heading *Pferdegebisse* (p. 420, fig. 6). The accompanying description gives no indication of the provenance of the specimen. The type seems, however, to be European; if so, its discovery at Gezer is of some importance. Owing to the weight of the Gezer specimen I was at first in doubt as to its suitability for the purpose, but my foreman assured me that bits quite as heavy might yet be used to control powerful horses.

(3) A few further observations upon the calendar tablet may be given here.

Let me say, first, that the brief paragraph printed on p. 271 of the October *Quarterly Statement* was hurriedly written to catch the post and to be in time for the issue of the journal, and was not intended to be any more than a preliminary announcement of the discovery. The assigning of the object to the sixth century was based on the associated objects, which seemed to me to be of about that date: and I had not made any attempt at a palaeographic analysis of the writing, for which, indeed, I had neither time nor materials. In dating from potsherds—of which, as it happened, there were not very many in the neighbourhood of the tablet—an error of two hundred years is quite possible; it is also possible that chance should preserve a portable object of the kind so that it should be found in buildings of a date later than its own.

I scarcely think that the tablet shows indications of being a palimpsest, as Prof. Lidzbarski suggests. It certainly has a number of marks upon it that do not belong to the writing, but these, I venture to think, are no more than the scratches that would naturally be made in the process of trimming the tablet to shape

¹ I must acknowledge the kindness shown by Dr. Dalman in calling my attention to this very useful book, and in allowing me the loan of his copy.

with a flint¹ or bronze knife. Some of the marks on the reverse face of the tablet may possibly have been made as a preliminary trial of the capabilities of the graving tool with which the inscription was written: but otherwise I do not think there is any sign of earlier writing on the stone.

Nor do I agree with Mr. Pilcher that the tablet is imperfect at the right-hand side. The top right-hand corner is gone: supplying that, the shape of the stone will be seen to be symmetrical, a well-made rectangle with an arched top. The right-hand edge is rather chipped, but between the chips the original unbroken smooth surface of the stone is preserved, and none of the letters are injured. The vertical stroke preceding the *yodh* at the beginning of the third line is really the tail of the *resh* just above, prolonged unduly by a slip of the graving tool, and interrupted by a slight flaw in the surface of the tablet.

I hope it will not be supposed that I mean these remarks for adverse criticisms. I am writing with the advantage of having the tablet itself lying on the table before me, and simply offer these observations as additional information.

The square hole cut just under the seventh line of writing, and probably meant for a peg to fasten the object to a wall, is no doubt the reason of the fracture by which the lower part has been lost. There not being sufficient space between the edges of the tablet and this hole, the continuation of the inscription, if any, must have been written below it; this is one way in which the missing four months may be accounted for. The vertical line of writing in the blank space to the left of the hole, *Ab* (*i?*), is probably the signature of the writer of the inscription.

The inscription itself may seem at first sight disappointing. A less banal addition to the meagre epigraphic harvest of the excavation would certainly be more welcome. But, apart from some linguistic points, which have been noticed in the last *Quarterly Statement*, the epigraph is of considerable value for the information it affords as to the agricultural year of Ancient Palestine: and it has been of especial interest to me, as it confirms some deductions I had already made from a consideration of the granaries found in the excavation. Some of these have been referred to in previous

¹ I think I have mentioned in previous reports that flint was used for rough domestic purposes till well into the period of the Hebrew Monarchy.

reports, and it has been observed that when they have been burnt, the charred seeds have been preserved and can be easily identified.

Till a complete agreement is reached on the interpretation of the various items in the catalogue, a full analysis cannot be offered of the inscription from this point of view: but certain details, both of its insertions and of its omissions, may be here referred to. The most striking, perhaps, is the mention of *flax*, on which all three translators in the last *Quarterly Statement* are agreed. Flax is no longer grown, as far as I know, anywhere in the neighbourhood. (Neither is cotton, of which Rauwolff found some fields near Ramleh in 1573.) I cannot say that I have certainly identified flax seeds among the grains found in the granaries at Gezer. As to the treatment of flax, a matter referred to by both Professor Lidzbarski and Professor Gray, one of my workmen who was in military service at Aleppo (where flax is still grown) told me that it is there *reaped* in exactly the same manner as wheat: this modern custom need not, of course, be taken as an index of the ancient practice.

