

# BULLETIN OF THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

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Queen Elizabeth, Engraving by Crispin van de Passe (ca. 1565-1637)  
George Nixon Black Fund

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SUBSCRIPTION ONE DOLLAR

Each cup has a shallow bowl, six and three-quarters inches in diameter, surmounting a circular base of baluster form over a convex, bell-shaped base.

The bowl's outer surface is plain except for the engraved heraldic device in mantling for the Town of Boston, Lincolnshire (Fig. 4). As this engraving is in the manner of the late seventeenth century, it may indicate the period when the cups were acquired as part of the Corporation's plate. The inner surface of each cup has engraved divisions. A central boss of repoussé, or hammer work in low relief, contains heroic heads, one with a helmet (Figs. 2, 3).

The knopped stem and base were decorated with typical designs of the Elizabethan period, strap-work in chased lines with panels of fruit and lion masks. The lower member of the base is delicately engraved and has applied circular plate or "cut-card work" with scalloped edge. Each cup has four hallmarks for London, 1582. All surfaces have a charming, pale color in the gilding. The diameter of the bowl is  $6\frac{3}{4}$  inches, the foot is  $3\frac{7}{8}$  inches, and the height is  $5\frac{1}{8}$  inches. The weights of the two cups are identical and together they weigh 29 ounces, 5 pennyweights.

EDWIN J. HIPKISS

### The Tomb of Hetep-heres I

READERS of this *Bulletin* will remember Dr. George Reisner's exciting account of the discovery at Giza in 1925 of the tomb of Hetep-heres I and of the subsequent intricate labor in piecing together the furniture of that queen who was the mother of Cheops, the builder of the Great Pyramid.<sup>1</sup> The study of the contents of the tomb continued over a period of some twenty-five years and resulted in the recovery of still other important objects in addition to the bed and bed canopy, the box of bracelets, the carrying chair and arm chair described by Dr. Reisner. During this time it has also been possible to secure for the Museum of Fine Arts reproductions of the most important pieces which have been reconstituted from the original material and which are exhibited in the Cairo Museum. In the case of the queen's inlaid box for the canopy curtains, the fragile gold sheets and inlays have been assembled on a newly constructed wooden box. The pottery vessels have also gradually assumed their original shapes as the innumerable broken bits were slowly fitted together. However, it has only been possible so far to restore in drawings the second, elaborately inlaid arm chair (Fig. 8), a gold-covered chest with its lid decorated with a design in faience inlays (Fig. 9), and a leather bag which contained walking sticks. It is hoped that the gold sheets and inlays from these pieces in the

<sup>1</sup> *B.M.F.A.*, Special Supplement to Vol. XXV (May 1927): XXXI (October 1928), pp. 76 ff.; XXVII (December 1929), pp. 83 ff.; XXX (August 1932), pp. 36, 88.

Cairo Museum can soon be put together by Ahmed Youssef of the Egyptian Department of Antiquities who did such a beautiful piece of work in restoring the curtain box.

The final report which will include, in addition to the material from the tomb, a discussion of the Fourth Dynasty royal family as well as a corpus of the pottery, stone vessels, and mud seal-impressions from the Giza Cemetery, was completed by the writer in 1951 and is being published by the Harvard University Press.<sup>2</sup> Only the remarkable plans devised by Dr. Reisner for the recording of this exceedingly fragile material and its painstaking removal layer by layer from the tomb made it possible to prepare a drawing as in Fig. 1, showing how the furniture had been placed around the alabaster sarcophagus before the doorway and shaft were sealed up with masonry. Dr. Reisner's achievement represents a high point in the technique of twentieth century excavation.

Cheops, or more probably his representative at the reburial, made a food offering to his mother's spirit, apparently not realizing that her body was no longer in the alabaster sarcophagus. The thieves who broke into the original tomb seem to have destroyed the body in their search for jewelry. Hetep-heres must have been buried beside her husband, Sneferu, at Dahshur. The daring of the thieves in attacking so recent a burial at a time when the royal house had reached a culminating point in absolute power, can only be explained by the fact that all activities were now concentrated on the new cemetery at Giza, leaving probably only a few funerary priests in charge at Dahshur.

