

# Antiquity

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## Editorial

PLATES I AND II

We print in this number a review by Professor R. G. Austin of Professor Jocelyn Toynbee's *Animals in Roman art and life*. Professor Austin retired in 1968 from the Chair of Latin at Liverpool and now lives in his native Cotswolds. In correspondence about his review, he wrote: 'It is a special pleasure to me to appear in the pages of ANTIQUITY. . . . I take this chance of saying that my father's name is not mentioned in the history of the foundation of ANTIQUITY printed on the back covers. He did an enormous lot of work for it, and his name appeared as joint editor with Crawford long after it was due the recognition (the two of them must have been the most difficult team that a boggling imagination could think up); and in fact, it was my father who actually invented the name ANTIQUITY. It would be nice if his association could be recorded.'

This we have done at once, with gratitude to Professor Austin for pointing all this out to us, and apologies to his late father. In a second letter Professor Austin says: 'It will be very nice to see my father's name given its place in the brief history of ANTIQUITY. I had often heard him say that the name was due to him: this rests on his statement only, but I don't think he would have invented this invention. He was a strange and difficult man. . . . I do not know how he and Crawford were brought together: it was a stormy partnership, and there were several fierce quarrels that stretched things to near breaking-point. His share in the work was the business side of production; he had John Bellows just round the corner, and it was his pride that ANTIQUITY was always punctual. [It is our sadness that due to the moving of our printers from one end of Cambridge to the

other, the December 1973 number was many days late\*—Ed.] The journal occupied his whole effort and affection and pride for many years, and it was the saddest imaginable thing that he continued trying to run his side of it long after incipient senility made itself felt; the result was that Crawford had no alternative but to take harsh action to prevent possible disaster to the journal. My own memory of this final unhappy episode has, mercifully, got very vague: I tried to help, but the whole situation was quite impossible. . . . It will be a very real satisfaction to me if his part in the history of such a unique journal can be recognized: I should not be surprised, though this is a rash observation, if the quinquagenarian of 1977 will owe something of its strong survival to my father's watchfulness in its infancy.'

This is all very interesting and has driven the present Editor to go through the early volumes of ANTIQUITY and to re-read Crawford's autobiography, *Said and done*, published in 1955. We have perhaps all been confused by the fact that ANTIQUITY was described as 'Edited by O. G. S. Crawford' from its foundation in 1927. It is not until Volume VIII for 1934 that the title-page says 'Edited by O. G. S. Crawford and Roland Austin' and this appears on every title-page until Volume XXIII for 1949 when Austin's name has disappeared. In the previous year Crawford had explained what was happening: 'One of the Editors, Roland Austin,' he wrote, 'has been obliged to retire for reasons of health. ANTIQUITY owes to Roland Austin more than it is possible to express in words. It owes to him its very name, which he suggested: and

\* That the shortened working week will do the same, or worse, for this issue is inevitable, alas.

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over twenty years of unremitting work and scholarly editing' (ANTIQUITY, 1948, 171).

The account in *Said and done* is worth repeating: 'I needed only a good printer and an assistant editor, both preferably residing in the same town. At Gloucester these conditions were fulfilled by the firm of John Bellows, printer, and Roland Austin, librarian, whose acquaintance I had made during my work on the Cotswold Long Barrows. Accordingly, I went to Gloucester on February 8th, 1926, calling first on William Bellows, manager of the firm, and inviting Roland Austin to have tea with me afterwards. Bellows was willing to print the journal. I asked Austin to accept the post of assistant editor for a fixed salary which, if he had agreed, we should have arranged there and then. He was unwilling, however, to do this, saying that he would prefer to wait and see how the journal fared. I weakly acquiesced' (Crawford, *Said and done*, 176). Earlier Crawford had explained the origin of the title: 'On 8 February 1926 I discussed the project with Roland Austin and William Bellows at Gloucester. We each proposed titles, but without coming to any definite decision. Shortly after this, however, in a letter to me dated 14 February 1926, Austin suggested ANTIQUITY. This title fairly covered all the subjects I had jotted down in a list of projected articles: it was not exclusive and would cover those of historical and anthropological interest. The scope of the journal was to be the whole field of human history from palaeolithic times down to the modern period' (ANTIQUITY, 1936, 386).

