

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Cambridge Antiquarian Society,

OCTOBER 29, 1888, TO MAY 27, 1889.

WITH

Communications

MADE TO THE SOCIETY.

No. XXXI.

BEING No. 1 OF THE SEVENTH VOLUME.



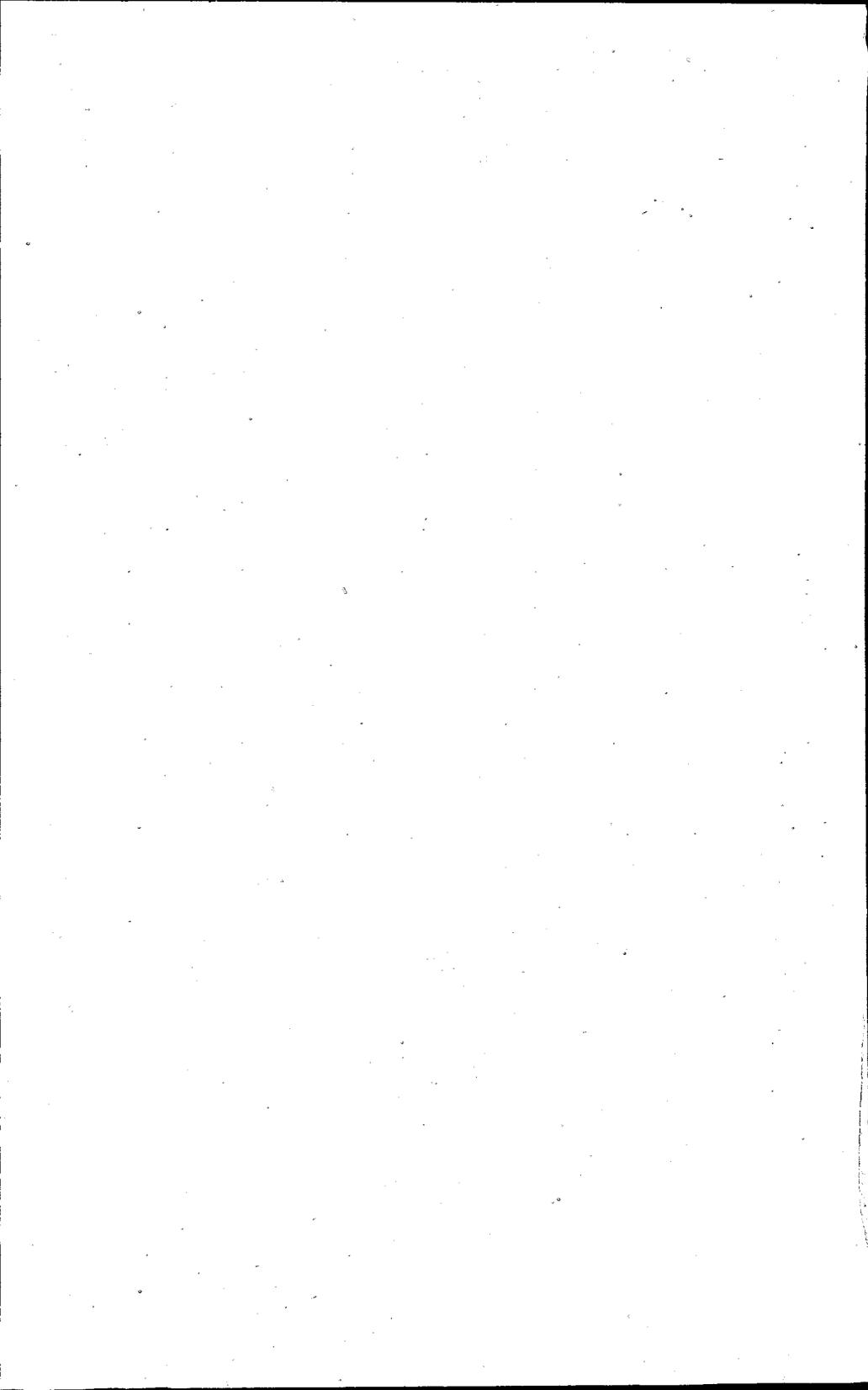
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in a visit to Bartlow and Hadstock, when Professor T. M^cK. Hughes gave an accurate and highly interesting account of the tumuli known as the Bartlow Hills.

