

CAMBRIDGE LIBRARY COLLECTION

Books of enduring scholarly value

Egyptology

The large-scale scientific investigation of Egyptian antiquities by Western scholars began as an unintended consequence of Napoleon's invasion of Egypt during which, in 1799, the Rosetta Stone was discovered. The military expedition was accompanied by French scholars, whose reports prompted a wave of enthusiasm that swept across Europe and North America resulting in the Egyptian Revival style in art and architecture. Increasing numbers of tourists visited Egypt, eager to see the marvels being revealed by archaeological excavation. Writers and booksellers responded to this growing interest with publications ranging from technical site reports to tourist guidebooks and from children's histories to theories identifying the pyramids as repositories of esoteric knowledge. This series reissues a wide selection of such books. They reveal the gradual change from the 'tomb-robbing' approach of early excavators to the highly organised and systematic approach of Flinders Petrie, the 'father of Egyptology', and include early accounts of the decipherment of the hieroglyphic script.

Illahun, Kahun and Gurob ~ Medum

A pioneering Egyptologist, Sir William Matthew Flinders Petrie (1853–1942) excavated over fifty sites and trained a generation of archaeologists. The two excavation reports now reissued here together were first published in 1891 and 1892 respectively, written in collaboration with other experts. They outline significant finds at the pyramids of Lahun and Meidum, and at Gurob and Kahun, notably the latter's cache of Middle Kingdom papyri. Petrie and his collaborators describe in detail how they came to make these discoveries, shedding light on developing archaeological practices used towards the end of the nineteenth century. Petrie's professional method of painstakingly recording every find is well demonstrated here, and each report includes a section of valuable illustrative material. Petrie wrote prolifically throughout his long career, and a great many of his other publications – for both specialists and non-specialists – are also reissued in this series.

Cambridge University Press has long been a pioneer in the reissuing of out-of-print titles from its own backlist, producing digital reprints of books that are still sought after by scholars and students but could not be reprinted economically using traditional technology. The Cambridge Library Collection extends this activity to a wider range of books which are still of importance to researchers and professionals, either for the source material they contain, or as landmarks in the history of their academic discipline.

Drawing from the world-renowned collections in the Cambridge University Library and other partner libraries, and guided by the advice of experts in each subject area, Cambridge University Press is using state-of-the-art scanning machines in its own Printing House to capture the content of each book selected for inclusion. The files are processed to give a consistently clear, crisp image, and the books finished to the high quality standard for which the Press is recognised around the world. The latest print-on-demand technology ensures that the books will remain available indefinitely, and that orders for single or multiple copies can quickly be supplied.

The Cambridge Library Collection brings back to life books of enduring scholarly value (including out-of-copyright works originally issued by other publishers) across a wide range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences and in science and technology.

Illahun, Kahun
and Gurob
~
Medum

W.M. FLINDERS PETRIE



Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-06573-3 - Illahun, Kahun and Gurob ~ Medum
W. M. Flinders Petrie
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge, CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.
It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of
education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108065733

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2013

This edition first published 1891 and 1892
This digitally printed version 2013

ISBN 978-1-108-06573-3 Paperback

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect
the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

Cambridge University Press wishes to make clear that the book, unless originally published
by Cambridge, is not being republished by, in association or collaboration with, or
with the endorsement or approval of, the original publisher or its successors in title.

The original edition of this book contains a number of colour plates,
which have been reproduced in black and white. Colour versions of these
images can be found online at www.cambridge.org/9781108065733

ILLAHUN,
KAHUN AND GUROB.
1889-90.

BY

W. M. FLINDERS PETRIE,

WITH CHAPTERS BY

PROF. SAYCE, D.D., CANON HICKS, PROF. MAHAFFY, F. LL. GRIFFITH, B.A.,
AND F. C. J. SPURRELL, F.G.S.

LONDON:
DAVID NUTT, 270, STRAND.
1891.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-06573-3 - Illahun, Kahun and Gurob ~ Medum
W. M. Flinders Petrie
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
STAMFORD STREET AND CHARING CROSS.

CONTENTS.