The record is now straight and Professor Austin's fears can be put at rest. His father *did* invent the title of this journal. These and other matters will be set out in greater detail in two years' time when we publish a book on the first fifty years of ANTIQUITY, a book that will be part history and, for the greater part, anthology. Meanwhile the present Editor reflects with gratitude that he has been privileged to find what Crawford demanded, namely, 'a good printer and an assistant editor, both preferably residing in the same town'. If this was necessary fifty years ago, it is more than ever necessary now: we could not exist without them.

☞ One of the most exciting and readable books about archaeology appeared in America just before Christmas. It was *The plundered past* by Karl E. Meyer. Published by the Athenaeum Press at \$12.95, it will be published in England by Hamish Hamilton in March 1974.

*The plundered past* is sub-titled 'The story of the illegal international traffic in works of art', and has been described by John Canaday as 'A fascinating and appalling hard-facts report on a crime against history—now in progress—that future centuries will hold against the 20th.' Karl Meyer, its author, formerly editorial writer and then bureau chief in London and New York of *The Washington Post*, who has already given us that excellent and most readable book, *The pleasures of archaeology* (New York, 1970), took three years off to investigate what one art historian has called 'the most explosive issue before the art world'. He has travelled extensively in the countries most affected, namely, Turkey, Italy, Mexico, and Guatemala, and already written three hard-hitting articles in *The New Yorker* for March and April of this year in which he says 'the prevalence of fakes is the venereal disease of the illicit art market—the punishment for bad judgement and excessive desire'. The *International Herald Tribune* of 27 February 1973 published an article which originally appeared in *The Washington Post* entitled 'Gods, Graves and Scoundrels', and we are grateful to Dr David Ridgway for drawing our attention to this.

The archaeological world is part of the art world and we have already referred to many aspects of this illicit trade in recent numbers (ANTIQUITY, 1970, 88–90 and 171–2; 1971, 246–8). Meyer describes and discusses, fairly and impartially, all the main issues from the looted and pillaged Maya sites to Haçılar and the collections of California tycoon Norton Simon, whose bronze Shiva, acquired for a reported million dollars, was stolen from a village temple in southern India: 'Hell, yes, it was smuggled', said Simon. 'I spent between 15 and 16 million dollars over the last two years on Asian art, and most of it was smuggled.' *The plundered past* has many primary documents

printed as appendixes including the text of the NBC programme broadcast on 12 November 1972 in which Thomas P. F. Hoving, Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Dietrich von Bothmer, its Curator of Greek and Roman antiquities, discuss the purchase of the Euphronios krater. In this strange broadcast Hoving says, 'Well, I'm a schizophrenic, I think you'd probably get that from most people. On the one hand I'm the advocate of getting art to the people and getting people to understand more about art. . . . On the other hand, being in this business since 1959 and an expert in having backup from extraordinary experts like Dietrich, we feel that that part of it is the surgeon's part of the job and only our hands can do that.' Karl Meyer adds, 'Mr Hoving's own words convey the tone and flavour of the Metropolitan's outlook during his tenure.'

A central theme in *The plundered past* is a detailed consideration of the Metropolitan Museum's acquisition of the beautiful calyx krater by Euphronios: Meyer also discusses the Greek bronze horse to which we have already referred in reviewing Calvin Tomkins's fascinating book *Merchants and masterpieces: the story of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (ANTTIQUITY, 1970, 171). In November 1972 it was announced that the Metropolitan had acquired what von Bothmer was later to claim as 'the finest Greek vase there is'. This hitherto entirely unknown calyx krater was executed by two great Athenian artists, the potter Euxitheos and the painter Euphronios. Hoving said that as a result of this find 'histories of art will have to be rewritten': he described it as 'majestic without pomp, poignant without a shred of false emotion, perfect without relying on mere precision'. He added that it was one of the two or three finest single works of art ever obtained by the museum and added, 'Appropriately enough, this unsurpassed work was acquired with funds obtained through the sale of ancient coins of its realm and time, which had not been on exhibition for years.'