Secondly, we note the greater importance of *fruits* in the agricultural year of this ancient calendar than in that of the modern village on the site. A few figs, mulberries, and olives, and the fruit of the cactus-hedges, are the only fruits now grown in the neighbourhood, and they cannot produce more than a very insignificant proportion of the annual revenues of the village. The cactus, like the orange, is of course a comparatively recent importation into the country, and could not have come within the horizon of the writer of the tablet; but the many fruit-presses both within and without the ancient city—one of which will be described later in this report—and fruit seeds found in the works from time to time, under the same conditions as the grain in the granaries, show that fruit culture was much more extensively practised by the ancient inhabitants, and that grapes, figs, olives, pomegranates, and apricots were freely grown.

On the other hand, we notice in the third place the complete absence of the crops which are now the chief agricultural interest of the summer months in South Palestine—the millet (*dhirra*) and sesame: and the total absence of these grains from the ancient granaries had long ago led me to the conclusion that they were not cultivated by the ancient inhabitants. Sesame seems to have been known in the Hellenistic period about Gaza, a store of sesame-seed having been found by Dr. Bliss in the latest city at Tell el-Hesi;

but not a trace of the culture of either of the plants mentioned have been found at Gezer, and, if I am not mistaken, the Old Testament writers are completely silent regarding them.

It is not easy to guess the purpose for which this tablet was prepared. The labours of the agricultural year were assuredly too elementary and deep-rooted a matter of common knowledge to need to be noted down in a bare catalogue without comment or explanation. There is nothing historical, votive, or epistolary in the inscriptions. It contains nothing talismanic or magical—unless, indeed, the missing base of the stone bore an invocation to some Superior Power for a blessing on the labours enumerated; but this hardly seems likely. It is of too formal a character to be classed with the random scribbles by which a writer tries the capacities of a doubtful pen. We are, I think, reduced to the prosaic conclusion that the tablet was prepared by the inscriber simply to “show off” his own accomplishment. Professor Lidzbarski has, very likely with reason, suggested that the writer was “probably a peasant.” Among the peasant class writing would not be a universal art, and one who possessed it would naturally be proud of it—just as modern fellahin are always delighted to find an opportunity of airing the feeble little smattering of Turkish which they acquire during their years of military service: or like one of the labourers in the works who was employed for a while at the monastery of Latrun, and there acquired perhaps fifteen words of French, which he drags into his conversation whenever in the least possible. Our friend Abi . . . —it is a pity we do not know his full name—was probably a simple soul, happy in his attainments, who suspended on the walls of his hut a list of the months, to which (no doubt with great personal satisfaction) he would not fail to call the attention of his less gifted acquaintances.

I say “a list of the months” advisedly: for although the official names of the months are not mentioned on the tablet, an interesting modern analogy suggests that the words following each repetition of ירד may have actually been the names by which the months were denoted among the peasantry. For in the speech of the modern fellahin analogous names are used as alternatives to the ordinary names given in calendars and documents, and exclusively used by the town population. I have not succeeded in obtaining all, or even most, of these names, and perhaps the ordinary names have driven the recollection of some of them from

the minds of the people: but I find that January is called *El-Marb'aniyeh*—I am told because it is a "cold" month, though I cannot trace the connection: probably the word is some cognate of *rabi'*, "spring." April, again, is called *El-Chamis*, because the Thursday (*chamis*) which is a sort of All Souls' Feast, falls within it. (So they say, but it may simply be so called because it is the *fifth* month of the year.) June is called *Kallás*, "because on that month the *kursenni* (camel-vetch) is collected," or *Abu'l-Jali*, "because manure (used for fuel) is collected." September is called *Aylán*, instead of its usual name *Aylál*, because the former rhymes with *zaytán*, "olives," which are gathered in that month. These imperfect notes suggest that we may have in the Gezer tablet one more totally unexpected treasure, an actual record in the *folk-speech* of Palestine of the period of the Hebrew monarchy B.C.