It is obvious that the Vizier was faced with the dangerous problem of convincing the king that little damage had been done and that the burial should be transferred to Giza. The Vizier and Overseer of all the King's Works, who at this time was building his own tomb at Giza, was Hemiunu. He is known to us from his seated statue at Hildesheim, which is one of the masterpieces of Old Kingdom sculpture, and the remarkably similar head in relief from his tomb chapel in our collection (Fig. 4; Acc. No. 27.296). He looks shrewdly capable of dealing with the robbery of the Queen Mother's tomb or of supervising the construction of the Great Pyramid which would seem to have been one of his duties.

The new chamber, hastily hewn in the rock at the bottom of a hundred foot shaft, seems to have been smaller than the original tomb. Unfinished cuttings in the floor and walls indicate that it had been intended to make it larger. There was not room to set up the bed canopy, and its poles and cross-beams were stacked beside the curtain box on the lid of the empty alabaster sarcophagus. The carrying chair was placed on top of the bed

<sup>2</sup> *A History of the Giza Necropolis*, Vol. II. *The Tomb of Hetep-heres. The Mother of Cheops: A Study of Egyptian Civilization in the Old Kingdom*. The drawings illustrated in Figs. 1, 8 and 9 were prepared by me for this volume and will appear in it.

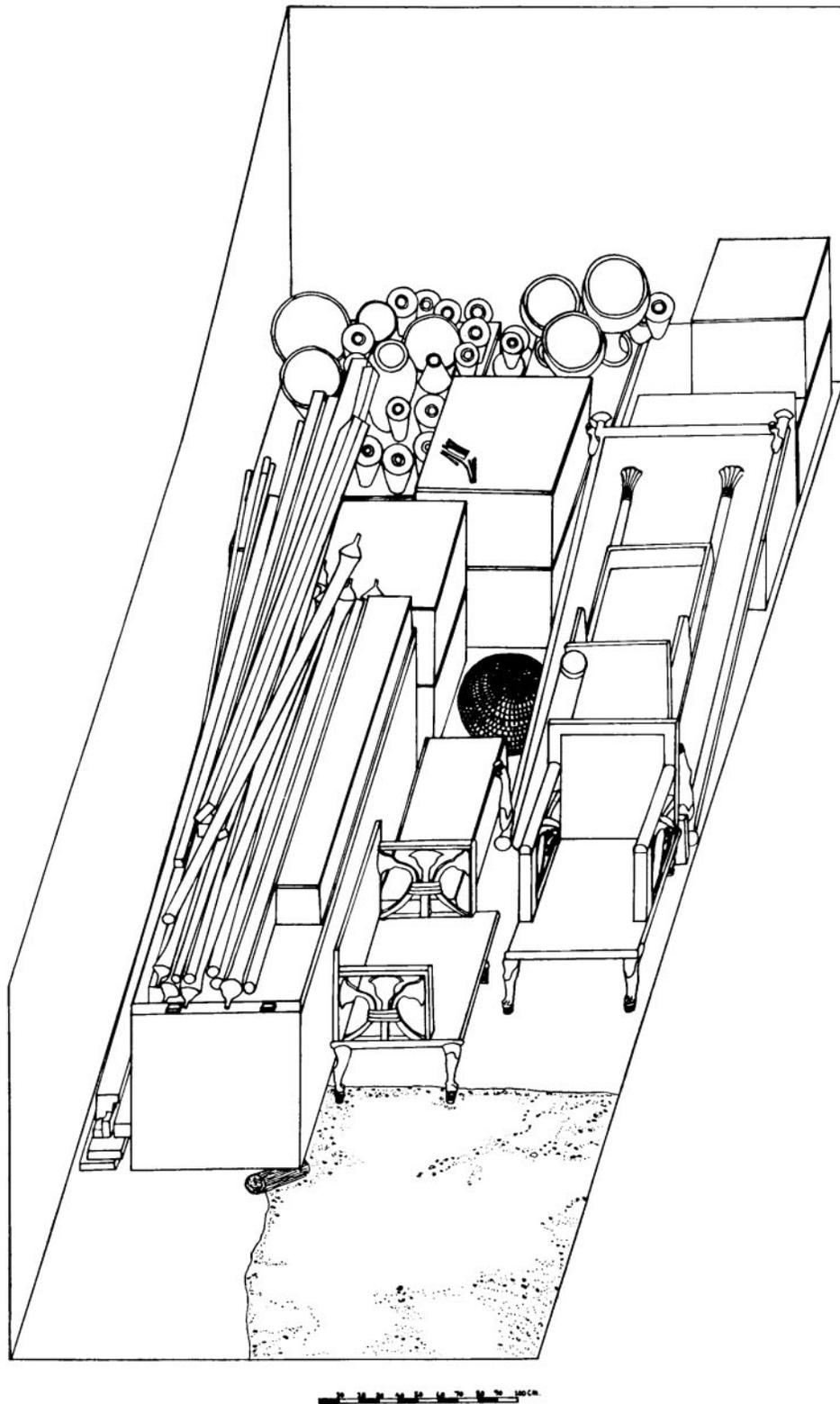


Fig. 1. Burial chamber of Queen Hetep-heres with furniture restored to its original position around alabaster sarcophagus

