Hidden Treasures: An Unpublished Collection of Egyptian Antiquities Housed in Nottingham Castle Museum

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An unpublished collection of Egyptian antiquities housed in Nottingham Castle Museum

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INTRODUCTION

In Nottingham, a city in the midlands of England with no notable connection to Egypt or Egyptology, is a surprising and little-known collection of over 400 Egyptian artefacts. The main focus of the largest museums in Nottingham is primarily its own regional history and archaeology. An Egyptian collection, therefore, is an interesting and unexpected possession, yet it has received little attention in terms of research, scholarship, and display.

My thesis attempts to shed light on a small, unpublished subcollection within Nottingham's Egyptian collection, namely the donations of the Reverend Greville Chester. These artefacts are currently in storage, where they have spent most of their time since their donation in the 19th century BCE. My thesis aims to complete the first step of making the collection more accessible – completing proper documentation of the artefacts. The current museum database entries are often vague and inaccurate. My catalogue aims to improve on these, attempting to identify, date, and provenance each of the artefacts. There is currently a charge of £40/hour + VAT for anyone wishing to access objects not on display but I have kindly been granted a fee waiver in exchange for the results of my research being inputted into the *Baseline Database*. Nottingham is my hometown and I have visited its museums several times over the years, yet was never aware of an Egyptian collection of this size. I am grateful to have been allowed access to this interesting and underexplored collection and hope to work with it further in the future.

In chapter I, I outline my research aims and the methodologies I have applied in order to achieve them alongside a brief introduction to Nottingham's Egyptian collection. Chapters 2 and 3 set some background context for the artefacts. Specifically, Chapter 2 looks at the origins of Nottingham Castle Museum and explains why the Egyptian collection is so out of place. Chapter 3 then looks at the work of the donor, Reverend Greville Chester, a prolific antiquities dealer passionate about educating the working classes through museum collections. The main body of the thesis is included in Chapter 4, where the artefacts are discussed and analysed in depth. Chapter 5 concludes with some of my personal thoughts on the future of Nottingham's Egyptian collection.

1

RESEARCH AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 Nottingham's Egyptology collection and the *Baseline Database*

My initial enquiry as to the number of Egyptian artefacts housed in the collections of Nottingham City Council Museums and Galleries Service (NCMG) returned 431 database entries. This was not refined by date and so includes all objects from Egypt, both ancient and modern.

The various museum collections owned by NCMG are organised on a system called the *Baseline Database*. The database was created in the 1990s to inventory and database Nottingham's collections and has over 750,000 entries.[1] It is unfortunately inaccessible to the public; in its entirety it can only be accessed on-site at Brewhouse Yard Museum by approved staff members.[2] Researchers making enquiries as to the contents of the collections are sent a Word document with the main information for objects, but not the complete database entries.[3] The entries for the Egyptian collection can be vague, particularly regarding dating and provenance. Often entries simply list "Egypt" or give an extensive date range that equates to the entirety of the pharaonic period. Egyptology is not a major part of NCMG collections, forming only 0.1% of the database, and thus, not a priority in terms of research. They also, understandably, do not have a specialist Egyptologist on staff which explains some of these inaccuracies.

Nottingham's Egyptian collection is comprised of five main sub-collections, most of which were acquired in the early years of Nottingham Castle Museum (NCM).[4] The Reverend Greville Chester donated the first collection of Egyptian artefacts at the opening of the museum in the 19th century CE. He donated a total of 112 artefacts, though not all of them ancient Egyptian. The second sub-collection has 83 objects acquired through NCM sponsoring digs of the Egyptian Exploration Fund (now the Egyptian Exploration Society). Many of these artefacts come from Sir Flinders Petrie's excavations at Naukratis which were the subject of

[1] NCMG 2014: 77.

[2] Just over 1% of the database entries are accessible on the heritage website Europeana, though the entries are more limited than the database proper and usually include only the museum number, brief description, and a single photograph of the object.
<https://www.europeana.eu/en/collections/organisation/1482250000004511916-nottingham-city-museums-and-galleries> (accessed 01/04/23).

[3] The reasoning for this is that the entries contain sensitive information, primarily value estimates, that the council wishes to be kept private.

[4] The information regarding these sub-collections is available within the NCMG database, but my thanks and an acknowledgement are due to University of Nottingham PhD candidate, Frances Potts, for informing me of the sub-collections and their respective acquisition histories. The background and early history of Nottingham Castle Museum is the subject of her upcoming thesis (see bibliography). Frances has been incredibly kind in discussing her research with me and I am immensely grateful for her knowledge in helping my own research, particularly in Chapter 2.

the British Museum project, 'Naukratis – Greeks in Egypt'.[5] The associated spotlight exhibition, 'A Greek in Egypt – The Hunter from Naukratis', was based for a time at the University of Nottingham Museum where objects from Nottingham's own collection were displayed.[6] Other sites include Tanis and Abydos. There are additionally 135 objects from Petrie's and others' excavations with the British School of Archaeology which came into the collection via the Duke of Portland, who subscribed to these digs and then donated them to the museum. These objects were mainly donated in the 20th century CE and come from sites such as Harageh, Lahun, and Beni Hassan. The fourth sub-collection is comprised of 43 palaeolithic flints from Thebes given by Montague Porch, a British colonial officer.[7] Finally, there is a set of Coptic textiles from a Mr Alfred Good.

The collections is diverse, containing shabtis, ceramics, scarabs, jewellery, amulets, coins, reliefs, papyrus fragments, funerary food offerings, clothing, and even the mummified remains of two cats, a hawk, and a small child.[8] There is a supposed ring from the tomb of King Seti I, an example of a so-called 'Fayum mummy portrait', and a fragment of linen wrapping cloth taken from an event held in 1889 at University College, London where Sir Wallis Budge unwrapped mummified human remains.[9] Some of the most recently acquired objects include 8 artefacts donated from police lost property in 1985, which according to the database were found in the garden of a Mrs Levy wrapped in a newspaper dated 1968.[10] There is no cohesive theme, location, object type, or provenance for the collection.

1.2 Existing research and scholarship

Other than the Naukratis exhibition mentioned, most of Nottingham's Egyptian artefacts have never been on display. 20 objects were selected in the early 2000s to be used for a small exhibition entitled 'Archaeology Revealed' alongside items from the larger archaeological collection.[11] This exhibition was inspired by viewing sessions organised for second year Fashion and Textile Students at Nottingham Trent University.[12] There is also an initiative entitled 'Access Artefacts' which loans objects to schools and community groups for handling sessions, and some of the Egyptian artefacts have been used for this purpose.

The collection has similarly not been the focus of much scholarship or research. Some of the artefacts from John Garstang's 1902-3 excavation season at Beni Hassan feature in his monograph, *Burial Customs of the Ancient Egyptians.* The shabtis and some of the scarabs were

[5] *Naukratis – Greeks in Egypt* project page <https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/projects/naukratis-greeks-egypt#about> (accessed 25/02/23).
[6] *A Greek in Egypt: The Hunter from Naukratis* advertisement <https://www.visit-nottinghamshire.co.uk/whats-on/a-greek-in-egypt-the-hunter-from-naukratis-p682061> (accessed 24/04/23).
[7] NCM 1905-70-112.
[8] Cats: NCM 1933-281/1-2; Hawk: HH-X 1095; Child: NCM 1892-51.
[9] Seti I ring: NCM 1925-92; Fayum portrait: NCM 1911-86; Linen wrapping cloth fragment: NCM 1970-46.
[10] NCM 1986-690-697.
[11] HH-X 1345, NCM 1879-74, NCM 1879-76; NCM 1879-211/2, NCM 1879-218, NCM 1888-4, NCM 1891-158, NCM 1892-51, NCM 1901-591, NCM 1901-593, NCM 1901-594, NCM 1914-46/1, NCM 1914-57, NCM 1919-1137, NCM 1927-96, NCM 1933-276, NCM 1933-278, 1933-280/1, NCM 1933-280/5, NCM 1933-280/6.
[12] This information comes from a discussion with Ann Inscker, curator of Archaeology and Industry. The exhibition was not published.

researched by an Egyptologist named G. B. Deakin. The database entries for these artefacts include his translations and descriptive notes.[13]

As a comparatively small regional collection it is understandable that the collection has received little attention. NCM from its origins has been focused on works of British craftsmanship and the fine and decorative arts, thus, a collection of Egyptian antiquities is noticeably out of place.[14] Most of the objects in the Egyptian collection were acquired during the period of NCM's history when it was striving to form a permanent collection of its own and as such, there was no cohesive collecting policy. This was also prior to the formation of specialist museums in Nottingham. As the sole museum, NCM could not be selective in its acquisitions. Were a collection of Egyptian artefacts offered to NCMG today, they would most likely be rejected and directed to a more suitable museum collection. Additionally, museums in the East Midlands are collaborative, and it is the nearby Leicester Museum and Art Gallery which was chosen to be the centre for Egyptology due to its larger and more cohesive collection.[15] The lack of information easily available regarding the collection furthers its invisibility.

1.3 Object selection

Although Nottingham's collection of over 400 Egyptian antiquities is comparatively small when looking at the inventories of larger British museums, it is still too sizeable a collection to be studied in depth within the scope of a master's thesis. A smaller subcollection is instead the focus of this thesis, namely the donation of 86 artefacts by the Reverend Greville John Chester in 1879.[16]

This subcollection was chosen for several reasons. Firstly, it is a cohesive set of objects, having been donated by one man. The other four subcollections that make up the majority of Nottingham's Egyptian collection were rejected on the following grounds.

The 135 objects donated by the Duke of Portland amount to too large a collection. The donations of Montague Porch and Alfred Good, of mainly palaeolithic flints and Coptic textiles respectively, were not selected due to the homogeneity of object types. Chester's collection, in comparison, contains a variety of small artefacts representative of the collection as a whole. This is also why I did not choose a selection of artefacts based upon object type or provenance, as I felt it would not illustrate the diversity of the collection across these two factors. The Naukratis artefacts acquired via subscription to the Egyptian Exploration Fund have already been studied in depth.[17] Chester's collection, in contrast, has not been

[13] I can find no evidence that this work was ever published. Ann Inscker believes Deakin may have simply researched these objects for NCMG in exchange for viewing the artefacts without charge.
[14] The museum's origins are discussed in Chapter 2.
[15] Leicester Museums and Galleries 2019: 6, 17-8
[16] This amounts to only 45 primary museum numbers as George Harry Wallis, first curator at NCM, classified artefacts collected in a group, such as the coin moulds and faience roundels, by group rather than individual artefact.
[17] As mentioned, these objects were researched as part of the British Museum's Naukratis project. Some 152 objects from Naukratis in Nottingham's collection are included in the British Museum's online database. <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/search?keyword=naukratis&keyword=nottingham> (accessed 24/04/23). They were also studied for the project's online research database, which is now archived at:

researched extensively. None of his donations are currently on display and less than half ever have been. The shabti figurines and scarabs were included in Deakin's research but none of Chester's collection has ever, to my knowledge, been published.

It should be noted that not all of Chester's collection will be studied. He made later donations of a combined 26 Coptic textiles in 1888 and 1891, however, these will not be discussed due to their later donation date and lack of object variety. Within Chester's initial 1879 donation, 22 artefacts have been excluded from study as they are outside the realm of ancient Egypt, either temporally or geographically.[18]

Table 1.1 Objects excluded from study

NCMG database number	Object description
NCM 1879-56/57	Two glass flasks from Lanarka, Cyprus
NCM 1879-58/223	Two Christian pilgrimage bottles from Alexandria
NCM 1879-60	19th century CE kohl pot from Cairo
NCM 1879-65	Ancient Greek terracotta mask from Capua, Italy
NCM 1879-66	Terracotta antefix from Capua, Italy
NCM 1879-68/69	c. 8th – 9th century CE Coptic papyrus fragments
NCM 1879-71	16th century CE commemorative Pope medal
NCM 1879-73	19th century CE carnelian necklace from Cairo
NCM 1879-76	Eight Roman weaving instruments from a tomb in Malta
NCM 1879-77	Indo-Portuguese ivory figurine
NCM 1879-226	Head of Dionysus from Capua, Italy
NCM 1879-227	Head of Medusa from Capua, Italy

With the elimination of the above objects, 64 artefacts are left for in-depth study.

1.4 Research aims

The overarching aim of my thesis is to bring attention and increase accessibility to a small, regional Egyptology collection. The first step in making a collection more accessible is to have a comprehensive and informative catalogue of its contents.[19] The database entries for the artefacts are at best, vague and general, and at worst, incorrect. Therefore, it is my primary aim to identify, date, and provenance the artefacts where possible and update and correct their database entries with my findings. To achieve this, the artefacts have been directly studied in person by myself. The catalogue for this thesis (**Appendix**) is largely representative of what the updated entries will include, though some further explanations may be added to

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20190801105436/https:/www.britishmuseum.org/research/online_research_catalogues/ng/naukratis_greeks_in_egypt.aspx> (accessed 24/04/23).

[18] I have included objects as early as Predynastic Egypt and as late as Roman Egypt. I am using the dates given in the database and other than a cursory inspection, these dates have not been extensively investigated.

[19] Serpico 2006: 6.

accommodate a non-Egyptological audience. I further hope that my catalogue can be made accessible online.[20]

1.5 Research methodology

The *Baseline Database* is the initial source of information for each artefact but, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 4, it is not always correct. The database entries are largely based on the 1879 *Annual Report* which includes the initial description for each object written by the museum's curator, George Harry Wallis, upon their donation. This was most likely informed by Chester's own comments when offering the artefacts to Nottingham.[21]

Unfortunately, information from Chester directly, in the form of journals or letters, does not exist for these artefacts. Therefore, for many of the objects, date and provenance have been reconstructed by researching object typology, i.e., dating objects based upon chronological and stylistic developments and using any geographical variations noted to find the origin of artefacts.

Chester's donations in other museum collection have been consulted when relevant. References to comparative artefacts usually come from the British Museum's collection. This is for several reasons. Firstly, the British Museum has one of the most comprehensive online databases that is easily searchable by a number of parameters.[22] Their Egyptian collection is also extensive and Chester regularly sold and donated artefacts to the institution.[23]

In the catalogue, the dimensions are my own measurements as they are often missing or incorrect in the database. Date ranges vary by object type, aiming to be as defined as possible. For certain objects, such as the coins, I have been able to date with certainty to a range of a couple of years through matching them with securely dated examples of the same coin type. For others, particularly the small, mass-produced objects such as the amulets, only a broad date range can be provided. I have used the photographs from the database where they exist, but the quality is not always sufficient. The colours in the database photographs are not always true to life and finer details are often obscured. In these cases, my own photographs are supplemented, allowing a clearer look at the artefacts. Transliterations and translations of any text are my own.

No scientific analysis has been carried out on the artefacts. This means that possible remains, such as in the faience kohl pot (**6**), could not be tested, though this may be a possibility for

[20] There is currently no concrete plans for this, but I am in conversation with NCMG of how this might best be achieved and platformed.