We went to New York in November 1973 to see the Euphronios vase and the Greek horse, beset with the same sense of impending confusion and excitement as Crawford had when he

went to Glozel in the twenties. What was going on? It had been proposed in the summer of last year that the BBC should do a programme on the Greek horse but Hoving and von Bothmer, harassed by American television and unable to believe that what they castigated as the media could contain gentleman scholars such as Paul Johnstone and his *Chronicle* team, declined to show themselves to the British viewing public. In November we were warmly received by Dr von Bothmer in the Met and by Mr Noble, now Director of the Museum of the City of New York, and listened to their well-argued accounts of the origins of vase and horse. And later, in the Blue Bar of the Algonquin, we discussed it all with Karl Meyer.

The Euphronios vase is beautifully displayed: it has a room to itself and a personal guardian—and how wise: a piece of antiquity with such public interest might easily be smashed to bits by a lunatic. It seems to a non-classical scholar magnificent, and even the most cautious British scholars are prepared to regard it as one of the great Greek vases. But where did it come from, and where has it been recently? The price paid by the Met was reported to be one million dollars. It was at first said that it had been in a private European collection since World War I, and that the name of the owner could not be divulged 'because he was the source of future acquisitions'. This was in November 1972; in February of 1973 it was being said that the pot had been sold to the Met by an expatriate American living in Rome, by name Robert E. Hecht, who had got it from an Armenian coin dealer living in Beirut, by name Dikran A. Sarrafian. Sarrafian said his father bought the vase in London in 1920, 'by an exchange with an amateur', and that he had never seen it intact: it had been lying in pieces in a hatbox.\* Sarrafian said to Gage, of *The New York Times*: 'I wasted most of my life with whores and archaeologists', a line which Karl Meyer says is worthy of Aristophanes. The Italian police, on the other hand, believe that the Euphronios krater was found in a looted Etruscan tomb. Who is right? Let us hope the Euphronios affair does not end with the sort of international \*'A hatbox?'—as Lady Bracknell might demand.

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uproar caused by the Boston Raphael. It was in December 1969 that the Boston Museum of Fine Arts announced a sensational acquisition—an apparently unknown portrait by Raphael; and this, together with the Boston treasure (a cache of 137 pieces of gold jewellery from a site whose whereabouts, thought to be in Turkey, are not known), were the main attractions in the Boston Museum's anniversary exhibition 'Art Treasures for Tomorrow' in 1970. On 7 January 1971, United States Customs officials entered the Boston Museum, and impounded the Raphael, which was later returned to Italy, from which country it had been illegally smuggled.

As we write, the antecedents of Euphronios are in doubt: von Bothmer argued to us a cogent and, as it appeared, convincing case for the Beirut hatbox—Rome dealer story. Reading *The plundered past*, one is prepared to believe anything. But what of the horse? The Met horse was purchased in 1923, and accepted by virtually every classical scholar as one of the finest Greek bronzes in existence. Gisela Richter, von Bothmer's predecessor as Curator in the Met, and a scholar and connoisseur of great distinction, called it 'without doubt, artistically the most important single object in our classical collection', and suggested it was made by Kalamis. The horse appears in practically every book on Greek art published from that day; thousands of replicas were sold by the Met and in shops like Brentano's in Fifth Avenue (PL. 1).

In 1956 a man called Joseph V. Noble came to the Met and became its operating administrator. He had walked past the horse to his office many thousands of times when, in 1961, he noticed, what no one had before, a thin line running from the top of the horse's mane down to the tip of the nose, and also down the spine, over the rump, and under the stomach. It occurred to Noble that this mould-mark was such as is left when a sculpture is made by sand-casting, a process invented in the 14th century AD. Suspicion grew and the horse was removed from public exhibition: the incontrovertible (but was it?) proof came in 1967 when a gamma-ray shadowgraph showed the inside of the horse

with its sand core and the iron wire used as its framework (PL 11). Noble gave a public lecture about all this in which he said of the horse: 'It's famous, but it's a fraud.' So ended Act II of the drama of the Greek Met Horse: Act I was its triumphant acceptance by Gisela Richter and almost all of her learned colleagues.

