

THE FINDING OF NAUKRATIS.¹

By W. M. FLINDERS PETRIE.

To give an account of a fruitful six months of work, within the space of an ordinary meeting paper, is scarcely to be expected; and as moreover a full description of the results will, I hope, appear shortly and so be accessible to all concerned, it seems hardly to be required. I will therefore rather attempt to render to this Institute a brief outline of the produce of my excavations and studies at Naukratis,—such an outline as will suffice for the general information of antiquaries who are not specialists, and will at the same time be a notification to specialists of anything which they should enquire into in more detail. I will not attempt therefore to encumber this outline with any arguments or authorities, since all those will be found fully stated in the volume now being prepared.

That the site in which I have been working with Mr. Griffith for the Egypt Exploration Fund is the city of Naukratis, no one has yet attempted to dispute. The position agrees, within two or three miles, with that given by Ptolemy, and is in accordance with the indication of the Pentingerian map of Herodotus, Strabo and Pliny, all the literary authorities who say anything relating to its position. The history of the town agrees with that of Naukratis, an archaic Greek city dating from the seventh century B.C. and extinct about the third century A.D. The great potteries here tally with the importance of the potteries of Naukratis. The archaic temple of the Milesian Apollo is named by Herodotus, and the temple of Aphrodite by Athenaeus. Finally in this town have come to light the only decree of the city of Naukratis, and the only autonomous coin of Naukratis, yet known.

¹ Read at the Monthly Meeting of the Institute, Nov. 5th, 1885.

The place was wholly unknown to any Europeans, archæologists, or travellers. Yet it is only five miles from Teh el Barnd station, and anyone can visit it in a day from either Alexandria or Cairo. I hope that we may in future have the pleasure of seeing any true antiquary who may have the good fortune to visit that fascinating country, where though we cannot agree with Canning that each man that you meet is a mummy, yet each hillock you see is a city; and Roman remains are so unpleasantly abundant that the explorer may pull to pieces a Roman wall to build his own house, with as little remorse as a Saxon embedded Roman tiles in his church.

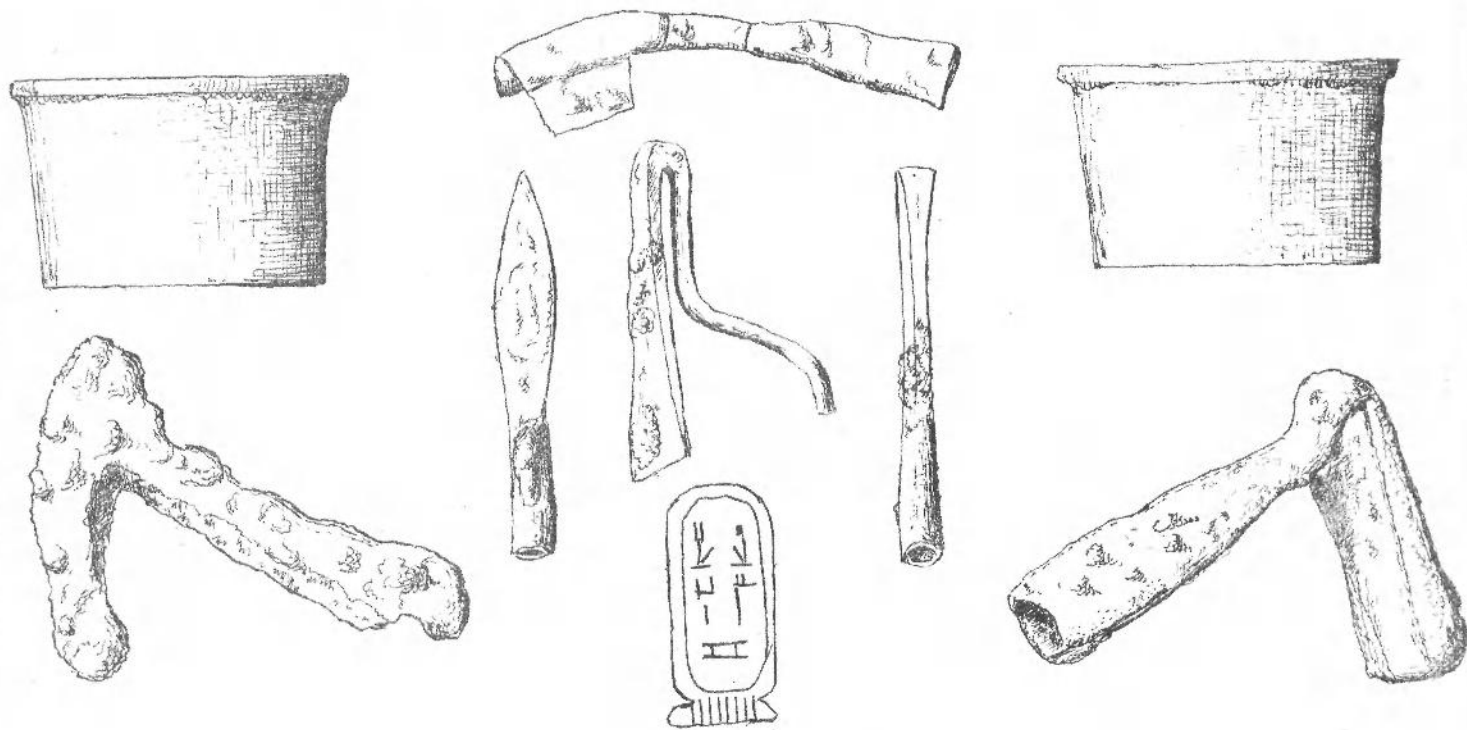
Of the buildings of Naukratis we have cleared the whole site of the temple of Apollo; the first temple about 600 B.C., and the second built on its ruins about 400 B.C. Only a few pieces of stone were left, but enough to recover the details of a peculiar form of archaic Ionic architecture, with a particular lotus pattern, like a prototype of the later Greek honeysuckle, around the top of column.