[21] Though no correspondence exists for my particular set of artefacts, two letters from Chester to Wallis are in the museum's archives (no reference numbers). The first describes an Indo-Portuguese ivory figurine (NCM 1879-77) Chester donated to the museum and his intention to donate some papyrus fragments. The second was sent alongside said papyrus fragments (NCM 1879-68/69) and gives a brief description and date. In both, Chester writes with familiarity to Wallis. These letters suggests Chester provide information regarding his donations and had a friendly relationship with Wallis.

[22] *The British Museum Online Collection* <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection> (accessed 14/06/23).

[23] See Chapter 3 for Chester's association with the British Museum and other museums.

some of the more interesting objects in the future. Similarly, visual inspection alone has been utilised to identify materials.

2

THE ORIGINS OF NOTTINGHAM CASTLE MUSEUM

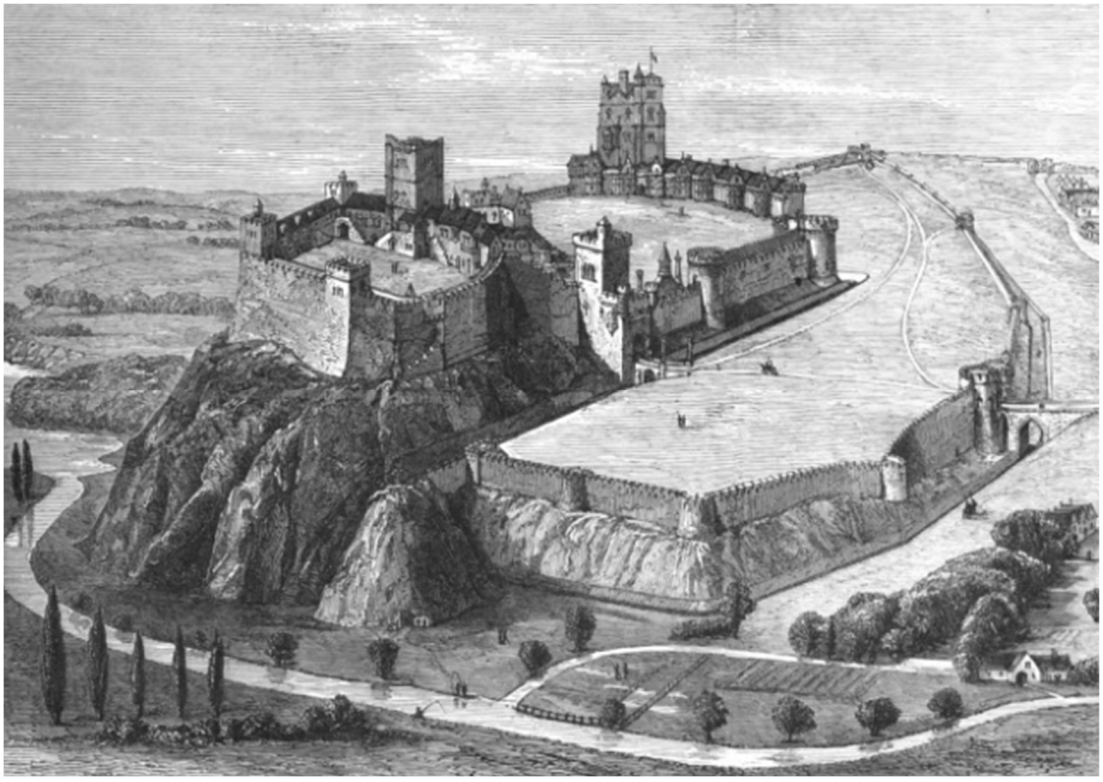

Fig. 2.1 A Victorian reconstruction of the medieval Nottingham Castle (drawing: *The Illustrated London News*, 6th July 1878: 20)

2.1 Before the museum: Norman castle, medieval legends, and ducal mansion

Prior to its renovation as a municipal museum, Nottingham Castle was simply, as the name suggests, a castle. The first structure built upon the rocky promontory now known as 'Castle Rock' was a Norman motte-and-bailey castle built by William the Conqueror in 1068.[24] This initial modest wooden design was eventually rebuilt in stone in the 12th century CE and was added to extensively throughout the medieval period when it served as an important royal fortress and sometimes royal residence.[25] It is during this period that the infamous legends of Robin Hood take place, with the villainous Sheriff of Nottingham occupying the castle.[26] The majority of this original castle met its end in 1651 following the bloody and devastating English

[24] Gott 1979: 3.
[25] Armitage 2015: 18.
[26] Armitage 2015: 21.

Civil War when it was burned to the ground to prevent it from being used as a military stronghold in the future.[27]

The second phase of development came in the 1670s when William Cavendish, the 1st Duke of Newcastle, and later his son, Henry Cavendish, constructed a ducal mansion on the remains of the burnt castle. The elaborate Italianate building, however, lost its appeal following the industrialisation of Nottingham. The city at this time was characterised by impoverished slums, second only in size and poverty to the infamous contemporary slums of India under the British Empire's rule.[28] It was targeted during the 1831 Reform Riots as a "resented symbol of power and oppression"[29]. The disenfranchised poor of Nottingham rose up and burnt the mansion down[30] in response to the Duke's opposition to potential electoral reform which aimed to extend the vote.[31] In retaliation, the Duke refused to rebuild the mansion and left the scarred husk of the structure for all to see for over 45 years.[32]

2.2 A temporary art exhibition to educate the masses

Whilst the castle remained derelict, a temporary exhibition was held in Nottingham's Exchange Building. This was primarily a result of two factors: the 1845 Museums Act and the enthusiastic work of the civil servant Sir Henry Cole. The Museums Act allowed municipal boroughs in England to raise money for the establishment of museums of art and science.[33] In 1871, Cole received a letter from Mr W. G. Ward, mayor of Nottingham, asking for advice regarding the establishment of a museum in Nottingham, and in his response, Cole advocated for the museum and offered the help of South Kensington Museum (SKM).[34]

Cole firmly believed in the importance of educating the working classes through museum collections, a popular opinion at the time.[35] The Industrial Revolution had transformed British society from a largely agrarian model to one centred around vast urban centres with associated workforces.[36] This shift produced more leisure time for the working-class communities, but Victorian paternalism left the middle classes concerned that they were using this new freedom in ways "which were not conducive to their own well-being or that of society at large".[37] The foundation of a museum would help to "inspire high quality design and production for the lace industry", Nottingham's foremost industry.[38]

[27] Armitage 2015: 46.
[28] Armitage 2015: 90.
[29] *Story of the Castle* <https://www.nottinghamcastle.org.uk/the-castle/history-of-the-castle/> (accessed 16/08/22).
[30] Gott 1979: 13.
[31] Smith 2004: 156.
[32] Armitage 2015: 119.
[33] Kelly 1977: 77.
[34] Cole and Cole 1884, vol. 1: 355.
[35] Kelly 1977: 77.
[36] McMenemy 2008:24.
[37] McMenemy 2008: 25.
[38] NCMG 2014: 55.

Thus, a temporary exhibition was opened on 14th May 1872 in the Exchange Building.[39] The central focus of the exhibition was fine arts and British manufactured objects, particularly examples of lace. At the insistence of Cole, the Education Committee had lent "Pictures, works of Art, and Lace" for the exhibition.[40] SKM had additionally loaned objects from their collection, primarily paintings and examples of modern English workmanship.[41]

The exhibition was a massive success, drawing in 78,382 visitors from its opening in just 7 months.[42] It was praised as "one of its most useful education institutions; and not only so, but a means of occupying the leisure of the working classes in a rational and temperate manner".[43] This success furthered the desire to establish a permanent museum.

2.3 The Midlands Counties' Art Museum

During a visit to Nottingham in 1872, the architect T C Hine had suggested to Cole that the castle, or more accurately its remains, could be a potential site for the new museum.[44] The fact that the ducal estate was transformed into a museum with a goal to educate the working class population of the city is ironic given the Duke's adamance to deny the very same population the vote less than 50 years prior.[45]

The new museum was officially opened on 3rd July 1878 by the Prince of Wales as the Midlands Counties' Art Museum.[46] The museum's first curator was George Harry Wallis, who had served as a supervisor for the temporary exhibition in Nottingham.[47] One of Wallis' main objectives was to source objects for the new museum. Nottingham's museum did not have the benefit of being born from a private collection or so-called 'cabinet of curiosity' like some of its major contemporary museums, such as the British Museum, the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, or the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge.[48] After the temporary exhibition had ended, SKM had retrieved most of their loaned objects.[49] Therefore, without a substantial permanent collection of their own, Nottingham needed to make a call for donations. Wallis sent out letters to "Noblemen and Gentlemen" requesting their assistance.[50] By October 1878, 293 donors were listed in the *First Annual Report of the Castle Museum Committee*. Donations mainly came from aristocrats' and other individuals' personal collections as well as private businesses.

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[39] *First Annual Report of the Nottingham School of Art and Exhibition by the School of Art and Exhibition Committee* 1873.
[40] *First Annual Report* 1873.
[41] Cole and Cole 1884, vol I: 356.
[42] Cole and Cole 1884, vol II: 342.
[43] *Report of the Museums Site Committee* 1873.
[44] Cole and Cole 1884, vol I: 356.
[45] Armitage 2015: 90, 119.
[46] *First Annual Report of the Castle Museum Committee* 1878.
[47] *George Harry and Muriel Wallis* <https://www.nottinghamcastle.org.uk/characters/george-harry-and-muriel-wallis/> (accessed 28/06/22).
[48] The British Museum originated as the private collection of Sir Hans Sloane, the Ashmolean Museum as the collection of Elias Ashmole, and the Fitzwilliam Museum as the collection of Viscount Richard Fitzwilliam. Saumarez Smith 1989: 6-7.
[49] *First Annual Report of the Castle Museum Committee* 1878.
[50] *Ibid.*

The museum's collection retained the focus of its predecessor's, i.e., fine art and examples of British manufacture, especially lace. Despite this, Wallis could not afford to be selective initially and accepted anything that was given.[51] It is during this influx of donations that the museum's first Egyptian artefacts were acquired, donated by the Reverend Greville Chester.

2.4 Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery

In present day Nottingham, the Castle Museum is no longer the sole museum, though it remains one of the most popular. The sites and museums as well as the collections in storage come under the management of the City Council, specifically Nottingham City Council Museums and Galleries Service (NCMG).[52] Each museum focuses on a different subject and the Castle Museum's domain is the history and archaeology of the castle and Nottingham more generally; the legends of Robin Hood and the medieval era; local manufacturing such as lace making; and a fine and decorative arts collection. This is largely consistent with the original aims of the institution.

The museum was closed in 2018 for a £30 million restoration; the restoration faced many setbacks due to the Covid-19 pandemic but finally re-opened on 21st June 2022.[53] For the reopening, new exhibits on the castle's history, particularly the moments of 'rebellion' centred at the site such as the Civil War and the Reform Riots, were produced.[54] Unfortunately, this re-opening was short lived and just 5 months later the site was shut again with the independent Castle Trust attributing the close to the pandemic, tripling of energy costs, and low visitor turnout.[55] Although criticism of the high entrance fees and two trustees stepping down from their post after a controversial incident surely played a part.[56] For now, the castle remains closed, though it is set to open in June 2023 at the time of my writing.[57]

[51] Though a bequest of fossils was removed temporarily to the Natural History Museum.
[52] NCMG 2014: 3.
[53] Toulson, G. 19th June 2021. Nottingham Castle reopening: everything you need to know, *NottinghamshireLive*. <https://www.nottinghampost.com/news/nottingham-news/nottingham-castle-reopening-everything-you-5546386> (accessed 14/06/23).
[54] *Story of the Castle* <https://www.nottinghamcastle.org.uk/the-castle/history-of-the-castle/> (accessed 16/08/22).
[55] Murray, J. 21st November 2022. Nottingham Castle closes its doors a year after £33m revamp, *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/nov/21/nottingham-castle-closes-its-doors-a-year-after-33m-revamp> (accessed 28/01/23).
[56] Adams, G. K. 6th September 2022. Chair of Nottingham Castle Trust to step down, *Museums Association*. <https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/2022/09/chair-of-nottingham-castle-trust-to-step-down/#> (accessed 28/01/23).
[57] Casswell, H., and Barnes, L. 21st March 2023. Nottingham Castle reopening plan confirmed by city council, *BBC News*. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-nottinghamshire-65029926> (accessed 31/05/23).

3

THE REVEREND GREVILLE CHESTER

3.1 Clergyman turned collector

The Reverend Greville John Chester was a prolific 19th century antiquities dealer and Nottingham was by no means the only museum that benefited from his wares.[58] He was a prevalent donator and seller to the British Museum, Petrie Museum, Fitzwilliam Museum, South Kensington Museum, and Cairo Museum to name but a few.[59] The museum of his alma mater, the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, received the most attention.[60] He bequeathed almost his entire collection upon his death to this museum and the Chester Room in the Egyptian Galleries is named in his honour.[61]

Fig. 3.1 Reverend Greville Chester (photo: Whitehouse 2009: fig. 7)

[58] Dawson, Uphill, and Bierbrier 1995: 96-97.

[59] The British Museum's online catalogue lists 1,207 objects donated by Chester and a further 6,887 purchased from him. <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/search?agent=Rev%20Greville%20John%20Chester&view=grid&sort=object_name__asc&page=1> (accessed 14/06/23).

[60] Seidmann 2006b: 27.

[61] Whitehouse 2009: xii.

