



William

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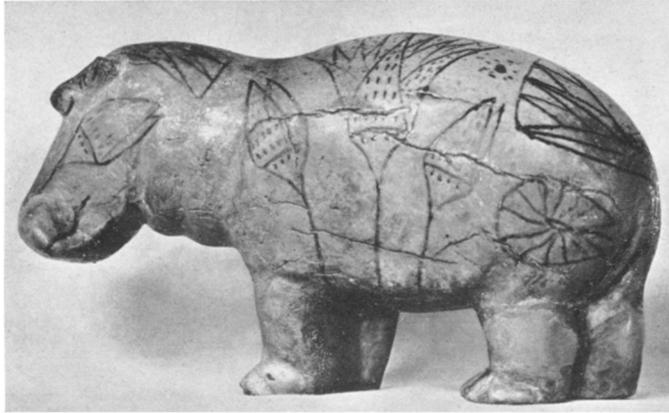
tion for the spirit which prompted you to dispatch them from afar. Our dynasty's majestic virtue has penetrated unto every country under Heaven, and Kings of all nations have offered their costly tribute by land and sea. As your Ambassador can see for himself, we possess all things. I set no value on objects strange or ingenious, and have no use for your country's manufactures. This, then, is my answer to your request to appoint a representative at my Court, a request contrary to our dynastic usage, which would only result in inconvenience to yourself."² And in spite of the

brush stroke are apt to consider dry. It is possible to derive pleasure from both types of painting, and in these, the careful delineation describes perfectly the arrangement and the differences in texture of the birds' plumage.

ALAN PRIEST.

WILLIAM¹

He is described on the back of the frame as "Hippopotamus with Lotus Flowers, Buds and Leaves, XII Dynasty (about 1950 B.C.), Series VII, Number 1, Egyptian Faience;" but to us he is simply William. He



HIPPOPOTAMUS OF BLUE FAIENCE, EGYPTIAN, XII DYNASTY (ABOUT 1950 B.C.)

modernist movement in China, the temper of the race is much the same as it was in the time of Ch'ien Lung. The Chinese have always viewed the things of nature as complete and lovely in themselves, and they so represent them.

The two paintings of geese are excellent examples of the Chinese treatment of nature subjects. In the first, the geese appear beside a clump of wind-blown grasses at the border of a stream. One reaches for an unseen insect, the other stretches its wings. In the second painting, the geese appear with autumn lotus leaves, one at rest and the other about to slip into the water. The treatment of both paintings is in the meticulous academic mode which those who prefer the broad, wet, impressionistic

² Bland and Backhouse, *Annals and Memoirs of the Court of Peking*, pp. 324-325.

stands in the place of honor on an old oak chest in our drawing-room and excites the admiration and envy of all who come to call.

The original William is to be seen in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, but, though ours is only a color-print, he radiates benevolence with all the warmth of a living creature, so that we have come to love and revere him with an intensity bordering on the pagan. In color he is a delicate blend of greens, blues and yellows, and I suppose the College of Heralds would describe his attitude as *passant regardant*, but he has the air of one waiting patiently for

¹ The following article, which appeared in *Punch*, or *The London Charivari*, of March 18, 1931, so delighted members of the Museum staff that it is reprinted here by permission of the Proprietors of "Punch." It was written, we learn, by Captain H. M. Raleigh.

the Day of Judgment, and he stands four-square upon his stumpy legs, gazing into the mysteries of life and death with an expression of unshakable placidity. If ever animal was in tune with the infinite, William is. His shape is irregular and dumpy, his flanks are decorated with the outline of the lotus flowers, buds and leaves, the pottery has chipped off his near fore-foot, giving the impression, at all events in the color-print, of a gray woolen sock bursting through a boot, and Margery and I can never decide which is the most adorable end of him, but it is impossible to look at him for long without a feeling of awe and a realization of the vastness of eternity.

I should like Professor Einstein to meet William, for William's curves would either confound or confirm his philosophy. It may be that eminent savants have investigated William before now and, taking him as their text, have delivered dusty lectures on the art of the ancient Egyptians, but they can never have come near the naked truth about William himself, his meaning or his message; for William is inscrutable, incomprehensible, and yet with it all the friendliest thing in the world.

He is, of course, our oracle, and neither Margery nor I would dream of taking any important step without first consulting him. At least, not now. There have been distressing occasions when we have disregarded his advice, but there will be no more of these. We have learned our lesson. There was the unfortunate affair of our last summer holiday, for instance, when our choice lay between a small cottage in the heart of Wiltshire and a second-rate hotel at a popular seaside resort. Margery and I discussed the problem in William's presence one morning and, thinking that the sea air would be good for the children, decided on the hotel. We had just reached this momentous decision when I happened to glance at William, where he stood immobile and mysterious in his narrow black frame, and his stern forbidding aspect gave me a shock. He had not moved, of course—he will never do that on this side of Doomsday—but there was something in the heavy droop of his left eyelid, in the curl of his great lip, and above all in the rounded bulk

of his posterior, that convinced us both of his disagreement with our resolve. "Poor fools," he seemed to be thinking, "what are the tawdry delights of a cheap seaside hotel compared with the deep peace of the English countryside?"