The temple of the Dioscuri is entirely destroyed, but the site of it, and its temenos or sacred enclosure have been ascertained. The temple of Aphrodite we have indications of, and I hope to open it up within two or three months. The temples of Zeus, of Hera, and of Athena remain to be found. The Pan-Hellenion—the greatest of the temenei of Naukratis, as it is called by Herodotus—we can almost certainly identify with an enormous enclosure on the south of the town; an enclosure larger than Lincoln's Inn Fields, with a wall, which would fill up a London street in breadth and in height to the top of the houses, and as long as the whole of the Strand: all built of large unbaked bricks.

Of later buildings the most important to us is one which is totally destroyed, not a single stone is left of even the foundations, yet what was left—the deposits beneath the foundations—make this one of the most valuable finds of the season. Beneath each corner of the building a square hole was cut in the ground and in it was placed a complete series of Models made for the purpose and buried in sand; models of all the ceremonial vessels used at the founding, models of the tools used in

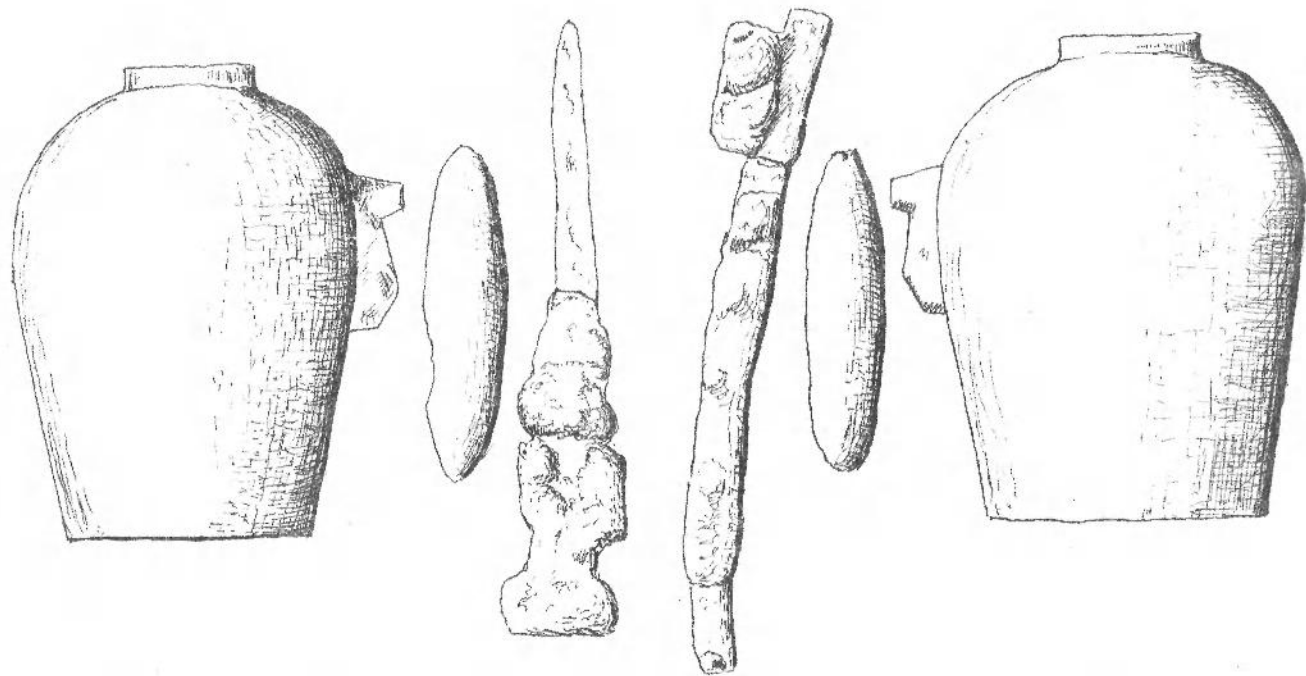
NAUKRATIS, FOUNDATION DEPOSITS OF PTOLEMY II.
MODELS, CEREMONIAL VESSELS AND TOOLS.

PLATE I.



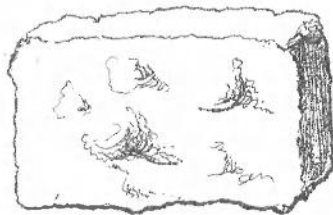
NAUKRATIS, FOUNDATION DEPOSITS OF PTOLEMY II.
MODELS.-CEREMONIAL VESSELS AND TOOLS.

PLATE II

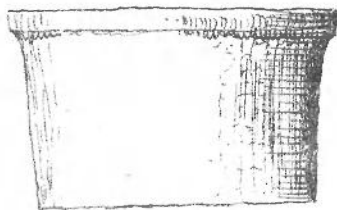


NAUKRATIS, FOUNDATION DEPOSITS OF PTOLEMY II. SAMPLES OF MATERIALS, ETC.

PLATE III.



Iron



Gold



Silver



Lead



Copper