Chester had worked as a clergyman before illness forced him to retire at age 35.[62] It was common for Victorians to spend their winters in Mediterranean countries, to escape the harsh British winter and to improve their health.[63] As such, Chester travelled almost every winter to destinations such as Italy, North Africa, the Levant, the Americas, the West Indies, Barbados, and most often, Egypt.[64] These trips were not only for health benefits, Chester was one of a number of "clergymen-amateurs who pursued their scientific and artistic interests" through foreign travel.[65]

Though he had been left an income upon his mother's death, Chester mainly financed his trips and purchases through artefact sales to institutions and private collectors.[66] He was praised by his contemporaries for his "natural good antiquarian instinct" which allowed him to acquire "valuable objects at very moderate prices" and became well-known in the Egyptian antiquities trade.[67] He was later commissioned by institutions such as SKM and the Palestine Exploration Fund to purchase from Egypt.[68]

He was respected and sought after for his knowledge by contemporary Egyptologists, archaeologists, and historians. Frederick Alexis Eaton travelled with Chester in 1870 to prepare his traveller's handbook to Egypt.[69] During Sir Wallis Budge's first mission to Egypt in 1886 in the search for artefacts for the British Museum's collection, he was guided around Cairo by Chester, who revealed the network of dealers and collectors he consulted for his own purchases.[70] Wallis Budge commended Chester's eye for antiquities though stated he needed "a little more capital and boldness" to become a truly first-class dealer.[71] Chester was closest with Flinders Petrie, who considered him a friend.[72] The pair met in 1881 during Petrie's first visit to Egypt for his survey of the Giza Pyramids and Chester's supposed 38th visit collecting antiquities.[73] Petrie spoke of Chester regularly in his journals and admired his attention to detail; he donated a shelf of books to him in the Edwards Library, University College London, in thanks for his guidance and encouragement.[74]

3.2 An illegal smuggler or an early Egyptologist?

The most famous artefact associated with Chester is probably the eponymous Greville Chester Great Toe, an artificial cartonnage toe dated to 600 BCE and one of the oldest examples of a working prosthesis, which he sold to the British Museum in 1881.[75] As evident

[62] Seidman 2006b: 29; Whitehouse 2009: xi.
[63] Gold 2020: 69; Reid 2020: 82.
[64] Seidmann 2006b: 29.
[65] Seidmann 2006b: 28.
[66] Seidmann 2006a: 145.
[67] Wallis Budge 1920, vol. 1: 84.
[68] Persson 2012: 7; Seidmann 2006b: 30.
[69] Gold 2020: 84.
[70] Seidmann 2006a: 146.
[71] Wallis Budge 1920: 85.
[72] Petrie 2013: 22.
[73] Petrie MSS 1.1. Though Seidmann (2006a: 145) notes that this number of visits would be a physical impossibility, Chester did visit Egypt many times.
[74] Dawson, Uphill, and Bierbrier 1995: 97.
[75] EA 29996; Jefferson 2019: 217.

in his Nottingham donations, Chester mainly collected smaller artefacts. The Chester Room in the Ashmolean displays small artefacts to reflect this preference. Wallis Budge described how Chester would stride through villages asking if the local inhabitants had any "antikas" to sell.[76] He also explains how Chester cultivated a network of dealers, "the Egyptians loved him, and his kindness, sympathy, and bonhomie endeared him to them".[77] Petrie recounts how he once found Chester "busy with a big drawer of papyri (...), apparently the wastepaper basket of some governor of the Fayoum" and on another occasion, Chester visited Old Cairo to "hunt for Arabic beads in the rubbish".[78] Though Chester always tried to record the provenance of his purchases, he was usually reliant on the second-hand information sellers provided him.[79]

His contemporaries marvelled at his ability to pass through custom houses and convince officials that "his heavy leather bags contained nothing but 'wearing apparel' when they were filled with pottery, bronze statues, stone stelae and even parts of coffins".[80] Wallis stated that "he got into difficulties with the officers of Customs at every port, and baffled them by feigning ignorance of the language and making a judicious use of *bakhshish*".[81] His charming manner often helped him slip past inspections at the border, yet external assistance also facilitated. He was once arrested at Jebel in Syria for smuggling and had his wares confiscated. During the night, however, the border agents sold his collection back to him, accompanied him to the steamer for the next leg of his journey, and wished him a successful trip.[82] Though technically this activity was illegal in Egypt as all artefacts were meant to be directed to the Cairo Museum, we should be careful in labelling Chester a 'smuggler'. The reality saw Egyptian awareness of and involvement in the antiquities trade, even museum staff sold artefacts.[83]

Similar hesitation should be given in underestimating Chester as a mere antiquities dealer or collector in comparison to the early forerunners of scientific Egyptology such as Petrie or Wallis Budge, who clearly held him in high regard. Chester was active in the period before Egyptology was its own established field and so, such a distinction did not yet exist.[84] Édouard Naville, for example, referred to him as a distinguished archaeologist even though Chester had never excavated in the modern sense.[85] Chester worked in the period when the French had the most influence in Egypt and as such, it was harder for the British to conduct large-scale digs.[86] This led to a phenomenon Meira Gold calls "long-distance archaeology" which saw collectors in Egypt operating as indispensable intermediaries for academics back in England.[87] Samuel Birch, for instance, the first Keeper of Egyptian antiquities at the British

[76] Wallis Budge 1920: 85.
[77] *Ibid.*
[78] Petrie MSS 1.1.
[79] Persson 2012: 8.
[80] Wallis Budge 1920: 85.
[81] *Ibid.*
[82] *Ibid.*
[83] Seidmann 2006a: 147.
[84] Gold 2022: 1.
[85] See Gold 2020: 84. No original citation is given.
[86] Gold 2022: 6.
[87] Gold 2022: 8.

Museum and an eminent 19th century Egyptologist, never travelled to Egypt and was reliant on information from people such as Chester.[88]

Chester contributed to academic journals, writing often for the Archaeological Institute and the London-periodical *The Academy*, where he updated readers on his latest acquisitions.[89] He also wrote the first meticulous catalogue for the Egyptian Department at the Ashmolean Museum.[90] Additionally, he was involved in the formation of the Society for the Preservation of the Monuments of Ancient Egypt.[91] This may seem ironic given his position in the antiquities trade which most certainly worsened the preservation of monuments with sites scavenged to meet demand. Yet, Chester would not have seen the irony, antiquities collecting and dealing was not commonly seen as a negative activity in Victorian society. Victorian paternalism argued for the preservation of foreign antiquities in Britain and academic institutions, museums, and archaeologists actively supported antiquities dealers such as Chester.[92]

3.3 Chester, museums, and educating the working class

Chester's donation to the new Nottingham Castle Museum was in keeping with his beliefs regarding museums and the working class. He was incredibly passionate about educating the lower classes and as a reverend, he had re-founded the Sheffield Field Naturalist Society and took young parishioners on country expeditions to teach them local history, geology, and botany.[93] He thought that museum collections should be educational and accessible and was horrified at the condition of the archaeological collections in Oxford which were housed across different locations and often poorly displayed with no systemic record keeping.[94] His donation to an institution expressly founded to educate the working class of Nottingham makes sense though one wonders what his reaction might be to learn that his collection now sits inaccessible in storage and has done for many years.

[88] Gold 2022: 8.
[89] Seidmann 2006b: 28-29; Gold 2020, 69.
[90] Chester 1881a.
[91] Persson 2012: 8.
[92] Gold 2022: 5.
[93] Seidmann 2006b: 29.
[94] Chester 1888b.

4

OBJECT DISCUSSION

4.1 Object type

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Chester mainly collected small antiquities. His largest donation in Nottingham's collection is a shabti figurine which measures just over 19cm in length (**46**). Besides personal taste, I would suggest that this size bias was a consequence of his collecting behaviours. As an individual working with limited funds, Chester would not be able to afford larger, monumental purchases or the costs involved in transporting them back to England. Similarly, smaller artefacts would be easier to pass through customs.

Though all small, there is a variety of object types in the collection (*Table 4.1*). These can be broadly grouped into personal belongings, funerary equipment, and architectural elements. Numismatic objects are the most common.

For my discussion, the objects have been grouped by object type. This broadly follows the collation of the objects within the database, and their original grouping by Wallis upon their donation. There are instances where I have grouped separate catalogue entries on account of object type, i.e., the miniature vessels (**1-3**).

Table 4.1 The collection by object type

Object type	No. of objects	% of objects[95]
Coins and coin moulds	15	23
Architectural elements	11	17
Amulets and pendants	10	15
Pottery	9	14
Figurines (inc. shabtis)	9	14
Scarabs and scarab moulds	6	9
Funerary wrapping and case fragments	4	6

4.2 Pottery **(1-9)**[96]

Miniature vessels **(1-3)**

NCM 1879-59; NCM 1879-61; NCM 1879-62

The *Annual Report* lists three small vessels from "very ancient tombs near the Pyramids of Gezah", specifically a bowl (**1**) and two dishes (**2, 3**). The dimensions listed in the database are slightly inaccurate, the two dishes are given the exact same measurements despite the fact **2** is noticeably larger than **3**. **2** is unfortunately missing but measurements could be taken

[95] All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

[96] These numbers refer to the catalogue entries in the appendix.

from its photograph. This confusion probably arose from their identical descriptions in the *Annual Report* when accessioning them onto the database and possibly, because **2** was already missing at this point. The vessels are listed as terracotta in the database. Whilst the vessels are certainly fired clay, I have identified their fabric as Nile clay.[97] **1** and **3** have the characteristic reddish-brown colour of the clay when fired. A grey core, the result of incomplete oxidisation,[98] is visible in **3**. I have designated both **1** and **3** as Nile B2 clay on account of their coarse appearance and their mineral and straw inclusions. From photographs alone, **2** is coarser and lighter in appearance, leading me to identify it, tentatively, as Nile C clay.

The database simply lists the vessels by their shape, **2** and **3** are interpreted as 'offerings'. I have identified the vessels as miniature vessels. I use the definition put forth by Arias Kytnarová, Jirásková, and Odler in their article on the subject, i.e. small vessels used in the funerary cult which were real containers of symbolic amounts of offerings, stylised in shape, but not exact copies of larger vessels.[99] Miniature vessels are common finds in Old Kingdom tombs and cemeteries, especially Giza, where these examples were found.[100] They have been found in burial chambers, burial shafts, and outside of tombs in enormous quantities in dumps.[101]

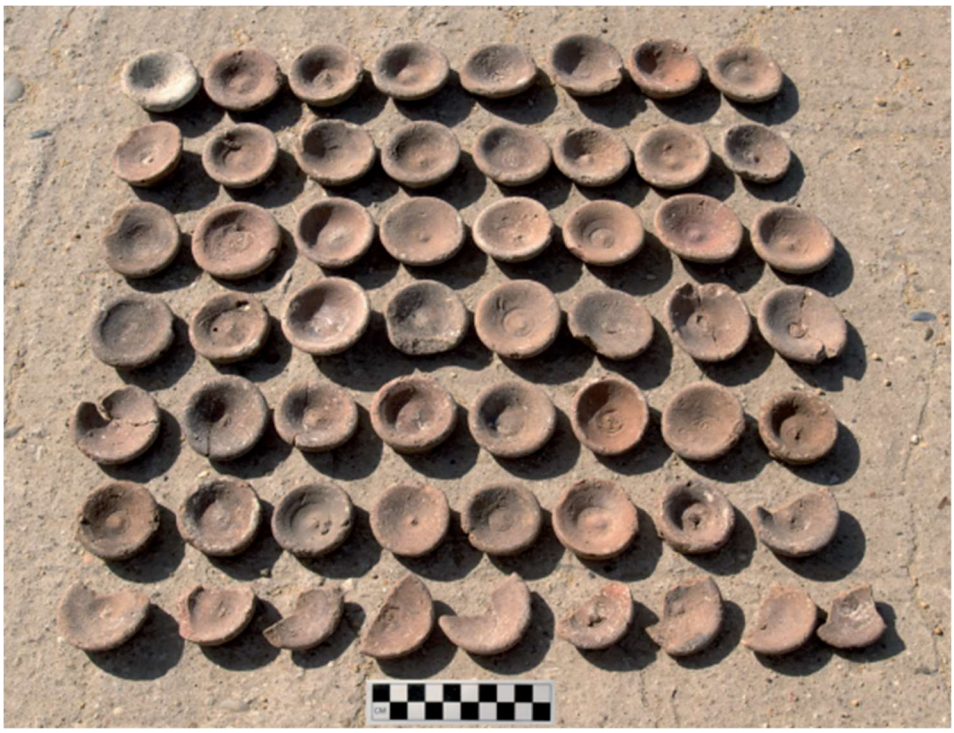


Fig. 4.1 Lower-quality ceramic miniature vessels dated to the later 5th dynasty. Abusir. AS 47 (photo: Arias Kytnarová, Jirásková, and Odler 2018: fig. 3)

[97] Hope 1988: 10.
[98] Bourriau, Nicholson, and Rose 2000: 121.
[99] Arias Kytnarová, Jirásková, and Odler 2018: 18.
[100] Arias Kytnarová, Jirásková, and Odler 2018: 15.
[101] Allen 2006: 20.

Though small vessels are known from the Predynastic Period, miniature vessels are first found in tombs from the early 4th dynasty.[102] They are found in the biggest quantities in contexts dating from the 4th – 6th dynasties.[103] There is not yet a full chronological typology of the vessel type, but it does appear that the size and quality of ceramic miniature vessels decreased as time went on.[104] Based on this observation, I would tentatively place Nottingham's examples towards the end of the Old Kingdom due to their rough modelling and small size.

After the 4th dynasty, the vessels are rarely found in burial chambers. Instead, they are found in refuse layers in or around areas of cultic activity such as chapels, corridors, niches, and burial shafts.[105] Funerary cult offerings would have been made repeatedly and regularly, amounting in enormous numbers of miniature vessels being used and discarded.[106] Consequently, they are often found in rubbish pits and heaps. Allen estimates that they were made and used in the millions in mortuary temples and tomb chapels during 4th – 6th dynasties.[107]

Given their numerous quantities, relatively small value, and liberal distribution across the Giza site, it would have been easy for Chester to purchase or source these vessels. Another 8 examples from Giza housed in the British Museum were donated/purchased from Chester between 1866-1880.[108] He also donated two examples to the Fitzwilliam Museum in 1891.[109] The uniformity of the object type make it impossible to define their origin further than the Giza necropolis without additional information.

Amphora handle **(4)**

NCM 1879-63

This handle is identified in the *Annual Report* as a "Handle of a Rhodian amphora; inscribed with the head of Apollo and EAI.II.P.-MP... ΛA.". The report states that the handle was found at Alexandria. Within the database this description is erroneously copied, the Λ in the inscription is written as an A. The handle is also incorrectly dated in the database to 2000 BCE, an improbability for an object from Alexandria which was founded in 331 BCE.[110]

The handle is most likely from an amphora found in Alexandria, though it lacks the distinctive 'spike' found on typical Rhodian amphora handles from the site (*figs 4.2, 4.3*). Stamped amphora handles from Alexandria are numerous; there are over 160,000 examples in the

[102] Allen 2006: 19.
[103] Arias Kytnarová, Jirásková, and Odler 2018: 15. Miniature vessels continue into the Middle and New Kingdoms, Allen 2006: 19.
[104] Arias Kytnarová, Jirásková, and Odler 2018: 25.
[105] Arias Kytnarová, Jirásková, and Odler 2018: 15.
[106] Allen 2006: 22.
[107] Allen 2006: 22.
[108] EA49428; EA49429; EA90745; EA90746; EA90747; EA5170 (there are three distinct vessels associated with this museum number).
[109] E. 153.1891; E.154.1891.
[110] Empereur 2001: 54.

Alexandrian Graeco-Roman Museum.[111] Alexandria was a major commerce centre for the wider Mediterranean and had a particularly close political and trade connection with Rhodes.[112] Consequently, the Rhodian amphora shape and associated stamped handles are the most commonly found.

(Left) *Fig. 4.2* Profile of the amphora handle (photo: author)

(Right) *Fig. 4.3* Fragment of a Rhodian amphora handle (photo: University of Southampton 2005)

Fig. 4.4 Amphora handle found at Naukratis. Petrie Museum, UCL. LDUCE-UC19357. (photo: © Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology)

The description of the stamp in the *Annual Report* is incorrect. Firstly, the head to the left of the stamp is identified as Apollo (*fig. 4.5*). There are no examples of Apollo motifs in the *Le Centre Alexandrin d'Etude* (CEAlex) amphora database, which collates examples of stamped

[111] Empereur, J. Y. General Introduction. In: *Le Centre Alexandrin d'Etude des Amphores* <http://www.amphoralex.org/presentation_e.php> (accessed 30/03/23).

