



JAYANTI

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE LANKA BAUDDHA MANDALAYA
(The Buddhist Council of Ceylon)



Edited by Ananda W. P. Guruge, B. A., Ph. D., C. C. S.

Vol. 1. No. 11

MEDIN 2499

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SPECIAL NUMBER

*to mark the arrival in Ceylon of the relics
of the Venerable Moggaliputta Tissa Thera*

CONTENTS

STORY OF THE RELICS

by Dr. Tennekoon Vimalananda

	Page
Introduction	3
Stupas at Bhilsa	4
History of Sānchī and Bhilsa	7
Sānchī Today	10
Decipherment of the Scripts	12
Evidence of Mahavamsa	15
PLATES & NOTES	21 — 48

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PLATE 1



Sanchi in 1851. From a painting by General F. C. Maisey.

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INTRODUCTION

THERE were three extraordinary Buddhist assemblies called the First, Second and Third assemblies. These were held at different periods. The Third Buddhist Council was assembled at Pataliputra (Patna) under the royal patronage of Asoka.

The relics which were brought to Ceylon on the 26th of April from Burma by the Hon'ble Jayaweera Kuruppu, Minister of Local Government and Cultural Affairs are those of the Venerable Moggaliputta Tissa Thera who presided over the third great assembly of the Sangha held in the year 241 B. C. at Pataliputra. At the conclusion of this great assembly the Venerable Moggaliputta Tissa Thera selected the principal exponents of the Dharma to propagate the doctrine in different countries (see text). The relics of the Venerable Moggaliputta Tissa, Majjhima, Kasyapa etc., the leading theras who took part in the great rehearsal of the Dharma were found in the second stupa at Sanchi and other stupas at Bhilsa.

In the year 1851, as stated in the text, Maisey and Cunningham succeeded in recovering from the stupas the remarkable series of relic caskets together with the relics. These were removed to England and safely deposited in different museums there.

The arrival of these relics in Ceylon during the Buddha Jayanti period after the many vicissitudes they have known, is indeed a happy coincidence which may be taken to signify a happier augury.

The writer takes this opportunity to record his lively sense of gratitude to the authorities of the British Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum and the India Office Library for the facilities afforded by them.

Last, but not least, the writer's special thanks should go to the Lanka Bauddha Mandalaya for enabling him to place his findings before the reading public.

Tennekoon Vimalananda.

University of Ceylon,
Peradeniya.

STUPAS AT BHILSA

REFERENCE TO VEDISA IN THE MAHAVAMSA

It is in an atmosphere of war and romance that we hear of Vedisa and its neighbourhood. Asoka was sent by his father Bindusara to Taxila to suppress a rebellion. Upon his accomplishing this mission ruthlessly, he was made governor of the Western Provinces. This kingdom was called the Malwa and Ujjeni was its seat of administration.

Asoka proceeded to Ujjeni in the year 274 B. C. On this journey he had his first youthful romance. The Mahavamsa records:—"Whom the prince Asoka, while ruling over the realm of Avanti, that his father had bestowed on him, halted in the town of Vedisa, before he came to Ujjeni, and met there a lovely maiden named Devi, the daughter of a merchant, he made her his wife; and she was (afterwards) with child by him and bore in Ujjeni beautiful boy, Mahinda, and when two years had passed (she bore) a daughter, Samghamitta." Asoka spent a few years there after having gained the affection of Devi, the lovely daughter of the chief man of Vedisa. But once again the people of the northwest rebelled against the rule of Magadhan Imperialism. Bindusara now directed Susima, his eldest son, to quell Taxila's second uprising but he was unsuccessful. Where upon Bindusara once more turned to Asoka. His crafty ministers, however, told the Emperor that Asoka was ill; and they at the same time sent word to the young prince that the King, his father, was taken seriously ill himself. Asoka hurried to the capital. The King, on seeing him, went into a passion, thinking the son had deceived him, and in the ensuing rage burst a blood-vessel which resulted in his death. Says the Mahavamsa:—"When Bindusara had fallen sick Asoka left the government of Ujjeni conferred on him by his father, and came to Pupphapara (Patna), and when he had made himself master of the city, after his father's death, he caused his eldest brother to be slain and took on himself the sovereignty in the splendid city." It is thus in a setting of war and romance and political conspiracy that

Bhilsa and its immediate neighbourhood receives mention in historical literature, and Sanchi itself entered the political arena.

But Bhilsa is known throughout the world today, not by her past traditions of war and romance and political conspiracy. Its fame rests on its sanctity and the greatness of its artistic inspiration. Here we have a distinctive and living tradition of art of priceless value. Both artist and layman admire and respect these great works of art. Indeed, they evoke reverence and love. The national art of India had its original in Bhilsa, and it flourished with extraordinary vitality because it interpreted both the secular and the religious aspirations of the Indian people. The religious conceptions embodied in Bhilsa's great monuments are not profound. It should be noted, however, that this spot is in no way associated with the life of Buddha. Perhaps, it is from its situation that it derived the impetus for the development of artistic tastes and talents.

THE SITUATION OF BHILSA

Bhilsa is situated in one of the strategic key points in the great Indian highways. Like Taxila, Bhilsa, too, in those ancient days was the junction of great trade routes. Modern discoveries have proved beyond doubt that the foundation of Vedisa goes back to the early Buddhist period in India, and that it had a large population. "Its importance it owed in part to its commanding position at the junction of the Bes and Betwa rivers, the latter of which afforded valuable water transport during the rainy season, but still, more to its position on two great trade routes one of which ran west to east from the busy seaports of the western littoral through Ujjayini, Kausambi and Kasi to Pataliputra, the other south-west to north-east from the Andhra Pratihthana to Sravasti as well as other cities of Kosala and Panchala. With Ujjayini, the capital of Avanti, from which it was distant not more than 140 miles, Vidisa must always have had close commercial and other ties and there were long periods when it was subordinate to that city, but at other times

the two kingdoms of Eastern and Western Malwa, that is, of Akara and Avanti, as they were respectively known, were independent of each other and ruled by rival dynasties." Bhilsa doubtless owed its prosperity to trade, but the benefits that it could bestow on the people were also conditional by orderly and sensible government. The region around Bhilsa always excited the admiration of the traders and the rulers. It had these special qualities, viz (a) the natural advantages of the country (b) the disposition of the people, and (c) the moderation of the government. The bulk of the traffic between the western coast of India and central India passed through Bhilsa. But as trade was brought to a standstill due to invasions and counter-invasions, Bhilsa and its neighbourhood passed into oblivion.

**BHILSA AT THE
HEIGHT OF
ASOKA'S GLORY
AND CULT OF
RELIC WORSHIP**

At Vidisa Asoka had his youthful romance. At Ujjayini he planned to usurp the throne of Magadha occupied by his eldest brother. At Sānchī Asoka gave to mankind, as Sir John Marshall puts it; ".....world-famed monuments, the most precious and perfect of all that Buddhism has bequeathed to us. It began in, or perhaps even before, the reign of Asoka in the third century B. C. and lasted for fully twelve hundred years, thus all but synchronising with the rise and fall of Buddhism in India. From first to last, the story of Sānchī was intimately bound up with the fortunes of the great city in whose shadow its Sangharama grew and flourished and on whose wealth it was mainly dependent for its support." Buddhism at Bhilsa went from strength to strength until countless Buddhist Stupas, shrines and monasteries could be seen over the face of the land. Of these stupas, and monasteries, stupa No. 1 at Sānchī stands as the crowning glory of Asoka. This stupendous shrine was built at the height of his glory at home and abroad. After a comparative study of the various stupas built by Asoka at Taxila, at Sārnath, at Nalanda etc., Sir John Marshall attributed to Asoka the authorship of the Stupa No. 1 at Sānchī. Says Marshall:- "My reasons for so saying

are, first, that the brick stupa springs from the same floor level as the lion pillars near the South Gateway, which, as I shall presently show, is also attributable to the same emperor; secondly, that the bricks themselves closely resemble in fabric and size the bricks used in other structures of Asoka's reign; thirdly, that every other known stupa of his time was constructed of brick; fourthly, that the existence of a stupa built by this emperor at or near this spot is suggested by the discovery in the debris near the Great Stupa of several pieces of an umbrella made of fina Chunar sandstone—the stone commonly used in his monuments—and cut, ribbed and polished in the manner peculiarly characteristic of his reign."

