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Bushire and Beyond: Some Early Archaeological Discoveries in Iran

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Some of the greatest discoveries are made by chance rather than through design. Interesting discoveries are not the sole prerogative of scholars, and the history of archaeology is closely intertwined with the personal histories of amateurs, antiquarians and travellers. The latter, in particular, have played an important pioneering role in the discovery and advertisement of the monuments and antiquities of extinct cultures, sparking the enthusiasm necessary for the gradual evolution of academic disciplines focused on the specifics of where, why and how. The following paper highlights some significant yet little-known discoveries made in Iran during the opening and closing decades of the nineteenth century.

1. Sasanian remains on the Bushire peninsula

The first part relates to recurrent discoveries of Sasanian ossuaries at some eight sites on the Bushire peninsula. On 3 June 1826 one James Edward Alexander (1803-85) (Pl. 1), landed at the Persian Gulf port and seat of the British Residency of Bushire (Alexander 1827, p. 92). Alexander had obtained a cadetship in Madras in 1820 and already served in the Burmese war of 1824 when he left the East India Company to join the 13th Light Dragoons as a cornet. This was to mark the beginning of a long and active army service in Persia, the Balkans, Portugal, South Africa, the Crimea, New Zealand and Canada, finally retiring with the rank of general.¹ Alexander also led exploratory expeditions in Africa and South America, but is most famous for his role in finally bringing 'Cleopatra's Needle' to London, some eighty years after it had been presented by Muhammad Ali (1769-1849) to King George IV on the occasion of his coronation (O'Donnell [1893], pp. 321-22, portrait facing 176; Lee 1901, pp. 31-32; Bierbrier 1995, 10).

In 1826 Alexander was a young man on temporary secondment to Colonel John Macdonald (-Kinneir) (1782-1830), then British East India Company Envoy Extraordinary to the Shah. However, as his superior officer was delayed at Shiraz,² Alexander spent his time visiting sites in the vicinity of Bushire and Shiraz, including Naqsh-i Rostam and Bishapur. Alexander was also told tales of an ancient cemetery located some six miles south of Bushire, close to a spot called Sabzabad and a short distance east of the ruins at Rishahr (Fig. 1). According to Alexander's host Colonel Ephraim Gerrish Stannus (1784-1850), the official British Resident in the Persian Gulf (1824-1826), 'urns [with] human bones, . . . are found in rows close to an ancient wall'. It is possible from this description that Stannus had conducted his own investigations at this site but, if so, there is no published account of it.

However, the cemetery described to Alexander by Stannus was one of eight such sites on the Bushire peninsula. The first of these was discovered in March 1811 [close one space] at a spot some one and three/quarter miles south of the town of Bushire when two or three asphalt-lined jars were unearthed by a pair of Arab workmen hired by the Acting Resident, Lieutenant William Bruce, on behalf of a diplomatic mission led by Sir Gore Ouseley (1770-1844). These jars were

¹ His long absence abroad between 1831 and 1854 occasioned a minor incident at the Oriental Club in London, to which he had been elected in 1829, when he was refused re-entry by the Hall Porter (Forrest 1968, p. 28).

said to be found ‘at about two feet from the surface of the ground’, to contain bones and

were placed side by side, fronting east and west. They had a small cover at one extremity, and were terminated at the other by a handle. In length they were three feet and a half, and the diameter of the orifice eight inches. Our surgeon [Mr Sharpe] supposed that the bones were those of a woman and child; the enamel of the teeth was undecayed (Morier 1818, pp. 44-45).

This discovery is also described by William Ouseley (1767-1842), Sir Gore Ouseley’s older brother, who added that ‘one old Arab assured me that he had himself dug up above a hundred’ such vessels (Ouseley 1819, pp. 217-20, 404, pl. XXIII). William Ouseley kept a skull, the two covers and several sherds belonging to one of the jars as part of his embryonic collection of Iranian antiquities.³

Two years later, in February 1813, the construction of a temporary Residency by Bruce at the same spot resulted in the discovery of five further jars. Two of these were promptly shipped to Bombay by Captain Taylor, then in command of the Resident’s guard of sepoy. This discovery was first reported by Sir John Malcolm (1769-1833), then resident in Tehran as Minister Plenipotentiary to the Shah, in his *History of Persia* (Malcolm 1815, vol. I, p. 198, n.*). They were later referred to in a slightly garbled description by Lt-Colonel John Johnson (1818, p. 19) who heard of the discovery when he passed through Bushire in 1817. Shortly afterwards they were the subject of a detailed paper presented to the shortlived Literary Society of Bombay by Mr William Erskine (1819) on the basis of correspondence with Bruce. They were found ‘interred in a straight line lying east and west, the small end to the east.’ Four of the jars were of a similar size, approximately three feet long, but the fifth was ‘a small one for an infant I suppose’. Disarticulated unburnt human bones were found inside the jars, the restricted size of which led Erskine to conclude that they had been used for the burial of decomposed corpses that had been deliberately exposed (cf. also Malcolm 1815, vol. I, p. 198, n.*; Modi 1889; Casartelli 1890).⁴

This was not the only findspot for such jar-burials. Bruce reported to Erskine (1819, pp. 191-2) that ‘a few . . . were met with in a / mound about twelve miles’ from the first cemetery. Further jars appear to have been discovered at this spot on at least two subsequent occasions. This site is described as being three miles south of Sabzabad,

in the part of the country called Bakhtiar, [where] there is a small plain within two or three feet of the surface of which there were found, some forty-five years ago [i.e. c. 1843], and may still be found, barrel-shaped coffins of baked earth, containing also human relics stowed away in the same fashion as these in the stone coffins, and the two sorts of repositories may be said to be of equal size and capacity, though far different in shape. The barrel-like coffins, which are termed jars, are of two equal parts, being divided in the middle breadthwise, and evidently joined together by metallic fasteners, which have, of course, rusted away, but the

³ This collection included seals, coins and other small objects acquired in Bushire bazaar, two fragments of Persepolis sculptures and three inscribed bricks collected from ‘Babylon’ by one Mr Martin, then staying in Bushire (Ouseley 1819, pp. 209, 213, 219, 417, pl. XXI). The reliability of the Babylon provenance might be questioned as the correct location of the site had only been firmly established in 1818 by the EIC Resident in Baghdad, Claudius James Rich (1786-1821), and it is more likely that these bricks derive from the Kassite capital of Aqar Quf, the spectacularly eroded ziggurat which was frequently mistaken for the Tower of Babel.

⁴ This may be the report to which Keppel (1827, p. 107) refers in his comments on the use of clay rather than wooden coffins in Mesopotamia.

holes on the rims of each half, evidently intended as holds for the fasteners, bear evidence to this explanation (Modi 1889, p. 3, quoting a letter from C.J. Malcolm dated 5 August 1888).