Act III begins at Christmas 1972, when *The New York Times* reveals that scientific tests have shown that Noble was wrong and that the horse is a genuine antiquity. How genuine and how antique? Battle is on, and the Met put on a first-class exhibition of the horse and all the reasons for and against it. We are especially grateful to Dr von Bothmer for keeping the exhibition on long enough for us to see it in November and for stating, with meticulous care and fairness, the arguments for and against the varying dates of the horse, which by now has gone back to a more modest place in the general classical collections.


There are four positions, at least, to adopt in relation to this most lovely bronze horse. The first is the Richter position—the horse dates from classical antiquity. The second is the von Bothmer position, that it is an eclectic work of the fifth/sixth century AD made in south Italy. The third is the Noble position, that it is a forgery made in the twenties in Paris; and here we should note that the official Met story is now that the horse was bought from Georges Feuardenet in Paris who said it came from the Mahdia wreck explored by divers in 1908 (see ANTIQUITY, 1930, 405–15). The fourth is the Daniel position, that we don't really know the answer for certain as yet. One thing does seem certain, namely, that the ridge which first attracted Mr Noble's suspicions was not an original feature but made by subsequent copying of the horse. Stylistic arguments are always dangerous but we warmly recommend the article by Lewis S. Brown of the Department of Anthropology of the American Museum of Natural History in that Museum's quarterly *Curator* (XIII, 1969, 263–92), in which he argues on grounds of style and the representation of the horse that it is 'one of the most noteworthy cases of fraud in the field of art that has come to light in recent years'.

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Our doubts relate to the acceptance of the thermoluminescence dating of the horse as final, certain, irrevocable. Three TL tests were made: the fine grain technique produced dates of between 1300 and 2800 BP, the large etched quartz technique dates of between 2000 and 5500 BP, and the single zircon grain technique 1900 to 3700 BP. We ask, in our ignorance, why do these three TL techniques produce varying dates from the same material—that of the core of the horse? And we note that the overall bracket from the TL tests suggests a date of between 1,300 and 5,500 years before the present, i.e., a date in calendar years of between 3500 BC and 700 AD. This wide bracket allows the Richter and von Bothmer positions, but disposes of the Noble position. Noble however says that the horse was so bombarded by x-rays and gamma-rays that TL dating is worthless, and that the heat necessary for fusing to the horse the left back leg, admitted by all to be an addition, could have re-fired the clay core and rendered any TL datings worthless.

By the time these words are printed there will have appeared in the February 1974 number of *Archaeometry* an article by Dr Zimmerman, formerly of the Oxford University Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art, and now of the Laboratory for Space Physics of Washington University, St Louis, Missouri, dealing with the TL dating of the core of the Met Greek horse. We all remember the teething troubles which affected carbon-14 dating, and the problems that still exist about its calibration. Incidentally Dr D. P. Agrawal of the Physical Research Laboratory at Ahmedabad, who has recently been lecturing in Britain, assures his hearers that we should not practise any form of calibration at the moment, and that calibrated dates for the Indus civilization make nonsense of established cross-dating with Mesopotamia, and has promised us a note to this effect and his comments on the note we recently published on this subject by Burleigh, Switsur and Renfrew (*ANTIQUITY*, 1973, 309). We remember too the constant warnings given us by E. T. Hall and others that TL dating was still in its infancy. Recently we have been told that TL dating of four tablets from Glozel, in


two separate laboratories, has given a date of about 600 BC, and we will return to this problem in a later number. Hardly anyone has any doubt that most of the Glozel material was fabricated between 1924–7 and in the June or September numbers we shall publish, as part of a general personal retrospect of archaeology in his lifetime, an account by Professor Bosch-Gimpera, the only surviving member of the 1927 International Commission, of the forgeries. And these matters will be discussed in Oxford in the 1974 symposium on Archaeometry and Archaeological Prospection to be held from 20 to 23 March.

 *The Archaeologists' Year Book 1973* is published by the Dolphin Press, 176 Barrack Road, Christchurch, Hants, England, at the price of £4.00, a substantial hardback volume of 232 pages. It is subtitled 'An international directory of archaeology and anthropology' and its aims, as described in the foreword, are 'to provide on an international basis, the basic facts on museums, universities, associations and other institutions whose activities cover the field of Archaeology (including Industrial), Anthropology and Folk-Life Studies.' This volume is the first edition of a series that is going to go on year by year, and could be a valuable work of reference to all readers of *ANTIQUITY*. The publishers say they 'sincerely hope that it will find the approval and co-operation of the archaeological world, and that over the years it will become firmly established on the book-shelves of archaeologists and libraries'.

