Margaret Brown
from her son's mother

January 16, 1913
BRITISH SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY IN EGYPT
AND EGYPTIAN RESEARCH ACCOUNT
NINETEENTH YEAR, 1913

THE
HAWARA
PORTFOLIO:
PAINTINGS OF THE
ROMAN AGE

FOUND BY
W. M. FLINDERS PETRIE

LONDON
SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY IN EGYPT
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, GOWER STREET, W.C.

AND

BERNARD QUARITCH
11, GRAFTON STREET, NEW BOND STREET, W.

1913
It may seem strange that we are indebted to Egypt for our knowledge of classical portrait-painting. The frescoes of Italy show nothing of the portable pictures which were so highly valued. It is only by a curious adaptation of Egyptian customs that we have preserved to us a branch of the most important division of ancient painting. In looking at these portraits, we must remember that they are only the work of a remote provincial town, surrounded by desert, and belong to the latest age of great art, some four or five centuries after it had reached its zenith. We can dimly see in them what the great paintings may have been, as in portraits painted to-day in Nigeria or Mauritius we might find traces of the methods of Titian or Botticelli. We can only be thankful that we have anything at all.

The portraits were usually painted on thin wooden panels, about 13 inches wide and 15 high. Two here are painted on canvas, and that was the original system. They were framed in Oxford frames, and glazed, to be hung up in the house. On the death of the person, the portrait was taken down, when the body was sent to be embalmed, and the sides of the panel were split off to reduce it to the suitable size to affix to the mummy. It was then fastened down by the outer bandages of the mummy wrappings, over the face. The mummy, with portrait, then stood for a generation or two in the court or hall of the mansion. After it had become damaged and dirty it was then sent off without any ceremony, often in a cartload of ancestors, and buried in the cemetery. There it lay under a few feet of dry sand until brought to light again in these excavations, after seventeen hundred years.

The people seem to have lived in or near Arsinoe, the capital of the Fayum province, some forty miles south of Cairo. That district was mainly occupied by Greek settlers, mixed with some natives and some Romans, and various traders and officials. The favourite burial-place was the modern Hawara, by the pyramid of Amenemhat III, who was venerated as the great organizer of the province.

Regarding the individuals painted we know but little. Very few had the name placed on them; Artemidoros, Isarous, Démôs, Demetris, and above all Hermionê, are all that were named among over a hundred that I have found. Alinê is a name on one other from the same place. Of these the most interesting personally is Hermionê Grammatikê, the grammarian or teacher of the classics, who is the only learned woman of whom we have any remains or portrait ("Roman Portraits," pl. ii.). She herself now stands in the Library of Girton College, once again surrounded by books and girl students, whom she doubtless loved well, long before the Goth and the Arab had broken up her old culture. Demetris must also have been a commanding personality, nearly six feet high, and with a face full of determination and strength which carried her on to the good age of eighty-nine.

The full account of the discovery and dating of the portraits, and the method of painting in coloured wax, is given in the volume on "Roman Portraits" recently published. Four portrait heads, in addition to the twenty-four issued here, were reproduced in colour, together with thirty-two photographs of others, in the same volume.
## ROMAN PORTRAITS

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The above issued in "Roman Portraits"

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