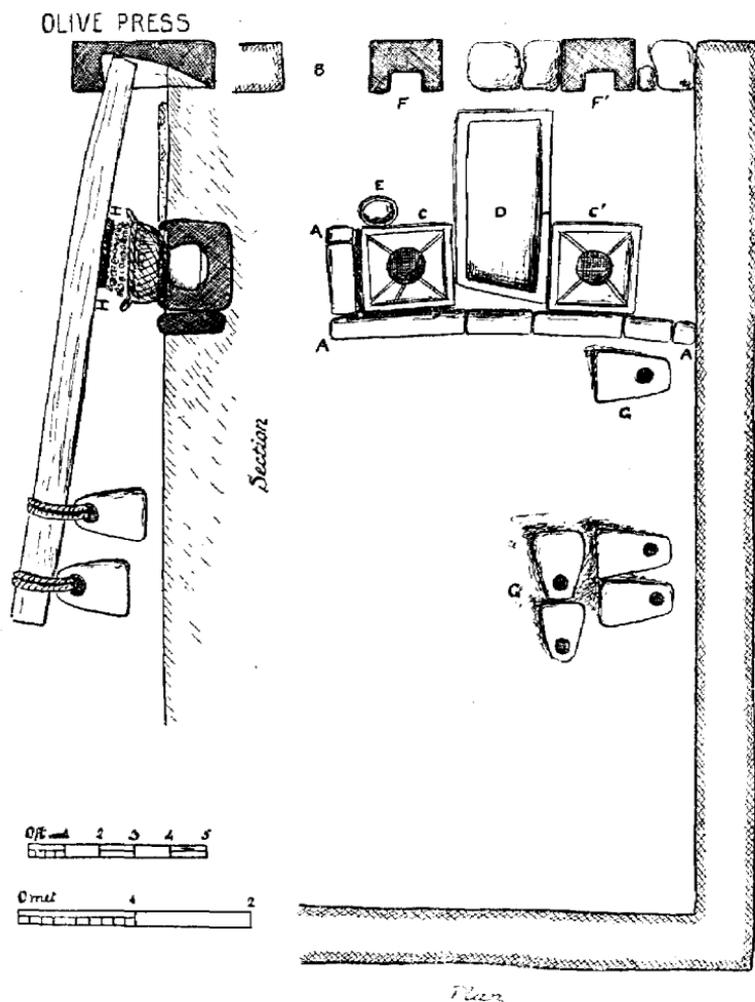
Before passing on to a description of the recent discoveries, I will ask readers kindly to correct the misprint *Lybian* (for *Libyán*) which twice occurs on p. 19 *ante*, and the *lapsus calami* "Sospater" for *Sosipatros*, October, 1908, p. 281.

§ II.—THE OLIVE PRESS.

The most remarkable structure found this quarter has been a very complete olive press, the arrangement of which will easily be understood from the accompanying plan and photographs (Plate II, and Fig. 1). The position is just under the letter N of the word EASTERN in Plate I.

In the north-east corner of a chamber measuring 23 feet 3 inches N.-S. by 19 feet 3 inches E.-W., a space 6 feet 7 inches × 9 feet 8 inches is marked out by a row of slabs set on edge (AA) projecting 9 inches above the plastered floor. This is not carried on to meet the northern wall of the chamber, as it would interfere with the entrance B. The south side of this enclosure is not quite straight, but has a distinct convexity toward the north. Within the enclosure are three vats, C, C', and D, sunk in the floor so as to project about as much as the row of slabs that surrounds them: the top surface is, however, not absolutely horizontal in any one of them. Beside C is a smaller vat, E.

The vats C, C' are cubical blocks of stone, measuring 2 feet 4 inches square on their upper surface and about 20 inches deep. The upper surface is recessed under a square margin: in the centre is a round hole, the opening into the hollow of the vat, which



SECTION AND PLAN OF THE OLIVE PRESS, GEZER.

expands downwards, ending at the bottom in a cup-shaped depression: reference to the section will make this description clearer than is possible with words. The upper surface has grooves (five in vat C, four in C') to direct the expressed juice into the central cavity. The central vat, D, is not made of one piece of stone, but of two or three cemented together: it is possible, however, that it was originally one piece and was broken by an accident. The internal dimensions are, length from 4 feet 5½ inches to 4 feet 7 inches (owing to the crookedness of the southern end), breadth 2 feet, depth 1 foot 3 inches. The margin is 3 to 4 inches broad. The small vat E measures 11½ by 10 by 5 inches, over-all dimensions.

Built into the north wall of the chamber, and opposite the two vats C, C' respectively, are two standards, F, F'. These are blocks of stone, 4 feet high, about 2 feet across the face, and 1 foot 5 inches thick, but tapering slightly downwards. In the face of each stone is cut a deep chase-mortice, beginning at the base of the stone (under the level of the pavement) and ending 11 inches from the top with a slightly arched top. The depth of the chase-mortice is *nil* at the bottom of the stone, 1 foot 1 inch at the top, and its breadth is 1 foot at the top, though it contracts by a very slight shoulder about 9 inches from the upper end.