After a brief Editorial (and we are never told who the Editor is), there are sections on Museums, Societies, Universities, Committees and Trusts, International Research Groups, a list of useful addresses, a section on laws relating to archaeology in Britain, and a concluding article by Stanley Thomas, of the University of Leicester, on 'Recent books in archaeology'. The aim of this publication is admirable but someone responsible must take it in hand before any further volumes come out. The present, and admittedly first and exploratory, volume is full of omissions: a brief list of a few

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—the Professor of Archaeology at Newcastle, the Professor of Anthropology at Oxford, Paul Mellars at Sheffield, John Mulvaney at Canberra, Sigfried De Laet at Ghent, Bruce Trigger at Montreal, Becker and indeed the whole Department of Archaeology of the University of Copenhagen, Giot at Rennes, Hatt at Strasbourg, Jadrewski in Poland, Maria Gimbutas at UCLA, Brian Fagan at Santa Barbara, Hugh Hencken at Harvard, and both M and Madame Bordes at Toulouse. There are no entries for Istanbul, Barcelona, Leningrad, Norway and South Africa. Eric Higgs is described as the Senior Assistant in Residence in the University of Cambridge and Soissons becomes Scissons. Proof-reading apart, this book needs to be re-organized, revised, re-edited, and brought up to date. It might then become a standard work of reference on the shelves of all archaeological departments and museums. It must first establish its credibility and its authority.

 Dr Michael Ryder, of the Animal Breeding Research Organisation Field Laboratory at Roslin in Midlothian, who has written for us on several occasions, now sends us what he describes as, 'A Cautionary tale: Belgic cotton or don't dig and smoke'. We print his contribution in its entirety (and in so doing remind our readers of Mrs Wilson's letter (1973, 264–8)):

Some time ago, I received from a Belgic excavation, that shall be nameless, some fibres

from what had appeared to be some wool with two cut ends suggesting a 'double-cut' made while the fleece was being shorn. It was thought that this might throw light on the introduction of a white, fine-woolled sheep into Britain. My first reaction to the white colour with the naked eye was that the fibres appeared to be flax, since even non-pigmented animal fibres usually have a yellow discoloration. Also the fibre length was too regular to represent a 'double-cut' from a fleece.

Under the microscope the fibres appeared twisted like cotton, but had the pigment that is added to de-lustre synthetics. Also the diameter distribution was too uniform for wool. Another expert I enlisted thought the fibres might be silk, and at this stage since the sample was clearly not wool (my main interest) I withdrew from the investigation through lack of time.

The fibres were then sent to a textile testing laboratory which confirmed my suspicion that the material was a modern synthetic and identified the mass (which I had not seen in its entirety) as a *cigarette filter*. Amusing as this may be, it wasted an appreciable amount of time of several experts, and it strikes at the very roots of archaeology. If such a large object as a cigarette end can creep into an excavation unnoticed, what hope have we that really small finds such as insect parts are not modern intrusions?

It appears that archaeological excavation needs a form of hygiene akin to that in food preparation if not that of the surgical operation. Is it too fanciful to suggest that the archaeologist will, one day, work through a 'drape', like a surgeon, so that only that part actually being excavated is exposed?

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### ANTIQUITY: title-page and contents list for Volume XLVII

As, regrettably, some copies of the title-page and contents list for Volume XLVII (1973)—distributed with the December 1973 issue—contained uncorrected errors, we are replacing *all* copies with the corrected reprint enclosed in this number. In case you have already sent your 1973 issues for binding, we have deposited corrected sheets with our binders, J. S. Wilson and Son, and they will put matters right. Please accept our apologies.