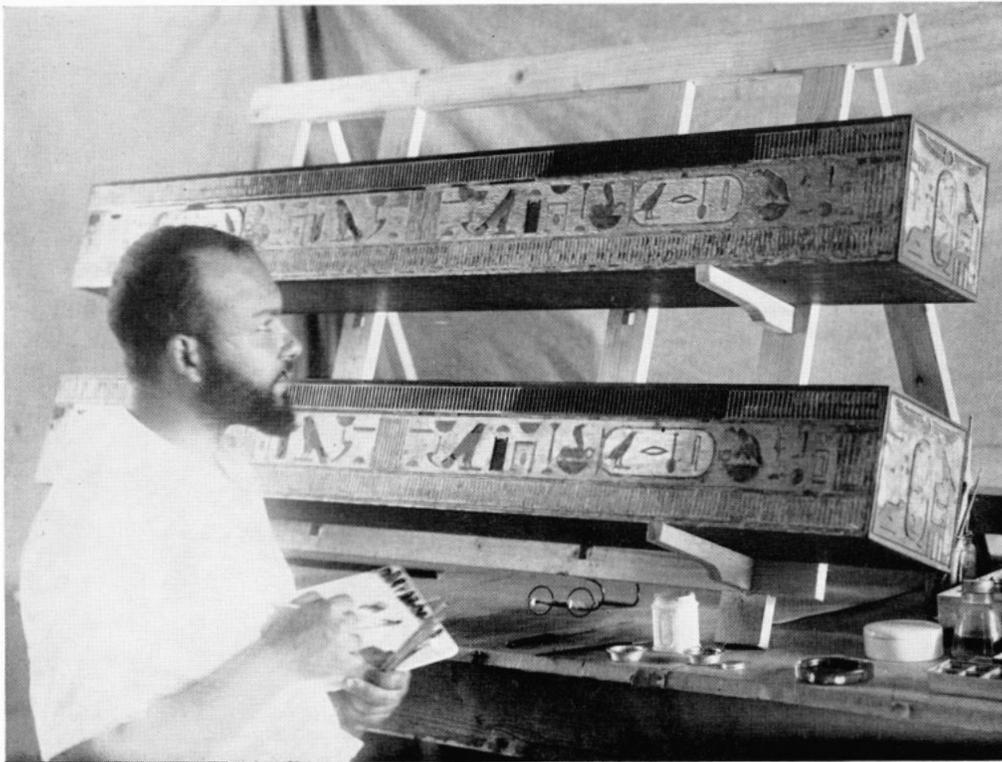


Fig. 2. Ahmed Youssef at work on the reconstruction of the curtain box for the Cairo Museum (above) and the copy for Boston (below)



Fig. 3. Condition of the decayed furniture in tomb when discovered



Fig. 4. The Vizier Hemunu: relief in Boston; (Acc. No. 27.296).

Head of seated statue in Hildesheim

which had been set upside down in front of the boxes of linen on which the pottery had been piled up. Two arm chairs were crowded into the remaining space inside the door, while beside the sarcophagus stood a richly inlaid gold-covered chest into which had been crammed a mixed collection of objects from the plundered tomb — the box of bracelets, another box with ointment vessels, the head-rest, gold and copper toilet articles and razors, a bead garment (?), the ewer and basin, and several stone and pottery vessels. This chest may originally have been intended for the

queen's garments.