The Buddhist world conceived Asoka as a monarch who appreciated, understood and realized the true spirit of the law of Buddha and regarded him as one who governed his dominions with *Dasa Raja Dharma*. Asoka, as an ideal Buddhist King, brought his vast domain under the sway of a humanized culture, so to deaden the effect of politics and to develop the personality of man according to the Buddhistic concept of humanism. Here at Sānchī the Asokan monuments stand out as a challenge to the laws of politics and proclaim a new message of understanding, co-operation and integration for human welfare. The complete culturalization of politics, government and the state was his avowed aim, which he made known through his works of art. He destroyed with his own hands the creations of Maurya without any remorse or compunction. The Mauryan political state was set at naught, and in its place arose the Asokan State as the upholder and promoter of cultural values. The Buddhist monuments at Bhilsa are found in quiet and retired spots some distance from urban life. The monastic regulation of Buddhism requires that a vihara should be in "a spot not too far from the town and not too near, suitable for going and coming; easily accessible to all people; by day not too crowded, at night not exposed to noise and alarm; and clean of the smell of people; secluded from men; well fitted for a retired life." An interesting and very significant feature of Buddhism from very early times was that the monastic edifices sprang up around the stupa. The Buddhist

texts are replete with information about the different buildings within the monastic establishments, and about the daily life of the members of the Sangha; but these texts are silent about the veneration of the stupas. So it is clear that among the Buddhists themselves, the stupa did not become an object of marked veneration until the time of Asoka. Although there is some reference to the eight stupas in which the Buddha's own relics reposed as having become objects of reverence since the Master's death, there is nothing to show that the stupa was adopted as a recognised emblem of the Buddhist faith prior to Asoka. "It was Asoka who gave the first impetus to this remarkable cult by opening seven of the eight stupas referred to above, subdividing the relics of the Blessed among all the principal towns of his realm, and erecting a stupa of imposing dimensions over each portion." According to Buddhists, the stupas were built over the relics of Tathagata at eight cities among which they had been distributed viz: Rājagriha, Vaisāli, Kapilavastu, Allakappa, Rāmagrāma, Vethadipa, Pava, and Kusinagara. It is quite evident that the building of stupas, in India was a common feature from very early times, but there is no evidence to show that stupas always formed part of the Sangharamas. Asoka foresaw their remarkable potentiality for popularizing the cult of relic worship, and he utilized it with this one definite object in view, viz: to consolidate, unify and propagate the Buddha Dharma. As much as Asoka found solace in Buddhism after the Kalinga war, it was on Buddhism that his descendants leaned to defeat the popular notion that conquest by arms is the duty of Kings. Even if the monarchs should find themselves involved in warfare, Asoka reminds them that might could still find pleasure in patience and gentleness, and that they should regard as the only true conquest that which is effected through piety or duty. He believed that humanity could be saved from violence, slaughter and family separations by a cultural reorientation of politics, government and the state. *New religions and social ideals were taking the place of the old. The early Buddhist Sangha, with its restricted outlook, its puritanism, its cold*

reasoning and its individualism, no longer sufficed. It was in the shadow of the stupa, that Asoka unified, consolidated and strengthened the Buddhist Sangha. Asoka found, "It was indispensable that it should adapt itself to the new ideals and endeavour to reconcile them with the old; nay more, if it was to be established, as Asoka himself purposed, on a broad national basis, it must show a far more catholic spirit than it had shown in the past, must cast its net wider among all races and classes of society, and be prepared to admit and develop, as part and parcel of its own organism, doctrines and superstitions undreamt of by the Founder."

Asoka's next task was to find out whether there existed a suitable and competent organisation to which he could entrust the propagation of his ideals of life. Such an organisation must be through and regulated in its minutest detail like his war machine, though its purpose he different. Such an organisation would enforce a high morality, mildness and humanity, compassion and benevolence. Asoka therefore joined the Buddhist order as a lay disciple, and subjected himself to the discipline of ideas of the Sangha. He comments: "It is more than two years and a half that I am a lay worshipper. I did not exert myself strenuously for one year; but, indeed, more than one year that I have lived with the Sangha, I have exerted myself strenuously." This extraordinary document relating how Asoka sought to find an organisation to carry out his royal instructions, is the earliest of the series of rock edicts relating to the Sangha. The Sangha, Asoka noted, was an institution which was a compromise between arbitration and majority rule. With the Sangha at his disposal, he found the age-old relic-worship as a convenient institution to teach and enforce his ethical system which he himself called the Law of Piety. He offered to the people Aryavarta a new gift of relics, which became the focal-centre of worship. The relics were invested with miraculous powers. "Their virtue went deeper than this, as a part of the body of the Blessed One, they helped to bring him from the unimaginable back to earth, strengthened the belief of the faithful in him as a very present power in their lives, and awakened in

them a spirit of personal allegiance and love that few of them, probably, had experienced before. This was the first and immediate result of Asoka's precious gifts." Ere long the stupa became the nucleus of every Buddhist monastery in Aryavarta, and was regarded as the outward and manifestation of

Buddhism. This relic-worship paved the way for image worship, which produced such far-reaching and in many ways revolutionary changes in the Sangha. This story of relic-worship is to be traced back directly to the stupas raised by Asoka.

HISTORY OF SĀNCHĪ AND BHILSA

SĀNCHĪ AND BHILSA DURING THE REIGN OF PUSHYAMITRA SUNGA

We have seen how with the stupa as the nucleus of the Buddhist monastic establishments at Sānchī, Asoka gave a high impetus to relic-worship. Sānchī with its magnificent stupas, great viharas, huge monasteries, public parks, and other institutions, however, suffered a set-back after the death of Asoka at the hands of Pushyamitra Sunga, who usurped the Mauryan Throne.

The Sangharamas at Sānchī, according to the *Vinaya* texts, consisted of; living and sleeping quarters for the *bhikshus*; a refectory or service hall (*upatthana-sala*); a fire hall or kitchen (*aggi-sala*); an open-pillared pavilion (*mandapa*); a promenade and cloister for walking exercise (*cankamana-sala*), a bathroom for hot baths (*jantaghara*); a *kathina*-hall for tailoring, a privy, a well and well-house (*udapanasala*), a store-room (*kothaka*) and a provision and drugs store (*kappiya-kuli*). It has been revealed that these various parts of the monastic establishments were not incorporated in a single building but were, for the most part at any rate, detached structures. By comprehensive and well-planned measures of conversion Asoka succeeded in transforming the doctrine of Buddha into a world religion.

The question now arises, what happened to Buddhism thereafter?, particularly to the Buddhist establishments at Bhilsa? Pushyamitra's vindictive outbreak of wrath and extreme oppressiveness was ruthless while it lasted only a very short time. Pushyamitra Sunga resorted to a savage persecution of

Buddhism, burning the monasteries and slaying monks in the Aryavarta. This was definitely the first blow struck at Buddhism since it emerged as a world religion. For, according to tradition, it is said that he offered a hundred *dinaras* for the head of every Buddhist monk. Sir John Marshall thinks that Pushyamitra dealt the unkindest blow on the Great Stupa at Sānchī. He says:... "From my examination of its core it was evident that the original structure of burnt brick had suffered great damage before the outer casing was added to it, and, moreover, that this damage could not have been due to mere weathering, but must have been wantonly inflicted. Who the author of it was, is not known for certain, but it may safely be inferred that it took place sometime after the downfall of the Mauryas, though necessarily before the addition of the outer envelope; it is a plausible conjecture, therefore, that it was done by the order of Pushyamitra, the first of the Sunga Kings, who was notorious for his hostility to the Buddhists and his vindictive acts of vandalism in destroying their sacred monuments. Unfortunately, the wrecking of the stupa was so thorough that it is impossible now to determine precisely its original design. There can be little doubt, however, that it was of about the same size as the stupa of Asoka at Sarnath, i. e. about 60 feet in diameter at the base including the raised terrace surrounding its base and a crowning pinnacle (*harmika*), surmounted by one or more umbrellas (*chattravali*), within a small square railing, similar to the monolithic one on the Sarnath Stupa. There is also little doubt that it would be encompassed by a processional path (*pradakshina-patna*)

and circular railing on the ground level, and by another smaller railing on the Germ of the terrace. Several pieces of an umbrella of Mauryan date were found by me in the debris near the stupa, and may be presumed to have belonged to the crowning pinnacle. Like the fragmentary umbrella of the same age Chunar stone of which the edict pillar is also made, and, like that umbrella are plain and highly polished on the outside but relieved on the inside by four concentric bands of the most delicately defined ribs, the cutting of which displays the same exquisite precision that characterizes all the known stoneworks of Asoka's reign, and which has probably never been surpassed in the stone carving of any country."

It should be mentioned here that the Greek Milinda, who stands out very conspicuously among the galaxy of Yavana Kings in the Aryavarta, championed the cause of Buddhists of Aryavarta against Pushyamitra. Milinda was celebrated as a just ruler, and when he died he was honoured with magnificent obsequies. He has immortalized his name in a celebrated dialogue entitled "The Question of Milinda," which is one of the most notable works in Buddhist Literature. On one occasion the troops of Milinda defeated the Sangas and carried their victorious arms as far as Pataliputra. It is quite evident from contemporary records that the Greeks have not done anything unique in the Bhilsa region.