[112] Senol, G. C. A Study of the Definition of Matrices of Stamped Amphora Handles in Alexandria. In: *Le Centre Alexandrin d'Etude des Amphores* <http://www.amphoralex.org/timbres/AnsesTimbrees.php> (accessed 30/03/23).

amphora handles from the centre's excavations in Alexandria as well as examples from the Graeco-Roman Museum.[113] There are however, 438 examples of Helios motifs within a rectangular stamp.[114] Helios was the leading deity in Rhodes and was associated with similar solar imagery to Apollo, perhaps explaining the initial attribution to the latter.[115] Motifs found on stamped amphora handles are related to the issuing state.[116] Therefore, I would contend that despite the lack of a 'spike' on the handle, Nottingham's example is still an amphora from Rhodes. Another, more complete, amphora handle manufactured in Rhodes and found in Naukratis, shows the distinctive 'spike' is not always present (*fig. 4.4*).[117] This example has the same fine pale pink clay and lighter coloured slip on its outer surface as Nottingham's example (see catalogue entry **[4]** for a more accurate colour photograph). I have classified this as Rhodian fabric 1 as per Peacock and Williams' definition on account of its fine, hard material and pale pink colour with paler slip.[118]

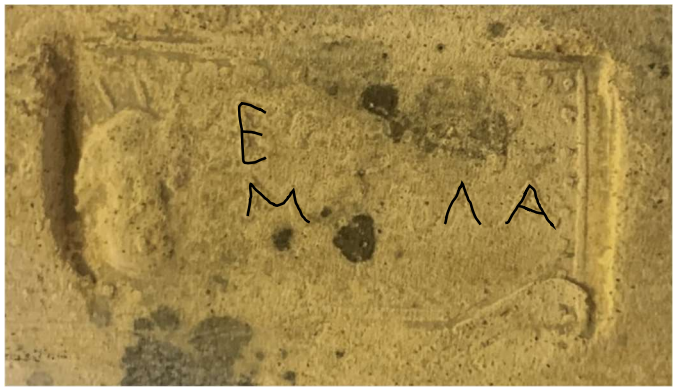


Fig. 4.5 The amphora stamp with visible lettering traced (photo: author)

Fig. 4.6 Amphora stamp with identical attributes to Nottingham's example, with rubbing of the design. ALEX ABC 0092.18. (photo: *Le Centre Alexandrin d'Etude des Amphores)*

[113] *Le Centre Alexandrin d'Etude des Amphores*. Matrices Of Stamps of Rhodian Eponyms and Producers <http://www.amphoralex.org/timbres/eponymes/accueil_epon/requete.php> (accessed 25/04/23).
[114] <http://www.amphoralex.org/timbres/eponymes/accueil_epon/affiche_rech_avanc_new.php> (accessed 14/06/23).
[115] Parker 2012: 655.
[116] Grace 2012: 74.
[117] LDUCE-UC19357. This amphora fragment is housed in the Petrie Museum, London. It is stamped with a rose stamp, a state mark of Rhodes, and a Rhodian eponym of the manufacturer.
[118] Peacock and Williams 1986: 103.

The inscription given in the database is also incorrect. It does not read "EAI.II.P.-MP... ΛA". 87.76% of the Helios stamp inscriptions in the *CEAlex* database start with the preposition "ΕΠΙ' followed by the name of the potter in the genitive case, as is typical of stamped amphora handle inscriptions.[119] Although Nottingham's inscription is faded, the initial "E' is visible. It is the border decoration, however, which provides the most information. The dotted line decoration is only associated with two named potters, one of which is Harmosilas.[120] Harmosilas appears in 54 examples in the *CEAlex* database, 6 of which show a close similarity with the Nottingham example.[121] One of the best preserved has identical features with a Helios head, a rectangular border with dotted lines, even the lettering and spacing matches (*figs. 4.5, 4.6*). The right bottom corner of Nottingham's example is slightly imperfect, the stamp likely caught some clay, creating a fold.

On account of the similarities, it is reasonable to assume that Nottingham's amphora handle also reads "'ΕΠΙ 'ΑΡΜΟΣΙΛΑΣ". All instances of the Harmosilas name are dated to Period IIc, which equates to ca. 234-199 BCE within the *CEAlex* database chronology. Additionally, the *Oxford Lexicon of Greek Personal Names* lists a Harmosilas who lived in Rhodes and worked as a potter between ca. 240-210 BCE.[122] From this, the amphora handle can be confidently dated to the Ptolemaic period, ca. 234-199 BCE.

As the handles are found throughout Alexandria in different contexts, and no notes exist regarding its provenance from Chester, the provenance cannot be defined further than information in the *Annual Report*.

Two cosmetic vessels **(5-6)**

NCM 1879-64; NCM 1879-216

These two vessels have been grouped together on account of their similar functions. The first (**5**) is a small faience jar from Tell Basta. An old museum label repeats the information given in the *Annual Report*, "Vase; blue faience, Tell Basta". The database makes a suggestion for the use of the vessel, namely as a kohl pot. The small size and form lends credence to this idea. The cylindrical jar shape is known from the late Predynastic Period and is one of the most common forms found.[123] A comparable vessel from Tell Basta is also designated as a kohl pot.[124] The contents of Nottingham's jar appear to be a mud/straw mixture. Scientific analysis could potentially find remnants of a cosmetic nature, but this is not apparent from visual inspection alone. The jar may also be missing a matching flat disk-shaped lid, a feature often found with kohl pots.[125]

[119] Grace 2012: 75.
[120] Nilsson 1909: 117.
[121] ALEX ABC 0092.15; ALEX ABC 0092.17; ALEX ABC 0092.18; ALEX ABC 0092.19; ALEX ABC 0092.20; ALEX ABC 0092.21.
[122] Oxford University*, Lexicon of Greek Personal Names* <http://clas-lgpn2.classics.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/lgpn_search.cgi?name=%E1%BF%BE%CE%91%CF%81%CE%BC%CE%BF%CF%83%CE%AF%CE%BB%CE%B1%CF%82> (accessed 30/03/23).
[123] Friedman 1999: cat. 121.
[124] Hilton Price 1897: no. 1477. The jar is decorated rather than plain but the form is similar.
[125] Freed 1982: 216.

The findspot of the jar, Tell Basta, was the site of the ancient Egyptian site, Per Bastet, later known by the Greek name Bubastis.[126] Chester frequented the site, selling a total 56 artefacts to the British Museum in the years 1867-1891.[127] The mounds of Tell Basta were well known in Chester's time, with Naville commenting that "dealers in antiquities [had] been working for years" in the area.[128] Unfortunately, the exact provenance was not recorded by either Chester or the dealers he may have purchased from and the form of the vessel is not enlightening in this respect. Neither can such a common vessel type be dated with any certainty without a known archaeological context.

The second vessel (**6**) is a small ovoid bottle with incised floral decoration at the bottom, described as "in the shape of a papyrus bud" and coming from Roman period Memphis in the *Annual Report*. The top is damaged, leaving a single lug handle and exposing a cork stopper. The bottle must have been formed by placing two halves together as a faint line bisecting the bottle is visible beneath smudging of the clay. It is a ceramic material, but its hard, fine material and light colour does not match to any Nile clay. I would tentatively suggest it may be a type of Marl A on this basis, though its possible identification as an imported fabric should not be discounted, especially given its form.

A bottle in the British Museum of comparable size and form was purchased from Chester (*fig. 4.7*). It is intact and features a single lug handle with similar incised decoration on the bottom. This bottle is identified as an unguentarium and dated to the Ptolemaic period.[129] Given these similarities, I have designated Nottingham's example as an unguentarium also.

Fig. 4.7 Ptolemaic unguentarium. EA18342. The British Museum.
(photo: © The Trustees of the British Museum)

[126] Tietze 2001: 208.
[127] <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/search?keyword=chester&keyword=tell&keyword=basta> (accessed 29/05/23).
[128] Naville 1891: 2.
[129] Bailey 2008: no. 3653.

Many unguentaria were produced with small and uneven bases and could not stand unsupported, as with Nottingham's example.[130] Anderson-Stojanović suggests that the vessels may have been placed against a vertical surface or laid horizontally.[131] If laid horizontally a stopper would be necessary to prevent the contents from spilling out, also helping to prevent evaporation. An alternative suggestion is that unguentarium were worn on the wrist.[132] The small lug handle could facilitate suspension, but I think the size of the bottle is slightly too large and cumbersome to have been worn this way. If suspended at all, around the neck seems more likely.

Cork stoppers are known from the 6th century BCE, primarily used for sealing wine containers.[133] They are fairly rare finds in Egypt, though they are present. A large number of cork stoppers, for example, were found during the 1998 excavations at the Red Sea Port of Berenike.[134] More relevant is an unguentarium with an intact cork stopper also in Nottingham's collection, dated to the Ptolemaic period and from Naukratis.[135]

The small opening of the bottle and cork stopper suggests the contents were liquid or powder rather than a solid wax or balm.[136] I believe that the floral decoration at the base of the bottle depicts lotus petals rather than papyrus and this may relate to the now missing contents of the bottle. Lotus petals are often found on perfume jars,[137] the scented flower a particularly appropriate design. Perhaps then, the jar contained a scented oil for personal or religious use.

The bottle was either found or purchased at Memphis by Chester, a site he frequented often. 267 artefacts in the British Museum alone are associated with Chester and from Memphis.[138] Petrie noted before his excavations at the site that the "peasantry" had "constant and unchecked appropriation" of the area.[139] Clearly, the site was well known for antiquities in Chester's time.

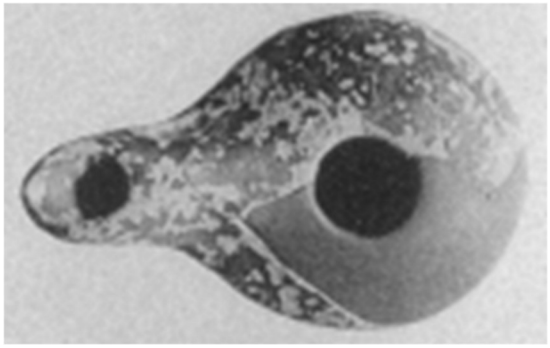
Two lamps **(7-8)**

NCM 1879-222; NCM 1879-225

These next two objects have also been grouped on account of their function – they are both (parts of) lamps. The first (**7**) is a well-known type of oil-lamp. It is made from Attic clay, recognisable from its red-orange colour.[140] The glaze supposedly made the lamp less permeable to the fuel it held.[141] The *Annual Report* dates the lamp to the Roman period and

[130] Anderson-Stojanović 1987: 114.
[131] *Ibid.*
[132] *Ibid.*
[133] Denecker and Vandorpe 2007: 115.
[134] Bos 2000: 275.
[135] NCM 1888-13.
[136] Anderson-Stojanović 1987: 114.
[137] Friedman 1999: cat. 82, Whitehouse 2009: cat. 24.
[138]<https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/search?keyword=memphis&agent=Rev%20Greville%20John%20Chester&view=grid&sort=object_name__asc&page=1> (accessed 14/06/23).
[139] Petrie 1909a: 1.
[140] Howland 1958: 68.
[141] Bailey 1972: 15.

gives its provenance as Alexandria. The database gives a more detailed description but does not date or place within any typology.



(Left) *Fig. 4.8* Ptolemaic oil-lamp from Naukratis. H2765. Bristol Museum. (photo: © Bristol Museums, Galleries & Archives)

(Right) *Fig. 4.9* Unclassified type Hellenistic oil-lamp (photo: Howland: pl.54.820)

An example from Bristol Museum has a comparable form and size, with a similar circular, flat base, nozzle, and opening on the top (*fig. 4.8*). This lamp is a local imitation of Type 25 as defined within Howland's typology of Greek lamps, dated between 4th-3rd centuries BCE at Greek sites.[142] This type is a popular model for imitations and inspired shapes at Egyptian sites.[143]

Another Greek type, unclassified by Howland, is also very similar to Nottingham's example (*fig. 4.9*). This type is dated to a similar period – the first half of the 3rd century BCE. Based on the affinities with these Greek types and the lamp coming from the Hellenistic site of Alexandria, I have dated Nottingham's example broadly to the Ptolemaic period.

The next lamp (**8**) is not classified as such in the database. In fact, it is described as simply as a figure of Isis in both the *Annual Report* and database description. Upon inspection, however, the hollowness and undecorated back of the figure hints at a different function. The female figure depicted is certainly Isis, identifiable by her cow horns, sun-disk, and so-called Isis-knot crossed over her breasts.[144] The form, however, is that of a figured lamp handle rather than a figurine. Similar handles date to the 2nd century CE, some of which also depict Isis (*fig. 4.10*).[145] All of them lack decoration on their backs and are hollow. An example depicting Serapis in the British Museum (*fig. 4.11*) displays the same general cross shape found on Nottingham's example, perhaps meant to facilitate holding the lamp. Supposedly, this example was connected to a bust of Isis.

[142] Howland 1958: 67-82.
[143] Bailey 1975: 240, Q522-528.
[144] Griffiths 2001: 190.
[145] Bailey 1970: Q2003-2010.

(Left) *Fig. 4.10* Lamp handle depicting Isis. Donated by Chester. The British Museum. 1926.0930.56 (photo: Bailey 1970: Q2010)

(Right) *Fig. 4.11* Lamp handle depicting Serapis. The British Museum. EA37585. (photo: © The Trustees of the British Museum)

On account of these similarities, I have dated Nottingham's example to the 2nd century CE as well. This agrees with the *Annual Report*'s description of the artefact as coming from Roman period Medinet el-Fayoum, or Arsinoë as it would have been known during that time. This gives the handle a contemporary date to the Roman period coins and coin moulds found at the site (**25-39**).

Funerary cone **(9)**

NCM 1879-219

Though the *Annual Report* describes it as an *inscribed* sepulchral cone from Thebes, the inscription on the cone is no longrt visible to the naked eye, if it ever existed. Funerary cones are predominantly found in the Theban necropolis and examples from the New Kingdom onwards bear the name and title of the tomb owner.[146] Earlier examples from 11th dynasty tombs, however, are uninscribed (*fig. 4.12*).[147]

[146] Manniche 2001: 565.

[147] Carter 1912: 10, fig.6. Most of the cones from Carter's excavations are now in the MET museum: 12.181.217, 12.181.218, 13.185.1, 13.185.2, 13.185.3, 13.185.4, 13.185.5, 13.185.6, 13.185.7, 13.185.8, 13.185.9.