Green glazed pottery.



Mud-brick.



Turquoise



Jasper



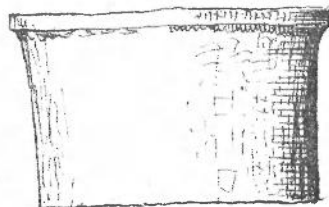
Lapis Lazuli



Agate



Turquoise, Obsidian,
 Jasper, Lapis Lazuli.



constructing the building, and samples of the materials employed in the building, together with the founder's name, Ptolemy Philadelphos, inscribed in hieroglyphics on a slip of lapis-lazuli. No such series is known before; a few scattered objects have been dug up by Arabs in different places, and sold without a history or a name; and we can only recognise what they have been now that we have a series of foundation deposits found entire. Each of the four sets had been more or less damaged in the destruction of the building, although buried in fine white sand, but from all the sets I have been able to restore a series entire for the British Museum. The others will appear in Egypt, America, and Germany. Such a find may I think be called an epoch in our knowledge of ancient customs, and small antiquities; we shall know what to look for in future, and where to wish for it under a building, and even after the building is destroyed.

Naukratis was the Greek Hong Kong and Birmingham in one: the treaty-port where they had their factories and imitated the work and arts of their early masters the Egyptians. The place to which they brought the iron ore from Elba, and smelted it, and made chisels and axes and hoes, arrow heads, spears and swords. This took place as early as the sixth century B.C.; and in Ptolemaic times they made fish hooks of iron largely. Copper ore was also brought there and smelted, and a silver worker's house was found while I was there.