A similar jar was presented to the British Museum in 1823 by Captain James Ashley Maude. This was shipped from Bushire in 1817 and was

found in a desert about three miles to the eastward of the walls of the town [of Rishahr] where at present, there are neither dwelling houses nor inhabitants. The vase is lined with bitumen, and a stone is generally found under the cover, placed upon the contents, which are human bones. These vases are found in groups of five or six, placed near each other in a horizontal position with the pointed end towards the east and about five or six feet under the surface of the earth. These groups of vases are supposed to contain the remains of families. Some of them are in the shape of a sarcophagus formed of talc (J.A. Maude, p. 22 May 1823).⁵

These vessels have sandy fabrics, a cylindrical body thrown in sections with a paddled bottom, a pointed base and a rolled rim, and were lined with asphalt (Fig. 2.1-2).⁶ This type of so-called torpedo jar with a 'spitzfuss' base is possibly best-known from Sasanian sites in central and southern Mesopotamia and south-west Iran (e.g. Adams 1981, p. 234) and indeed Captain Robert Mignan (1829, pp. 46-47) compared similar vases he found in southern Iraq in 1827 with 'some I have dug up near a village called Reschire, five miles to the south of Bushire in the Persian Gulph'. The form appears to have commenced in the Parthian period and continued to be made into the early 'Abbasid period. They were probably lined with asphalt so as to render them impervious, and were presumably the local equivalent of Roman transport amphorae which were used primarily to carry wine and oil but also other substances (Zemer 1977). The pointed bases – described by Morier as 'handles' – were probably designed to be set into supports, yet would have provided a suitable grip when carried slung over one shoulder.

The site of Sabzabad itself, close to an old fort at Rishahr, is known to have produced stone ossuaries as well as jar burials judging by Stannus' account to Alexander. The remains at Rishahr are marked on a number of early maps and gazetteers of the Persian Gulf owing to their use in navigation along this barren section of coastline. Niebuhr's map dated 1765 marks 'Rischahr ruins' (cf. Hansen 1964, p. 311), as does a later Memoir prepared for the Indian government in 1830 by Captain G. Barnes Brucks (reproduced by Bidwell 1985, p. 587, map facing p. 531); a later British naval intelligence report likewise comments that Rishahr 'is on the site of a medieval port, and has a ruined fort' (Mason 1945, p. 125). The date of this fort has not been firmly established although it is widely attributed to the Portuguese, who finally evacuated in 1622.⁷ However, the site itself should be identified as the Sasanian port of Rev-Shapur.

According to later historical sources this town was founded by Ardashir I (c. AD 224-41), was a victim of Arab piracy culminating in bloody reprisals by Shapur II (AD 309-79),⁸ and witnessed a

⁵ British Museum archives: Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, *Letters on Antiquities*, no. 75.

⁶ A photograph of this vessel was published by Bilkadi (1996, p. 103).

⁷ There is some evidence to suggest that the Portuguese may have re-modelled an earlier fort dating to the thirteenth century or before (Whitehouse & Williamson 1973, p. 40); a similar pattern of reuse is evident at the so-called Portuguese Fort on Bahrain (Vine 1993, pp. 99-103).

⁸ Bandar Abbas and other Persian ports were the subject of similar raids during a period of weakened central

major battle during the Arab Conquest.⁹ During the fifth century it was the seat of the Nestorian metropolitan of Fars. It is said to have been a source of [i.e. local market for] excellent pearls and clearly functioned as an important entrepot for the province of Fars and an early rival to Siraf within the context of Gulf trade (cf. Whitehouse 1971; Williamson 1972; Whitehouse & Williamson 1973). Early Sasanian Fine Orange Ware with Black Paint - probably imported from south-east Iran - Indian Red Polished Ware, Sasanian plain wares and so-called pedestal supports have been found here (Pézard 1914, pl. V.18; Williamson 1972, pp. 100, 104; Whitehouse & Williamson 1973, pp. 35-42, pl. II). In addition, extensive remains of carnelian-working in the form of beads, gems, rings and waste flakes have been reported from the area of Rishahr (Whitehouse 1975; cf. Pézard 1914, p. 35). The date of these remains is unclear. Whitehouse implied that they may be Sasanian and states that there is a local source yet local informants told Ouseley (1819, pp. 200-201) that 'above seven hundred families [were] employed in cutting and polishing carnelians and other ornamental stones; which, it is / affirmed, were not originally produced here; but brought in their rough state from Cambay in India.'

The importance of Rishahr was finally supplanted when Nadir Shah (r. 1736-47) selected a fishing village situated at the northern tip of this narrow coral reef peninsula as the site of the principal Persian port and naval base of Bushire.¹⁰ This was designed to enable Persian control of the Gulf and soon afterwards the Persian navy indeed succeeded in seizing Bahrain and Muscat. In 1763 the British East India Company established a Residency at Bushire enabling exclusive trading rights in Persia and in the following year the Resident was upgraded to British Consul (Belgrave 1972a, pp. 19-20; Standish 1998, pp. 83-84). By 1820/1 Bushire was handling a quarter of all Persian exports although the population never exceeded 20,000 (Issawi 1971, pp. 27-28, 31, 130).

The town of Bushire was dominated by fine two-storey buildings with wind-catchers and an Armenian Church of St. George built in 1819 (Greenway & St Vincent 1998, p. 305; Mason 1945, pp. 503, 583). The Residency itself was situated outside the south-east corner of the town walls but close to the seashore and was 'built in the Indian style, with big, high rooms and old-world sanitation, but comfortable and more dignified than the houses which are now being built in the Gulf' (Belgrave 1972b, p. 14). The plan consisted of a rectangular building with a defensible entrance and outer and inner courtyards surrounded by storerooms, offices, kitchens and living quarters (Belgrave 1972a, p. 85). This building remained in use as the Residency until the mid-nineteenth century when Captain Felix Jones transferred it to the former summer retreat at Sabzabad (Belgrave 1972a, p. 85; Wright 1977, p. 73).¹¹ The subsequent growth of Sabzabad must have been a factor for this being the findspot of a number of further ossuaries in the second half of the nineteenth century.

⁹ The Arab sources are ambiguous as a second Rishahr existed near the head of the Gulf in the district of Arrajan (Le Strange 1905, p. 271) but most modern writers accept that this is the site of Rishahr near Bushire (Hinds 1984, pp. 51-52, n. 87).

¹⁰ In March 1811 the wreck of Nadir Shah's man-of-war, constructed at great effort with wood brought from Mazanderan, was still visible in Bushire harbour (Morier 1818, pp. 38-9). Further information on the history and topography of the town is given by Curzon (ed. 1892, vol. II, pp. 229-36), Wilson (1928), Mason (1945, pp. 125, 502-4, pls 270-71), Bidwell (1985, pp. 584-86) and de Planhol (1990); Wright (1998, pp. 167-68) lists funerary monuments of British individuals interred in the church of St. George and at Rishahr Cemetery. Useful detailed maps of the island can be found in Pézard (1914, pl. IX), [Moberly] (1987, endpapers: 'to illustrate operations at Bushire 1915'), Whitehouse & Williamson (1973, p. 36) and Whitcomb (1987, p. 312).