Lying on the floor of the chamber, outside the enclosure containing the vats, are five stone weights GG. These are heavy pyramidal blocks of limestone on a base 1 foot 5 inches square, tapering to 1 foot 1 inch (the dimensions vary slightly in the different specimens) and 2 feet 2 inches high. Near the upper end of each is a round perforation.

Except that one of these weights is broken, and there is a chip out of the edge of the small vat E, this olive press is perfect, wanting only the wooden beam to make it once more serviceable.

This beam is supplied in the section drawn at the side of the plan, which shows the method of working. The slight shouldering in the chase-mortices of the standards just referred to have been taken as indicating that the beam was about 9 inches deep. A basket of olives, already crushed by rollers or pounding stones, would be placed on top of each of the vats C, C'; a small piece of board, HH, would probably be laid upon them, and the heavy wooden beam laid upon that, one end slipped into the chase-mortice and the other end weighted with the stone weights. When the

juice was expressed into the vats C, C' it would be baled out into D, and there allowed to stand till olive-stones, fragments of the fruit, skins, and other impurities had sunk to the bottom.¹ The small stone cup E was probably meant as a stand for a jar.

Close examination of the photograph (Fig. 1) will show that the top of the chase-mortice in the stone farthest from the spectator has been chipped, no doubt on some occasion of manipulation of the heavy wooden beam. The nether stone of a saddle-quern lies in the wall beside this standard; this was found in the neighbourhood, and placed where it lies during the excavation. It may be



Fig 1.—Vats and Standards of the Olive Press.

as well to forestall possible criticism by calling attention to the likeness of a human face on the standard nearest the spectator above the chase-mortice. This is a curious instance of the perversity of which photographs are capable. This face is a purely accidental combination of marks and flaws on the stone of very various depths, and indeed can scarcely, if at all, be identified on the original stone.

¹ It is also possible, though less probable, that D was meant as a receptacle for the olives awaiting their turn of crushing.

In a chamber to the east of that containing the press is lying a flat disc of stone 5 feet 2 inches in diameter, no doubt for crushing the olives upon. This probably belongs to the same installation as the press described above.

The chief interest of this olive press is not, however, its perfect preservation, but its *date*. It falls within the same limits of time as the Calendar Tablet, having been found in the same stratum. To discover presses of this kind in Roman surroundings would be nothing remarkable, but, as has been pointed out to me by Dr. Dalman—who has made a special study of the history of arts and crafts in Palestine—to find that at so comparatively remote a date this type of machine was in use in the country, is an important addition to knowledge.

§ III.—RECENT EPIGRAPHIC DISCOVERIES.

Of the small additions to our store of written documents made during the past quarter, pride of place naturally attaches to the fragment of a cuneiform tablet, though the contents of that document are unfortunately not illuminating owing to its damaged state (Plate III). It is a fragment, hard baked and of a black colour, all four edges of which are broken away. One face only is inscribed, bearing the remains of thirteen lines. The fragment measures $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches high and 1 inch across. The writing is very minute. The circumstances of its discovery were curious. I, with the foreman, was measuring out the ground for a new pit with a tape measure, and the foreman saw the tablet on the surface of the ground close by where he was holding the end of the tape. How it got there I am unable to say. The Rev. Père Dhorme, Professor of Assyriology at St. Étienne, Jerusalem, and Professor R. F. Harper, the director for the current year of the American School of Archaeology, have kindly examined the document for me, and I am enabled to append their decipherment of it to the present report, with an enlarged photograph that Professor Harper has been so good as to make for me.

Besides the tablet, there is nothing to describe in this section but the usual Rhodian jar-handles, of which some twenty or thirty have been found (most of them repeating, in duplicate, inscriptions already recorded from the mound); and the potter's stamp shown in Fig. 2. This is evidently the same inscription as has twice before been



FRAGMENT OF TABLET WITH CUNEIFORM INSCRIPTION.
[From a photograph by Prof. R. F. Harper.]

found in circular stamps, although the ט is lost by an injury to the surface. At last, we can now be certain about the order of the letters, the inscription being written in a straight line and not following the curve of the stamp. I cannot say that the definite information we have thus obtained, that the letters are to be read יהטר , appears to make the inscription any easier to deal with.¹

One or two of the "royal" stamps have also been found, but nothing new in that difficult subject has come to light.