PLATE I: EDITORIAL

*The Greek bronze horse in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Purchased from the Fletcher Fund, 1923. Height:  $15\frac{13}{16}$  in.; length:  $14\frac{1}{2}$  in.; weight:  $25\frac{1}{2}$  lb. (= 401.6 mm.; 368.3 mm.; 11.6 kg.)*

*See pp. 4-5*

*Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*

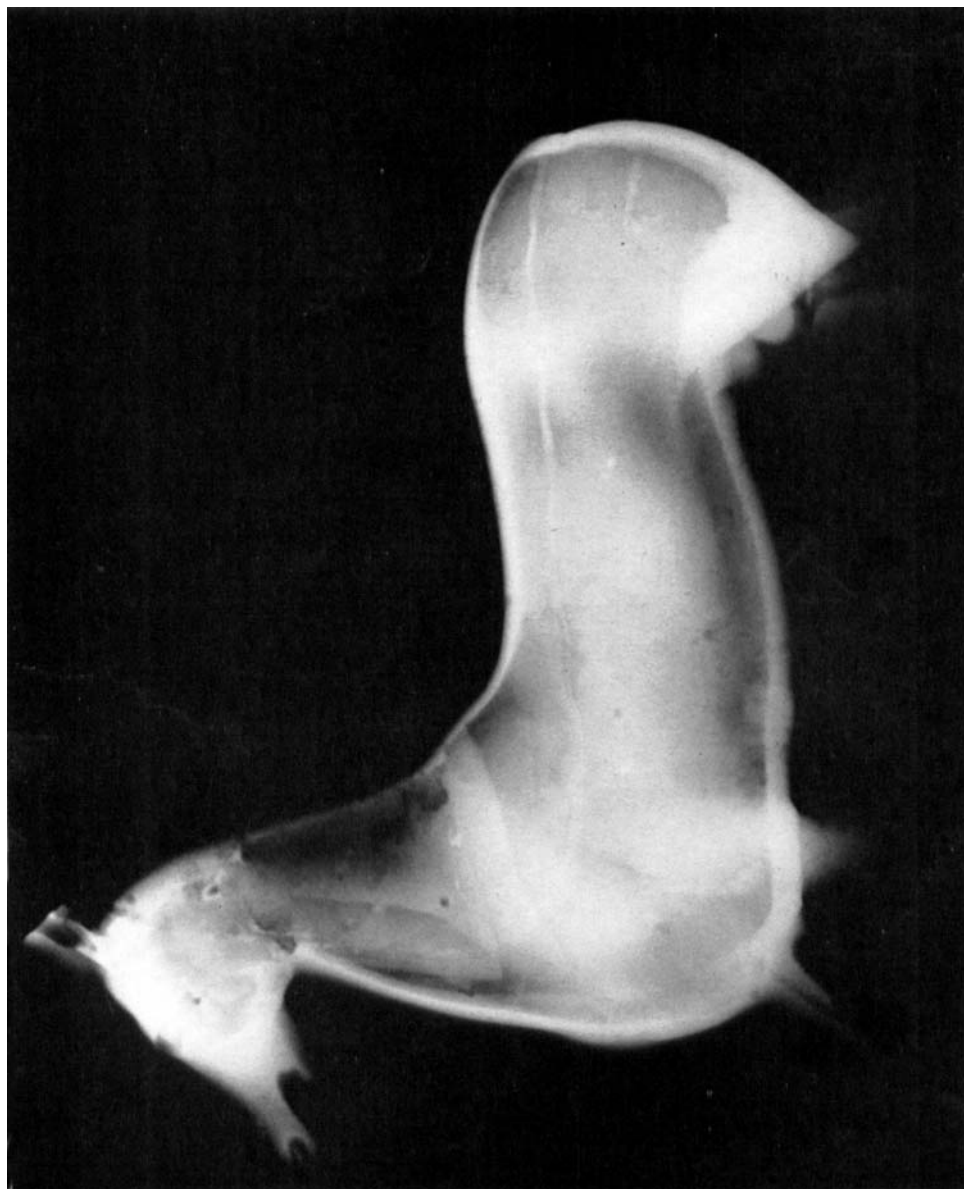


PLATE II: EDITORIAL

*Gamma ray shadowgraph of the Greek bronze horse in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, made in September 1967, using radio-active Iridium 192.*

*Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*

*See pp. 4-5*