Fig. 4.12 Uninscribed funerary cone from Thebes, Dra Abu el-Naga, Tomb CC 7. MET museum, 13.185.8. (photo: © The MET Museum)

During Howard Carter's excavations at Thebes, plain funerary cones were mainly found loose in rubbish dumps near tombs or on the floor of tomb courtyards.[148] Stamped examples in contrast are often found embedded into the tomb wall, with stamp facing outward (*fig. 4.13*).[149] Carter believed the unstamped examples were more likely to represent model cakes or loaves of bread, made in burnt clay to immortalise them as offerings, rather than them being used as ornamentation for the tomb wall.[150] Interpretations of the circular shape of funerary cones include the shape of the sun-disc or an imitation of the ends of roofing poles.[151]

The black colour of Nottingham's example is notably different to the reddish-brown ceramic found on most examples.[152] I believe this a result of overfiring the clay, effectively burning it to a black colour, or firing it at reducing temperatures.[153] The remnants of white paint are still visible which is a feature found on other examples.[154]

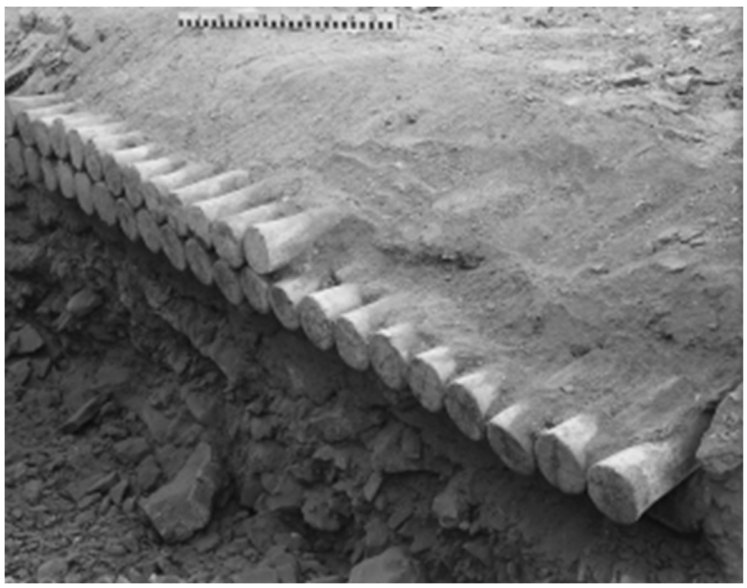


Fig. 4.13 Funerary cones in situ (photo: Zenihiro 2009: fig. 23)

[148] Carter 1912: 21, 24, 26-27.
[149] Manniche 2001: 565.
[150] Carter 1912: 10.
[151] Manniche 2001: 567.
[152] Zenihiro 2009: 11.
[153] Bourriau 1993: 155.
[154] See examples in note 131.

4.3 Scarabs and a scarab mould **(10-14)**

Two missing scarabs **(10)**

NCM 1879-211

Two scarabs described simply in the *Annual Report* as "SCARABAEI (2), blue glazed" are unfortunately missing. Their location was known in 1979 when Deakin examined them. The first (*NCM 1879-21111*) has no photographs in the database but is described by Deakin as glazed light green steatite worn to a dark brown colour (*fig. 4.14*). He mentions that the back has "rounded prothorax and elytra marked" and in his notes has drawn a summary sketch of the underside. It appears to be a walking male figure with two uraei and two *ankh*(?) symbols coming from the body. Unfortunately, the database offers little further information, the scarab is dated to the New Kingdom though it is not clear on what grounds. The object was on display in the Brewhouse Yard Museum in 1997 but sometime in the subsequent 26 years it has gone missing. On account of the scarce information regarding the scarab, it has not been included in my catalogue.

More can be said about the second scarab (**10**, *NCM 1879-211/2*) which is luckily photographed in the database. This example was also on display; it was featured in the 2000-2002 'Archaeology Revealed' exhibition at the Castle Museum. It is again dated to the New Kingdom on uncertain grounds. The database describes it as a "scarab made of green faience, with a carved scarab beetle on one side and an inscribed hieroglyphic design on the other". The scarab may well be faience, but it could also be glazed steatite, a common material for scarabs.[155] The back contains detailed features of the scarab anatomy including a defined clypeus, head, prothorax, and elytra. The inscription on the underside features a walking male figure with a sun disc at the head. Two curved lines originate from the shoulders of the figure, and two uraei from the waist. The sun disk is a common attribute for male deities, found with gods such as Ra[156], Sokar[157], and Horus[158], to name but a few. This attribute in itself is not enough to identify the figure. The uraeus similarly is a symbol associated generally with royalty, divine authority, and power and is depicted with pharaohs and deities.[159] The curved lines could potentially be stylised representations of horns as found on scarabs incised with images of Hathor.[160]

The provenance is not named for either of the scarabs and there are no defining features to discern this.

[155] Andrews 1994:50.
[156] Hart 2005: 132.
[157] Hart 2005: 148.
[158] Hart 2005: 71.
[159] Andrews 1994: 76.
[160] An example (EA3645) in the British Museum shows a Hathor head on a pylon flanked with two uraei.

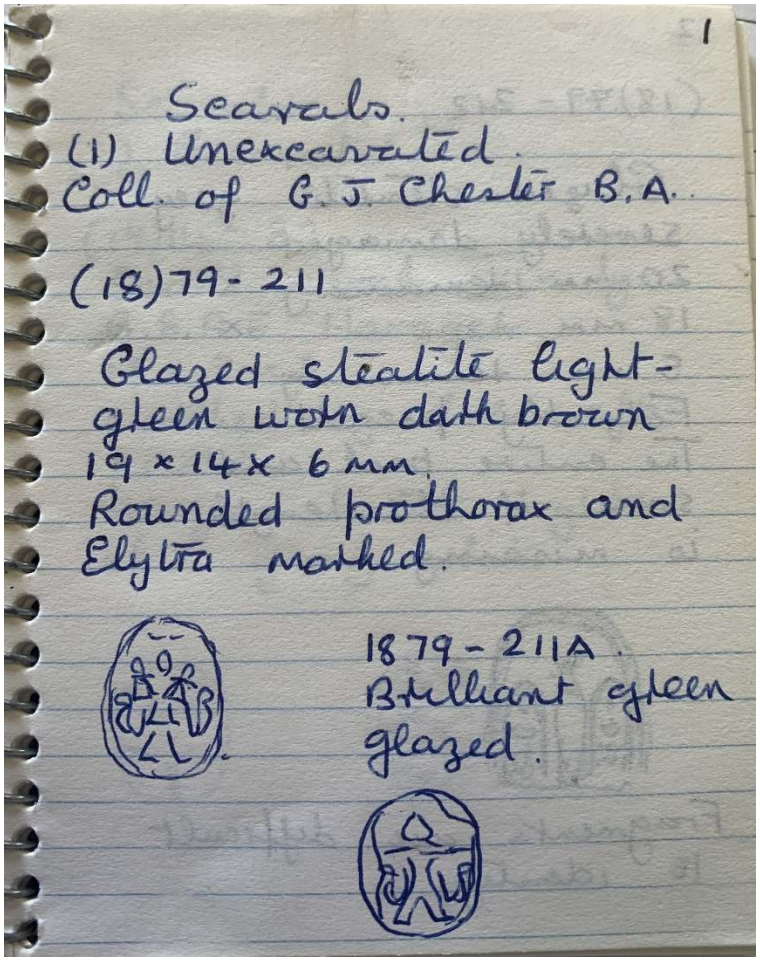


Fig. 4.14 Deakin's notes on the missing scarabs (photo: author)

Three glazed steatite scarabs **(11-13)**

NCM 1879-212/1-3

The remaining three scarabs donated by Chester are all glazed steatite examples. They are described as a group in the *Annual Report*, "SCARABAEI (3), white and brown; one with the name of King Thotmes III". The database description is similarly succinct: "White/bronze glaze. Two complete scarab seals, and what remains of the bottom of a third. One has no scarab design on the front, only a smooth lozenge-shape."

The first example (**11**) is a fragmentary brown glazed steatite scarab inscribed on its underside with two cartouches of Menkheperre, i.e., Thutmose III. The double cartouche is a fairly common feature on Thutmose III scarabs.[161] Hieroglyphs above the cartouches read, "The King of Upper and Lower Egypt". Between the cartouches are a sun-disk and an unidentified symbol, perhaps some hybrid form of a *djed*-pillar. The back is damaged, exposing the longitudinal piercing for suspension.

[161] Jaeger 1982: 36. An example (1894.1477) from the Art Institute in Chicago with two cartouches with hieroglyphs surrounding.

The database dates the scarab to 1555-1335 BCE, which I believe was an incorrect attempt to date it to the reign of Thutmose III. A pharaoh's name, however, can only give a *terminus post quem*; the scarab could have been produced during or after Thutmose III's reign. The posthumous cult of Thutmose was particularly popular and lasted until the Ptolemaic period, he was worshipped as a great warrior and builder who expanded Egypt's territory to its largest extent.[162] His name, Menkheperre, is found on scarabs and amulets long after his death to provide magical protection for their owners.[163] Pharoah's names in general were inscribed on scarabs to protect their owner from harm via the "magical omnipotence" of the pharaoh.[164]

The second example (**12**) is a white glazed steatite scarab inscribed with two crocodiles on its underside.[165] The back includes incised clypeus and head; the prothorax and elytra have not been indicated. The legs are depicted naturalistically, and it is pierced longitudinally for suspension.

The doubled crocodile sign (Gardiner I.3) has a three-fold meaning. In its simplest interpretation, the presence of a crocodile is apotropaic, intended to ward off evil for its wearer.[166] On a secondary level, the crocodile may refer to Sobek and offer the deities protection and powers to the wearer. Finally, from the 12th dynasty, two crocodiles could be used as a playful way to spell out the word for sovereign, *jty*.[167] As with the Thutmose scarab, this would offer the magical protection of the pharaoh to the scarab's wearer. The interior hatched decoration of the crocodiles is characteristic of the Second Intermediate Period.[168] The lack of an incised prothorax has been noted as characteristic of the late Middle Kingdom to Second Intermediate Period.[169] Therefore, on stylistic grounds I have tentatively dated this example to the Second Intermediate Period. Though it should be kept in mind that scarabs are can be hard to date when removed from their archaeological contexts.[170] The database dates the scarab to the New Kingdom, but I believe all three examples were dated as a group upon their joint donation and this date actually relates to the Thutmose III example.

The final example (**13**) is a different type altogether. It is lentoid in shape and white glazed steatite. The back is undecorated, the underside is incised with horizontal lines, and the underside has been pierced longitudinally.

I believe this is an example of a scaraboid form called a cowroid.[171] The cowroid shape was a popular form with "a circular or elongated oval base which show that it is based on a cowrie shell" (*fig. 4.16*).[172] Cowrie shells were used as jewellery throughout Egyptian history; they are commonly interpreted as amuletic adornments related to fertility, intended to protect against

[162] Lipińska 2001: 403.
[163] Allen 1923: 142.
[164] Bianchi 2005: 180.
[165] Comparable inscriptions include Petrie 2013: plate V.33; MET museum 26.4.32, 26.7.552; Israel Museum, Jerusalem 76.31.3870, 76.31.3691; Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC42495.
[166] Friedman, Borromeo, and Leveque 1998: cat. 45.
[167] *Ibid*.
[168] Cooney and Tyrrell 2006: cat. 63.
[169] Cooney and Tyrell 2006: cat. 15.
[170] Cooney 2008: 1.
[171] Scaraboid refers to an amulet/seal which has a similar shape to a scarab but usually depicts another animal or shape on the back.
[172] Andrews 1994: 54.

infertility, increase fertility, and more generally ward off evil and bring good luck.[173] They are found in graves of young girls from predynastic times.[174] Their artificial counterparts, i.e. cowroids, become popular from the Middle Kingdom onwards.[175] These imitations are usually decorated on the back in the style of the cowrie shell, though this is not always present.[176] The colour of the glaze and the shape of Nottingham's example is clearly imitative of the cowrie shell. Furthermore, I believe the decoration on the underside may be a stylistic reference to the opening of a cowrie shell, particularly the lines with small vertical hatches passing through at regular intervals.

(Left) *Fig. 4.15* Underside of the cowroid (photo: author)

(Right) *Fig. 4.16* Cowrie shell (photo: Golani 2014: fig. 1)

Unfortunately, there is no indication as to where Chester may have acquired these scarabs, their provenance is unknown.

Scarab mould **(14)**

NCM 1879-67

The *Annual Report* lists the findspot for this scarab mould (**14**) as Medinet el-Fayoum, more specifically the Greek era site in the region, Krokodilopolis. An old museum label kept with the artefact dates the mould to the 26th dynasty.

The mould would have been used for a scarab. I have identified the ceramic material as Nile A clay on account of its reddish-brown colour, fine, hard material, and lack of inclusions. The head, prothorax, and elytra are all indicated, but it is unclear if the clypeus is present. The remnants of white faience paste are visible. The paste would have been pressed into the mould

[173] Golani 2014: 75.
[174] Golani 2014: 73.
[175] Golani 2014; 78.
[176] British Museum faience example with plain back, EA28745; yellow glazed steatite with plain back and decoration around this sides, EA40109; white glazed steatite example with plain back, EA86252.

to form the scarab and would have built up after several uses, eventually rendering the mould unusable.[177]

There are two channels running through the mould which would create a longitudinal piercing through the scarab for suspension.[178] Channels in scarab moulds are a feature found often in moulds from 26th dynasty scarab factory of Naukratis which mass-produced scarabs for the wider Mediterranean community.[179] An example from Naukratis in Nottingham's own collection has the same feature (*fig. 4.17*) as well as one in the British Museum (*fig. 4.18*), and The West Park Museum, Macclesfield (*fig. 4.19*).

(Left) *Fig. 4.17* Scarab mould from Naukratis. Nottingham City Museums and Galleries. NCM 1888-63G. (photo: © Nottingham City Museums and Galleries)

(Middle) *Fig. 4.18* Scarab mould from Naukratis. The British Museum. 1965,0930.900. (photo: © The Trustees of the British Museum)

(Right) *Fig. 4.19* Scarab mould from Naukratis. The West Park Museum. B93. (photo: © The Silk Heritage Trust)

The Fayum region, like Naukratis, is particularly associated with the Graeco-Roman period.[180] The area was well known in Chester's time. Before the systematic excavations of the late 19th century and early 20th century, sites had already been mined by antiquities hunters and *sebakh*-diggers.[181] Major papyrus finds in the 1870s and 1880s had put the region on the map and increased scholarly interest.[182] Locals took advantage of this and scavenged in the area specifically to sell onto the foreign antiquities market.[183] Consistent agricultural activity had additionally worsened preservation in the area.[184] As Chester was active in the time before systematic archaeological excavations began, it is unlikely the mould was found in a securely stratified context and is therefore hard to date with certainty. The fact the *Annual Report* references the Greek name for the site and the museum label uses the same date as the scarab

[177] Masson 2018: 14.
[178] Masson 2018: 5.
[179] Masson 2018: 5. Though examples have been found from many other sites, such as a New Kingdom mould from Malqata in the Met Museum (11.215.683).
[180] Wilfong 2005: 496.
[181] Wilfong 2005: 497.
[182] Davoli 2012: 627.
[183] Davoli 2012: 637.
[184] Petrie 1889: 2.

factory in Naukratis lends some weight to the 26th dynasty date given. The mould may have even originated from the Naukratis scarab factory and been transported to Krokodilopolis, given both sites had a thriving Greek population, though this is only a theory.