Fig. 2.
Hebrew Stamp on
a Jar handle.

§ IV.—AN EGYPTIAN STATUETTE.

At the south end of the trench joining the two pits (just west of the olive press but at a lower level) were the remains of a house that had evidently been destroyed by fire. The photograph (Fig. 3),

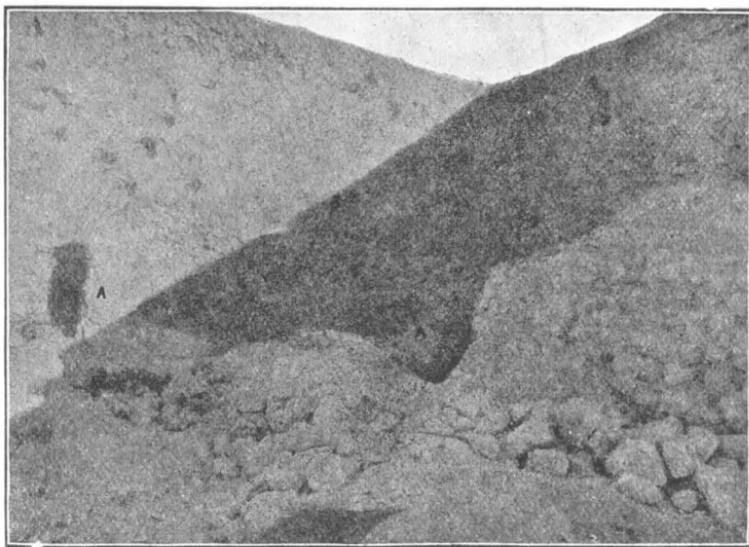


Fig. 3.—Débris of House containing the Egyptian Statuette.

¹ [The second character resembles פ (?? יפטר), rather than ג , or the later form of ה . Prof. Lidzbarski, after seeing a very rough tracing of the lettering, confirms the פ , which may be accepted, but questions whether the third sign stands for ט or ק ; his provisional suggestion, יפקד , for יפקדיה(ו) "[Yahweh] visits," is, in some respects, preferable to the alternative "[Yahweh] opens" [?]. —Ed.]

which shows a section right through the debris of this building before it was completely cleared out, will indicate the condition in which it was found. In this picture, AA are the ends of the outer walls, projecting from the sides of the pit ; and it will be seen that the space between these walls is filled with loose rubbish.¹ This rubbish displays evident marks of fire. Above this, at B, are some



Fig. 4.—Egyptian Statuette.

layers of finer sandy stuff, and above that again, the more compact remains of later strata, which did not come to so abrupt an end, but accumulated by a gradual process of decay. The date of this

¹ I thought at first by *fire*, but the absence of any blackening on the rubbish makes this explanation difficult.

ruined house was in the second Semitic period, *i.e.*, about 1800–1400 B.C. The loose débris is principally broken brick, fire-baked, which had fallen into the area of the dwelling; the finer stratum above is not improbably the mud roof fallen on top of all.

This broken rubbish was almost devoid of antiquities. But in the very middle of the ruin was the statuette represented in Fig. 4. It had fallen, and was lying on its right side.

It is carved from a block of gritty micaceous sandstone. The figure is set on a square pedestal, $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, 1 foot $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches along the sides and 1 foot $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches across the front. There is no inscription on this pedestal, or indeed on any other part of the

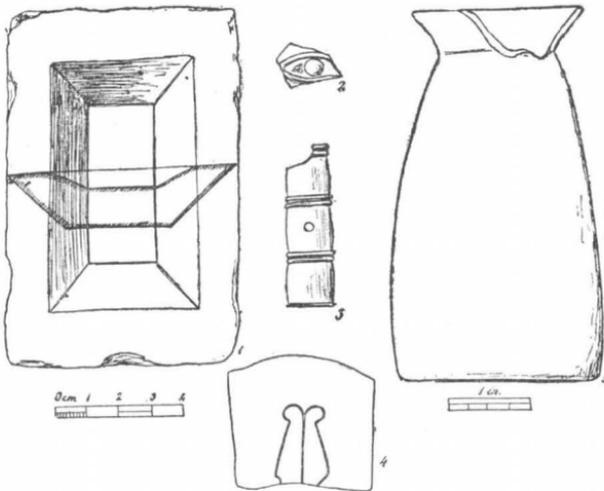


Fig. 5.—Objects from the House containing the Egyptian Statuette.