¹¹ The Sabzabad Residency was used until 1946 when the Political Residency was transferred to Bahrain and the old buildings handed over to the Persian government for use as a sanatorium; the British consulate closed in

Close to Sabzabad, and a short distance east of Rishahr, lie the remains of the important Neo-Elamite settlement of Liyan. Wilson (1928, p. 73) refers to ‘numerous burial urns, bricks, and cuneiform inscriptions [being] discovered in the neighbourhood in 1873 and 1877’. A number of these bricks exist in the British Museum, one presented by Mr A.S. Betts in 1873 but the majority being presented by Colonel Ross in 1875 (Walker 1981).¹² In 1887 excavations were made at Liyan by the German philologist, Mr Friedrich Carl Andreas (1846-1930) (Pl. 2), during the course of his research into the languages of southern Iran (Kānus-Credé 1974; Budge 1920, vol. I, p. 331).¹³ These investigations are unpublished: some 200 cases of Elamite and other antiquities were packed but ‘owing to pecuniary difficulties he was unable to take them out of the country. Four cases belonging to this collection are on their way to the British Museum’ (*Reports to the Trustees*, 19 May 1888).¹⁴ The site was later re-investigated in 1913 by the French mission to Iran (Pézard 1914) but no further work has been undertaken there.¹⁵

In March 1888 as part of a more extensive trip to Mesopotamia and Egypt, Wallis Budge visited Bushire in order to investigate the possibility of new excavations. These were considered either at Bushire or on Bahrain where Captain E.L. Durand’s discovery of a cuneiform inscription ten years before had attracted an [unclaimed] offer of a , 100 grant from the Trustees of the British Museum towards further exploration on the island.¹⁶ At Sabzabad Budge ‘called on Mr C. J. Malcolm, on whose property the antiquities had been found, and he welcomed us most kindly, and offered to afford every facility if the British Museum would excavate the whole site. He gave me for the Museum a small Parthian stone coffin, containing burnt human remains’ (Budge 1920, vol. I, p. 331 = Fig. 3.1).¹⁷

This was not the only ossuary discovered by Joseph Malcolm [Malkomian], an Armenian employee of the Persian Telegraph company. In the same year he sent a second limestone ossuary and lid ‘filled with human bones’ – later reportedly identified as those of a sixty year old man – to the Anthropological Society of Bombay. This coffin was promptly published by Mr Jivangi Jamsedji Modi, a leading Parsi scholar in Bombay, who related the find to Avestan texts describing Zoroastrian burials in ‘bone receptacles’ or *astodans* (Modi 1889; cf. also Casartelli 1890). According to a letter to Modi from Malcolm, dated 5 August 1888, this ossuary

was accidentally found in a vault about 5 or 6 feet below the surface . . . among others deposited there, and covered with the *débris* of parts of the vault that had fallen in from the effects of rain. The said vault is about 7 miles from the town of Bushire, and the ground surrounding it are covered with / mounds, which are manifestly the ruins of what must once have been buildings. The particular vault

¹² These are registered as ANE 1873-7-26,1; 1875-7-24,1-2 [part]; 1875-7-25,1-37; 1895-5-14, 2-7. An inscribed brick of Shilhak-Inshushinak I passed through the London salerooms in recent years; according to the attached nineteenth century paper label, this was one of a group of seven (Bonhams 5 July 1994, pp. 62-63, lot 268 = Bonhams 7 April 1998, p. 47, lot 237 = Bonhams 22 September 1998, p. 43, lot 140).

¹³ Andreas is better known for his philological contributions and co-operation with F. Stolze in the publication of the first photographic album of the standing ruins at Persepolis (Andreas & Stolze 1882). The bulk of his papers are held by the University Library in Göttingen (Lentz 1987).

¹⁴ British Museum archives: Department of the Ancient Near East. The bricks are registered as ANE 1875-7-25,1-26 (cf. Walker 1981, pp. 149-50).

¹⁵ This site is briefly described by Mostafavi (1978, p. 92).

¹⁶ Budge decided against working on Bahrain but Mr and Mrs Bent excavated a large tumulus there the following year. Their finds were later presented to the British Museum (Reade & Burleigh 1978).

¹⁷ This acquisition is listed in reports by Mr Renouf (then Keeper of the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities) to the British Museum Trustees (*Reports to the Trustees*, 19 May 1888, 28 June 1888).

itself was under a mound, and the removal of which for agricultural purposes led to the discovery of the said coffin (Modi 1889, pp. 2-3).

The British Resident in Bushire at this time was Colonel Edward C. Ross, who had already presented the Museum with the inscribed bricks from Liyan mentioned above, a second and very similar limestone ossuary which was probably found at the same site (Fig. 3.2) and a reused torpedo jar ossuary that was said to be from Sabzabad (Fig. 2.2).¹⁸ The stone ossuaries were later placed on display in a former Babylonian and Assyrian Room – now the Early Egypt gallery in Room 64 – in the British Museum, together with Parthian glazed ‘slipper coffins’ excavated at Warka by William Kennet Loftus (British Museum 1892, p. 135; British Museum 1908, p. 117; British Museum 1922, p. 80). The sizes and shapes of the two ossuaries in the British Museum compare favourably with that described by Modi: the three range from 48 to 60 cm in length, 33 to 36.6 cm in width and 24.5 to 27 cm in height. Each has one squared-off end and a rounded end and was covered with a flat lid carved from the same type of stone; two of the lids have single holes drilled through at either end. The shaping marks of an adze are very clear on both of the ossuaries and lids in the British Museum.

Curzon (1892, vol. II, p. 235) later described these discoveries as one of the characteristic features of Bushire, there being

an immense collection of stone and earthenware vases of rude shape and fabrication, sealed up with earthenware lids or with coverings of talc, sometimes lined inside with a coating of bitumen, and containing human skulls and bones. A great number of these have been found between Bushire and Reshire, at a depth of about two feet below the surface, usually placed horizontally in a long line one after the other. The jars are about three feet in length and one foot in diameter. They are supposed to have contained the remains of Zoroastrians, after the body had perished by exposure.

Whitcomb (1987, p. 315) has ingeniously suggested that these reports may have referred to lines of ancient drain pipes, possibly water conduits leading from the Angali canal which appears to have supplied the peninsula with much of its water in antiquity. However, it is clear from the contemporary descriptions that bones were invariably found within both the asphalt-lined jars and the stone ossuaries. A further set of ossuaries were discovered in more recent years as a result of the construction of a national park at Shoqab next to the beach between Bushire and Rishahr. These finds included long narrow-mouthed jars measuring up to 87 cm in height, 14 cm across at the mouth, and containing human remains and plain stone ossuaries measuring 50 cm in length, 30 cm across and 25 cm in height (Mir Fattah 1996; Curtis and Simpson 1997, p. 139; Yamauchi 1997, pp. 241-42).¹⁹ These reports draw attention to similar finds being made in more recent years at Bahmani and Bagh-e Zahra, thus bringing the number of currently known burial sites to a total of eight, lying north, east and south of the Sasanian port of Rev-Shapur.

¹⁸ The stone ossuary was reported in later gallery guides as being from Susa but this is not supported by documentation at the time of its registration.

¹⁹ These discoveries are mentioned in a recent guide. ‘Excavations along the same road [between Bushire and Rishahr] have revealed a more or less continuous line of buried earthenware vases, believed to contain the remains of Zoroastrians after the vultures had done their work’ (Greenway & St Vincent 1998, p. 307).

There has been much discussion over Sasanian funerary customs with a common assumption that these must be influenced by Zoroastrian belief as this was the official religion of the Empire (e.g. Trumppelmann 1984; Boucharlat 1991). However, the available archaeological evidence suggests a wide range of burial practices in different parts of the Empire which probably reflects more closely a diversity of religious belief and funerary tradition. In Mesopotamia primary Sasanian burials have been excavated at over forty sites, including Tell Mahuz (Negro Ponzi 1968/9) and Mohammed 'Arab (Roaf 1984, pp. 142-44, pl. XI). In other cases, particularly along the Euphrates, torpedo jars were likewise reused in a funerary context but employed in a different manner, namely placed in a row over the body, presumably in order to protect it from dogs and other animals (al-Haditti 1995).

