

Antiquity

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Notes

For reasons of convenience our usual comments on Recent Events are substituted for the customary Editorial Notes.



With reference to a note on the 'pebble giants' of California in our December number (ANTIQUITY, 1932, VI, 479), Mr ARTHUR WOODWARD, of the Los Angeles Museum, writes to us under a misapprehension. Since other readers may have misunderstood what we said it will be better to make this quite clear by a restatement. We had no intention of implying, as Mr Woodward thought, that the *ground-figures* were of natural origin; they are obviously the work of man. We merely suggested that other (natural) features visible on the air-photograph seemed to point to the fact that the artificial ground-figures were of no great age. But we do not in the least desire to press a view based merely upon a photograph if it is not acceptable to those familiar with the actual topography.

Mr WOODWARD says:—'As to their age, I do not know at the present time. Judging by the "desert varnish" or patina upon the smooth, water-worn, wind-whipped and sun-darkened pebbles constituting the peripheral ridges outlining the figures, I should judge that these figures had been there for many years'.

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In *The Times* of 28 January, Mr Arthur Upham Pope writes about recent discoveries in Persia and the adjoining regions. It is here, and especially in the region to the north of Persia, that the most important discoveries of the future will be made. We are particularly interested in one paragraph which we quote in full :—

‘ M. Alexander Marustchenko, a brilliant young Russian archaeologist, has been for several years excavating at Askabad, directly over the border of northeast Persia. Here were found nearly 100 prehistoric mounds, some clearly dating from at least the beginning of the 4th millennium B.C., and producing pottery of the Susa I type ’.

Should this number of ANTIQUITY meet the eye of M. Marustchenko and his colleagues, we hope that he will communicate with the Editor, as we should like to publish some report of his results in a future number of ANTIQUITY, for the benefit of archaeologists outside the Soviet Union. (Incidentally we suggest that *The Times* map-draughtsman might learn a little political geography. On the map accompanying Mr Pope’s article, both Armenia and Turkestan are marked ‘ Soviet Russia ’. Armenia is no more Russia than Scotland is England).



A car patrol of the Egyptian Army discovered, in the Nubian desert about 40 miles northwest of Abu Simbel, two hieroglyphic inscriptions with the names of kings of the 4th and 12th dynasties. A later visit by Mr Englebach resulted in the discovery of quarries from which the ancient Egyptians obtained the stone used for their statues.

‘ Every variety of diorite was found, from the black-green stone of which the royal statues of the old kingdom were made, to the black speckled with white frequently used for bowls and vases. Half-dressed blocks are lying about, evidently abandoned owing to the discovery of flaws, and a ramp has been identified up which blocks were evidently rolled for loading on sleds. The whole site is more than a mile square. Eight miles further north other cairns have been discovered with inscribed stelae recording expeditions sent out to obtain some precious material, possibly amethyst, from the desert ’ (*The Times*, 28 February, p. 13). We hope that vertical air-photographs will be taken of these sites.



A jar containing 40 lb. in weight of gold and silver Turkish coins, mostly gold, and therefore representing a very considerable sum of

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money, has been discovered buried in a field near Skoplje. It is believed that it was buried by a Turkish landowner during the first Balkan War. (*The Star*, London, 21 March).

We quote this find, not because it is, presumably, of any direct archaeological interest, but because it is an admirable modern parallel to the hoards of gold objects, Roman and medieval coins and jewelry which are unearthed from time to time in this country. Such hoards are used by historians as evidence of disturbed conditions. They are most numerous at periods when the raids of Picts and Scots took place and, later, during our own Civil War. The Turkish instance provides a close parallel in our own day.



There has been quite a spate of hoards recently—or is it that the more enlightened attitude of most modern States results in completer preservation? This, perhaps combined with the effects of greater publicity for archaeology, generally prevents such finds from going into the local jeweller's melting pot, the fate of the famous Battle hoard and many others.

Thus the discoverers of gold bracelets at Towednack (*ANTIQUITY* 1931, VI, 96) and of gold British coins at Chute and Westerham (*ib.* 1928, II, 90, 228–9,) all received their full reward from the State. So too did the agricultural labourer who found a magnificent collection of late medieval ornaments and coins at Kropp, in the province of Skaane, Southern Sweden. (*The Times*, 23 March, p. 13).



A correspondent writes:—‘In *ANTIQUITY* for March, p. 99, Capt. T. W. M. Johnson refers to willow-herb growing on slag heaps, and the following information may therefore be of interest.

‘Cannock Chase lies about 4 miles southeast of Stafford and during the war period, 1914–18, the greater part was covered with military camps. In consequence many natural features were altered—for instance, roads were made where tracks had previously existed, high ground was cut down and hollows filled up, filter beds were made for the drainage system and in general great quantities of slag were used for these purposes. Since the camps have vanished I have noticed during the summer time great masses of willow-herb in bloom on the

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sites where slag has been dumped. Each year the growth gets more dense but does not seem to spread to those parts of the Chase which were not subject to human occupation. Before the war willow-herb was unknown on the Chase’.



Mr W. F. JACKSON-KNIGHT writes :—‘ Mr G. D. Hornblower offers (ANTIQUITY, March 1933, p. 94f) the attractive proposal that the name of Homeric Troy, which I had connected (*ibid.* 1932, VI, 454, etc.) with the root TRO apparent in maze names, and the name of Tros, the foundation hero, also, may have referred originally, if in fact they contain connotations of “shutting”, to the closing of trade routes, commanded where they crossed by the fortress also called Ilion. I add that the name Ilion is capable of a similar interpretation, by comparison with the verb εἶλω, for which Liddell and Scott give “*to roll up or pack together into close quarters . . . , κατὰ τείχεα λαὸν ἐέλσαι, to roll up the host and force it back to the walls, Il. 21.295 . . . in pass. also, to go to and fro, . . . to wind, turn round. . . .*”. All the most relevant meanings therefore seem available in this word ; and, since its root EA or AA is identified in ἱλιγξ, ἱλιγγος, ἱλιγγιάω, the etymological connexion with Ilion should not be impossible’.



There is no end to the possibilities opened up by such speculations. At least there would be no end if there were not also a blue pencil. Before using it however we are going to join in ourselves in the Trojan game, after which the present tournament must close. The last instance comes from Portugal and is quoted from FOLKLORE, December 1932, XLIII, 454 :—‘ Just east of Cabo de Espichel a Roman, pre-Roman and supposed Phoenician settlement, built on sand-dunes [*sic*] forming the outer shelter of the Setubal bay [in Portugal], has partly sunk into the sea. The place is called Troia, and on the highest point of the present dunes stands what may be a phallic column, ten feet high, plainly visible from the opposite shore’.