sculpture. The figure sits in an attitude familiar in Egyptian statuary, upon a low cushion with knees drawn up under the chin. Around the knees the arms are folded, the right arm being uppermost. In the right hand is clasped an *ankh* symbol (⊕); in the left is a conical object, apparently an *uat* sceptre. The face (whose nose, always rather flat, is gone, through an unlucky stroke of the pick that brought the statue to light) has a short beard. On the head is the usual Egyptian wig. A projecting pilaster runs up the back, down the middle of which is painted a narrow red line, crossed at top and bottom by a horizontal line in the same colour. The total height of the sculpture, inclusive of the pedestal, is three feet.

Who the figure may represent, or for what purpose it stood in the house whose debris covered it, there is nothing to show. It is perfect, save that the right forearm and part of the underside of the pedestal were broken away; the fragments were found, however, where they had fallen. The stone is very coarse-grained—almost a breccia—with little cohesion, and is easily broken.

In Fig. 5 are represented a selection from a few other objects found in or near the house, which yet further attest the Egyptian character of its ancient occupants. No. 1 is a tray of diorite with

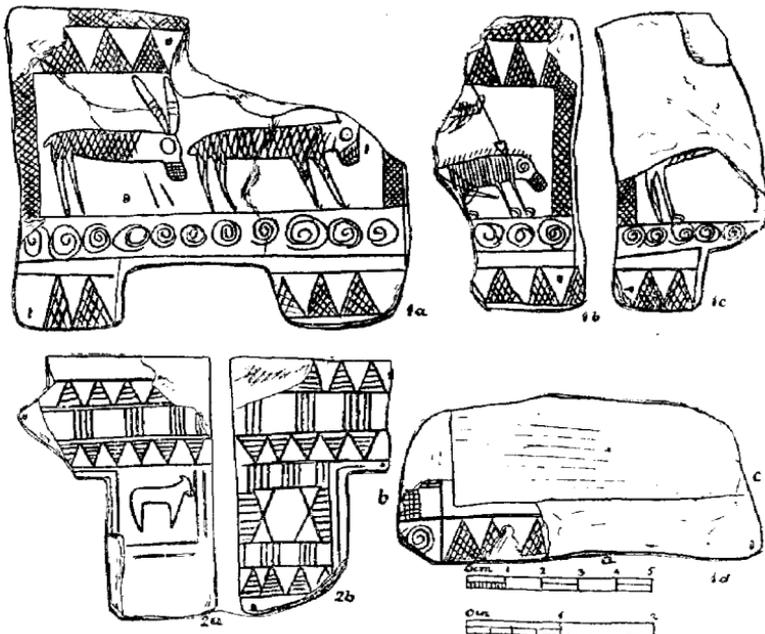


Fig. 6.—Votive Altars.

a rectangular depression—evidently a painter's palette, as a dash of red colour still remains on the bottom. No. 2 is the eye of a figure of porcelain, enamelled green; No. 3 a turned bar of bone, perforated; No. 4 is a disc of ivory, with a feather crown cut on it. Several other similar fragments of ivory were found, none, however, with any device upon them. No. 5 is a vase of alabaster. There were also found a pair of bronze tweezers, fragments of a Bügelkanne, and some other potsherds. Some of these displayed palpable marks of fire.

§ V.—MORE "VOTIVE ALTARS."

Two more fragments of the curious little limestone boxes described in recent reports as "Votive altars" have come to light, and are shown in fig. 6. Were it not for the graffiti on the specimen bearing the name of Eunélos, which seem to imply dedication to Hêracles, I should begin to feel doubt whether these objects are not meant for some domestic purpose more simple than that suggested. However that may be, we have in the new specimens, unhappily very imperfect, repetitions of the same type as has previously been described: A rectangular limestone box on four feet, the sides ornamented by scenes in which animals are the most characteristic element, inside rudely designed and yet more rudely executed panelling of frets, triangles and spirals. On one end of the more important of the new fragments an animal is being killed with a spear: the arm and head of the otherwise missing man who wields the spear are much rubbed and very difficult to make out. The surviving figures represent two animals, one of which has long appendages that may be either a donkey's ears or a stag's horns, so childishly is the creature drawn.

The second fragment is remarkable for the design being almost entirely ornamental, one small animal only being introduced in quite an insignificant position. Though the design of this specimen is not less elementary, the execution is much better than usual.