Within Iran there is greater evidence for secondary burials although primary burials of this period have been excavated at some sites in northern Iran, including Haftavan Tepe (Burney 1970, pp.169-71, pls VIIc-d, VIIIa-c). Across southern Iran, individuals were interred inside cairns although the poor state of the surviving remains render it ambiguous as to whether these were disturbed primary burials or secondary interments (cf. Azarpay 1981). The practice of interring human remains inside torpedo jars is attested from Susa. Loftus (1856/7) remarked that this was the 'most common form of coffin' that he encountered at this site, especially on the huge Ville Royale mound (so-called 'Great Platform'), and speculated on how the bodies could have been placed inside such narrow-mouthed vessels (cf. also Loftus 1857, pp. 405-406). Similar jar burials have been reported from the Galalak district of Shushtar, suggesting that this was a funerary practice employed at a number of sites in this region (Mir Fattah 1996). At other places in Fars, there is evidence for burial in rock-cut ossuaries but the cemeteries found on the Bushire peninsula offer the first convincing archaeological evidence for stone and ceramic ossuaries within Iran at this date.

2. Early excavations at Persepolis and the discovery of a sphinx

Bushire was the traditional gateway to central Iran from the south. At a distance of some 200 km from Bushire lay the city of Shiraz. On arrival here the adventurous and the romantic usually rode out to the ruins of the Achaemenid royal citadel at Persepolis, a short distance away. These ruins were rediscovered by a European audience during the seventeenth century with the publication of travel accounts by Pietro della Valle and others. The standing remains were frequently illustrated by later travellers, some of whom made more extensive investigations. The story of these discoveries is still unfolding but the following section illustrates another significant yet little-known episode.

On 29 June 1826 Alexander visited Persepolis where he found excavations by his superior officer to be in progress. After briefly describing the ruins, he added:

Colonel Macdonald employed people in clearing away the earth from a staircase, and made the interesting discovery of a chimerical figure representing a lion or dragon winged, with a human head, resting one of its paws on a lotus-flower, supported by a stem like that of the date tree. No similar figure had ever previously been discovered at Persepolis (Alexander 1827, p. 140).

This figure belongs to a category of Achaemenid male royal sphinxes (Pl. 3). Facing pairs of these figures, each wearing a divine horned headdress and with one paw raised in supplication, survive in the upper central panel on the processional staircases of four buildings at Persepolis, namely the Palace of Darius, the Palace of Xerxes, the Apadana and the so-called 'Central

Building'. At the time of Macdonald's excavations, these facades were either still buried or in a highly fragmentary state (Ouseley 1821, pp. 255-56, n. 31, p. 532, pl. XLI [bound in out of sequence to follow p. 530]); indeed, a second fragment of sphinx relief from Persepolis was found reused at the site of Madar-i Sulaiman [Qasr-i Abu Nasr] where it was recorded by earlier travellers, including Sir William Ouseley in 1811 (Ouseley 1821, pp. 41, 534, pl. LV: 5).²⁰ However, the present example derives from a fifth location, probably the upper central portion of a facade belonging to Palace G, which was constructed next to the Palace of Darius by Artaxerxes III (358-338 BC) but which was physically transferred during or after his reign to replace the original north staircase of Palace H that had been constructed by Artaxerxes I (464-424 BC) (Shahbazi 1976, pp. 53, 55). The fact that it was not previously exposed to the elements helps explain its relatively crisp appearance.

The purpose of these sphinx figures was apotropaic and variations of the motif recur on a number of small objects of this period, including a gold appliqué in the Oxus Treasure (Dalton 1964, 14, pl. XII),²¹ an ivory from Susa (de Mecquenem 1947, p. 88, fig. 56: 2), gold appliqués from Sardis and elsewhere (Curtis 1925, 11, pl. I, no. 1; Bingöl 1999, 182, no. 203), Western Achaemenid stamp seals (Boardman 1970, pp. 34, 39, 42-43, pls 1, 5, nos 5, 116-25) and seal impressions from Daskyleion, Wadi Daliyeh and Ur (Leith 1997, 191-92, pl. XV: 1, cf. also pls XIX, XXI, XV; Collon 1996, p. 74, pls 20d-f, h-i).

Accompanying Alexander's description are three engravings taken from the author's drawings. These consist of the sphinx relief in question, a standard view of the site looking down from the mountain behind the Tomb of Artaxerxes III (Pl. 4) and a detail of a processional scene showing servants ascending a staircase to the left (Pl. 5). The processional scene may be identified with the bottom right flight of the eastern staircase of the Palace of Darius where these figures are missing yet closely paralleled by figures on the equivalent left side (Schmidt 1953, pls 133, 135).²²

The Persepolis sphinx was removed in 1828 by Sir John McNeill (1795-1883), a difficult process as he described in a letter to Macdonald.²³ The relief was generously presented to the British Museum in December 1937 by the National Art Collections Fund who had purchased it for the reduced price of £600 from the dealer Mr Alfred Spero of 48 Duke Street, St. James' (Pl. 6; *Trustees Reports for 1936-38*, no. 17;²⁴ Smith 1938; Barnett 1957, pp. 62-63, pl. XXI: 4; Verdi ed. 2003, 123, cat.53). Nothing was then known about its previous history although it was assumed

²⁰ This fragment has since been restored to its original position (Carbone 1965, p. 36, fig. 5). In 1933 the American excavators of Qasr-i Abu Nasr found traces of the nineteenth century excavations (Whitcomb 1985, pp. 16, 32).

²¹ Pfrommer (1993, pp. 17-18, 238, nn. 122, 127, 148) has suggested a post-Achaemenid date for this appliqué (ANE 1897-12-31,26 = 123927).

²² Compare the scene at the bottom right flight of the staircase on the western side which was moulded by the Weld expedition (Smith 1932, no. 3, pl. 8).

²³ McNeill first visited Persia as an Assistant-Surgeon to Major Henry Willock's mission in January 1821. After his first marriage he was re-appointed at Willock's request as medical officer to the East India Company legation in Tehran in 1824, later becoming assistant to Macdonald and eventually promoted to Minister Plenipotentiary to Tehran from 1836-42 (Lee 1893, pp. 249-51; [MacAlister] 1910; Wright 1977, pp. 21-22). McNeill finally retired to Edinburgh in 1842 where his house at 53 Queen Street was 'fitted up entirely in Persian materials' ([MacAlister] 1910, p. 271). It is likely from this description that the sphinx relief featured prominently among these furnishings. We are very grateful to Mrs F. S. Farmanfarmanian for kindly drawing our attention to this description (Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh: McNeill Papers, GD371/-).

²⁴ British Museum archives: Department of the Ancient Near East, S. Smith, *Report of Donations*, 29 December

that it had been in a private British collection since the nineteenth century.²⁵ Alexander's (1827) description and illustration are therefore particularly important as they establish, for the first time, a precise provenance for the British Museum relief. However, other details of Alexander's published drawing are incorrect: the tip of the winged disc symbol in front of the sphinx was mistaken for a rosette and the fourteen line ruling to the left should correspond with the beginning of a row of plants. The vertical left side of this slab is original whereas the present thickness of 8.5 cm indicates that it has been thinned down as other slabs along this facade are uniformly 30 cm thick.