		PAGE
INTRODUCTORY.		
1. Work at Kahun and Gurob	vii	
2. Work in Palestine	vii	
3. Personal	viii	
CHAPTER I.		
PYRAMIDS OF ILLAHUN.		
4. Condition	I	
5. Finding the entrance	I	
6. Original entrances	2	
7. Passage dimensions	2	
8. The chambers	2	
9. The Sarcophagus	3	
10. Altar and pottery	4	
11. Shrine and walls	4	
12. Pyramid of Atmuneferu	4	
CHAPTER II.		
THE TOWN OF KAHUN.		
13. Plan and divisions	5	
14. Northern side	6	
15. Southern side	7	
16. Western quarter	8	
CHAPTER III.		
THE ANTIQUITIES OF KAHUN.		
17. Pottery	8	
18. Foreign pottery described	9	
19. The age of it	9	
20. Varieties of it in town	10	
21. Styles unknown as yet	10	
22. Relation to known pottery	10	
23. Stone figure stands	11	
24. Wood carvings.	11	
25. Wooden fittings and tools		11
26. Flint tools		12
27. Copper tools		12
28. Group 9		12
29. Inscriptions		13
30. Scarabs and seals		14
31. Measure		14
32. Weights		14
33. Later objects of XVIII. dyn.		15
CHAPTER IV.		
MEDINET GUROB.		
34. Plan		15
35. History		16
36. Burnt deposits of foreigners		16
37. Dated groups of remains		16
38. Changes of fashion noticed		18
39. Miscellaneous antiquities		19
40. Inscriptions		20
41. Measure		20
42. Weights		20
CHAPTER V.		
THE TOMB OF MAKET.		
43. Place and arrangement		21
44. Contents of coffins		22
45. Age of burials		23
CHAPTER VI.		
ILLAHUN IN THE XXII. DYN.		
46. Age of cemetery		24
47. Glazes, amulets, beads, &c.		25
48. The rise of the later styles.		26
49. Special tombs described		26
50. Tomb of Amenardus		27
51. Typical styles of burial		27

	PAGE
CHAPTER VII.	
PTOLEMAIC CEMETERY, GUROB.	
52. Cartonnage coverings and coffins	28
53. Bandaging, &c.	28
CHAPTER VIII.	
PTOLEMAIS AND LATE SITES.	
54. Ptolemais according to Ptolemy	29
55. The inscription found	29
56. Present ruins	30
57. The fort	30
58. Map of sites	30
59. Koms 1 and 2, and mastaba	31
60. Kom 3 and cemetery	31
61. Koms 4, 5, and Kom el Akl	31
62. Kom Wezim	32
63. Appendix by Canon Hicks	32
CHAPTER IX.	
THE GREEK PAPYRI.	
By Prof. Sayce.	
64. Sources of papyri	34
65. Phaedo papyrus	35
66. Antiope papyrus	35
67. The private papyri	36
68. Tax-gatherer's accounts	37
69. Kleon the architect	37
70. Diophanes the general	39
CHAPTER X.	
THE HIERATIC PAPYRI.	
By F. Ll. Griffith.	
77. State of the collection	47
78. Classes of papyri	47
79. Legal and official documents	47
80. Letters	48
81. Scientific works	48
82. Religious and literary works	49
83. Royal names	49
CHAPTER XI.	
THE STONE IMPLEMENTS.	
By F. C. J. Spurrell, F.G.S.	
84. Nature of the collection	51
85. Axes	51
86. Adzes	52
87. Knives	52
88. Sickles	53
89. Using of sickles	54
90. Sculptures of sickles	55
91. Club	55

I N T R O D U C T I O N .

1. THE work of the season 1889-90 has completed the exploration of the towns of Gurob and Kahun, which was begun in the previous year. During my absence Mr. Fraser took charge of the place, and succeeded in opening the pyramid of Illahun: and on my return I continued the clearing of the XIIth dynasty town at Kahun, while soon after Mr. W. O. Hughes-Hughes joined me, and took up the excavations at Gurob, to which I could not attend along with the other work. The planning of the town of Kahun required close attention, as over two thousand chambers were cleared; and each required to be measured, and entered in the working plan which was kept, before it was refilled with the earth from other rooms. The most interesting piece of work was the clearing of the Meket tomb. It so seldom happens that a large tomb is found quite undisturbed, and can be entirely cleared in a careful manner, that the details are worth a full record; moreover, the series of added burials in these chambers, the heaping on one side of all the small objects from time to time, and the Phoenician and Aegean pottery found here, are remarkable details. The entrance to the tomb was found late one afternoon; anticipating a long affair, we blocked it with earth, and then opened it next morning. The outer chamber we first cleared, as it only contained broken pottery and some earth: and in this and the rest of the clearance I only allowed the lad Mekowi to be below with me. He was the lucky head of the party who cleared Horuta's tomb; excitable and restless, he always preferred speculative work, and I gave him the business of opening up the foundation deposit of Usertesen's temple. On this tomb being found by two lads who were half afraid of it, Mekowi eagerly offered to share it with them if he might; and as he was very well in hand, and could be quite trusted, I was glad of the change. The outer chamber being clear I began to open the coffins which blocked the door of the main chamber; and as each object was found I recorded it and handed it to Mekowi to lay