BHILSA BETWEEN THE FALL OF SUNGAS AND THE RISE OF THE IMPERIAL GUPTAS After the fall of the Sungas, the religious persecution became sporadic. As a matter of fact, by and by the people professing various religions came to live together in harmony, enjoying fairly impartially the royal favour. The rivals of the Sungas in Bhilsa region were Andhras of Dakshinapatha. The Andhras were less aggressive but none the less dangerous. The Western Kshatrapas were contemporary of the Andhras. They followed a very liberal policy towards the Buddhists of Sanchi. It is interesting to note

that under the imperial Guptas the Buddhist establishments of Bhilsa did not suffer any damage.

An inscription records the gift by Chandragupta's officer named Amrakarddava, seemingly a man of high rank, of a village called Isvaravasaka, and of a sum of money to the Aryasangha or Order of the Faithful at the great vihara or monastery Kakanadabota, for the purpose of feeding monks and maintaining tamps. The Gupta occupation of Vidisa is also attested by two epigraphs in the caves of the Udayagiri hill, four miles from Sanchi, one of which records a dedication made by a feudatory Mahārāja during the reign of Chandragupta II in 401 A. D. The other commemorates the excavation of a cave by a minister of Chandragupta II who came here in company with the king who was "seeking to conquer the whole world."

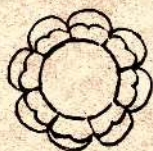
Towards the close of the Gupta rule, India was attacked by the White Huns. The great monuments of Bhilsa fortunately escaped destruction at their hands. After the Hun invasion, the Eastern Malwa in which Bhilsa is situated came under Harshavardhana of Thaneswara, followed by Mihisa Bhoja and Paramaras. Concluding the historical survey, Sir John Marshall remarks:—"with the subsequent history of the district we need not here concern ourselves, since there are no Buddhist edifices at Sanchi after the twelfth century A. D.; and it is probable that the Buddhist religion, which had already been contaminated by Hinduism, died out altogether about this time in Central India."

BRITISH INTEREST IN ANTIQUITIES AND BHILSA IN MODERN TIMES At the beginning of the 13th century Bhilsa passes into oblivion "till curious Saxons, from a distant land, unlocked the treasures of two thousand years." In modern times, Sir William Jones was the first European to recognise the need for a careful and systematic investigation of the monuments of ancient India. This great pioneer Indologist saw that Sanskrit literature does not give a fair and objective story of India's past. He warned historians against uncritical acceptance of their works as history. To implement this view and to further

researches into Indian Literature and history, he founded the Royal Asiatic Society in the year 1784. At this famous society's inauguration, which will remain a permanent testament to his imagination and vision, Sir William Jones said: "when I was at sea last August, on my voyage to this country (India), which I had long and ardently desired to visit, I found one evening, on inspecting the observations of the day, that India lay before us, and Persia on our left, whilst a breeze from Arabia blew nearly our stern. A situation so pleasing in itself, and to me so new, could not fail to awaken a train of reflections in a mind which had early been accustomed to contemplate with delight the eventful histories and agreeable fictions of this eastern world. It gave me impressionable pleasure to find myself in the midst of so noble an amphitheatre, which has ever been esteemed the nurse of sciences, the inventress of delightful and useful arts, the scene of glorious actions, fertile in the production of human genius, abounding in natural wonders, and indefinitely diversified in the forms of religion and government, in the laws, manners, customs and languages as well as in the features and complexions of men....." Sir Alexander Cunningham, almost a hundred years later, pays this great tribute to Jones:—"The study of the Indian antiquities received its first impulse from Sir William Jones."

With the expansion of the territories of the East India Company, more and more ruined sites were discovered, numerous plates of reproductions of ancient stupas began to pour into the Society's officers at Calcutta. Some of these plates were published in the page of the several volumes known as *Asiatic Researches* and early volumes of the *Royal Asiatic Society Journal*. The untimely death of Sir William Jones in the year 1794 darkened the prospect

of the early materialization of the scheme of listing the ancient monuments and research which he had laid before the Royal Asiatic Society. However, Colebrooke, a young scholar, on whom the mantle of Sir William Jones fell, completed some of his predecessor's unfinished literary works; but nothing worthwhile has been done in the sphere of Buddhist antiquities. Yet more and very important Buddhist and historical sites were discovered since India has a super-abundance of ruins. Gradually, the collection of antiquities increased. The Marquis of Wellesley deputed Buchanan to explore the country and submit a report giving a detailed description of all the ancient sites, Buchanan explored diligently the Buddhist remains of Gaya, Baragoan, Kasia and Kahaon, and his pioneer exploration of those areas for archaeological and historical research proved invaluable. The judgement and accuracy of his report is remarkable. Perhaps it is not quite out of place to make mention here the policy which the Portuguese followed in India with regard to the antiquities and places of worship. In 1546 the king of Portugal sent a remarkable letter to his Viceroy in India: "We charge you to discover all idols by means of diligent officers, to reduce them to fragments and utterly to consume them, in whatever place they may be found, proclaiming rigorous penalties against such persons as shall dare to engrave, cast, sculpture, limn, paint, or bring to light any figure in metal, bronze, wood, clay, or any other substance, or shall introduce them from foreign parts; and against those who shall celebrate in public or in private any festivities which have any Gentile taint or shall abet them." Many works of art must have disappeared from the Western coast of India, for the Viceroy of India followed the instructions of the Roman Catholic king of Portugal to its very letter.



SĀNCHĪ TODAY

SANCHI IN MODERN TIMES

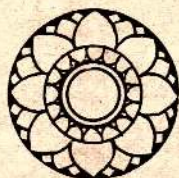
From the thirteenth century onwards Sānchī appears to have been left deserted and desolate. The City of Vidisa had fallen to ruins during the Gupta period and had been superseded by Bilisa (Bhailasvāmin); but, though the latter town played an important part in local history during Muhammadan times, and though it was thrice sacked by Moslem conquerors and its temples destroyed for a fourth time in the reign of Aurangzeb, yet amid all this devastation the monuments of Sānchī, in spite of their prominent position on a hill less than five miles away, were left unscathed, and when re-discovered by General Taylor in 1818, proved to be in a remarkably good state of preservation. At that time three of the gateways of the Great Stupa were still standing erect, and the southern one was lying where it had fallen; the great dome was intact; and a portion of the balustrade on the summit was still in situ. The Second and Third Stupas were also well preserved, and there were remains of eight minor Stupas, besides other buildings, in the vicinity of the Second Stupa, but no record of their condition is preserved. The beauty and unique character of these monuments was quickly recognised, and from 1819 onwards there appeared various notes, illustrations and monographs descriptive of their architecture and sculpture, though too often marred by the fanciful ideas or inaccuracies of the authors. Most notable among these works were Cunningham's *Bhilisa Topes* (1854), Fergusson's *Tree and Serpent Worship* (1868), and General Maisey's *Sanchi and its Remains* (1892). But the widespread interest which the discovery and successive accounts of the stupas excited, proved lamentably disastrous to the monuments themselves; for the site quickly became a hunting-ground for treasure-seekers and amateur archaeologists, who, in their efforts to probe its hidden secrets or to enrich themselves from the spoils supposed to be hidden there, succeeded in half demolishing and doing irreparable harm to most of the structures. Thus, in 1822, Captain Johnson, the Assistant Political Agent in Bhopal, opened

the Great Stupa from top to bottom on one side, and left a vast breach in it, which was the cause of much subsequent damage to the body of the structure and of the collapse of the Western Gateway and portions of the enclosing balustrade. The same blundering excavator was probably responsible, also, for the partial destruction of the Second and Third Stupas, which until then had been in perfect repair. Then, in 1851, Major (afterwards General Sir) Alexander Cunningham and Captain F. C. Maisey together contributed to the general spoliation of the site by hasty excavations in several of the monuments, and, though they succeeded in recovering a most valuable series of relic-caskets, from the Second and Third Stupas, their discoveries hardly compensated for the damage entailed in their operations. It is fair, however, to add that we owe to Maisey a very excellent series of drawings which were used by Fergusson to illustrate his *Tree and Serpent Worship*, and later on by Maisey himself to illustrate *Sānchī and its Remains*; and that we owe to Major Cunningham the valuable account of Sānchī and other Buddhist sites in its vicinity contained in his *Bhilisa Topes*—a book which, but for their excavations, would probably never have been written. During all these years the idea of repairing and preserving these incomparable structures for the sake of future generations seems never to have entered anyone's head, and though in 1869 (as an indirect result of a request by Napoleon III for one of the richly carved gates) casts of the East Gate were prepared and presented to some of the principal national museums of Europe, it was not until 1881, when still more havoc had been wrought by the neighbouring villagers or by the ravages of the ever-encroaching jungles, that the Government bethought itself of safeguarding the original structures. In that year Major Cole, then Curator of Ancient Monuments, cleared the hill-top of vegetation and filled the great breach in the Main Stupa made by Captain Johnson nearly sixty years before, and during the two following years he re-erected at the expense of the Imperial