It is quite possible that Macdonald made other clearances at Persepolis as he appears to have been a regular visitor to the site, leaving graffiti within Xerxes' Gate of All Nations (the so-called 'Porch of Xerxes') dated 1808, 1810 and 1826, and the main north doorway of the Palace of Darius dated June 1820 (Curzon 1892, vol. II, pp. 157, 169). Indeed, the 1820 graffiti lists the members of the delegation as 'Col. J. M. Macdonald Envoy, Cap. R. Campbell Asst., Sir Keith Jackson Bart., Cap. Jervis 3d Cav., Major Geo. Willock, Lt. McDonald, J. P. Riach Esq., Lt. Strong, Cornet Alexander, Geo. Malcolm' followed by the name of 'Mrs Macdonald Kinneir' (Simpson 2005). However, Macdonald's excavations were by no means the only such investigations conducted during this period and the first quarter of the nineteenth century witnessed a minor flurry of activity at Persepolis. The early travellers' accounts provide a useful record of the state of the monuments and illustrate their progressive decay.²⁶ This was precisely the period when a number of sculptural fragments entered private European collections, notably belonging to Sir Gore Ouseley (Ambassador to Persia 1811-14) and the Fourth Earl of Aberdeen, many of which were later presented to the British Museum.²⁷ One of these little-known early excavators was Colonel Stannus, Alexander's host at Bushire in June 1826.

²⁵ Sidney Smith (Keeper of the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities) suggested in a letter to Sir Robert Witt (Chairman of the National Art Collections Fund) that the sphinx may have belonged to Lord Amherst of Hackney but this is clearly mistaken (British Museum archives: Department of the Ancient Near East, *Correspondence*, 30 October 1937). I am also grateful to Mrs M. Yule of the National Art Collections Fund for her assistance.

²⁶ Not all travellers were so thorough. For instance, John Hyde, a businessman from Manchester, visited Persepolis on 4 and 6 October 1821 – the days immediately before and after the premature death of Claudius James Rich in Shiraz – but his (unpublished) journal makes no further reference to his activities there (British Library Add. MS 42106).

²⁷ Barnett (1957); Mitchell (2000); Roaf (1987) and Curtis (1998) list additional pieces in other collections; cf.

3. *Stannus, the first plaster casts of Persepolis sculptures and the Weld expedition*

‘Stannus was a splendid-looking man with a tall soldier-like presence’ (Pl. 7; Vibart 1894, p. 107). He was from a wealthy Irish family who joined the service of the Indian army in 1800 and was posted to the Bombay European Regiment with which he served with distinction; he was promoted to Captain in 1811, rising to Colonel in 1829 (Vibart 1894, pp. 104-107; Crone 1937, p. 237; Burke’s Peerage 1976, p. 1046). During his brief Residence at Bushire, Stannus produced an important report for the British government on the state of trade between Persia and India between 1817 and 1823 (quoted by Issawi 1971, pp. 89-91).

He retired to England from this post on health grounds in 1826 but was later appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the East India Company Military Seminary at Addiscombe, near Croydon, on 13 March 1834. This promotion followed the resignation of his predecessor over growing criticism of the discipline at Addiscombe, the breakdown of which was attributed to ‘the pernicious habit of smoking cigars’ and the availability of pocket money (Broadfoot 1893, p. 651). However, ‘though just and kindly, he was no administrator, and was systematically irritated by the cadets into extraordinary explosions of wrath and violent language. During the latter years of his rule at Addiscombe the discipline seems to have got very slack’ (Lee 1898, p. 86). ‘Notwithstanding his quickness of temper and his use of strong language, Sir Ephraim Stannus was a favourite with the cadets’ (Vibart 1894, p. 109).²⁸ In 1838 Stannus was promoted to the rank of Major-General and he remained in post here until he died of a heart attack on 21 October 1850, aged 66. He had remained a close friend of McNeill’s with whom he maintained regular correspondence ‘in the most illegible of handwritings’ ([MacAlister] 1910, p. 88). Stannus was buried in the churchyard of St. John’s in Croydon and a plaque was erected in his memory by ‘a few of his oldest friends’ in St. James’s Church, where the cadets used to attend and where many of the officers were buried (*Croydon Advertiser* 1882, p. 27).²⁹

During his spell of residence in Bushire, Stannus made some limited yet previously unrecognised excavations at Persepolis. In 1825 he exposed ‘a number of sculptured stones, capitals of columns etc.’ but these were re-buried a few days later by local villagers who blamed them for a sudden locust swarm (Alexander 1827, p. 137). Although not cited by Curzon (1892), Stannus’ name recurs twice as a graffito on the interior of the main east doorway and a window on the south side of the Palace of Darius (Simpson 2005).

Despite his evidently mixed fortune in excavation, Stannus succeeded in making the first casts of Persepolis reliefs as an alternative record, through the expedient of making

several long shallow boxes of wood, in / which he put quick lime, applied them to the sculptures, and allowed them to remain till thoroughly dry. The case was then taken off and sent to Bushire, containing the impression, from which the cast was again taken in lime. These, of course, are very valuable, as nothing can be more accurate. Processions were the subjects of these casts (Alexander 1827, pp. 97-8).

²⁸ See also his obituary in *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, December 1850, p. 659.

²⁹ I am grateful to Mr S. Griffiths of Croydon Local Studies Library for this information. The Seminary was finally closed in 1861 with the merging of the Indian and British Armies after the Indian Mutiny when the War Office decided that the existing training facilities at Sandhurst and Woolwich were sufficient. Addiscombe House, which was built by Hawksmoor, and the surrounding buildings were later demolished for housing

These casts were shipped to India following Stannus' departure from Bushire in 1826. The governor of Bombay during this period was Mountstuart Elphinstone (1779-1859) who was said to be 'immersed in classical literature' and had previously been responsible for 'the putting together of a valuable library in the handsome Residency' at Poona (Bellasis 1952, p. 211). In 1827, the year of Elphinstone's resignation, Mr Edward Hawkins (1780-1867), numismatist and Keeper of the Department of Antiquities in the British Museum, reported to the Trustees that 'he has received 23 cases of casts of Persepolitan sculptures and inscriptions presented to the Museum by the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay. They are at present placed upon shelves in the basement storage' (*Officers' Reports*, vol. X, May 1827).³⁰ These casts immediately appear to have been given a protective wash and sealed with oil (*Minutes of the Standing Committee of Trustees*, no. 3022, 12 May 1827); some were also mounted on stone slabs, a method that continued to be used in the nineteenth century to support fragile Assyrian reliefs and Parthian coffins within the Museum (*Sub-committee on Antiquities*, 14 June 1828, p. 13).³¹ The casts were placed on display in the Central Saloon [later moved to the Assyrian Transept] of the British Museum together with Persepolis sculptures presented by Sir Gore Ouseley in 1817 and Lord Aberdeen in 1825 (Jenkins 1992). However, these were not the only casts made by Stannus: he also made casts of the Middle Persian inscriptions at Hajjiabad (Curzon 1892, vol. II, p. 116) which were displayed together with the Persepolis sculptures and casts.³² However, since that date the existence and significance of these has been overlooked (Simpson 2000; 2003).