The objects from this unique royal burial of the Fourth Dynasty (about 2650 B.C.) were naturally assigned to the Cairo Museum. However, in 1937, a representative selection of duplicate pieces of pottery was presented to the Museum of Fine Arts. It had taken a long time to assemble these from the mass of fragments, since very few pieces remained unbroken. They constitute the most complete corpus of Fourth Dynasty forms so far recovered. The pottery was made for the tomb and most of it remains unfinished without the



Fig. 5. Pottery from the tomb of Hetep-heres: (Acc. Nos. 37.2686, 2691, 2701, 2703, 2705, 2712)

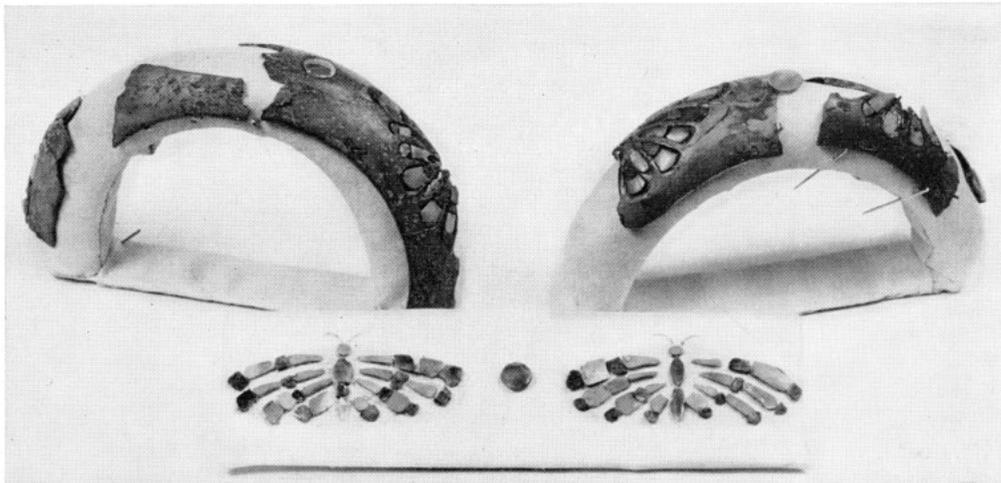
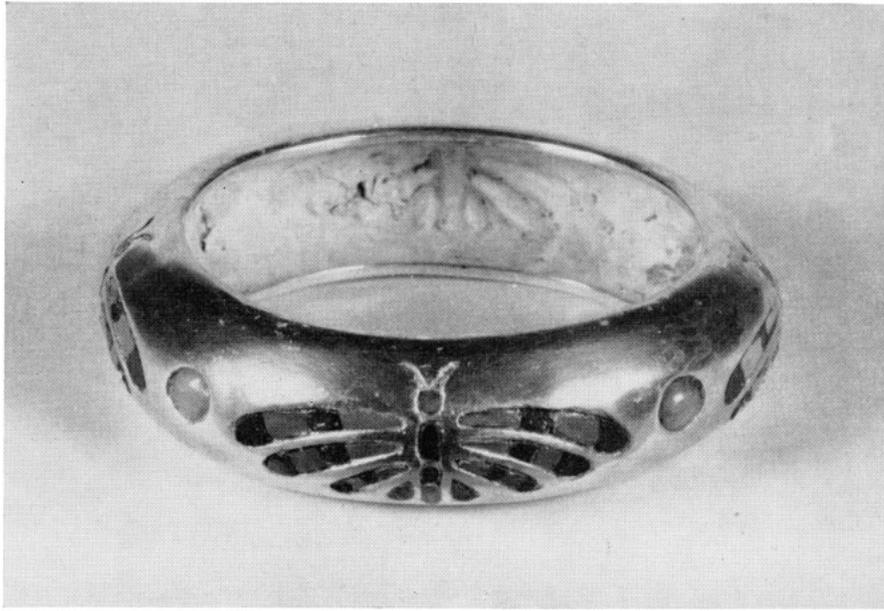


Fig. 6. Electrotype copy of one of silver bracelets (Acc. No. 52.1837), and fragments of original silver and inlays (Acc. Nos. 47.1699-1701)

final application of a red wash or burnishing. It shows no signs of damage or wear as it would certainly have done had it been in practical use for some time. However, it represents the vessels used by the royal household in the reigns of Sneferu and Cheops. Great basins and heavy cooking bowls and jars are found side by side with lighter tableware. Some of the more interesting shapes are illustrated in Fig. 5; (Acc. Nos. 37.2686, 2691, 2701, 2703, 2705, 2712). Since at Harvard Camp the pottery had only been provisionally mended, much more work was required to strengthen the joining of the parts after the pieces reached the Museum. This work has now finally been completed and the best pieces have been placed with other fine examples of Old Kingdom pottery from Giza in a case opposite the repro-

ductions of the furniture.