Government the fallen gateways on the south and west, as well as the smaller gateway in front of the Third Stupa. No attempt, however, was made by him to preserve the other monuments which were crumbling to ruin, to exhume from their debris the monasteries, temples and other edifices which cover the plateau around the Great Stupa, or to protect the hundreds of loose sculptures and inscriptions lying on the site. These tasks, which involved operations far more extensive than any previously undertaken, were left for the writer to carry out between the years 1912 and 1919. The buildings which were at that time visible on the hill-top were the Great Stupa and the few other remains which the reader will find indicated in the site plan (Pi. 2) by hatched Lines. For the rest, the whole site was buried beneath such deep accumulations of debris and was so overgrown with jungle, that the very existence of the majority of the monuments had not even been suspected. The first step, therefore, was to clear the whole enclave of the thick jungle growth in which it was enveloped. Then followed the excavations of the areas to the south and east of the Great Stupa, where it was evident that a considerable depth of debris lay over the natural rock, and where, accordingly, there was reason to hope (a hope which proved to be abundantly justified) that substantial remains might be found. The buildings which were exposed to view in the Southern part of the site are for the most part founded on the living rock; but those in the eastern area constitute only the uppermost stratum, beneath which there still buried the remains of various earlier structures. These have been left to the spade of some future explorer, as it was clear from trial diggings at different points that they were mainly monastic dwellings similar in character to those already brought to light in other parts of the enclave and unlikely, therefore, to

add much to our present knowledge of the monuments. The third task to be done was to put one and all the monuments into as thorough and lasting a state of repair as was practicable. Most important and most difficult of achievement among the many measures which this task entailed were: first, the dismantling and reconstruction of the whole south-west quadrant of the Great Stupa, which was threatening to collapse and to bring down with it the South and West Gateways, as well as the balustrade between them; secondly, the preservation of Temple 18, the ponderous columns of which were leaning at perilous angles, and had to be reset in the perpendicular and established on secure foundations; and thirdly, the repair of Temple 45, which had reached the last stage of decay and was a menace to anyone entering its shrine. Other measures that are also deserving of particular mention, are the rebuilding of the long retaining wall between the Central and Eastern Terraces; the reconstruction of the dome, balustrades and crowning umbrella of the Third Stupa; the re-roofing and general repair of Temples 17, 31 and 32; the effective drainage (involving the relaying of the old fragmentary pavement) of the area around the Great Stupa; and the improvement and beautifying of the site generally by roughly levelling and turfing it and by the planting of trees and flowering creepers.

Finally, there remained the question of protecting the numerous movable antiquities which lay scattered about the site. For this purpose a small but adequate museum was erected, where sculptures, inscriptions and architectural fragments have been duly arranged and catalogued, and where plans, photographs, and other materials have been set out to assist the visitor in the study of these unique monuments." The above long quotation is from Sir John Marshall's work on the Monuments of Sanchi.



DECIPHERMENT OF THE SCRIPTS

JAMES PRINCEP AND THE DECIPHERMENT OF THE SCRIPTS ON THE RAILINGS OF THE GREAT STUPA AT SANCHI

Half a century passed by after systematic and coordinated efforts were begun to read the earliest writings in India, but with no sign of immediate success. The atmosphere was tense, because of the enigma presented by the writings itself. It was, of course, known that the earliest writings was a script, not ornamental decoration as the uniform had at first thought to be. No such supposition was ever made with regard to it, though of course, there were innumerable local legends in the places, where these records were found. By this time, faithful reproduction of various writings on rocks, pillars, etc., had reached the scholars of Europe. Recognised as a script, they took a keen interest in it, as to the contents of the records of the earliest writings and the language implicated, and a lively rivalry was manifest amongst western scholars to be the first to read the writings of ancient India. The mantle of scholarship, which for so long had been worn by Sanskrit literary scholars, now fell on James Princep. He was not a scholar of the type and calibre of Sir William Jones, Colebrooke, Wilson etc. The man who was destined to be recorded in Indian history as the decipherer of the Brahmi lipi, was by profession Anay Master of the Calcutta mint. With Princep's appointment as Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society, a new era dawned with regard to Indian archaeology. As a result of Princep's work, the puzzling script of the pillars and rock inscriptions of India, was made plain, a new world of history displayed. He was able to read the edicts of the Dattu pillar of Asoka for the first time. This decipherment of the Brahmi Lipi was a remarkable and brilliant achievement. Princep examined the facsimilies of the inscriptions on the stone railings of the Great Stupa at Sanchi and concluded that they could not be fragments of one continuous text or inscription. Though it originated in a pure guess, he was perfectly

right. Referring to the writings on the railings, which enabled him to decipher the Brahmi Lipi, he writes, "Apparently trivial and fragments of rude writing have led to even more important results than the others. They have instructed us in the alphabet and the language of those ancient pillars, and rock inscriptions, which have been the wonder of the learned since the days of Sir William Jones and I am already nearly prepared to render to the Society an account of the writing on Sultan Firoz Lat (pillar) at Delhi, with no little satisfaction that, as I was the first to analyze those unknown symbols and show their accordance with the system of Sanskrit alphabets in their application of the vowel marks, and in other points, so I should be now rewarded with the completion of a discovery. In the course of a few minutes, I thus became possessed of the whole alphabet. Like most other inventions, when once found, it appears extremely simple; as in most others, accident rather than study, has had the merit of solving the enigma which has so long baffled the learned."

THE APPOINTMENT OF CAPTAIN F. C. MAISEY BY THE COURT OF DIRECTORS OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY TO OPEN UP THE STUPAS AT BHILSA AND CENTRAL INDIA

In the year 1851 the Court of Directors of the East India Company, appointed Capt. F. C. Maisey to open up the Stupas at Bhilsa and Central India.

At about this time Sir Alexander Cunningham had been entrusted with similar work in Eastern India. He came over to Bhilsa to join Maisey in his exploration. Cunningham with his very sound knowledge of Indian archaeology, religious and languages at once realized with penetrative sagacity the very weighty importance of the discoveries they were going to make. He thought Sanchi excavation would be very profitable, and was anxious to be present. So Maisey waited till he arrived. The two officers of the Royal Engineers went to work with military precision. Maisey

surveyed the ground, drew up his plans and dug straight down to the centre of each stupa, keeping careful record of everything he found. It is true that his method of working largely destroyed the monuments themselves and Maisey and Cunningham have been severely criticised on this account. But the fact, unrecognised till now, that he did keep careful records, must be placed to his credit. In 1854 Maisey submitted his report to the Directors of the East India Company. They were disappointed no treasure had been found and refused to incur the further expense of publishing a full illustrated report. Cunningham, meanwhile, had written his own report of the excavations, with drawings of his own. This was published as *Bhilsa Topes*, but it is clear, from the incompleteness of this work, that Cunningham did not fully utilize Maisey's report. There were many important omissions. But, from the point of view of interpretation and archaeological reliability, Cunningham proved himself far superior to Maisey. The latter had peculiar ideas about Assyrian affinities, sun worship and Babylonian interpretation which he applied to the sculptures of Bhilsa. The *Bhilsa Topes* was published in the year 1853. Capt. F. C. Maisey submitted his report to the Directors of the East India Company in Sept. 1854. So it is quite evident his full report was not available to Cunningham. Sir Alexander Cunningham writes in his preface to the *Bhilsa Topes* as follows:— "The discoveries made by Lieutenant Maisey and myself, amongst the numerous Buddhist monuments that still exist around Bhilsa, in Central India, are described-imperfectly, I fear-myself in the present work. To the Indian Antiquary and historian, those discoveries will be, I am willing to think, of very high importance." The recent investigations which the author carried out in London have brought to light material of high religious and historic importance to the Buddhists all over the world and also of marked importance to historians and archaeologists of India and Ceylon. Most of those materials relating to the stupas at Bhilsa have lain for a whole century in museums, libraries and other institutions in London. This great series of stupas at Bhilsa contain a number of inscribed relic caskets in which relic pieces of calcined bone, ash, and dust of early Buddhist saints