In 1844 a second group of Persepolis casts, totalling twenty seven reliefs and four inscriptions, were made by M. Pierre-Victorien Lottin [also known as Lottin de Laval] (1810-1903), using a different technique that was christened 'lottinoplastique'; these casts survive in the Musée de Berny and Musée du Louvre (Chevalier 1997, pp. 27, 33, 193, figs 11, 18, nos 8-9; Zapata-Aubé & Amiot-Defontaine 1997).³³

Almost fifty years later a third and even more extensive set of plaster casts were made through an expedition to Persepolis initiated by Mr Cecil Harcourt Smith (1859-1944), a curator in the Department of Antiquities in the British Museum. This followed an earlier reconnaissance trip to Persia for the purpose of 'examining some likely fields for archaeological research in Southern Persia' which Smith had made in May-August 1887; he was accompanied and assisted by Major-General Sir Robert Murdoch Smith (1835-1900), formerly a key player in Newton's expedition to Halicarnassus, later Director of the Persian Telegraph company and now Director of the Royal Scottish Museum (Dickson 1901, p. 311).³⁴ The ensuing expedition of 1892 was privately

³⁰ British Museum archives: Central Archives. A second group of eighteen casts, listed by Stannus in a paper sent to Edward Hawkins (*Letters on Antiquities*, no. 100), were offered by Stannus to the Royal Dublin Society but not delivered owing to 'some mistake of his agent'.

³¹ I am very grateful to Dr Ian Jenkins (Department of Greek & Roman Antiquities) for drawing my attention to these archives and to Christopher Date (Central Archives) for his kind assistance.

³² *A Guide to the Exhibition Galleries of the British Museum, Bloomsbury*, (London 1884), p. 80. Two of these casts were transferred in 1880 from the India Museum. It might be noted that the original colour of the plaster - visible on the backs of the casts - and the method of mounting of the Stannus casts from Persepolis and Hajjiabad are identical yet contrast greatly with that of the later Weld series. I am very grateful to Ken Uprichard (Head of Inorganic Conservation) for his insightful comments on these and the possible original displayed appearance of other sculptures.

³³ Lottin de Laval also made casts of Assyrian reliefs at Khorsabad (Fontan 1994). His own *Manuel complet de Lottinoplastique*, published in 1857, has been re-issued electronically at <http://www.bmlisieux.com/normandie/lottinop.htm>

³⁴ British Museum archives: Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, *Reports to the Trustees* 1887-88, pp.

financed by Lord Savile and was directed by Mr Herbert Weld [Blundell] (1852-1935).

Herbert Joseph Weld was born in 1852 and was educated at Stonyhurst (Pl. 8). He was the son of Thomas Weld-Blundell of Ince-Blundell but discontinued the name of Blundell in 1924 prior to inheriting the Weld seat at Lulworth. His career included further travels in Persia (1891), Libya (1894) and Cyrenaica (1895), hunting game and exploring the source of the Blue Nile in Somaliland, Abyssinia and Sudan (1898/9, 1905) and a spell as Boer War correspondent for *The Morning Post*. Herbert Weld was a notable philanthropist. In addition to his work at Persepolis he presented a substantial collection of East African stuffed birds to the Natural History Museum and, in the winter of 1921/2, he travelled to Baghdad where he acquired an important collection of tablets. He presented this to the Ashmolean Museum, recommending Kish as the preferred site for a proposed joint expedition between Oxford University – largely funded by Weld himself – and the Field Museum in Chicago, and nominally directed by Stephen Langdon, then the Professor of Assyriology in the University (Field 1955, p. 53; Gibson 1972, pp. 70-71; Moorey 1978, pp. 13-14).

On 11 November 1925 Weld was elected an Honorary Fellow of Queen's College Oxford in recognition of his support for the Kish expedition, the citation in the minute-book referring to him as 'Hon. D.Litt., Fellow Commoner 1902'; at that time a Fellow Commoner was a person admitted to the college as a mature scholar, already a graduate of some standing, who was allowed to share the high table with the fellows as a mark of distinction. He would not be expected to read for any degree and would pay all expenses himself. Weld was a member of the Athenaeum and various learned societies (*Who was Who 1929-1940*, pp. 1433-34) and was elected a member of the Royal Yacht Squadron at Cowes in 1924, where his boat *Lulworth* 'won a good many races, including the King's Cup in 1925' although Weld's 'detachment from the excitement of the start was a general cause of astonishment' (Guest and Boulton 1903, pp. 179-80).³⁵ He had a house at 13 Arlington Street, London SW1 but in 1927 he inherited Lulworth Castle at East Lulworth in Dorset, 'a castle of a very special sort' that was constructed in c. 1608 in Gothic style (Pevsner 1972, pp. 45, 194-6). This was a tragic period in his life as his beautiful young wife died in 1929 and Lulworth castle was gutted by fire in the same year. Herbert Weld died at Lulworth on 5 February 1935 after a brief illness, leaving the sum of £500 in his will to Queen's College Oxford. He was buried in the Weld family chapel the following day, the members of the congregation including Langdon who added a glowing appreciation to Weld's published obituary (*The Times*, 7 February 16b; funeral details on 9 February 15d, appreciation on 12 February 19c, details of the will on 27 August 13c and 22 June 9d).³⁶

Meanwhile, in November 1891 Herbert Weld left for Persia, arriving in Shiraz the following January. Plaster piece and papier maché moulds were made on site by the *formatore* Mr Lorenzo

Museum) based on experience 'learned on the job at the British Museum' (Burton 1999, p. 171) and it was on behalf of that museum that Murdoch Smith built up a rich Islamic collection from Iran, partly acquired from M. Richard, 'a French gentleman long resident in Persia' (Murdoch Smith 1877, preface). The activities of M. Richard at Rayy had been detailed by Cecil Smith to the Trustees of the British Museum some years before as he noted that 'M. Richard of Teheran has made some tentative excavations here, the most interesting result of which was the acquisition of fragments proving the existence here in very early times of the manufacturing of *reflet* pottery' (*Reports to the Trustees* 1887-88, p. 131).

³⁵ My thanks to Mrs Diana Harding (Royal Yacht Squadron Archivist) for kindly referring me to this source.

³⁶ I am very grateful to Mr J. M. Kaye (Keeper of the Archives at Queen's College) for information relating to Weld's Oxford connection, to Dr Roger Moorey for suggesting other leads, to Mr D. Greenhalf (Custodian of Lulworth Castle) for kindly sending further information and to Lady Agnes Grey for giving her permission to

Andrea Giuntini (c. 1844-1920) and one of his four sons. Giuntini (Pls 9-10) had previously worked for D. Brucciani who owned an important cast gallery at 40 Great Russell Street and had travelled to Meso-America with Alfred Maudslay to mould Mayan sculptures at Copán and Quirigua.³⁷ At Persepolis he moulded processional scenes along the north face of the Apadana and the southern and western facades of the Palace of Darius, royal combat scenes inside doorways of the Palace of Darius and the Harem, an inscription of Artaxerxes III Ochus (358-338 BC) from the staircase on the western facade of the Palace of Darius, a column base excavated in the Treasury, a lion on the rock-cut tomb facade of Artaxerxes III and the winged figure in Gate R at Pasargadae (Smith [1931]). While at Persepolis, Weld and Giuntini made and presented duplicate papier maché moulds of the Artaxerxes inscription and a guardsman from the southern facade of the Palace of Darius to Mr Truxton Beale, the United States Minister to Persia, during his otherwise unsuccessful visit to try and secure sculptures for what is now the Smithsonian Institution in Washington (Adler 1895).³⁸ After returning to England in the summer, Giuntini's moulds were used to make plaster casts and sold via Smith's London address of 3A The Avenue, Fulham Road (Pl. 11).³⁹