in the outer chamber. Hour after hour I went on gradually clearing the coffins, until there was hardly any space left in the outer chamber to place the finds. The work was heavy, for not only the weighty coffins needed to be shifted, but a large beam of roofing had broken, and a block of stone lay on the top of the coffins, almost crushing them. This needed to be shifted off, and yet there was no foothold from which to reach it except on the treacherously rotten coffins, so that it made a troublesome delay. Towards evening I finished, and came out, streaming with perspiration, and covered with the black dust of the mummies and wrappings. All the things found were then carefully packed in baskets, and carried over to our house. In these plates will be seen drawings of every object found (excepting duplicates)—even every variety of beads; and it is much to be wished that whenever a tomb or group of objects is discovered undisturbed, a similar index of the whole should be published for reference and study, quite apart from any artistic picture of special pieces.

2. My work at Kahun was finished in January, and Mr. Hughes-Hughes had given up Gurob about the same time. After a brief trip in the Fayum, and packing up all the collections, I left Egypt in March to undertake excavations for the Palestine Exploration Fund. The delays were considerable, owing to an immaterial error in the firman; and at last I only succeeded in getting fairly to work a few days before the miserable month of Ramadan. As the workers came to the work at Tell Hesi from a village six miles off, it was all the more difficult; and only after making a difference in the pay did I force the men to stay all night at the Tell: the women never would stop, but walked each way every day. To drive such a gang,—all of them utterly unaccustomed to steady continuous work,—during Ramadan, was not a happy task. But by repeated weeding out of the laziest I got together at last a tolerable body, which dispersed however like a puff

of smoke when the harvest came on, and not a man could I get to do anything. The six weeks' work however sufficed to clear up the history of Tell Hesi, and—still better—to form a series of dated pottery of the various periods, so laying a foundation for future explorations on a scientific basis. The results of this work having been published by the Palestine Exploration Fund, I need not enter on them here. After thus obtaining a chronological scale I spent a fortnight in visiting various ancient sites, and identifying the periods of the remains from the pottery strewn over them.

3. The costs of the excavations described in this volume have been defrayed by my friends Mr. Jesse Haworth and Mr. Martyn Kennard, in continuation of their liberal assistance of the work which I carried on during two previous years in the Fayum; and the greater part of the objects found have been presented by them or myself to various public museums. While I was absent in England the inspectorship of the Fayum had been transferred to Major Brown, R.E.; but he very kindly permitted me to continue to use the inspection house at Illahun, as Mr. Hewat had done; when so much was being discovered it was most needful to have a lodgement for the antiquities, and but for the use of such a house the work would have been much hindered. After I had worked during October at Kahun,

Mr. W. O. Hughes-Hughes came out in November to take up the excavation of Gurob; I could not possibly have attended to this in the time available before I went to Palestine, and it was therefore very fortunate that some regular work could be carried on before the natives finally plundered the place. Of course no sort of guardianship or protection was given by the Government, and it was only by paying guards myself that I could preserve the site until Mr. Hughes-Hughes came. So soon as he left the rest of the town and tombs utterly perished at the hands of the plunderers. We are therefore indebted to his attention for rescuing most of the information on this site which is in the present volume.

Again I am fortunate in having the collaboration of several friends on special chapters here. Prof. Sayce renews his attention to Greek papyri, and Prof. Mahaffy has joined on the subject. Mr. Griffith has begun a study of the series of hieratic papyri: and the demotic will I hope be worked out by Dr. Hess. Canon Hicks has given his special knowledge to the Ptolemais inscription, and Mr. Spurrell has elucidated much about the use of flint implements, with his wide information on the subject. To all these friends my sincerest thanks are due for attending to what neither my own time or studies permitted me to take up.