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978-1-108-06097-4 - Cretan Pictographs and Prae-Phoenician Script: With an Account of a Sepulchral Deposit at Hagios Onuphrios Near Phaestos in its Relation to Primitive Cretan and Aegean Culture

Arthur John Evans

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Cretan Pictographs and Prae-Phoenician Script

Sir Arthur John Evans (1851–1941) famously excavated the ruins of Knossos on Crete and uncovered the remains of its Bronze Age Minoan civilisation (as described in his multi-volume work *The Palace of Minos at Knossos*, also reissued in this series). But he had already visited the island prior to this: in 1894, during his first trip, he found examples of an ancient pictographic writing system that pre-dated the Phoenician alphabet later adapted by the Greeks. First published in 1895, this work, illustrated with examples throughout, documents and describes these discoveries, and demonstrates that the earliest finds date from a period before even the most ancient known Semitic scripts. Evans also records evidence of later scripts which were subsequently categorised as Linear A and Linear B (only the latter has been deciphered since his death). The final section of the book describes in detail the pottery and other finds from the Hagios Onuphrios deposit.

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WITH AN ACCOUNT OF A SEPULCHRAL DEPOSIT
AT HAGIOS ONUPHRIOS NEAR PHAESTOS
IN ITS RELATION TO PRIMITIVE CRETAN
AND AEGEAN CULTURE

BY
ARTHUR J. EVANS, M.A., F.S.A.

KEEPER OF THE ASHMOLLEAN MUSEUM
AND HON. FELLOW OF BRASENOSE COLLEGE, OXFORD

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NOTE.

THE first of these papers is reprinted, by permission, from the *Hellenic Journal* (Vol. xiv. Pt. II. 1895) with some slight additions and corrections. The account of the Hagios Onuphrios deposit and its bearings on the prehistoric culture of the Aegean world is now issued for the first time. Already in 1893, on the occasion of my paper on 'A Mycenaean Treasure from Aegina' I ventured to announce to the Hellenic Society that I had found what I believed to be a clue to the existence of a system of picture-writing in the Greek lands. The result of my explorations in Crete during the spring of 1894 was not only to confirm this discovery as regards the 'pictographic' system but to add distinct evidence of the existence in the island at a very early period of a linear system of writing standing in a certain relation to the pictorial. A summary report of the results of my researches in Crete in the spring of 1894 was sent by me to the *Athenaeum* from Candia on April 25 of last year, and appeared in that Journal on June 23. The *Times* of Aug. 29 published a further account of my Cretan discoveries, written by me at the request of the Editor, and I also read a paper on the subject in the Anthropological Section of the British Association, of which reports appeared in the *Academy* and other papers. On that occasion I called attention for the first time to certain archaeological evidence connecting the Philistines with Mycenaean Crete. In the second paper of this book and the supplement are incorporated some further materials obtained by me during another Cretan journey undertaken this spring.

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