Extensive lime burning, erosion, removal of certain pieces and vandalism had already led to parts of the site – particularly the long-exposed north face of the Apadana – being damaged. The 1892 casts thus provide the best surviving record of these sculptures. Some casts were sold to defray costs, the buyers including the Musée du Louvre, the Vorderasiatische Museum Berlin and the Metropolitan Museum in New York but only two complete sets appear to have been made and the moulds were deliberately destroyed to ensure that these remained a limited edition (Budge 1925, p. 24; Smith [1931]).⁴⁰ One set was presented by Lord Savile to Nottingham Museum and Art Gallery and the second was presented to the British Museum in July 1893 'with the view of

³⁷ Maudslay described Giuntini as 'a very good fellow and good companion - does not grumble' (Graham 2002, p. 111). There are some interesting similarities between the Maudslay and Weld expeditions. Both were directed by modest men of private means whose objective was, in Maudslay's words, 'to enable scholars to carry on their work of examination and comparison, and to solve some of the many problems of Maya civilisation, whilst comfortably seated in their studies at home' (quoted by Drew 1999, p. 89). Maudslay learnt the technique of making paper squeezes at Yaxchilán in 1881 from the French explorer Desiré Charnay; his subsequent expeditions relied heavily on making squeezes of low-relief sculptures and inscriptions using 'a special tissue like orange wrappers that travelled out from England in large bales' or making plaster piece-moulds of stelae and sculptures in the round. 'The logistical problems were formidable. Besides photographic and survey equipment, and supplies for many weeks in the field, he had to arrange for the shipment of the plaster [bought for 50 shillings a ton in Carlisle but reckoned by Maudslay to cost £50 by the time it reached Copán], the bales of paper, wrapping materials for the moulds and specially designed boxes to transport them ... At Copán, Maudslay and Giuntini used four tons of plaster and produced some 1400 separate piece moulds' (Drew 1999, p. 93; cf. also Graham 2002). I am very grateful to Susan Gill for drawing my attention to Drew's account.

³⁸ My thanks to Dr Ann C. Gunter for kindly telling me about these casts.

³⁹ I am very grateful to Mrs Valerie Emmons for kindly sending me further information about Lorenzo Giuntini and his family. He had two brothers (Frederico Eugene and Angelo Robert), four sons (Lawrence Mark Angelo, Joseph Albert Victor, Lelio and Renaldo) and four daughters (Flora Kate, Cecilia Alice, Ada Maud and Mabel Adela); the brothers and sons all worked in the family studio and together were partly responsible for making a number of well-known monumental bronze sculptures erected in public spaces across London.

⁴⁰ The Musée du Louvre holdings include cast sections of the north facade of the Apadana and the west staircase of the Palace of Darius, recently exhibited in two temporary exhibitions (anon. 1997 = Smith 1932, no. 2 [part]; Fontan 1998, pp. 228-29, nos 93-94 = Smith 1932, no. 4 [part of sections I and IV]). I am indebted to Dr A. Caubet for kindly supplying this information. Nine plaster casts of Achaemenid sculptures were registered by the Vorderasiatische Museum and transferred to the University of Hamburg in 1993; for this information I am grateful to Dr R.-B. Wartke. The reassembled cast of the enthroned Xerxes which was made for the

supplying adequate means of comparison of the Persepolis sculptures with the Assyrian slabs exhibited in the British Museum' (*Trustees Minutes*, 29 July 1893, no. 2798).⁴¹ However shortage of adequate space and the Trustees' concern over showing casts rather than originals prevented them from being placed on permanent display (a fate similar to that of the Maudslay casts). Nevertheless, following the popularity of an exhibition on Persian Art held at Burlington House earlier in 1931 - at which some of the Nottingham casts were exhibited - and the unexpected availability of a temporary exhibition slot (normally hosting a temporary display relating to Woolley's excavations at Ur), a display of these casts was opened on 26 May 1931 in the former Assyrian Basement of the British Museum (anon. 1931, p. 8; Smith 1932; cf. Royal Academy 1931, p. 6).⁴²

During the course of his expedition Weld excavated a number of trenches at Persepolis. These were in the Apadana ("The Great Hall of Xerxes"), the Central Building ("square pylon at the south corner of the Hall of a Hundred Columns"), the Hall of a Hundred Columns, Palace D ("tumulus rising behind the Palace of Darius"), the Palace of Xerxes ("open court below the Palace of Darius"), the Harem ("S. E. Edifice"), the Treasury and the plain below the citadel; in addition, he excavated some trenches in Palace P at Pasargadae.⁴³

Most of the discoveries were architectural but they hinted at the degree to which colour was an important factor in the original decor of the palaces. Traces of 'a rich red' cement pavement were found in the Treasury and Palace of Darius, a fragmentary fluted pilaster 'with remains of the [yellow] paint in the flutings ... laid on a ground of white gesso' was discovered in Palace D, and a blue and yellow glazed brick found in or near the Apadana (Weld Blundell 1892, pp. 539, 541, 557); the discovery of this glazed brick is interesting as few examples of this type of architectural decoration, better known from Susa, had hitherto been reported from Persepolis. The base of a relief in the Hall of a Hundred Columns was also noted as being 'covered with a coating of blue paint, which came away readily under the touch as fine blue powder. This on examination is proved to be silicate of copper, or blue fritte', confirming earlier suggestions that the sculptures were originally coloured (Weld Blundell 1892, p. 557).⁴⁴

⁴¹ These two sets have now been reunited following the acquisition by the British Museum of the Nottingham casts in November 1997: the ultimate aim is to display a sequence of these Persepolis casts in a future Ancient Iran gallery.

⁴² The exhibition was open for a year before being dismantled in May 1932 (*Reports to the Trustees*: S. Smith, p. 8 June 1931, no. 137, 6 May 1932, no. 69). In a letter to George Hill, then Director of the British Museum, Smith wrote that a 'rough calculation shows that the approximate length of exhibition space required would be over 100 feet, and the only safe way of exhibiting them temporarily would be to have two sets of planking about 30 feet long run down the centre of the room; at least that is the only way that suggests itself to me at present as feasible, without interfering with the public view of the Assyrian sculptures', and continued by referring to his desire that they be displayed in a permanent gallery once 'the temporary Persian exhibition in the Print Room is dismantled' (*Reports to the Trustees*, 7 March 1931, no. 228). In preparation for this temporary exhibition, the casts were fitted together, cleaned and coloured by the Cast Department of the Victoria & Albert Museum (*Officer's Reports* 1931). The Assyrian Basement was later restricted to its present size and height with the construction of galleries above.

⁴³ Surprisingly, Weld's pioneering excavations at Palace P are not mentioned by Stronach (1978) although they must have informed Herzfeld's later trenches.

⁴⁴ Traces of black, red, green, blue and yellow or golden pigment have been noted on reliefs in the Apadana, Central Building and the Hall of a Hundred Columns (Tilia 1978, p. 31-69; Lerner 1971; 1973; Roaf 1983, p. 8). Lumps of pigment or pigment-encrusted sherds have also been found at the south-west corner of the Terrace wall, in and near the tripylon and on the northern side of the Apadana (Tilia 1972, pp. 245-46; Tilia 1978, p. 68-69). Analyses indicate the black to be asphalt, the red to be a vitreous material, the blue to be 'Egyptian Blue'

Beneath the Apadana, Weld cleared out the series of drains which had intrigued many of the earlier travellers to the site and within the Treasury he found and moulded a column base. The process of making moulds necessitated some additional excavation, notably within the Palace of Darius where he cleared the lower part of a doorway on the southern side to reveal a royal combat scene, and along the facade of the staircase on the western part of the Palace of Xerxes (Smith [1931], p. 12, nos 10, 12).