4.4 Amulets and jewellery **(15-24)**

Six small amulets **(15-20)**

NCM 1879-210/1-6[185]

These six amulets are listed together in the *Annual Report* as "AMULETS (7), porcelain and jasper; eye, blue porcelain; hair-ring, red jasper, from Thebes; figures of the gods Osiris, Shu, etc".[186] They are all small in size and pierced for suspension, likely worn for their protective abilities.[187] For most of them, their form has only been made clear by comparison with finely modelled examples as they are more simplistically rendered. Petrie's and Andrews' respective monographs on amulets have been particularly helpful for identifying their forms.[188] Date ranges are necessarily broad; these small, mass-produced objects are difficult to date outside of their archaeological contexts.

The first amulet (**15**) is a faience example in the form of the dwarf-god Pataikos. I have identified it as Pataikos rather than the dwarf-god Bes as it lacks the defining features commonly found for Bes, such as a protruding tongue, headdress, or leonine face (see **22**, **23**). Pataikos is typically interpreted as a dwarf form of the god Ptah[189] and is worn as a protective amulet from the 6th dynasty onwards, although the form is more popular after the New Kingdom (*fig. 4.20*).[190] The god principally appears in amuletic form and does not seem to have been a part of a specific myth, text, or iconography.[191] Dwarves in general were seen as protectors against snakes and other harmful animals, Dasen suggests the amulet type would have been worn around the neck to guard the wearer, especially small children, against "unpredictable negative forces" and as a symbol of regeneration.[192] As with most of the amulets which follow, this amulet is simultaneously theophoric, homopoeic, and phylactic as per Petrie's definition, i.e. it is in the form of a deity and would offer both the protection and abilities of said deity to the wearer.[193]

[185] The amulets are not given their own museum numbers in the database, they are supplied here for ease of referencing in the style of other objects displayed in a group.
[186] The 'hair-ring' is discussed in the next section.
[187] Andrews 1994: 6.
[188] Petrie 1914, Andrews 1994.
[189] Dasen 1993: 84-85, Pinch 2002: 180.
[190] Andrews 1994: 39.
[191] Dasen 1993: 85.
[192] Dasen 1993: 89, 97.
[193] Petrie 1914: 6-7.

Fig. 4.20 Pataikos amulet from Saqqara. The British Museum. EA67227.
(photo: © The Trustees of the British Museum)

The second amulet (**16**) is in the form of a male kneeling deity, either Shu or Heh. The basic rendering of the amulet makes it difficult to distinguish between the two (*fig. 4.21*). If Shu, there is the sun disk between his arms in reference to the Heliopolitan creation myth. Shu, as god of air, with his consort, Tefnut, created Geb, god of the earth, and Nut, goddess of the sky.[194] Life was created when he separated the two by raising Nut to the sky. Crude examples are found from the Third Intermediate Period onwards, but it is not until the 26th dynasty that finer modelled examples are found. Nottingham's example is practically unrecognisable when compared to such modelled examples (*fig. 4.23*), but the general form aligns with 'degenerate' examples (*fig. 4.22*).[195]

If the amulet instead depicts Heh (*fig. 4.24*), he is holding a palm rib in each hand which forms the pictorial message wishing the owner millions of years of life in the afterlife.[196] Heh amulets are known as early as the late Old Kingdom and occur in First Intermediate Period and Middle Kingdom burials, after which they do not appear again until the Roman Period.[197]

I believe the amulet is more likely to depict Shu, though this cannot be stated with absolute certainty. The form more closely aligns with crude examples of Shu amulets whereas Heh amulets are more commonly made in precious metal, especially gold, and often have the arms by the sides rather than above the head.[198] The description in the *Annual Report* also describes the amulet as Shu.

[194] Andrews 1994: 19.
[195] 'Degenerate' is used here following Andrews 1994: fig. 7.
[196] Andrews 1994: 89.
[197] Andrews 1994: 89.
[198] Andrews 1994: 89, figs. 4c, 16a, 69a.

Fig. 4.21 Late Period amulet, either Shu/Heh. Ashmolean Museum. AN1896-1908-EA.621.
(photo: © Ashmolean Museum)

(Left) *Fig. 4.22* Late Period Shu amulet
(photo: Andrews 1994: fig. 7)

(Right) *Fig. 4.23* Late Period Shu amulet. The MET Museum. 04.2.372.
(photo: © The MET Museum)

Fig. 4.24 Late Period Heh amulet. Brooklyn Museum. 37.1169E.
(photo: © Brooklyn Museum)

The third amulet (**17**) is broken in half and depicts the deity Bastet as a sitting cat. Though other female deities were associated with felines, Bastet is the only one depicted fully as a

cat.[199] Bastet was worshipped as a goddess of fertility and the female cat as an animal was also noted for its fecundity.[200] Many amulet types could be utilised in both daily life and for funerary purposes but this amulet type, on account of its meaning, was probably worn by living women.[201] Cat-shaped amulets are known from the Old Kingdom onwards (*fig. 4.25*).[202]

Fig. 4.25 Bastet amulet from Saqqara. Greco-Roman Museum, Alexandria. SR 1187(A). (photo: © Bibliotheca Alexandrina Antiquities Museum)

The next amulet (**18**) is one of the most popular and recognisable symbols found in ancient Egypt art, the *wedjat* eye. It depicts the eye of Horus after it had been plucked out by Seth and then healed by Thoth; Horus subsequently offered the healed eye to his dead father, and it was powerful enough to revive him.[203] The eye is thus often used as a protective amulet with supposed healing properties. The amulet type is known from the Old Kingdom onwards.[204]

The fifth amulet (**19**) is the first non-faience example, instead made from a dark grey basalt. It is also the first not referential to a deity, as it is in the form of a heart as depicted in the hieroglyph,  '*jb*' (Gardiner F.34). The heart was believed to be the seat of intelligence, feelings, and memory[205] and the amulet form is often interpreted to be wisdom-imbuing.[206] Sousa additionally states the form was believed to be able to "control darkness and evil and to guarantee good health both in earthly life and in the beyond".[207] It is often found on the torso of the deceased in funerary adornments.[208] Andrews notes two examples which predate

[199] Andrews 1994: 32; Petrie 1914: 46.
[200] *Ibid.*
[201] Andrews 1994: 33.
[202] *Ibid.*
[203] Andrews 1994: 43.
[204] Andrews 1994: 10, 43.
[205] Andrews 1994: 72.
[206] Sousa 2007: 70.
[207] *Ibid.*
[208] Petrie 1914: 10, Andrews 1994: 72.

the New Kingdom but their dating is uncertain and states that otherwise the amulet type is not known before this.[209]

The sixth amulet (**20**) is another eye, this time of the human variety. The form was intended to provide sight in the afterlife and is thus homopoeic in function.[210] It is first found during the 5th dynasty in a burial context at Mostagedda but following that it is virtually unknown until the Late Period.[211]

The *Annual Report* notes that Chester acquired the amulets from Thebes, and he would have done so before organised archaeological investigations in the area. In 1896, Petrie said after his work on some temples in the area, that Thebes had been "repeatedly ransacked" by "every plunderer".[212] Clearly Chester had benefitted from this plundering of the area, whether conducting it himself or purchasing the amulets from antiquities dealers. 51 amulets in the British Museum from Thebes were donated by or purchased from Chester.[213]

Earring **(21)**

NCM 1879-210/7

The object the *Annual Report* lists as a red jasper "hair-ring", I have instead identified as a penannular carnelian earring (**21**). Similar objects have been identified as hair-rings on account of the opening in the ring which is argued to be too small to fit onto an earlobe.[214] Wig ornaments are known in gold[215] but there is a notable lack of evidence for hair-rings from burials or in representations.[216] In contrast, there is evidence for earrings. Most convincingly, three penannular earrings, one of which was carnelian, have been found in a 19th Dynasty grave at Balabish.[217] The earrings were still attached to the human remains, inserted through a hole in the earlobe. Red-jasper examples have also been found in the 19th Dynasty burials of young women at Gurob and Matmar.[218] Freed explains that the narrow openings may indicate a strictly funerary function for some examples, the earrings may never have been worn in life but deposited as "token" jewellery with the deceased.[219] Alternatively, two loops may have been attached to the ring, through which a pin or wire could have been passed through, simultaneously going through a hole in the earlobe (*Fig. 4.26*).

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[209] Andrews 1994: 72.
[210] Petrie 1914: 9, pl. I, 4a.
[211] Andrews 1994: 69.
[212] Petrie 1896: 1.
[213] <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/search?keyword=amulet&place=Thebes%20%28historic%20-%20Upper%20Egypt%29&agent=Rev%20Greville%20John%20Chester&view=grid&sort=object_name__asc&page=1> (accessed 21/05/23).
[214] A number of New Kingdom carnelian rings found at Amara West now held by the British Museum are listed as both earrings and hair-rings with the small openings mentioned as evidence for the hair-ring designation. EA86486; EA86624; EA86511; EA86636; EA86542; EA86563; EA86556; EA86653; ES86492; EA86652; EA86559; EA86628; EA86487; EA86505.
[215] Andrews 1997: fig. 87. Wig rings of Sithathoryunet in the MET museum, 16.1.25.
[216] Freed 1982: cat. 290.
[217] Wainwright 1920: 55-54, pl. XIX.2.
[218] Andrews 1997: 116. Original reference not given.
[219] Freed 1982: cat. 290.

Fig. 4.26 Pair of gold penannular earrings from Abydos tomb 941, A.09.
(photo: Freed 1982: cat. 295)

Though earrings are introduced in Egypt in the Second Intermediate Period,[220] all the earrings of the same type (penannular and carnelian) as Nottingham's example seem to come from New Kingdom burials (or unprovenanced museum examples).[221] Therefore, I have tentatively dated Nottingham's earring to the New Kingdom.

Bes amulets **(22, 23)**

NCM 1879-209; NCM 1879-214

I have placed these two faience amulets together because they both depict Bes. They were both on display at some point, presumably together, as an old museum label for them reads, "Pendants depicting the God Bes; glazed earthenware. From Thebes. XXII Dynasty". The date and nature of this display is not given in the database, only that it was in the Castle Museum. 'Glazed earthenware' is a comment used more than once in the database for artefacts made of faience, an erroneous belief that clay was glazed with a blue colour rather than being comprised of the vitreous frit that it is.

The first (**22**) is a characteristic depiction of Bes, his dwarf-body naked, wearing a plumed headdress, with a lion's mane and tail. Bes was closely associated with childbirth and his amuletic form was worn in life, especially by women and children.[222] It could also serve a protective function as funerary equipment[223] or a generally apotropaic function as a dwarf deity, similar to the Pataikos amulet (**15**). As an amulet, Bes is first found from the 18th dynasty onwards.[224] The plumed headdress in particular first appears during the reign of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III.[225] Thus, the 22nd Dynasty date listed on the museum label is possible though how this date was reached is not explained. The *Annual Report* is not enlightening simply stating, "FIGURE, green porcelain; Besa (Typhon). Thebes.".[226] Once again, erroneously

[220] Andrews 1997: 109.
[221] See Freed 1982: cat. 291, citation 1 for a good list of excavated examples and the British Museum examples listed above.
[222] Andrews 1994: 40.
[223] Aiding the 'rebirth' of the deceased in the afterlife. Dasen 1993: 77.
[224] Andrews 1994: 39.
[225] Dasen 1993: 58.
[226] Typhon refers to the ancient Greek mythological serpent creature, often depicted with monstrous features.

describing the faience material. I have kept a broad date range in my catalogue as I am not convinced by the 22nd dynasty date. The amulet lacks any of Bes' attributes, such as the weapons or musical instruments found in later examples, that may have aided dating.

The second example (**23**) is a form which originates in the Third Intermediate Period – the Bes head.[227] Bes is shown facing forward sticking his tongue out, again with leonine features and a plumed headdress. The back is undecorated and a loop on the head could be used for suspension as a pendant, the holes in the ears and the channel between nostrils could have also facilitated this. The *Annual Report* is again succinct, stating: "PENDANT, blue porcelain; head of Besa (Typhon).". Once again, the faience material is incorrectly identified, though this time it was thought to be blue porcelain. It is interesting that this example was designated a pendant whereas the previous was termed a figure.

Spacer bead **(24)**

NCM 1879-215

The different descriptions for this faience object hold conflicting information. The *Annual Report* describes it as an "AMULET, green porcelain; double procession of four deities.". The database description interprets the piece further and claims it could possibly represent the four sons of Horus as shown on the top of canopic jars. An old museum label keeps the more general description of a procession of deities and dates the example to the 22nd dynasty in contrast to the database which dates it to 1555-1335 BCE.

I have offered a new interpretation. The object is in fact a spacer bead, a type of bead found in jewellery from the Old Kingdom onwards which would be strung in intervals between other beads on items such as necklaces, jokers, or anklets (*fig. 4.27*).[228] It was included at terminal points to prevent the string from sagging or tangling. Faience examples often depict a youthful and rejuvenated pharaoh, the subjugation of foreign enemies, or as here, a procession of deities.

The bead shows four identical male figures in a procession wearing plumed headdress. The identical nature of the figures makes their interpretation as the four sons of Horus unlikely. The heads of the four sons as found on canopic jars are clearly differentiated, with baboon, falcon, jackal, and human heads. I would suggest that the figures are instead the four forms of the Theban deity. Montu. Montu is usually depicted falcon-headed wearing two wall plumes with a sun disc.[229] Attributes on this example are not clear due to its crude rendering but there are clearly four identical figures. Montu is sometimes depicted as four identical falcon-headed figures, representing the four main cult centres for the god in the Theban area (*fig. 4.28*). No examples predate the Third Intermediate Period.[230]

[227] Andrews 1994: 40.
[228] Friedman, Borromeo, and Leveque 1998: cat. 46.
[229] Pinch 2002: 165.
[230] Andrews 1994: 30.

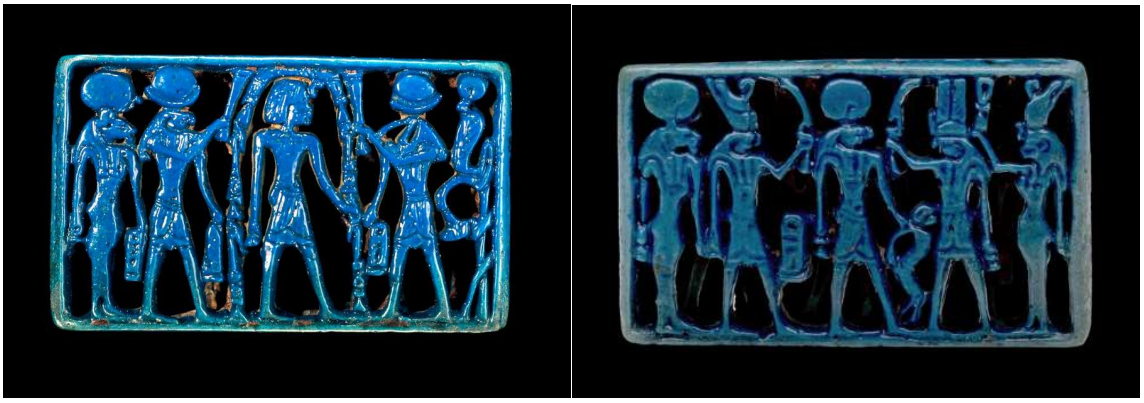


Fig. 4.27 Faience spacer bead. British Museum. EA14556. (photo: © The Trustees of the British Museum)

Fig. 4.28 Figure of the four forms of Montu (photo: Andrews 1994: fig. 226)

I also disagree with the two dates proposed. The 22nd dynasty date from the old museum label may suggest the bead was on display at the same time as the Bes amulets, but once again the reasoning for such a date is not explained. The date range of 1555-1335 BCE I think is simply the database's way of writing a New Kingdom date as found in the Thutmose III scarab entry (**11**), though it is not clear where this has originated from. I instead propose a broad date range of the Third Intermediate Period onwards on account of the subject matter. It has been suggested that all faience openwork spacers such as this were produced in the Third Intermediate Period to celebrate the New Year at Hermopolis.[231]

Unfortunately, no provenance has been given for this bead. The depiction of a Theban deity may suggest it was purchased from the same site as the amulets, but this cannot be proven.