were enshrined. Other material shows graphically the precise methods and places in which the caskets were posited in the stupas. From reasons unknown to the author the papers on the subject remained unnoticed. Though the existence of relic caskets was doubtless known to a few individual scholars they have never till now been studied as a group. Sir John Marshal the greatest modern authority, believed as late as 1918 that these caskets and relics had been lost. He says, "In 1851 Major (afterwards General) Sir Alexander Cunningham and Capt. F. C. Maisey together contributed to the general spoliation of the site by hasty excavations in several of the monuments, and, although, they succeeded in recovering a most valuable series of caskets from the second and third stupas, their discoveries scarcely compensated for the damage entailed in their operations since the caskets themselves were subsequently lost." However, it should be noted Sir John Marshal, in his great work *THE MONUMENTS OF SANCHI* has produced reproductions of epigraphs of three out of four caskets recovered from the Stupa No. II at Sanchi, and he was silent with regard to the fourth casket. The recent work by the author of this article, in London, has brought to light the casket, which the early British explorers in the field of archaeology had removed to England. This series of caskets seem from the inscriptions they bear to have contained relics of great Arhats who took part in the Third Buddhist Council, which was held at Pataliputra at the express wish of Asoka. We are thus brought into immediate contact with a phase of early Indian history. On the other hand, these discoveries confirmed the truth in important details of the account in the Mahavamsa of both the Third Buddhist Council and the lay of the Ruvanvalisaya at Anuradhapura. He writes: "In the inscriptions found in the Sanchi and Sonari Topes we have the most complete and convincing proof of the authenticity of the history of Asoka, as related in the Mahavamsa. In the Pali Annals of Ceylon, it is stated, that after the meeting of the Third Buddhist Synod, 241 B.C. Kasyapa was despatched to the Hemavanta country to convert the people to Buddhism. In the Sanchi and Sonari Topes were discovered two portions of the relics of

Kasyapa, whom the inscriptions call the Missionary to the whole Hemavanta."

**THE TWO GENERALS
DIVIDED THE RELIC-
CASKETS TOGETHER
WITH THEIR RELICS
AT CHAITYA-GIRI
IN 1851**

We know from Buddhist Texts that stupas were raised over the body-relics of the Buddha himself at eight towns among which they had been distributed, viz: Rājagriha, Vaisāli, Kapilavastu, Allakappa, Rāmagrāma, Vethadipa, Pāva and Kusinagara. This happened at Kusinagara in the 6th century B. C. All the eight claimants to a share of the relics of Buddha were his kinsmen, and they were all Kshatriyas. After a lapse of two thousand four hundred years, another division of relics took place. The situation was quite different, and offers a direct contrast to the scene at Kusinagara. The dramatic stage at this time was Chaityagiri—the stage so intimately associated with Asoka's youthful days and in subsequent years a spot which found full expression of his religious fervour. Cunningham and Maisey, under the East India Company, which administered the country at this time, were given extended leave from their military service to explore the stupas of the Eastern India and Central India. They opened all the stupas of Bhilsa and collected a series of relic-caskets. These caskets including their covering receptacles were not less than 50. The relics enshrined in them were the body relics of Buddha, Sariputta and Maha-moggolana, and the great saints who took part in the Third Buddhist Council. Two military officers, who were also Royal Engineers, divided between them all that they had brought to light from the stupas at Bhilsa. These relics and caskets became their personal property! For the Directors of the East India Company were not interested in these bones for they had memories of Egypt that valuables might be concealed in tombs scattered over the face of

India. The author of the article did not come across any relevant document as to the method and principle they adopted in sharing the caskets or the exact number of caskets that went into the allotment of each General. But it is quite apparent from the Museum papers that Maisey's portion as a whole went to South Kensington Museum and Cunningham's collection went to the British Museum. Cunningham refers in his work THE BHILSA TOPES to one of the most touching episodes engraved on the Lowest Architrave of South Gateway - The War of the Relics Sir John Marshall too writes. "This was the war which the chiefs of seven other clans waged against the Mallas of Kusinara for the possession of the Buddha's relics. In the centre of the architrave, the siege of Kusinara is in progress; to the right and left, the victorious chiefs are departing in chariots and on elephants, with the relics borne on the heads of the latter. The scene is carried through on to the projecting ends of the architrave, and the seated elephants on the intervening false capitals are clearly intended to be part and parcel of the scene." Cunningham, with the sculptured story of Kusinara before his very eyes depicting Sakyan Kings carrying off their rightful share of the relics, composed a poem. At the conclusion of his memorable work on Bhilsa he writes: "Let the imagination wander back for two thousand years, and the mind's eye will behold the Chaityagiri, of Tope range of hills, 'glittering with the yellow robes of the monks. Along the road side, and in sequestered spots, will be seen numerous trees, beneath which half-naked ascetics sit silent and still, brooding upon futurity. The classical reader will recall the Tabasi Magorum (or ascetic Magicians), and the Tabaso gens (or ascetic nation), both of whom Ptolemy places to the eastward of Ujjain, and who could therefore only be the Tapasyas, or 'ascetic' of the Chaityagiri hills. The last two stanzas of his poem is as follows:

*"How changed the busy scene of former days,
When twice five thousand monks obey'd the call
To general thanksgiving and to praise;
When the stone cloisters echoed, and the hall*

*Resounded with the solemn festival;
 And gay processions filled each gorgeous gate
 No more do pilgrims round the solid wall
 Of yon mysterious pile perambulate:
 No more to Budh do Kings their kingdoms dedicate.*

*“Nought but the Topes themselves remain to mock
 Time’s ceaseless efforts; yet they proudly stand
 Silent and lasting up their parent rock,
 And still as cities under magic’s wand:
 Till curious Saxons, from a distant land,
 Unlocked the treasures of two thousand years;
 And the lone scene is peopled; - here a band
 Of music wakes the echoes, there the cheers
 Of multitudes, alive with human hopes and fears.”*

EVIDENCE OF MAHAVAMSA

THE MAHAVAMSA ACCOUNT OF THE STUPAS AND THE DRAWINGS OF THE EARLIEST STUPAS IN INDIA

The Mahavamsa is the oldest literary document, which gives the most complete and comprehensive narrative about the construction of a Stupa in the Buddhist world of the past. The recital in the great chronicle is not only an elaborate and absolutely perfect one, in its minutest detail about the architectural features, but it is also a document of the highest historical importance, which throws a floodlight of information on the great ceremony connected with the enshrining of the relics. When we discard the supernatural elements of the statement, we get a description of facts about the construction of a stupa and the festivities associated with it. It then sounds like an eye-witness enumeration of the great event. The account of the representatives from different realms, the full representation of bhikkhus from different fraternities of India and Ceylon, the precious stones, pearls, and materials used for the occasion, the selection of the master-builders of the stupa, the state drive of the monarch from the palace to the

sacred site, the method employed by the King to raise the necessary funds for the construction of the Stupa, and the account of the state dignitaries are something unique, dramatic, vivid and graphic. Such an account regarding the building up of a stupa is unparalleled in the whole range of Buddhist literature. Just over a hundred years back, when General Maisey and General Cunningham were engaged in the opening up of the Stupas of Bhilsa, they had a copy of the English Translation of the Mahavamsa by George Turner, and they verified the statement of the Mahavamsa from the actual state of affairs of the Stupas at Bhilsa.

Cunningham in “The Bhilsa Topes” writes with reference to the Mahavamsa: “The foundations were formed of round stones (perhaps boulders), which were trodden by elephants. Above these were placed courses of clay, bricks, cements, Kurunda stones, iron plates, divine incense (brought by the Samaneras, from Hemavanta), bhalika stones (steatite), common stone, plates of brass (imbedded in Kapittho gum which had been moistened with the milk of small red coconuts), and plates of silver (cemented with vermilion mixed in oil of sesamum). I have preserved

this extravagant account simply because I think it probable that most of these particulars may be partially true. The Plates of Silver and brass, and even of iron, were possibly only small discs, and the course of bhalika stone only a single slab; each deposited in the centre of the building.

The laying of the foundation stone was attended with as much solemnity as now takes place at the same ceremony in England. 'Reverend ones,' said the Mahārāja, 'Tomorrow I will lay the festival-brick of the Great Chaitya: let all the fraternities assemble there,' and further, he proclaimed, 'Let all my people attend with offerings for Buddha, and with garlands.' The road leading from the city to the site of the Tope was decorated; and on the appointed morning, the moon being full, the king attended by his ministers, and accompanied by thousands of troops, with dancing and singing women, and bands of musicians, proceeded to the site of the Mahathupa. On reaching the place he made an offering of one thousand and eight suits of clothing, which were deposited in the middle, and at the four sides, of the intended site.