The following has been added to the list of Societies in union for the exchange of publications:

Société Archéologique de Constantine (*Algeria*).

The PRESIDENT delivered an address reviewing the Society's work during the past year.

Professor MIDDLETON made the following communication:

NOTES ON A BLUE-GLAZED OENOCHŒ OF PTOLEMAIC
MANUFACTURE. (Plate XIII.)

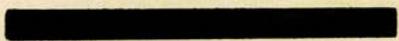
THE glazed Oenochœ, which Mr S. S. Lewis kindly exhibits here this evening, is, with perhaps one or two exceptions, the finest and most interesting example of a very rare fabrique which has ever been discovered. Its special point of interest is, in the first place, the inscription which fixes its date within the years of Ptolemy IV.'s reign, B.C. 222—204; and secondly, its peculiar fabrique, combining Egyptian technique with purely Hellenic form. This beautiful vase, a wine-jug or Oenochœ, measuring $11\frac{3}{4}$ inches high, is said to have been discovered at Curium on the south coast of Cyprus, but—like many other objects found in Cyprian tombs—it is clearly of Egyptian workmanship.

Like most of the pottery of Egypt, it is made of a very light coloured paste, formed of clay from the Nile Delta, mixed with a very large proportion of sand. The process of its manufacture seems to have been this. First of all the body of the vase was "thrown" on the potter's wheel, and then the spout and ears were shaped by hand.



11 3/4 Inch

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΥ
ΘΙΛΟΚΑΤΟΡΟΣ



The flat fluted handle and the various *emblemata* were formed separately in moulds, and applied while soft to the body of the vase and then fixed by luting before firing.

The *emblemata* consist of two Silenus or Satyr-masks, both formed in the same mould, and applied, one at the bottom, the other at the top of the handle, and also wreaths of leaves looped round the vase. These festoons are now missing, but their form is visible on the surface of the vase.

Next came the first firing, which fixed the handle and the *emblemata* in their places. After this the potter cut the inscription, incising it deeply with a sharp tool, a rather difficult process on the hard gritty clay.

Then came the application of the blue glaze, which is simply a glass made of sand, alkali from the Natron desert, and lime, the colouring matter being an oxide or carbonate of copper.

All these materials were finely ground with water to the consistency of cream: the vase was dipped in the mixture and then fired a second time at a high temperature.

The use of this brilliant blue glaze (*κύανος*) is peculiar to Egypt; it is used very largely to cover the Osiris-Mummy figures which are found in large quantities in the Egyptian tombs of many different dynasties, and for countless other purposes. Glazes in the true sense of the word were not used on Greek pottery, and enamels very rarely: the chief distinction between these two substances is that a glaze is a transparent coating, and an enamel an opaque one. Both are equally of a vitreous nature.

The final process applied to this Oenochöe (judging from the analogy of other specimens of this ware) was the application of gold leaf to the masks and festoons—i.e. to all the ornament in relief. As this gilding was applied after the final firing, it was insecurely fixed, and has in this case wholly perished.

The chief reason why the Greeks did not make glazed

pottery is a practical one: the clay they used was what potters now call a "fat clay;" that is, it contained very little silica. This kind of clay is smooth and soft, very plastic on the wheel, and can be moulded with ease into almost any shape. Thus the Greek potters were able to mould vases of very beautiful forms of the thinnest possible substance. "Fat clays" have however one drawback, they cannot retain a vitreous coating or glaze. For this purpose a "lean clay" is needed, which contains a large proportion of silica. The siliceous glaze combines, during the firing, with the silica in the "lean clay," and thus a vitreous coating is produced which adheres closely to the pottery; whereas in the case of a "fat clay" the glaze would flake off as the vessel cools. "Lean clays" are not nearly so plastic and pleasant to work as the "fat clays," and thus Egyptian pottery is usually clumsy in body, and far less graceful and varied in form than that of the Greeks. In some cases the mummy statuettes, covered with a brilliant blue glaze, are composed principally of sand; having only enough clay added to them to enable the potter to mould the figure into form. Some of these figures which have been fired at a very high temperature are vitrified not only on the surface, but all through the statuette, and thus have become solid masses of enamel rather than clay.