[231] Friedman, Borromeo, and Leveque 1998: cat. 46.

4.5 Coins and coin moulds **(25-39)**

Six coins **(25-30)**

NCM 1879-224/a-e

This next round of objects can be dated with more precision than most. The *Annual Report* lists them as, "COINS (6), bronze of Constantinus, Helena, Crispus, and Licinius.". The database entries are some of the most detailed of the collection but, as will be demonstrated, not entirely accurate. Each coin is kept within a small envelope with dimensions, obverse and reverse legend, mint mark, and associated emperor written on the front. The coins must have been on display at some point as they each have an old museum label. They are described here in chronological order using the typology set out in *Roman Imperial Coinage* (RIC).[232] In my catalogue I have greatly expanded upon and corrected the information in the database, including RIC type, size type, issuing emperor, mint, mint mark, *officina* and series marks,[233] obverse and reverse design, obverse and reverse legend in Latin and translated into English.

The earliest coin (**25**) is incorrectly identified in the database as being issued by Constantine II in the years 337-340 CE. There are also slight mistakes in the recording of the obverse and reverse legend. The coin was actually minted in the year 313 CE by the Roman emperor in the East, Maximinus Daia, and depicts his joint emperor in the West, Constantine I, on the obverse. The coin was minted in Alexandria and on the reverse depicts Genius holding the head of the Graeco-Egyptian deity, Serapis, amongst other attributes.

The next coin (**26**) is mistakenly attributed to Licinius II in the database and given a broad date range of 317-324 CE (Licinius II's ruling period). Though the obverse does depict Licinius II, the coin was actually issued by his father Licinius I between the years 317-320 CE. The reverse is incorrectly interpreted as a Roman soldier, it is in fact the deity Jupiter, identified as such on other examples of this coin type. Though the coin was minted outside of Egypt, after the Diocletian reforms at the end of the 3rd century CE, Egypt's closed economy ended and foreign currency could circulate in the country.[234]

A coin issued by Constantine I in 324 CE (**27**) is erroneously attributed to 'Constantinus II' on its envelope yet dated to Constantine I's reign, 307-337 CE in the database. 'Constantinus II' is likely meant to refer to either Constantius II or Constantine II, Constantine I's sons. The coin type, nevertheless, can be securely identified as being issued by and depicting Constantine I. The coin was minted in Heraclea and the reverse design celebrates the emperor's twentieth regnal anniversary.

The last three coins (**28, 29, 30**) were all issued between 325-326 CE by Constantine I, though from different mints. The first (**28**) is attributed to Constantine II in the database and

[232] Bruun 1966; Sutherland 1967.

[233] *Officinae* were the workshops in Roman coin mints. *Officina* marks indicate which workshop a coin was produced at, though it is not always indicated. Series marks are thought to indicate when the coin was struck and the workshop overseer at the time. The introductory chapters in both Bruun 1966 and Sutherland 1967 discuss these marks.

[234] Geissen 2012: 562.

dated to his reign, whereas the other two (**29, 30**) are attributed to the people they depict on their obverse designs, Crispus and Helena, and incorrectly dated on this basis.

The database states that the coins were found in Medinet el-Fayoum, a region already discussed in relation to the scarab mould (**14**) in Section 4.4. The coins are later than the scarab mould and date to the period when the site was called Arsinoë, same as the lamp (**8**).[235]

Nine coin-moulds **(31-39)**

NCM 1879-70/1-9

Chester also donated nine coin-moulds, described in the *Annual Report as*, "MOULDS (9), terra-cotta; for making copper coins of the Lower Empire. Medinet el Fyoum (Crocodilopolis)". Coin-moulds used to cast counterfeit coins have been found in their thousands across sites in Egypt.[236] During the first excavations at Arsinoë, Petrie stated that "scarcely anything was found beyond a lot of forger's coin-moulds of Licinius and Constantine",[237] the same two emperors found on these coin moulds. Clearly, the moulds could have been easily sourced in the area by either Chester personally or the antiquities dealers he frequented.

Coin-moulds were made by pressing coins into discs of moist clay, which were then bound together to form a cylinder.[238] A channel would then be cut into the side of the cylinder, allowing several casts to be made from a single pour (*fig. 4.29*). Once cooled, the cylinder would be broken apart and the cast coins removed. This explains why each coin has a design of either face, though they do not relate to the same coin, they would have been paired with a separate mould. It also explains why one example (**31**) has no design on one side, it was most likely on the edge of the cylinder.

The ceramic moulds are discussed here by design as there are only 3 designs found across a total of 18 faces. Two obverse designs, namely heads of Licinius I (**32, 34, 38, 39**) and Constantine I (**35, 37**), and only one reverse design, Jupiter. The database correctly identifies the designs with some minor mistakes in the recording of the legend. All of the moulds are dated to the period 200-400 BCE which, whilst correct, can be specified further. Strangely, the database lists three "extremely similar" coin-moulds found in the collection of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Australia which feature entirely different designs.[239] In my own catalogue the images have been reversed to show the coins' design and legends clearly. I have provided the date for the coin type(s) the mould was taken from when possible, but this can only provide a *terminus post quem*, i.e. the mould must have been taken after the

[235] Davoli 2012: 613.
[236] Over 2,500 moulds were found in 1943 during excavations at Hermopolis Magna, Barakat 2005: 213, and around 15,000 were found during excavations in 1950 at Qasr-Qaran, Jungfleisch and Schwartz: 5. References sourced from Nixon 2013: 36, note 8, 9. See also Milne 1905: 342-353, for a discussion of moulds found during excavations in 1903 and 1905 amongst the rubbish heaps of Behnesa.
[237] Petrie 1889:3.
[238] Nixon 2013: 25.
[239] 88/613(1-3).

coin had been minted but the coin type may have remained in circulation for a while and so too its counterfeit versions.

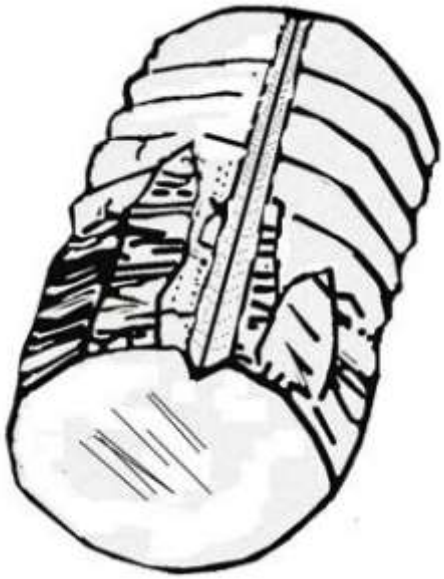


Fig. 4.29 Coin-moulds bound together in a cylinder (drawing: Nixon 2013: fig. 1)

Four coin-moulds are impressed with obverse types of Licinius I (**32, 34, 38, 39**). **39** is the best-preserved example, the legend IMP C VAL LICIN LICINIVS P F AVG can be clearly read.[240] The legend can also be read on **34** and **38** but only the first part is visible on **32**. A search on the *Online Coins of The Roman Empire* (OCRE) database confirmed that this partial legend can only be the same one as found on the other moulds.[241] This particular legend is found on 41 types of coin, all featuring a portrait of Licinius I.[242] The coin types were issued by Constantine I, Galerius, Licinius I, and Maximinus Daia between 308-324 CE.

One mould (**36**) is damaged enough that only the inscription IMP C VAL can be read. Unfortunately, this is a title used in legends for three different emperors (Diocletian, Licinius, Maximinus) across a date range of 284-324 CE. Without any further defining features, it is impossible to say what the legend might have read and which emperor is depicted. **33** suffers even more damage to its legend, with only AVG visible at the end. This is too little information to attempt to date.

35 and **37** depict obverse type of emperor Constantine I with the legend, IMP C FL VAL CONSTANTINVS P F AVG.[243] Both are slightly damaged but the legend is still visible. The

[240] Misspelled as LI**N**CINIVS in the database.
[241] <http://numismatics.org/ocre/results?q=obv_leg_text%3A+IMP+C+VAL+LICIN+LICINIVS&lang=en> (accessed 27/05/23).
[242] <http://numismatics.org/ocre/results?q=fulltext%3AIMP+C+VAL+LICIN+LICINIVS+P+F+AVG&lang=en> (accessed 27/05/23).
[243] Incorrectly copied in the database as IMP **CEL** VAL CONSTANTINUS PF AVG.

legend is associated with 48 coin types dating to the period 310-324 CE.[244] It was minted by Galerius, Licinius, and Maximinus Daia and always used with heads of Constantine I.

Only one reverse type is found on the moulds, that of Jupiter standing left with attributes and the legend IOVI CONSERVATORI AVGG. It is the mint, officina, and series marks which provide the most information, however. On 39, once again the best preserved, the mint mark for Alexandria is clearly visible as well as K / wreath / X / A. This combination of marks is found only on types RIC VII Alexandria 17, 18, and 19, all of which date to 316-317 CE and were minted by Licinius I. Even when the legend or design are not clear, the mint marks confirm that 33, 35, and 37 are also of the same type. 31, 34, and 38 have slightly different marks, the A referring to the first workshop is instead B for the second. The type is the same, however, and the same date applies. 36 is in the worst condition, only a standing figure with sceptre and globe is visible and the beginnings of a wreath and X. This combination is found on types RIC VII Alexandria 16-21, all of which were minted between 316-317 CE.

4.6 Figurines **(40-47)**

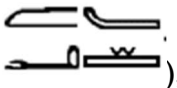
Shabti figurines **(40-46)**

NCM 1879-78; NCM 1879-79; NCM 1879-80; NCM 1879-81; NCM 1879-82; NCM 1879-213; NCM 1879-218

Chester donated 7 funerary figurines, better known as *shabtis*. These funerary figurines both represented and substituted the deceased; their purpose to fulfil the agricultural obligations of the deceased in the afterlife.[245] The *Annual Report* is characteristically succinct. For each figurine, the provenance is noted and the presence or absence of writing. Each example is designated as a "Sepulchral figure (Shabti)". Chester's donations vary in form, material, and period. There are grouped here by material and categorised using Hans Schneider's typology of the object type.

The first two examples (**40, 41**) are painted clay. **40** is the simpler of the two, depicted mummiform holding two hoes and wearing a tripartite wig. The white paint is uneven and obscures some of the finer modelled details. There is a vertical hieroglyphic inscription painted in black ink, presumably the name, and possibly title, of the deceased. Interestingly, Deakin's comments on the figurine are incorrect, stating "Green glazed faience foreman 6.3cm in H. uniscribed". I think it is likely he was shown the wrong shabti, as the inscription is clearly visible, and this is the only obvious mistake he makes in his notes. The database offers no date for the shabti but the *Annual Report* lists its provenance as Saqqara. Using Schneider's typology, I have classified this example as Class VD3 on account of its mummiform form, tripartite wig, and agricultural implements.[246] The wig, agricultural elements, and typology date the shabti to the New Kingdom period.

[244]<http://numismatics.org/ocre/results?q=fulltext%3AIMP%20C%20FL%20VAL%20CONSTANTINVS%20P%20F%20AVG&lang=en&start=40> (accessed 27/05/23).
[245] Milde 2012: 1.
[246] Schneider 1977: 185.

41 is also painted clay but uses red, yellow, white, and black paint to create a more detailed figure. The shabti is once again mummiform with a tripartite wig holding two hoes. A vertical line of text names the owner as Mahu (), identified as such by Deakin. A different feature is the red painted basket on the figures back. The *Annual Report* states that the figure also came from Saqqara and the database gives a date range of ca 1370-1270 BC. Once again, this shabti can classified as Class VD3 and dated to the New Kingdom.

The next figures are both faience (**42, 43**), though burned to a black colour. They are both listed as from Saqqara in the *Annual Report* and depict a mummiform figure wearing a tripartite wig and beard, with crossed arms holding two hoes. On the back of the left shoulder is an incised basket. The pillar against the back of the figures is the so-called Saite pillar, which is commonly found, as the name suggests, in the Saite period.[247] I have classified both as Class XIA, type I on account of their back-pillar, mummiform bodies, and plain tripartite wigs separate from the back-pillar.[248] These features and type can date the shabtis to the Saite Period. **42** was not studied by Deakin and contains no date in the database. **43**, however, is identified as 'Saite type' by Deakin and dated, rather confusingly, to the period 30-640 BCE in the database. The reasoning for this incorrect dating is not explained.

44 and **45** are also faience figurines but not burned. **44** is described as a foreman by Deakin and is shown wearing daily dress with one crossed at the chest holding a whip, which has been rendered in black ink. The *seshat*-band around the tripartite wig is visible from the back. These features allow the figure to be categorised as Class IXC within Schneider's typology.[249] This type is found at Thebes, which helps to specify the provenance of the figure given as only 'Upper Egypt' in the *Annual Report*. Using Schneider's typology, it can be dated to the Third Intermediate Period, which would make the term 'ushebti' rather than shabti more accurate.[250] **45** is a mummiform figure standing with arms crossed and holding no implements. The tripartite wig is detailed in red paint as well as the basket on the back. There are traces of a vertical line of hieroglyphs in red ink which is almost invisible. The shabti is Class VB4 as defined by Schneider, which dates it to the New Kingdom. The *Annual Report* lists the provenance as Thebes. Both the report and the database associates this museum number with two shabtis but only one could be found, the other is presumably missing and must have already been in 1979 when Deakin completed his studies as he mentions only the one.

The final shabti (**46**) is the largest example. It is made from wood and depicts a mummiform figure standing with arms crossed, holding no implements. There is no remaining evidence of any text. The provenance is listed as Thebes in the *Annual Report*. Wooden shabtis are known from the 12th dynasty to the end of the New Kingdom. Without any implements or other attributes, it is hard to specify the date of this shabti further.

[247] Schneider 1977: 161.
[248] Schneider 1977: 225.
[249] Schneider 1977: 219.
[250] Spanel 2001: 569.

Other figurines **(47)**

NCM 1879-220; NCM 1879-221

Chester also donated two non-shabti figurines. The first of which (NCM 1879-220) is unfortunately missing. The *Annual Report* lists it as a "FIGURE, terracotta; man on horseback. Roman period. Medinet el Fyoum". The database offers no further information, describing it simply as a figurine of a "man on horse". The lack of further information, photographs, or dimensions excluded the artefact from my catalogue.