Pottery was one of the principal trades of the place, and we have found quantities of broken bowls of certain types which were scarcely known elsewhere, and which were therefore undoubtedly made on the spot. The value of the digging of Naukratis to our knowledge of ancient pottery promises to be great, as here we have what no Greek city can shew us, a regular stratification growing at the rate of four feet in a century, and embedding in it the pottery of each decade in regular order. A most interesting branch of this trade is that of the glazed statuettes and scarabæi. Anyone who knows our National collection at all will remember the multitude of small glazed figures found in Greek tombs in Rhodes, and elsewhere about the south-west of Asia Minor. These figures are evident imitations of Egyptian work, but yet

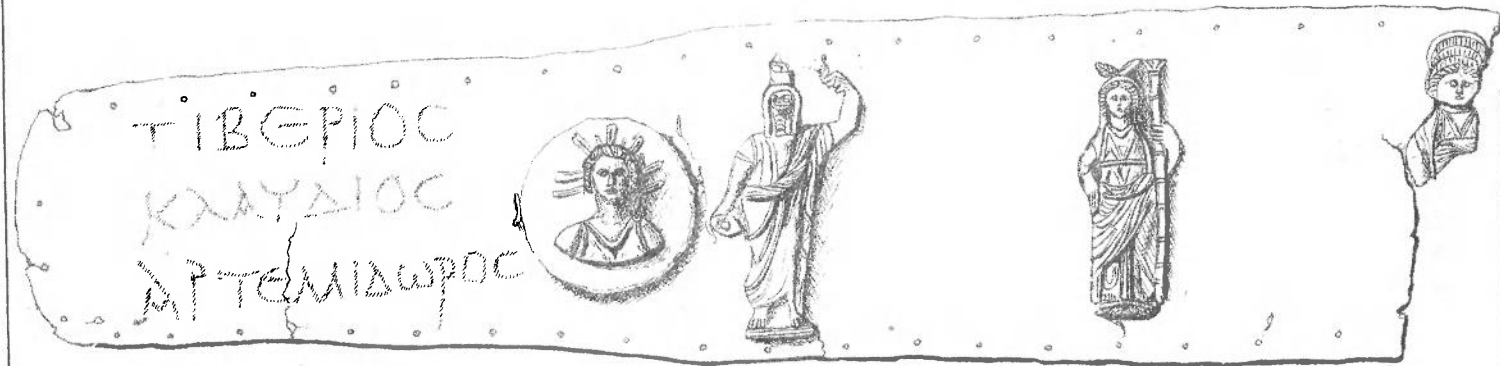
with different motives, different treatment, and somewhat different material. Where they came from has not yet been settled, and they have sometimes been credited to that general resource of uncertainties, the Phœnicians. Now, here at Naukratis I have found not only exactly the same figures, the same subjects, the same scarabæi, as have been found at Kameiros, but also the factory in which they were made, and hundreds of the moulds used for making them. Such a complete clearing up of a whole class of objects perhaps rarely falls to the lot of any exploration. This factory was destroyed in 570 B.C., as shown by the Egyptian kings' names found on its scarabæi. I hope that you will shortly see the parallel objects from Rhodes and from Naukratis placed side by side in one case in the British Museum.

For Greek inscriptions our work has answered well. Eight inscriptions on stone have been brought over or copied, and many fragments besides. But the more important class of inscriptions are those incised on bowls and pottery which were dedicated in the temple of Apollo. These inscriptions range over a space of nearly a century, from about 600 B.C. down to 520 B.C., a time but scantily represented hitherto. Fragments of hundreds of bowls have been dug out from the ancient rubbish hole, or rather trench, which was behind the archaic temple of Apollo. One of the most valuable is exhibited here, the dedication of a great *lebes* by Phanes, the Halikarnassian traitor who deserted his countrymen, and his adopted nation, and went over to the Persians. There can scarcely be a doubt, that this vase was his gift to the temple.

Besides the inscription from the temple of Apollo some were obtained from the temenos of the Dioscuri serving to identify that temenos, and others, with the names of Hera and of Aphrodite.

Of later times I would call your attention to a fine piece of gold repoussée work of the first century A.D. and some other ornaments which were found with it. The figures on it represent Helios, Hygeia, Ceres, and probably Juno; but unhappily half of it is lost.

One of the best results for scientific archæology is the large collection of weights which have been obtained.