Of even greater interest than the pottery is the fragmentary portion of one of the original silver bracelets, with a butterfly design of carnelian, lapis lazuli and turquoise inlays (Fig. 6; Acc. Nos. 47.1699, 1700, 1701). This was presented by the Egyptian Department of Antiquities to the Expedition when it closed down its forty years of work at the Pyramids in 1947. There were originally twenty of these bracelets. Sixteen were well preserved and have been placed on the restored wooden cylinders in the reconstructed gold-covered box in the Cairo Museum. An electrotype copy of one of the bracelets has been prepared by Mr. Young's Research Laboratory and is exhibited beside the fragmentary original (Fig. 6; Acc. No. 52.1837).

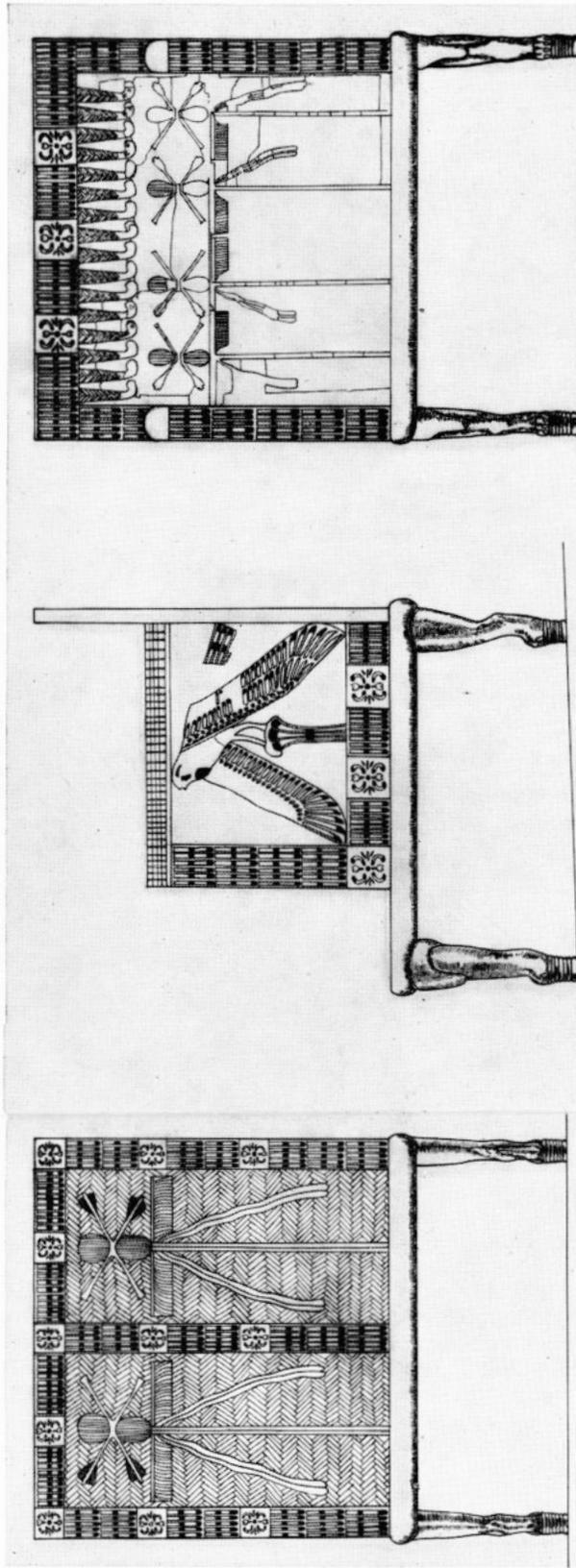


Fig. 7. Reconstruction of gold-covered arm chair inlaid with faience

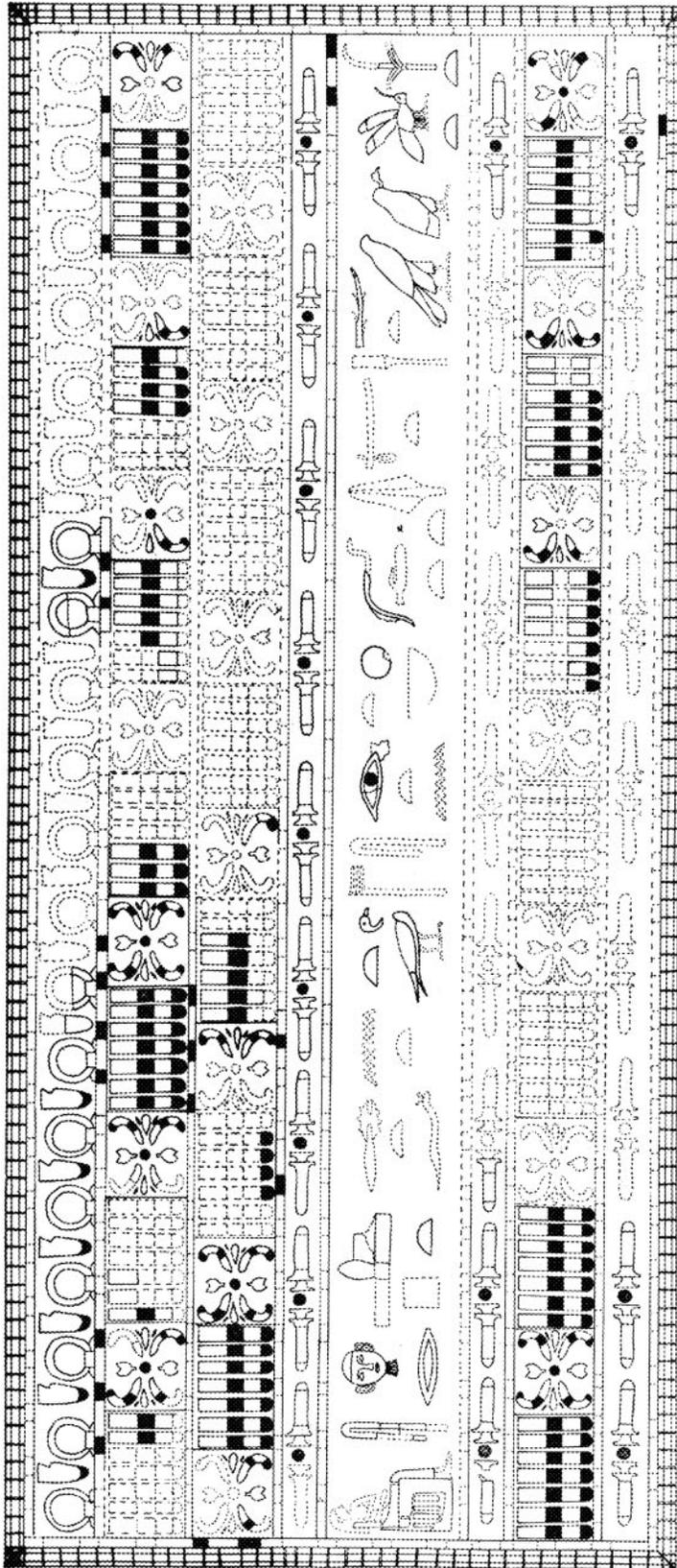


Fig. 8. Reconstruction of inlaid lid of gold-covered chest

In 1939, Ahmed Youssef, who had been lent to the Expedition by the Cairo Museum, completed the difficult task of replacing the thin gold sheets and faience inlays on a modern copy of the box for the curtains of the bed canopy. The inscriptions give the titles of the queen's husband, Sneferu, the first king of Dynasty IV. The box has so far only been published in an article by Reisner in the *Illustrated London News*, November 18, 1939, pp. 757-758. At the same time, Ahmed Youssef prepared a reproduction of the box for the Boston Museum (Fig. 2; Acc. No. 39.746). Unfortunately the wood was affected by the climatic change from Egypt to America and had to be removed from exhibition in the Museum after a short time and allowed to stand for a considerable period to determine whether further stress would be exerted on the plastered and gilded surfaces. Mr. Young has now treated these again and the box has recently been returned to exhibition. Together with the decoration of the footboard of the bed, of which a reproduction is exhibited nearby, this box gives a vivid impression of the skill of the Old Kingdom designer. Even more elaborate are the hawks, feather patterns, and flowers from the second arm chair (Fig. 7) and the inlaid designs on the lid of the chest which contained the bracelet box (Fig. 8). In the summer of 1952 I was able to examine this material again in the Cairo Museum with Ahmed Youssef and to check the inlay patterns and gold sheets with my restored drawings. It was proposed then that Ahmed Youssef should complete the work of restoration and it is hoped that he may soon be able to turn his ingenuity to the chair and chest, which are the most richly decorated and showy pieces of all the furniture.