Vases of this special fabrique appear to have only been manufactured in Egypt during the reigns of a few sovereigns of the Lagidae family.

The most remarkable known example was found at Benghazi in the Cyrenaica, which, together with Phœnicia and Cyprus, for many years formed part of the Ptolemaic dominions. It is an Oenochœ of similar shape and size to that now exhibited, and is inscribed in the same way, under the blue glaze, with the name of Queen Berenice, the sister and wife of Ptolemy III. (Euergetes) 246—222 B.C., ΒΕΡΕΝΙΚΗΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΗΣ ΑΓΑΘΗΣ ΤΥΧΗΣ.

As eponymous founder of the city of Berenice (the modern Benghazi) she is deified as "the Good Fortune" of the city.

The *emblemata* on this vase consist of a standing figure of the deified Queen, holding a cornu-copiae, and pouring from a patera a libation upon an altar, which is inscribed $\theta\epsilon\omega\omicron\nu\ \epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\rho\epsilon\tau\omega\omicron\nu$, i.e. "the Altar of the deified benefactors," a title conferred on various members of the family of Lagidae. On the other side of the figure of the Queen-goddess is a tall hippodrome *meta*, enriched with garlands of flowers—probably having reference to the sacred contests which were usually held at the founding of a new city.

The *emblemata* were wholly gilt, and a good deal of the gold still remains.

Ptolemy Euergetes conquered the Seleucidae and became master of the Cyrenaica in the year 239—238 B.C.; so this Oenochöe is probably a few years later than that date. It passed into the collection of M. Beulé soon after its discovery, and is described by him in the *Journal des Savants*, 1862, p. 162.

Less important examples of this fabrique in the Berlin and Louvre Museums are inscribed with the names of other members of the Lagidae dynasty, namely Arsinoe, wife of Ptolemy II., 285—247 B.C., and Cleopatra, wife of Ptolemy VI., 181—146 B.C.

Some smaller uninscribed specimens are to be seen in the British Museum—e.g. a cup from Naucratis and an *alabastron* from Tel-el-yahoudeh, in the Egyptian Delta: others were found in various tombs in Cyprus. Since writing this I have heard that Mr Budge has recently secured for the British Museum some fine examples of this Ptolemaic pottery with incised inscriptions.

Returning to Mr Lewis' vase, the incised inscription is $\beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\omega\varsigma\ \pi\tau\omicron\lambda\epsilon\mu\alpha\iota\omicron\upsilon\ \phi\iota\lambda\omicron\pi\alpha\tau\omicron\rho\omicron\varsigma$ —"the vase of the King Ptolemy Philopator," at least so I think it must be interpreted. This form of vase-inscription is quite abnormal, as it is not

usual to put the owner's name on Greek or Egyptian pottery. The nearest thing to it is a class of incised inscriptions, scratched on early pottery from the *temeni* of various temples at Naucratis, dating from the 7th and 6th centuries B.C. These vases were in many cases marked as belonging to certain temples by scratching on them the word "I am," followed by the name of the deity in the possessive case; e.g.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΟΣ ΕΜΙ,
"I am [the cup] of Apollo."

Legends on coins of the Ptolemies and other kings are similar in form to the inscription on Mr Lewis' vase: e.g. a fine gold Octodrachm of Ptolemy IV., the owner of this vase, struck in Cyprus, has the legend ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΥ ΦΙΛΟΠΑΤΡΟΣ, some word for "coin" or "money" being understood.

From the palaeographical point of view the vase inscription is peculiar from its semi-cursive, semi-lapidary form. The round sigma (C for Σ) is used, while on Ptolemaic coins the older form always occurs.

The cursive ω is used for Ω, and the rounded €̄, with the central stroke separated from the curve. The alpha in two instances is peculiar, being open at the top: the other characters are of the usual lapidary type; so the whole inscription comes midway between the papyrus and other pen-written types and those on coins and marbles of the Ptolemaic period.

In Crete the C for Σ occurs very early, e.g. on a coin of Gortyna of the 7th or 6th century B.C.; but in other places it is not used, except in cursive writing, till considerably later than the date of this vase.

Mr M. R. JAMES read a second part of his paper "ON FINE ART AS APPLIED TO THE ILLUSTRATION OF THE BIBLE," etc. This has been printed with the paper read 13 May (see above, pp. 31-69).

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