

ESNA 1905 - 1906.

A Report on the Excavations of the late Professor John Garstang.

This study was undertaken with the aim of presenting the results of the excavation of the cemetery of Esna carried out under the direction of Professor John Garstang in 1905 and 1906.

Although a preliminary report was published in Annales de Service viii the full results of the excavation were never published. All the surviving records are kept in the Department of Egyptology, Liverpool University, but the objects found during the excavation had been scattered all over the world, many having since been destroyed by accident, earthquake or war. The largest groups of surviving material are in the collections of Liverpool University and of the City of Liverpool Museums, and these form the core of this present study.

The first aim was to examine the existing records, particularly those made in the field during the excavation. These include rough plans of the site and of certain tombs, manuscript reports sent by Garstang to members of the excavation committee, and photographs. The paperslips recording the objects as they were found in the field and the field pottery corpus helped to provide the basis for the Inventory (I, i-xli) and the Pottery Corpus (Plates 7-45). All these records contained a number of inaccuracies, but it has been possible to rectify many of these and take them into account when the objects traced were examined.

The most important aspect of the report was the tracing of as many of the objects found at Esna as possible. Although many of those which survive are in Liverpool, groups of objects were traced in museums in many parts of the world, and there was often no record of how they came to be in these different collections. This involved a considerable amount of detective work, as objects had to be identified exactly and attributed to their correct object groups before they were drawn. All the objects traced have been underlined in the Inventory and their museum numbers have been included. Although many objects have not yet been traced, enough can be illustrated and studied to show that the cemetery was in more or less continuous use between the XIIth and XXth Dynasties, and this study has concentrated on the material from these periods.

Chapter 3 discusses various problems connected with individual tombs and object groups, and the following chapters describe the material found, beginning with the pottery. Here the difficulties involved in reconciling the field records to the objects traced were particularly complicated. Certain groups of finds such as the beads and amulets, the



scarabs and seals, the funerary stelae and the human statuettes and figurines were large enough to allow a whole chapter to be devoted to each type of object, but in succeeding chapters the objects have been grouped according to the material of which they were made. The relevant plates are to be found in the second volume.

Volume II also includes a list of museums and collections with Esna material, and a dated list of object groups which is arranged in numerical order to give a simple reference to the section of the Inventory in which each object group is to be found. This is followed by an index of names and titles occurring at Esna arranged in alphabetical order.