The weights of the Egyptian and Assyrian standards far outnumber all the examples hitherto known, while the Greek weights will add largely to the published lists. Over 500 weights in all have been collected this season, and the examination and treatment of them have occupied a large part of my time in England. They will be completely published in weight, form, and material, in the account of Naukratis.

The thousands of small objects brought over prevent my noticing them in detail. The general classes are, beside those already mentioned, archaic alabaster statuettes, archaic terra-cotta figures, terra-cotta of the finest Greek period, and terra-cotta of the decadence and Roman times. Miscellaneous painted Greek pottery of all ages from the seventh century B.C. down to the latest decadence of patterns and appliqué figures in the Roman age. Bronzes of Egyptian types, though probably made by Greek workmen to a great extent. Calu stamps of Roman age. A large quantity of Greek coins, both early silver and Ptolemaic copper coins. Many rude stone figures of various types have been found; they are generally of about the third century B.C., so far as I could observe. The forms are horsemen; cocks; seated figures, holding a drum with both hands on the knees; squatting figures like a cat seated, but with fingers and a human head; and female figures lying on the side, with a head-rest beneath the head; these last are the commonest, and in good specimens, they are reclining on a striped stuff couch, with lotus flowers painted on the slab behind them, and with a child standing by the feet, probably votive offerings after childbirth. Fragments of sculpture are often to be found in the ruins, indeed the whole ground in the Temenos of Apollo is thick with chips of fine white marble. Only within the last four years the natives have found two large inscribed stelae in that enclosure, with long inscriptions, and smashed them up for stone. Chips of statues, of carving, of inscriptions, are continually turning up, and one of the most curious pieces is part of a limestone model of a large building of mud bricks; the position of the windows which are in the upper floor only, and blank walls with narrow ventilators in the lower floor, agrees exactly with the form of a

great block of chambers in the Greek Temenos, and perhaps it may be part of a model of that building which seems to have been storehouse and fort in one.

The prospects for future work at Naukratis are excellent, that is if the British public will back it. About half of the site has been cleared already by the Arabs; but half, and that containing four temples, is still unopened ground. To clear it all entirely would be a matter of ten or twenty thousand pounds. but by trenching through it we may hope to come to some valuable sites. We have the great advantage in one respect that the Arabs dig largely here every year, perhaps 200 working for a couple of months; and so a quantity of objects is found without the cost of working. As I pay the same for things whoever finds them, this is a great saving to the Fund and we can step in at any time if a valuable site is reached and work it ourselves. The principal management of the work will be in the hands of an excellent Greek scholar Mr. Ernest Gardner, fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, who has prepared himself by the examination and allotment of all the antiquities which I brought over this year, and by treating all the inscriptions found. Thus a short acquaintance with the place will enable him to carry on the work as well or better than anyone else could do it. It is perhaps the most valuable site for Greek archæology of the early historic period that will ever be found; in Greece the rocky slopes do not preserve things in their original positions, whereas in Egypt the perfect flat of the Delta mud allows every thing to lie where it falls; and the quick washing away of the mud brick houses, and accumulation of dust, soon buries everything out of sight in a close fitting soft bed of mud, which has formed on an average a foot of deposit every twenty-five years. If this city be not thoroughly and scientifically worked out, and that soon, (for in another generation it will all have disappeared by Arab diggings) the loss to our knowledge of archaic Greek life, trade, manufactures, and history will be irreparable.

A few words respecting an object here exhibited which is not from Naukratis but from an Egyptian capital about

six miles from there. This bronze head of Horus, under the form of a hawk, crowned with the disc of the sun, has been the figure-head of one of the sacred barks belonging to a temple; such a shrine as was carried in processions on the shoulders of the priests. As a piece of bronze work it is among the best known; but as an example of rich inlaying with gold it is unequalled; no figure in the British Museum, Louvre, Turin, or Bulak, approaches the magnificence of this example. It will grace the British Museum in future, as I have presented it to the Egyptian Department.

I need hardly say that all important objects, and complete sets of all classes of things, from Naukratis, have been presented to the British Museum by the Egypt Exploration Fund; other museums at home and abroad have benefited by the large number of duplicates which were not necessary for our great collection. A great part of the objects selected may be now seen in the first vase room in a table case. The stone tablets and sphinxes which I discovered last year at Tanis have now been placed in the great Egyptian Saloon near the entrance.