§ VI.—A REMARKABLE POTTERY FRAGMENT.

From the animal drawings on the "altars" we pass to a much earlier zoological series: the curious frieze of animals on a very imperfect pot found close to, and of the same period as the destroyed house referred to above. The pot was unfortunately broken into small fragments, many of which were missing: they were insufficient to determine its shape—indeed little remained except the fragments of the painted frieze, the development of which is shown in Fig. 7. It is interesting as probably representing *native* attempts to depict animals without the contamination of foreign art influences.

§ VII.—A NOTE ON THE MUTILATED SACRIFICES.

My attention has been called to an extract from the *Times* of January 21st, 1909, which, while it cannot be said fully to illuminate the mystery of the mutilated girl, found, under the first permit, in

a cistern, or the mutilated boy more recently discovered under a house foundation, at least illustrates and is parallel to those cases. The dissevering of the body at the waist, the burial of a portion, and the division of the remainder in pieces among the spectators— unquestionably as amulets—are strangely reminiscent of the scenes that must have taken place in Gezer, of which the two interments referred to are the tangible remains.¹

The following is the extract from the *Times* correspondent (New York, January 20th).

“An account of a recent sacrifice in the Philippines of a child to the gods is published to-day in an official report by Mr. Allen Walker, the District Governor of Davio, in Moro Land. The account gives full details, and shows that the sacrifice was carefully arranged, and was for the purpose of appeasing the evil spirits. A

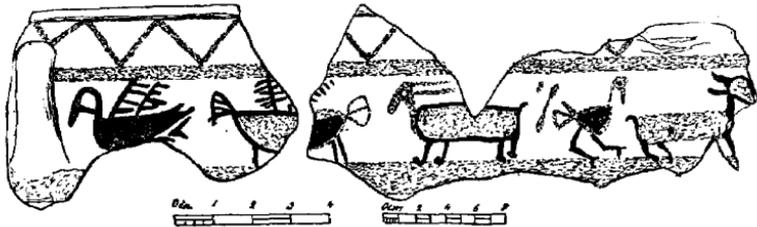


Fig. 7.—Fragment of a Painted Bowl of the Second Semitic Period.

large number of men and women attended the ceremony, and it seems a strange note that the name and address of each person who participated is shown in the official report. The account states that a boy named Sacum was brought forward and was placed against a small tree; his hands were tied above his head, and he was fastened to the tree with bejuco strips at his waist and knees. A native named Ansig then placed the point of a spear at the child's right side, below his right arm, and above the ribs. The spear was grasped by other natives, who, at a signal from Ansig, forced it through the child's body. It was then withdrawn, and the body was cut in two at the waist. The body was afterwards taken from the tree and was chopped into bits by the people present, each of whom was allowed to take a small portion as a memento of the occasion. The remainder of the body was buried.

¹ In a later issue of the *Times* (January 26th, 1909) Mrs. Lewis of Cambridge has already called attention to the parallel suggested.

It is said that the child did not realize what was to happen to him until the moment when he was tied up, when he began to cry; further that death was almost instantaneous, the only cry being one uttered when the spear first entered the child's side. Ansig, a man about 60 years of age, says that in his life he has attended, or officiated at, 50 human sacrifices more or less, both among the Bagobos and the Bilanes, and that the sacrifice of human beings is also a practice among the Tagacolos, although he has never been present at one held by that tribe. The Bagobos do not sacrifice any but old and decrepit or useless slaves, captured from other tribes, but the Bilanes sacrifice even their own people. The report says that the natives who took part in the recent sacrifice were not conscious of wrongdoing, but that upon investigation and proof they have been sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. Sentence, however, has been suspended on their promise to stop the practice."

§ VIII.—CONCLUSION.

Unless something should come to light sufficiently important to demand special mention, during the four weeks of the permit that still remain to us, the present will be the last report written from Gezer. Before it reaches the hands of the subscribers, the work will have come to an end.

The excavation of the city is thus left unfinished, though it cannot be but that at some future time it will be resumed by other investigators, equipped with the fuller knowledge that the researches of coming years will bring. I may close this report by indicating what yet remains to be done before Gezer can be said to have yielded up all its secrets.

Referring to Plate I, where the area already excavated is shown, I may first remark on the spaces left blank within the wall. That at the eastern end, containing the words "Entrance to Cemetery" and other letterpress, can be neglected. The greater part of this area is bare rock, or rock covered by from a few inches to perhaps three or four feet of soil, as I have ascertained by soundings. There may be valuable objects there by chance, but the probability is against this being a part of any special importance.