The ceremony was attended by members of the Bhikkhus from the principal monastic establishments in India, from Rajagriha and Vaisāli, from Benares, Sravasti, and Kosambi; from Ujain and from the wilderness of Vindhya, from Kashmir, and from Alasandha (or Alexandria,) the capital of Yona (or the Greek country of Kabul). The king, encircled by the multitude of bhikkhus, entered the whole space, and bowing with reverence to them, presented an offering of garlands. Then walking thrice round the site, he stationed himself in the centre, and with a pair of highly polished silver compass pointed with gold, described a circle for the lower course of bricks. He next placed in the centre eight gold and silver vases, and encircled them with eight gold and eight silver bricks....."

"The bricklayers were assembled by beat of drum; and the Rajah inquired from the architect 'in what form dost thou propose to construct the Chaitya?' The architect, taking some water in the palm of his hand, dashed it into a golden vessel full of water, and pointing to hemispherical bubbles of air

which stood for a moment on the surface, he said 'I will build it in this form.'

'The relic-chamber was formed of six clouded slabs of stone (meghavanna). One was placed flat, four were arranged like the sides of a box, and the sixth (which was the lid) was placed to the eastward.'

General Cunningham verified the Mahāvamsa narrative as to what extent the account agrees with, the state of the earliest group of stupas in India. He remarked: "This (the Mahāvamsa) account agrees so closely with the present state of the great Sānchī Chaitya that it might be taken as an actual description of that building. The hemispherical form, the square crown, the Chatta above Chatta are all the same, and there are also the same, statues of the four Buddhas, and the same emblems of the Sun over the four gateways."

The question arises whether Cunningham has incorporated in his work on Bhilsa Topes, the illustrations supporting the general contention of the Indologists. "But who was to contradict the Ceylonese historians? They possessed, what the Buddhists of Magadha did not possess, a history of their island and their sovereigns. They valued historical chronology for its own sake, forming an exception in this respect to all other nations of India." Cunningham has included in his work on Bhilsa Topes, some sketches of the Stupas, relic-caskets, and eye-topics of the epigraphs on the caskets. The author publishes here for the first time the drawing of General Maisey, facsimiles of inscriptions, photographs of the caskets etc., which prove how true are the words of the Mahāvamsa. These drawings by Maisey belong to the earliest group of Stupas in the Aryavarta hitherto available.

The materials which the caskets were made, the epigraphs engraved and written in ink on those caskets, the very wide variety of scripts of the inscriptions, the language of the inscriptions, the shape and size of the caskets, the relics and other objects found deposited in the relic-receptacles offer a very fascinating study.

These relic-caskets were made of granite, chunar stone, red sandstone, black granite, black steatite, white steatite, mottled steatite, rock crystal, common clay. etc. All the variety of stones mentioned are found in Vindhya region. Incidentally the specimen of stones supposed to have been used in the construction of the Maha thupa at Anuradhapura, are found in the Bhilsa Stupas. The rock crystal caskets are by no means rare. The relic-caskets made of clay is a very regular feature of the Stupas at Bhilsa. Like the relic-caskets discovered in other regions of India, these caskets bear inscriptions on them. There are a number of instances where caskets have the ink writing on them (see Plates Nos. 6, 7 & 9). It is interesting to note here that crystal being too hard a substance to engrave, the name of the saints whose relics were enshrined in the caskets was found on a small piece of stone. Certain epigraphs and ink writings on the caskets of Bhilsa reveal to us information concerning the antiquity of the art of writing in ancient India. Buhler gave a masterly analysis of the Brahmi lipi in his famous work: **THE ORIGIN OF THE INDIAN BRAHMI ALPHABET**: He wrote this great work over seventy years back. But since then many discoveries have been made in India. Without any dispute whatsoever he has accepted that the lipi (writer) mentioned in the Buddhist Texts was the same as Asokan scripts (Brahmi lipi). He thought the Asokan scripts were largely developed as stone cutter's scripts. This does seem possible when we study the scripts of the caskets of Sāriputra and Mahamaudgalyāyana. For it would seem the existence of pen writing in ink lying behind the Asokan stone cut script. It is most important to determine how common pen writing was, when it became general. These few epigraphs are the only available instances of material for comparing the stone-cutter's scripts with an ink script. The "SA" in those two inkwritten words shows its earliest uncial development (uncial-in which the strokes are based chiefly upon broad curves). The greatest historical significance should attach to the fact that these were inscribed or written in ink. Thus there is indisputable epigraphical evidence in settling the chronology of the Stupas. Since

Cunningham published his eye copies of these inscriptions, Fleet, Pargiter and Ludens noted philological and linguistic aspects of certain words. Sir John Marshall in his work included some of these short inscriptions with palaeographical plates. Apart from this the author does not know of anyone who has edited this remarkable series of inscriptions with original photographic plates. The author of this article has photographed the inscriptions for the first time. The scripts of these caskets bear a general similarity to the Asokan scripts and particularly to that of the Gunas inscriptions and the cave inscriptions of Ceylon. The highly developed cursive (cursive—in which letters belonging initially to one of the two classes, are distorted or pinched according to the exigencies of a cursive writing style) nature of the scripts might be held to pre-suppose a date before Asoka. Except the three Stupas at Sānchī, the rest of the Stupas at Bhilsa have completely disappeared. In some cases, it would be almost impossible to locate their site. Our evidence for their age, antiquity and artistic beauty remains only on paper.

Cunningham commenting on the inscription of the casket (Bhojpur stupa No. VII a) said "It scarcely is possible to determine the age of the Tope except conjecturally. The forms of the alphabetical character in the two inscriptions show that its date cannot be much later than the end of the third century before our era; while the lowness of the plinth on which the dome stands shows that it was most probably erected in the beginning of Asoka's reign. The date therefore can be stated approximately as the latter half of the third century before the Christian era."

The shape and size of the relic caskets offer an irresistible branch of study of the craftsmanship in ancient India, centuries, before Christ. As there are numerous shapes of caskets so there are numerous sizes, too. Amidst the variety of types one could see one particular type is very common, namely that specimen which in a subsequent period was selected as the model of a relic casket. This type is very predominant in the Bhilsa group of caskets; and this was wrought with care and dexterity. Further it is quite clear from the caskets themselves that the pattern

chosen was from the articles used in every day life. The rock crystal casket discovered from Sonari Stupa No. I is the smallest one in the entire group. It is less than one inch in diameter. The relic-casket of black steatite, which is shaped like a spear is the second smallest one in the group. This is from Sonari Stupa No. II. The double steatite casket of a mottled purple colour is a very unusual type in the whole series. Except for the few caskets made of common clay, the rest are of great artistic importance. Here one could see the emergence of a distinct school of art. Almost all the caskets are inscribed with the names of the saints whose corporeal relics were enshrined therein. Each casket contains small particles of burnt human bone. Sometimes these caskets contain a sufficient quantity of relics, which could be recognised as belonging to a particular limb of the human body. Bhojpur Stupa No. IX (c) casket contains the following relics: "Portion of temporal bone; portion of parietal bone; the internal surface still retains the branching bones called sulci meningei; these portions of the skull are very much solidified, which proves that they belonged to an old person; three incisors, or front teeth; one molar, or back tooth, not fully developed, and therefore the back-most, or wisdom tooth; portions of ulna, forming the lower end of long arm bone; portions of tibia; portions of femur or thigh bone, with the linea aspera still strongly marked; portions of Phalanges unguium, or finger bones." Apart from the relics of saints found deposited in the caskets, the seven precious things were found in them. Of course this is not a regular feature. The seven precious things found in the caskets of Sariputra at the Stupa No. III at Sanchi are as follows:- "Seven beads, an amethyst crystal, ruby, lapislarili, mother of pearl, two pearls." A garnet, cornelian and two pearls were discovered from Stupa No. II at Sonari. The author of the articles would like to say a few words about the very close affinity that exists between the Bhilsa group of caskets and the Piprawa groups. Regarding the high antiquity of the caskets Vincent Smith remarked "According to the well known legends, which may have some basis of fact, the relics of Gautama Buddha were, immediately after

his cremation, divided into eight shares of which the Sakyas of Kapilavastu obtained one. Mr. Peppe's Stupa at Piprawa may well be the building erected over the relics of Gautama obtained at his cremation. It is unlikely that the inscription is later than B.C. 400 and it is quite possible that it may be earlier." The materials with which caskets were made at Piprawa are white steatite, black steatite, rock crystal and bear striking resemblance to those of Bhilsa. The shape and size of the Piprawa group of caskets bear such remarkable likeness to those of Bhilsa, that even the cleverest of archeologists would have mistaken the place of origin but for the inscriptions engraved on them. Here is the text of the inscription of the Piprawa casket. It runs as follows: "Iyam salila Nidhane Budhasa Bhagavate Sakiyanam Sukilibhatanam Sabhaginikanam gasuna dalata." Rhys Davids translates the above text as follows: "This shrine for relics of the Buddha, the August One, is that of the Sakyas, the brethren of the distinguished one, in association with their sister, and with their children and their wives." The precious objects found at Piprawa are various stones, Cornelian, white and red amethyst, topas, garnet, coral, crystal, shell etc. Because of the very close affinity that exists between the Piprawa group of Caskets and the Bhilsa group, the author of the article would like to point out to his readers that the Bhilsa artists were very much influenced by those of the Piprawa School of artists. (See Plate II)