The second (fragmentary) figurine (**47**) is identified as a head of Aphrodite in the database. The *Annual Report* lists it as a Greek Period Aphrodite head found in Lower Egypt. Heads of women with the same slightly angled tilt of the head, so-called 'rings of Venus' on the elongated neck, and coiffured hair and bun are found across the Mediterranean and dated to the Hellenistic Period. Not all of them, however, are identified as Aphrodite. Some examples are simply referred to as the head of a (Greek) woman, but others are identified with Ptolemaic queens such as Arsinoë II. Ptolemaic royal women were often associated with Aphrodite in their depictions, the goddess represented traditional femininity and beauty and connected with marriage.

Fig. 4.30 Hellenistic terracotta female figurine. From the temple of Artemis Paralia at Kition Myres. (photo: Karageorghis, Merker, and Mertens 2016: cat. 365).

The protrusion at the bottom of the neck suggests the head may have been attached to a larger full-figure sculpture (*fig. 4.30*). The body of the example below, for example, was hollow,

allowing the head to be inserted. The head showcases the same long neck and rings of Venus as found on Nottingham's head. It is missing, however, the so-called 'melon' hairstyle which is particularly associated with the early Hellenistic period and found on Nottingham's example. This feature as well as the comparable heads mentioned have led me to date the Nottingham's head to the Ptolemaic period.

The provenance of the head is harder to reconstruct given the geographical spread of the object type. The *Annual Report* mentions only generally, "Lower Egypt". Perhaps of note is the number of similar heads purchased from locals by Petrie at Memphis during his excavation season there.

4.7 Funerary wrapping and case fragments **(48-51)**

Book of the Dead fragment **(48)**

NCM 1879-72

This linen fragment of a chapter of the Book of the Dead is described in the *Annual Report* as a "MUMMY WRAPPING, portion of a; inscribed with part of the Ritual for the Dead, and a vignette of a person adoring before an altar with offerings". I believe that instead of an altar, the vignette depicts the tomb owner before the tomb door. This is found in vignettes of Chapter 92 and in its entirety shows the soul of the tomb owner, in the form of a human headed bird, flying out of the door of the tomb and the tomb owner standing before the door with hands outstretched to embrace his soul (*figs 4.31, 4.32*).[251]

(Left) *Fig. 4.31* Papyrus of Ani, sheet 18, chapter 92. EA10470,18. The British Museum. (photo: © The Trustees of the British Museum)

(Right) *Fig. 4.32* Book of the Dead of Djedher, sheet 10, chapter 92. EA10047,10. The British Museum. (photo: © The Trustees of the British Museum)

There is a hieratic text written in horizontal lines below the vignette. It has bled through the linen and is not clearly legible but most likely contains the text for Chapter 92. Hieratic was

[251] Wallis Budge 1898: 152.

introduced to funerary papyri and linens in the 21st Dynasty and often appears on smaller fragments with more simple vignettes, as with this example.[252]

Funerary case fragments **(49-51)**

NCM 1879-217/1-3

Chester donated these three cartonnage fragments together, described in the *Annual Report* as "FRAGMENTS (3) of the cartonnage of a mummy case, with hieroglyphic inscription, and figure of Osiris". Two of the fragments have strikingly similar decoration (**49** and **50**). Both have vertical lines of hieroglyphic text written in black ink on a white background with black lines dividing the text. They also have the same red, yellow, and black border. It would be tempting to suggest they belong to the same cartonnage but as they do not align exactly, it cannot be said with certainty. Especially as the design elements are features commonly found on cartonnage cases of the Third Intermediate Period.[253] Cartonnage was used from the Third Intermediate Period for the innermost coffins of burials.[254] Based on these stylistic similarities I have tentatively dated the fragments to the Third Intermediate Period.

51 has a different design entirely, depicting a crowned djed-pillar flanked by a uraeus. This is the Osiris figure referenced in the Annual Report, the djed-pillar being the backbone of Osiris in mythology.[255] The djed-pillar was often painted on the bottom of cartonnage cases, either inside or outside.[256] The motif alone is not enough to date the fragment. The provenance for all three fragments is also unknown.

4.8 Architectural elements **(52-62)**

Faience rosette tiles **(52-60)**

NCM 1879-74/1-9

The *Annual Report* describes these nine tiles as "ROUNDELS (9), of inlaid porcelain, used as ornaments of pedestals and capitals of pillars" and gives their provenance as the site of Tell el-Yahudiya. An old object label kept with the tiles gives the same information but specifies the material as faience and dates them to the 19th Dynasty. Interestingly, the database description, which is the most recent, departs from both and claims the tiles were worn as jewellery in ancient Egypt. This description most likely led to their feature in the 'Archaeology Revealed' exhibition, which as mentioned was inspired by a session held for Fashion and Textile students.

Nevertheless, the initial description is the most accurate, the artefacts are indeed architectural decorative tiles. I have identified them as inlaid faience tiles from the 20th dynasty palace of

[252] Niwinski 1989: 16.
[253] Bartos 2017: 32.
[254] *Ibid.*
[255] Pinch 2002: 127.
[256] Lapp and Niwiński 2001: 283.

Ramesses III at Tell el-Yahudiya based on their decoration. There are numerous examples of similarly decorated tiles from museums globally. In the British Museum for example, there are 160 rosette tiles from Tell el-Yahudiya, 138 of which came from Chester. The tiles were mass produced at a factory near the site and have been confidently dated to the 20th dynasty palace.[257]

The back of the tiles are undecorated as they would have been inlaid into the wall decoration of the palace or architectural elements such as capitals. Chester donated two capital fragments to the British Museum in 1871 which include inlaid rosette tiles (*fig. 4.33*).[258]

Fig. 4.33 Fragment of a limestone capital inlaid with rosette tiles and petals. The British Museum. EA38274. (photo: © The Trustees of the British Museum)

Chester was very active in the Tell el-Yahudiya region, he gathered hundreds of artefacts from the area between 1870 and 1874.[259] He presented the most "remarkable" tiles to Samuel Birch, the incumbent Keeper of Egyptian Antiquities at the British Museum, after his first visit and was paid £124 for 660 specimens, roughly equivalent to £10,000 today.[260] Gold suggests that Chester either purchased the tiles from the antiquities market in the nearby village of Shibin al Qanatir or simply collected pieces that had previously been unearthed by locals sourcing for the antiquities trade and I agree it will have been a combination of both for the Nottingham examples also.[261] In his personal copy of Murray's 1875 handbook of Egypt, Chester amended a sentence which states that "unfortunately" unauthorised activity at the site was not reported to Mariette to instead read "fortunately".[262] Clearly, the site had been profitable for his trade.

[257] Friedman, Borromeo, Leveque 1998: 197; cat. 55, 56.
[258] EA38273; EA38274.
[259] Gold 2020: 70.
[260] Birch, 8 June 1871. *Report respecting offers for purchase*. Reference sourced from Gold 2020: note 225.
[261] Gold 2020: 71.
[262] Gold 2020: 71; fig. 2.4.

Chester's extensive knowledge of the region was invaluable, it was one of the places he took Eaton during the latter's visit for the preparation of his travellers' handbook.[263] He was also sought after by Thomas Hayter Lewis who was the first British person to thoroughly 'investigate' Tell el-Yahudiya.[264] Lewis did so without visiting the site himself, instead relying on the numerous artefacts from the region in British museums, the field records of collectors, and the personal accounts of people such as Chester. Lewis thanked Chester for his assistance in his essay on the site and the tiles.[265]

Porphyry mosaic fragments **(61-62)**

NCM 1879-75/1-2

The *Annual Report* lists two "specimens of green and red Egyptian porphyry from Roman pavements, Alexandria". The database elaborates that these fragments were "likely a piece of a larger floor design made up of many pieces of stone", i.e., a floor mosaic. The fragments were included in the Ground Floor archaeology exhibition from 1970, the date which they were returned to storage is unclear.

Reconstructing the provenance of artefacts from Alexandria is difficult for several reasons. Firstly, the modern city sits atop the ancient and some of the ancient city is now submerged past the coastline. Surviving monuments are rare, and even in the 19th century, travellers were lamenting the loss of the monuments mentioned in the classical texts which first drew them to the site.[266] Ancient writers, such as the 1st century CE Greek geographer Strabo, wrote of such monuments but in a fashion that gives no detailed idea of the architecture or topography of the site.

The fragments are undecorated, but their fabric can help date them. **62** is an example of red or imperial porphyry. This material was sourced from a single mine in Egypt in the Roman period, *Mons Porphyrites* in the Eastern Desert.[267] The mine was active from its discovery in 18 CE until its eventual abandonment in the 430s.[268] **61**, however, is an example of green porphyry, which although available from other mines, was also mined in the Eastern Desert. Red porphyry was technically owned exclusively by the emperor, yet it still entered the private market, perhaps as leftovers from imperial projects.[269] Celebrated as the hardest known stone in antiquity it was often used for buildings, particularly floors.[270] It was used in imperial buildings such as the Pantheon but is also common in mosaics at sites such as Kom el-Dikka, a neighbourhood in Alexandria.[271]

[263] Gold 2020: 71.
[264] Lewis 1881.
[265] Lewis 1881: 171.
[266] Empereur 2001: 54.
[267] Keenan 2018: 1035.
[268] Keenan 2018: 1035.
[269] Majcherek 2020: 472.
[270] Aston, Harrell, and Shaw 2000: 49.
[271] Dunbabin 1999: 256; Majcherek 2020.

Though it is hard to find its exact provenance, the fabric, small size, and tapered shape (which would have facilitated slotting into a larger design) of the fragments lends credence to their identification as mosaic tiles. **61** is a square shape found in mosaic designs and the curved form **62** was probably part of a larger circular design (*fig. 4.34)*.

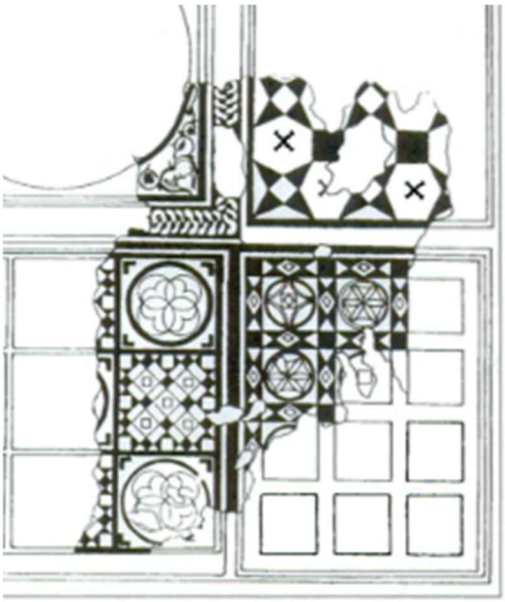


Fig. 4.34 Fragment of a mosaic from Early Roman House F, Kom al-Dikka (line drawing: Majcherek 2003: fig. 2)

5

THE FUTURE OF THE EGYPTIAN COLLECTION

This thesis has attempted to show the benefit of researching artefacts in storage and how much new information can be uncovered as well as demonstrating the variety of Egyptian artefacts owned by NCMG. The artefacts current condition languishing in storage should be lamented, not only because they are inaccessible, and behind a pay wall at that, but because it goes against the core founding principle of the museum and Chester's very reason for donating them, i.e., to educate the masses. Arguably, this also goes against the modern definition of a museum and its purpose. Saumarez Smith argued that "collections should be open and accessible to at least a portion of the public, who [are] expected to obtain some form of educational benefit from the experience".[272] It is an unfortunate reality of all museums, and has been since their modern origins, that vast numbers of artefacts are kept inaccessibly in storage.[273]

It may be too optimistic to hope that Nottingham's Egyptian collection will be on display any time in the near future. Though Nottingham Castle Museum should be re-opening soon, it is unlikely foreign artefacts will feature heavily in the new display. It is understandable that a collection of Egyptian antiquities would not be a priority for an English medieval castle and ducal mansion turned museum. Secondly, the collection is not currently well-documented enough for an exhibition, temporary or otherwise, to be possible. The research I have conducted on Chester's donation would have to be applied to the collection as a whole. This of course requires time, funding, and specialists. In an overview of the known Egyptology collections in UK museums, Serpico stated that "making collections accessible is restricted by a general lack of specialist curatorial knowledge" and Nottingham is no exception.[274]

Nevertheless, there are steps that could be taken to improve accessibility to the collection. Firstly, the *Baseline Database* could be made available online. 13% of the known Egyptology collections in UK museums do not have an online database, so Nottingham is by no means alone in this regard, but this would at the very least increase awareness of the collection.[275] It could also facilitate remote research of artefacts and prompt publications of the collection.

A recent solution to storage management is the concept of 'visual storage'. This allows the public access to collections in storage without the need of a costly or time-consuming traditional display.[276] Curators can continue to work alongside collections and the public gets to experience a 'behind-the-scenes' look at the museum. Unfortunately, at Nottingham this option would be difficult. There is a large off-site storage facility which houses the industrial

[272] Saumarez Smith 1989: 6.
[273] Riggs 2018: 257.
[274] Serpico 2006: 6.
[275] Serpico 2006: 25.
[276] Oakley and Jordan 2009.

collections, local archaeology, and community history.[277] Smaller collections outside of this tend to be based in cellars and attics due to a lack of space and usually have poor access and conditions. A report by consultancy firm Purcell in 2016 highlighted the poor collection storage and management, lack of storage space, and lack of good quality research facilities at Nottingham Castle in particular.[278]

Alternatively, objects from the Egyptian collection could be loaned to another museum which specialises more in Egyptology and has the resources and curatorial staff to display them such as Leicester Museum or The Egypt Centre in Swansea.[279]

At the very least, the database entries for Chester's donations will soon be updated to reflect my corrections and additions and at least one group of the Egyptian artefacts left in storage has now received focused research and proper documentation.

[277] NCMG 2014: 66.
[278] Purcell 2016.
[279] *Leicester Museums Egyptian Collections* <https://www.leicestermuseums.org/collections/explore-leicester-s-collections/egyptian-collection-highlights/> (accessed 14/06/23). The Egypt Centre, Swansea <https://www.egypt.swan.ac.uk/> (accessed 14/06/23).

IMAGE CREDITS

Fig. 2.1 *The Illustrated London News*, 6th July 1878: 20.

Fig. 3.1 Whitehouse, H. 2009. *Ancient Egypt and Nubia*. Oxford: fig. 17.

Fig. 4.1 Arias Kytnarová, K., Jirásková, L., and Odler. M. 2018. Old Kingdom Model and Miniature Vessels from Giza. In: Kahlbacher, A., and Priglinger, E. (eds), *Tradition and Transformation in Ancient Egypt: Proceedings of the Fifth International Congress for Young Egyptologists, 15-19 September, 2015, Vienna*. CAENL 6. Vienna: fig. 3.

Fig. 4.2 Author's own.

Fig. 4.3 University of Southampton. 2005. Rhodian Type, *Roman Amphorae: a digital resource* <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/amphora_ahrb_2005/zoom.cfm?id=74&img=PRW4&CFID=79234694-b696-4e0a-94ec-be34ae9a7937&CFTOKEN=0> (accessed 25/04/23).

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