We went to the sea. Margery was quite worried about it, and on the morning of our departure Peter, my eldest boy, aggravated her anxiety. "Mummy," he said, coming into the dining-room with a wooden spade in his hand, "why does William look so grumpy today? I don't think he wants us to go." But I would not change our plans at the last moment because of the fancied disapproval of an Egyptian hippopotamus, and we went. It rained unceasingly throughout our holiday, and the children, imprisoned by the weather in a dingy and overcrowded hotel, became fractious and difficult to control. Margery lost three pounds seventeen and six-pence playing bridge with perfect strangers; Peter fell against a hot-water radiator and cut his forehead open; the nurse had her watch stolen in a cinematograph theater, and I contracted mumps. When we got home I expected to find William in a sarcastic mood, declaiming with every curve of his dumpy body, "I told you so." But I was wrong. William is far above that kind of shoddy triumph.

Not long ago I bought, in the teeth of William's manifest disapproval, a club called a driving baffle. It took me repeatedly into the rough, flew out of my hands and stunned a caddie, and lost me five new balls and a medal competition, and not a flicker of emotion did William betray on his large flabby countenance. He had warned me, I had disregarded his warning and I had suffered for my folly. He left it at that. After all, golf doesn't matter much. The original William has been in existence for nearly four thousand years, and he will stand invincible and serene for countless centuries after the names of Vardon, Taylor and Bobby Jones have faded into oblivion.

Margery and I are careful about William now. He has the casting vote in all family disputes, and in his calm dispassionate way orders our goings out and our comings in. We would no more dream of doing anything

of which he disapproved than of questioning the authority of a point-duty policeman. Nor do we worry over the problems that vex the minds of amateur psychologists and

the writers in the Sunday papers. Modernism, complexes, inhibitions, the fourth dimension—what do such things matter to us? William is sufficient.

ACCESSIONS AND NOTES

THE LIBRARY. During the summer the Museum Library will be closed on Sundays, from June 7 to September 6 inclusive.

THE RESTAURANT. This year the Museum restaurant will not close for any period, as it has done in the past, but will be open during the usual hours throughout the summer.

MEMBERSHIP. At a meeting of the Board of Trustees, held May 18, 1931, the following Members were elected: **SUSTAINING MEMBERS,** F. E. Saxham Drury, Mrs. C. Alan Hudson. **ANNUAL MEMBERS** were elected to the number of 50.

THE STAFF. At a meeting of the Board of Trustees held May 18, 1931, the following promotions were authorized: Christine Alexander, Assistant Curator in the Department of Classical Art, to be an Associate Curator; Isabel L. Hoopes and Marjorie Milne, Assistants in the Department of Classical Art, Assistant Curators; Frances Little, Assistant in the Department of Decorative Arts, an Assistant Curator.

BEQUESTS. Recent bequests accepted by the Museum with expressions of appreciation from the Trustees are the notable collection of paintings left by Miss Lizzie P. Bliss; the unique collection of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century woodcuts and metal cuts received from James Clark McGuire; the extensive collection of books on classical archaeology received from the late

Director, Edward Robinson, for use as a departmental library; and the sum of \$100,000 from the late President, Robert W. de Forest, the income of which is to be used in the discretion of the Trustees.

A more extended account of the collections received from Miss Bliss and Mr. McGuire will appear in a later issue of the BULLETIN.

A VALUABLE BEQUEST TO THE LIBRARY. In addition to the sum of \$35,000, Jane E. Andrews (Mrs. William Loring Andrews) bequeathed to the Library in memory of Mr. Andrews, the organizer of the Library, two copies of a very interesting book of which Mr. Andrews was the author, *New Amsterdam, New Orange, New York*, published in New York in 1897. This is a chronologically arranged account of engraved views of the city from 1651, when the first picture was published, until 1800. One copy consists of trial proofs of the colored maps, engravings of headbands, tail-pieces, and initial letters, and samples of type, all arranged as they appear in the complete volume. The volume itself contains all of these engravings and plans, views, facsimiles, and a colored map not included in the volume of proofs. There are also four water-color paintings by George H. Boughton, reproducing events in the early occupation of the city by the Dutch, which were made especially for this book, as stated in two letters written by the artist and laid in the book. The work, octavo in size, is bound in red crushed levant, with a well-chosen ornamental design. Thirty