ASOKA, THE BUDDHIST CHRONICLES OF CEYLON AND THE STUPAS AT BHILSA

The heretics and other heterogeneous elements dominated the Sangha, and the reputation and the unity of the Sangha reached its lowest ebb. The Sangha was completely disunited and disorganised. Asoka failed to enforce discipline in the Asokaramaya, the monastery of which he was chief supporter. He found it was a much easier task to administer his vast empire than to control and maintain discipline in a single monastery. He was baffled, so he sent his minister to the splendid Asokaramaya with the command, "Go and settle this matter and let the Uposatha-festival be carried out by the com-

munity of Bhikkhus in my Aramaya." The minister went thither and when he had called the community of bhikkhus together he announced to them the king's command:

"carry out the Uposatha-festival"

"We hold not the Uposatha-festival with heretics"

The community of the bhikkhus replied, and this misguided minister struck off the heads of several theras one by one with his sword, saying, "I will force you to hold the Uposatha-festival." When the king's brother, Tissa, beheld the crime he sped to the minister and took a seat nearest to him. When the Minister saw the thera he went back to the king and told him what he had done.

The great monarch was much troubled and he went to Asokāramaya with all speed and asked the community of bhikkhus, greatly disturbed in mind, "Who in truth, is guilty of this deed that has been done?". And certain of them answered in their ignorance: "The guilt is thine," and others said, "Both of you are guilty" but those who were wise answered "Thou art not guilty." When the king heard this, he said, "Is there a bhikkhu who is able to set my doubts at rest and to befriend religion?" There is the thera Tissa, the son of Moggali, O King, answered the brethren. Then he was filled with an extraordinary zeal, and he sent forth messengers to the Thera. Aged as he was, the thera was able to enter a wheeled vehicle, and so was brought by ship along the Ganges. Going knee-deep into the water, the king respectfully gave his right hand to the thera, as he came down from the ship. The venerable thera took the king's right hand out of compassion for him and the king took him to the pleasure garden called Rativaddana, and when he had washed and anointed his feet and had seated himself, the monarch asked whether or not he himself shared the guilt of murder of the bhikkhus by his minister.

The thera told the king there was no resulting guilt without evil intent.

The third synod was composed of one thousand arhats selected by Moggaliputta Tissa. This synod was assembled at the express desire of Asoka for the purpose of discovering and expelling the multitude of heretics who had insinuated themselves into the monasteries with heads shaven and having donned the yellow robe of the Buddhist monk. Each

professed his own creed, saying, "this is Dharma; this is Vinaya." The Buddhist Viharas were defiled by the presence of the worshippers of Fire and Sun. The bhikkhus and ascetics of various descriptions who attended the Third Synod were assembled in the Asokārama Vihāra at Pataliputra by the king in person accompanied by the venerable Arahats Moggaliputta, then seventy-two years old. The heretics, sixty thousand in number, were then stripped of their yellow robes, supplied with white garments and expelled from the assembly. The Synod were then occupied for nine months with re-hearing the Vinaya and Dharma, in the same manner as was done at the First and Second Synods of the Great Kasyapa and Yasa. From the number of Arahats who composed it, this assembly was called the Sahasrika Sangiti or "The Synod of one thousand."

The Third Buddhist Council held at Pataliputra under the Imperial patronage of Asoka sat in session for a period of nine months. It was a remarkable gathering. It represented the culmination of the earlier form of Buddhism which with the ensuing expansion was destined to under-go a profound modification of spirit. This Third Buddhist Council was the signal for the formation of an organisation of missionary activity, which was already included as we have seen in the policy of Asoka. The names of the chief evangelisers in the different provinces are carefully preserved to us. These missionaries, who were selected by Moggaliputta, were the principal Sthaviras or leaders of Buddhism, men who had acquired the rank of arhat and were respected for superior sanctity.

The following is a list of the missionaries and of the scenes of their labours:-

1. Madhyantika was deputed to Kāshmira and Gandhara. He was first opposed by the Naga King of Aravalo. But the Naga was finally converted together with subjects, and "the land glittered with the yellow robes" of the monks.
2. Mahadeva was deputed to Mahisamandala.
3. Rakshita was deputed to Wanavasi, the modern Mewar and Bundi in Rajaputana.
4. Yavana Dharmarakhita was deputed to Aparanta.
5. Maha Dharma Rakshita was deputed to the Maharatta country.

6. Maharakshita was deputed to the Yavana county.
7. Madhyama was deputed to the Himavanta along with four other Sthaviras.
8. Sono and Uttaro were deputed to Suvarnabhumi.
9. Maha Mahendra, the son of Asoka, with four other Sthaviras was deputed to Lanka.

These are not mere legendary names gathered from literature. The story of these missions is one of the most curious and interesting narratives in the ancient history of India. The authenticity of the narrative has been most fully and satisfactorily established as stated earlier by the discovery of the corporeal relics of these missioneries with names of the countries to which they were deputed. It is Mahawamsa again that refers to Cetiya-giri when Mahinda met his mother before his departure to Ceylon. Sir John Marshall accepts the tradition recorded in the Buddhists as correct and writes "When did Buddhists first establish themselves on the hill of Sanchi? Was it during the reign of the Emperor Asoka or was it some remote age, may be during the life time of the Great Teacher himself? To this question no positive answer can be given. In the Mahavamsa, the Buddhist Chronicle of Ceylon- is a story which was but there are no real grounds for this inference. The story goes that Asoka, then Viceroy of Ujjayini (Ujjain), halted at Vedisa on his way from Pataliputra to his new province, and had two sons - Ujjeniya and Mahendra, a daughter Sanghamitra. It is also related that, after

Asoka's accession, Mahendra headed a Buddhist mission sent under the auspices of the Emperor to Ceylon, and that before setting out he visited his mother at Vedisa and was taken by her to a beautiful Vihara or monastery at a spot called Cetiya-giri. Now the name Cetiya-giri implies a hill with a caitya and, assuming the story of Mahendra as told in the Ceylonese Chronicle to be correct - and there seems no sufficient reason for discrediting it,- it has been suggested that the hill in question is to be identified with Sanchi, where Asoka himself set up a Stupa and a pillar where alone in this neighbourhood there are many remains of his age to be found. Unfortunately, we have no proof as to when the name Cetiya-giri came into use. If it was before Asoka's time, the Caitya in question is not likely to have been a stupa or stupa-chapel, since, as we shall presently see, the stupa-worship was virtually started by Asoka, but it might conceivably have been some other form of religious edifice or object of cult worship. On the whole, however, it seems more likely that the name Cetiya-giri was given to the hill after the erection of Asoka's own stupa there. In what precise year that stupa was erected we do not know. It may well have been fifteen or twenty years before the Mahendra mission started to Ceylon, which was not until the Third Council had been held at Pataliputra - 21 years after Asoka's coronation. Even if it had been erected only five or ten years before, there was ample time for the hill to have become known as Cetiya-giri."