A glance at the photograph of the tomb of Hetep-heres when it was first opened (Fig. 3) shows clearly how hopeless looking was the condition of the decayed material, with the wood inside the gold casings of the furniture either shrivelled to a fraction of its original bulk or else deteriorated to the consistency of cigar ash. All the more amazing was Reisner's achievement in recovering the original appearance of virtually every one of the objects. In comparison, the famous equipment of the tomb of Tut-ankh-amen was in sound condition, as well as being some 1300 years more recent (1353 B.C. as against 2650 B.C. for Hetep-heres). The Hetep-heres furniture has attracted considerably less attention than that of Tut-ankh-amen, partly because there were fewer pieces and partly because it belonged to a time of simpler living conditions. However, it is fully representative of the first great period of Egyptian achievement. The fine proportions and boldly designed decoration reflect the same spirit as the great portrait sculpture of Dynasty IV, the wonderful wall reliefs, and the painting as exemplified by the famous Medum Geese.

WILLIAM STEVENSON SMITH

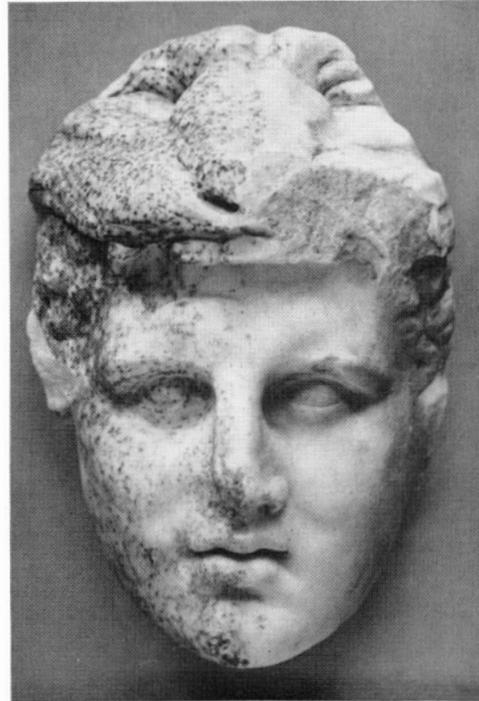


Fig. 1. *Head of Alexander* Otis Norcross Fund

### Alexander — Heracles: A Preliminary Note

THE marble head which is here presented<sup>1</sup> is not a newcomer to the Museum (Fig. 1). It paid its first visit to Boston as early as in the summer of 1910, then on loan from Mrs. John Newbold Hazard of Peacedale, L. I., and after various vicissitudes was again deposited here by Mrs. Hazard's daughter, Mrs. D. H. Reese, from whom it has now been recently acquired.

It was bought in Sparta in 1908 and went through a preliminary cleaning process in the British Museum in the same year before being brought by its first owner, Professor W. Romaine Newbold, to Philadelphia. The importance of the head, clearly envisaged by its learned owner, was soon confirmed by specialists in the field. In 1909 Professor William N. Bates published it<sup>2</sup> for the first time. It was briefly presented by Dr. L. D. Caskey in this *Bulletin* in the following year and was further discussed by two other scholars in subsequent years.<sup>3</sup>

To their description of the head there is little to add, and a summary of earlier observations may suffice as a presentation. It is somewhat under life-size and made of Pentelic marble which on the

<sup>1</sup> Head of Alexander; 52.1471; Otis Norcross Fund.

<sup>2</sup> W. N. Bates, "A head of Heracles in the style of Scopas," *AJA*, XIII, 1909, pp. 151-157.

<sup>3</sup> L. D. Caskey, "A Marble Head of Heracles," *Bulletin M. F. A.*, Vol. VIII, 1910, pp. 26-27; W. W. Hyde, "The Head of a Youthful Heracles from Sparta," *AJA*, XVIII, 1914, pp. 462-478; *id.* in *Olympic Victor Monuments and Greek Athletic Art*, Wash. 1921, pp. 305-320; R. G. Kent, "The Baffled Hercules from Sparta," *Proceed. of the Numism. and Antiquarian Soc. of Philadelphia*, vol. 29, pp. 85-104 (later produced in a corrected reprint, 1923).