The western end, on the other hand, is more promising, and by far the greater number of interesting objects were found in the six trenches partly excavated on that section of the mound. It is heavily encumbered first by the *wely*, which obviously covers a

building of importance, the nature of which it is impossible to determine: secondly, by the modern cemetery, which sprawls over the neighbourhood of the shrine, and which will prevent excavation under its precincts till many generations are passed; and thirdly, the farmhouse with its mulberry plantation in front. This plantation prevented me from tracing the western side of the city wall from the southern end: at the northern end (just at the letter W of the word WESTERN in the plan) the wall is ruined. Just under the farmhouse, however, the soil is not deep—indeed the bare rock appears in the courtyard of the building. The section of mound which I most regret leaving is the triangular part interposed between the cemetery, the farmhouse, and the western trenches. The soil here is of an average of from 16 to 20 feet deep—rather more toward the east, less toward the west—and the general distribution of antiquities suggests that it is probably a rich part of the mound.

The blank space south of the long opening in the Central Valley and the Eastern hill is perhaps not so important—though, of course, it is quite impossible to speak dogmatically as to where *the* prize may be hidden! The soil is 12 to 16 feet in depth. Its full examination would require the demolition of the Maccabean Castle. The space between the western trenches and those of the Central Valley partakes of much the same characteristics.

Outside the city walls there are the cemeteries and the settlements of late historical times to be considered. I think, with regard to the cemeteries, that I can honestly claim to have exhausted these so far as it has been humanly possible to do so. A few beads may have passed unnoticed in sifting the soil of the opened tomb, and of course it is always possible that some important tomb remains, so cunningly concealed that it has not yet come to light. (I attach no importance to a mysterious tale told me by a casual wayfarer, within the first month of the excavation, that there was a cave in the mound with 12 tons of gold in it, the secret of which he knew, and was ready to impart for a *bakhshish*.) But putting aside the hypothetical possibility of such a treasure as an undiscovered tomb still remaining, the reason why so few important tombs were found during the work was simply, first, because there were very few to begin with; and secondly, because they have been ransacked by thieves from the time of Chosroes down to the beginning of the excavation. What there might have been to tell had it not been for these generations of vultures it is impossible to say. At least the gleanings they have

left have been sufficient to cover over sixty plates of groups of tomb-deposits that have been prepared for the *Memoir*, beside a number of photographs, plans, and other drawings.

The later settlements, however, are still almost virgin soil. The Roman village that probably exists under Abû Shûsheh is, of course, inaccessible so long as the modern houses above it are inhabited. But there is still the important area of ruins under the soil near 'Ain Yerdeh, which contains the Roman bath; and the two groups of ruins of the Byzantine period that are together known by the name of Khurbet Yerdeh, east of this. I doubt, however, whether the investigator of the future will find much to occupy his attention at either of these places, when he makes his appearance on the scene. For these ruins are the ordinary quarries for the large modern village of Kubâb, and every year stones are taken from them by camel-loads for buildings and repairs. The Roman bath which I described a year or two ago will in a couple of years from now have completely disappeared. To attempt to inspire a reverence for antiquity into the fellahin would be as hopeless as to endeavour to develop similar sentiments in the cattle that graze over the ruins.¹

By carefully filling in the important buildings on the mound, I have done my best to preserve them against these vandals. They may dig them out again, of course, but they are not so fond of hard work as to undertake such a task unless pressed by necessity. As a fine reservoir, built of well-cut square stones, was being filled in the other day, one of the men (who had had his eye on its materials) said indignantly to the foreman, "What harm can it be, taking these stones? They are but stones—useful to us, and no use where they are." The foreman said, "Because it would be a crime to destroy such a beautiful building." "Does not your master commit a greater crime?" retorted the man. "He enters tombs, and takes away the skulls and some of the bones of the dead, and leaves the rest. How can taking stones be a worse crime than that?" "Allah," said the foreman, "will bring those bones together again on the Day of Resurrection, no matter where they are placed or what is done with them in the meanwhile; but who will restore these stones, after you have once destroyed them?"

¹ Two natives were overheard a month or two ago, before I had commenced filling in, discussing what they would do after the excavator had left the scene. "As for those standing stones [the pillars of the High Place]," said one, "it will be a pity to break up the *end* one—it would make such a good lintel!"