Finds were few except in the north-east corner tower of the Apadana where

buried in masses of charcoal, we found a quantity of red pottery vases, an iron axe-head, nails with round heads, and a copper pot full of pieces of bone and charcoal. Humble implements, but interesting as relics of an historical conflagration. They had been cracked by the fallen rafters and some blackened by the heat (Weld Blundell 1892, p. 546).

The nails and charcoal probably derive from the burnt superstructure of one of the upper stories whereas the remainder of the finds perhaps reflect stored contents. A similar situation was noted by later excavators inside the Treasury but unfortunately this evidence does not appear to have been either recorded or retained by most excavators at the site. Weld's 'copper pot' was presented to the Trustees of the British Museum where it was recorded as a 'bronze vase' (*British Museum Returns*, 16 August 1893, p. 54).

This particular vessel consists of a straight-sided sheet-bronze bucket or pail standing 12.5 cm in height with an original rim diameter of 28 cm, base diameter of 12 cm, height/width ratio of 1 : 2.2 and a capacity of 1.8 litres (ANE 1892-12-14,1 = 91163). It originally had a free-swinging handle attached to two plain T-clamps, measuring 5 cm across and 5.1 cm in height and each held in place below the rim with three round-headed rivets; the handle was detached and the bucket was badly crushed and distorted in antiquity (Fig. 4; Pl. 12). Qualitative X-ray fluorescence analysis by J. R. Lang and D. R. Hook (Department of Scientific Research) of the corroded surfaces of the bucket indicate that it is a tin bronze containing traces of lead whereas the suspension loop and rivet analysed are copper with a trace of lead. Radiography proves that the bucket had not been decorated in antiquity.⁴⁵

Buckets such as this are frequently depicted in ninth-eighth century Assyrian, Urartian and North Syrian art although details such as the decoration and the shape of the handle attachments vary (Madhloom 1970, pp. 109-16, pl. LXXXV; Merhav 1976).⁴⁶ Several plain and one engraved sheet-bronze buckets were excavated in ninth/eighth century contexts in level IV at the site of Hasanlu in north-west Iran (Burned Buildings I, II, IV, IV East) and an example with Assyrian-style decoration was excavated at the eighth century cemetery of Chamahzi Mumah in western Luristan (de Schauensee 1988, p. 49; Muscarella 1988, pp. 29-31, no. 8; Haerinck & Overlaet 1998, pp. 27-29, fig. 43, pls 62-3). Further straight-sided buckets - some reportedly found in Luristan - exist in other collections, some with decoration added in recent times (Moorey 1971, pp. 268-69, fig. 23, pl. 81, no. 513; Merhav 1976; Muscarella 1977, p. 184, pl. XIV: top; Tanabe *et al.* 1982, pp. 68, 73, pl. III; Mahboubian 1997, p. 242, no. 315).

Although it is conceivable that the bucket excavated by Weld was an heirloom, it is more likely

1953, p. 287; cf. also now Ambers & Simpson 2005).

⁴⁵ Department of Scientific Research file: Project rad7066 dated 20 January 1999.

that this type had a lengthier history than previously suspected. Indeed, horizontally fluted metal buckets with swinging handles are shown being carried by royal attendants on sculptures in the Palace of Darius (521-486 BC) and the Hall of a Hundred Columns (Schmidt 1953, pls 183-84; Tilia 1972, pl. XCVII). Horizontal fluting was widely used as a surface technique by Achaemenid metalworkers and recurs on bowls, beakers and animal-head vessels as well as contemporary Attic pottery copies and column bases, both at East Greek sites and Palace P at Persepolis (Miller 1993; Stronach 1978, pp. 84-85, pls 73-76). However, this bucket suggests that plain versions of this type were also manufactured. The function of these bucket is unclear. In Assyrian art, buckets are shown being used by apotropaic figures in purifying ceremonies whereas the Persepolis reliefs show them being carried by attendants next to the king. The excavated finds from Hasanlu and Chamahzi Mumah suggest that they may have had other practical functions, supported by the excavated context of the Persepolis bucket.

Herbert Weld's work at Persepolis is a classic example of nineteenth century problem-orientated research building on earlier discoveries and observations of Political Residents, Envoys and travellers such as Ephraim Stannus, John Macdonald [-Kinneir] and James Alexander, highlighted above. This was the beginning of archaeological research in Iran yet the full story has yet to be told and further episodes are certain to unfold with continued research in libraries, archives and other collections.⁴⁷

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FIGURE CAPTIONS

- Fig. 1 Map of Bushire (after [Moberly] 1987, Whitcomb 1987, Whitehouse and Williamson 1973).
- Fig. 2.1 Reused torpedo jar ossuary from Sabzabad; presented by Capt. J.A. Maude (ANE 1823-6-14,1 = 91952). Munsell pale yellow 5Y 8/2 surfaces with more heavily oxidised fabric; asphalt-lined. Length as preserved 76 cm, maximum width 22 cm, circular hole, 1.5 cm across, drilled through the wall at a height of 70 cm above the base.
- 2 Reused torpedo jar ossuary from Sabzabad; presented by Col. E.C. Ross (ANE 1875-7-24,41 = 91954). Munsell pale yellow 5Y 7/4 surfaces with more heavily oxidised fabric; asphalt-lined. Length of lower portion 68 cm, interior rim diameter of second piece 11 cm.
- Fig. 3.1 Limestone ossuary from Sabzabad; presented by Mr C.J. Malcolm (ANE 1888-7-14,1 = 91333/134691). Length 59.7 cm, width 36.6 cm, height 24.5 cm. Lid length 59.5 cm, width 36 cm, thickness 3 cm.
- 2 Limestone ossuary; presented by Col. E.C. Ross (ANE 1875-7-24,42 = 91932). Length 48 cm, width 33 cm, height 27 cm. Lid length 48 cm, width 33 cm, thickness 2.5 cm.
- Fig. 4 Bronze bucket from the Apadana at Persepolis; presented by Mr H. Weld (ANE 1892-12-14,1 = 91163). Height 12.5 cm, rim diameter 28 cm, base diameter 12 cm.

PLATE CAPTIONS

- Pl. 1 Portrait of James Edward Alexander (from Alexander 1827)
- Pl. 2 Portrait of Friedrich Carl Andreas (from Kanus-Credé 1974)
- Pl. 3 Royal sphinx (from Alexander 1827)
- Pl. 4 View of Persepolis (from Alexander 1827)
- Pl. 5 Processional scene (from Alexander 1827)
- Pl. 6 Royal sphinx from Persepolis; presented by the National Art Collections Fund (ANE 1938-1-10,1 = 129381). Length 75 cm, height 82 cm, preserved thickness 9 cm.
- Pl. 7 Portrait of Ephraim Gerrish Stannus (from Vibart 1894, p. 105)
- Pl. 8 Portrait of Herbert Weld (from Lulworth Castle exhibition display panel)
- Pl. 9 Lorenzo Giuntini as a young man (photograph courtesy of Mr V. Emmons)
- Pl. 10 Lorenzo Giuntini in later years (photograph courtesy of Mr V. Emmons)
- Pl. 11 The interior of the Giuntini family studio, Fulham Road, London (photograph courtesy of Mr V. Emmons)
- Pl. 12 Bronze bucket from the Apadana at Persepolis; presented by Mr H. Weld (ANE 1892-12-14,1 = 91163)