PLATE 3 a



Sir John Marshall

Fig. 1

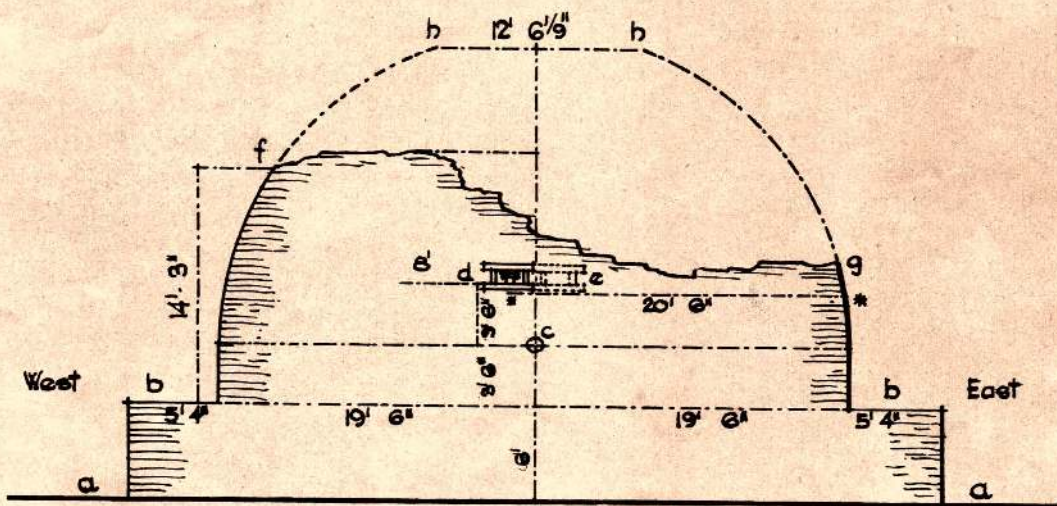


PLATE 3 b

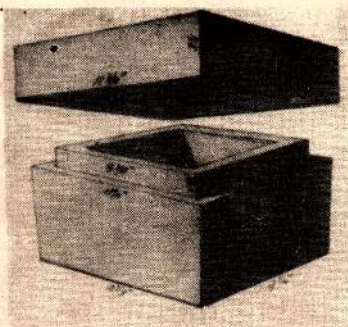


Fig. 2

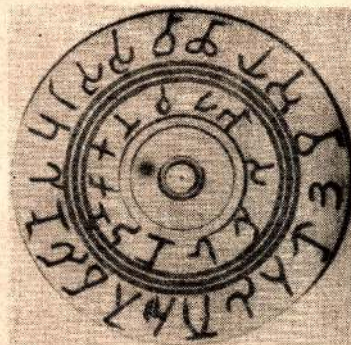


Fig. 3

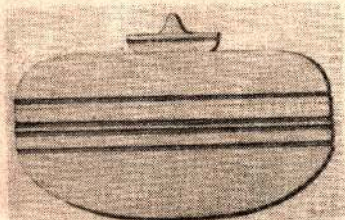


Fig. 4

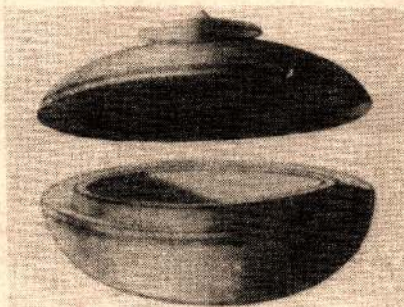


Fig. 5

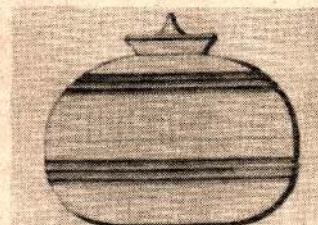


Fig. 6

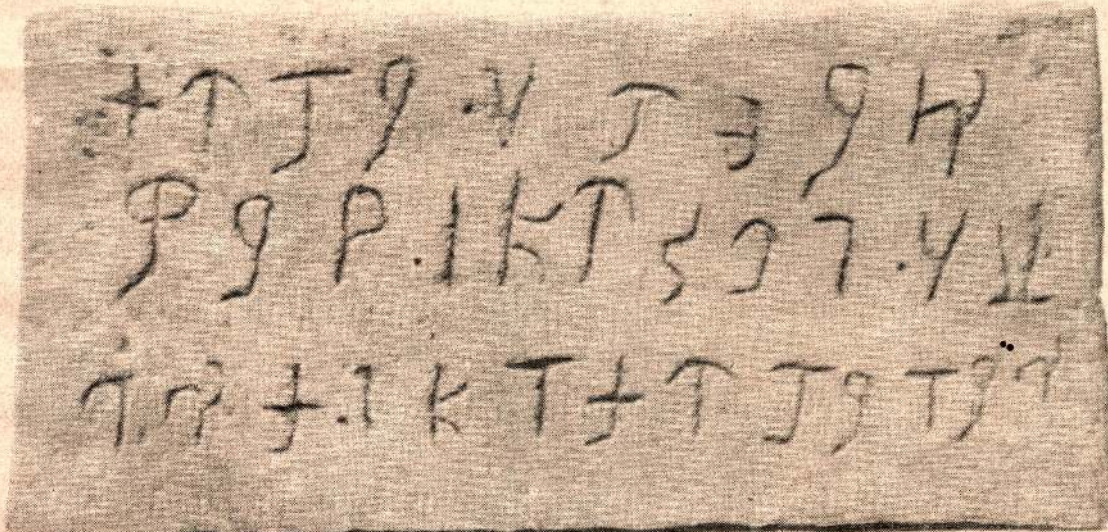


Fig. 7



Fig. 8

PLATE 3c



Fig. 9

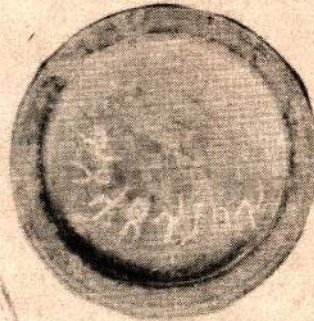


Fig. 10



Fig. 11

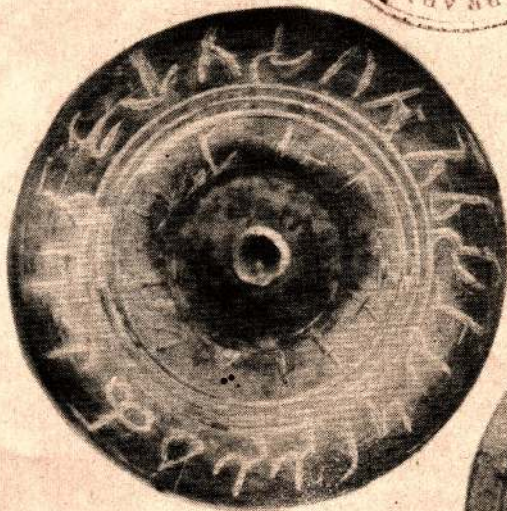


Fig. 12



Fig. 13



Fig. 14

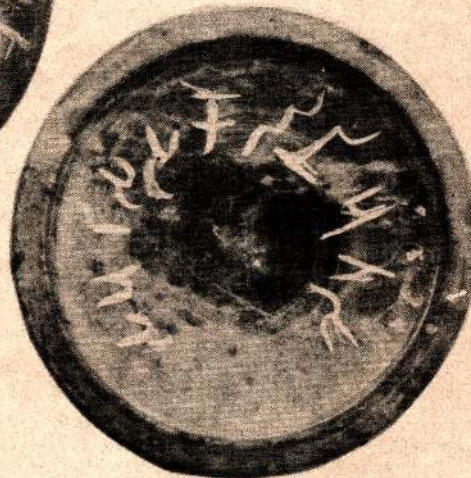


Fig. 15



Fig. 16

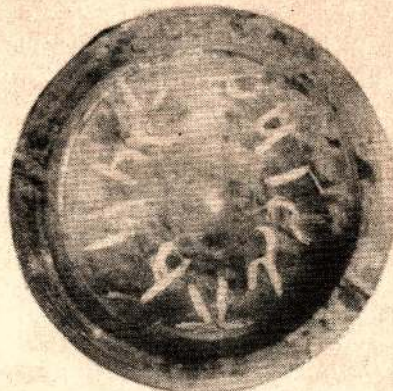


Fig. 17



Fig. 18

PLATES 1-3

(The Bhilsa Topes No. XX Maisey's Relic Series Plate 2)

SĀNCHĪ STUPA No. II

SIR John Marshall's Work: **The Moun-ments of Sānchī** gives full reference to Cunningham's **The Bhilsa Topes**, and also includes the reproductions of inscriptions of the stone box and three relic caskets. (Fig.8) The drawings of Maisey graphically indicate the layout of the stupa, its exact condition at the time of opening, the position of the relic-chamber, the stone box in which caskets were found enshrined and also the caskets found deposited in the box. Cunningham's account is not completely accurate. Here is Maisey's observation.

REFERENCE

Plate 2

Fig.1. Section of the small stupa (B) at Sānchī (vide PLXLIV) a. a. level of the palisaded enclosure: b. b. Basement or drum: c Centre of hemisphere: d. Chamber in which the box (Fig 2.) was contained: e. Supposed situation of a second similar chamber. fig. Section before digging. hh. restored out line.

Plate 36

Fig. 2. Sandstone box on one side of which is the inscription No. 253. It contained several pieces of calcined bone and four (4) small steatite boxes or pots.

Figs. 3 & 4 One of the steatite pots, showing the style, and the arrangement of the inscriptions (Nos. 254, 255). Another of the boxes resembles this, but has the inscriptions (Nos. 256, 257) differently arranged.

Fig. 5. A third box slightly differing in shape: it has three (3) inscriptions (Nos. 258, 259, 260).

Fig. 6. Fourth Box: It has also three (3) inscriptions (Nos. 261, 262, 263).

All four boxes contained calcined bone.

THE INSCRIPTIONS ON THE RELIC-BOX AND CASKETS AT STUPA No. II AT SĀNCHĪ

Fig. 7

The white sandstone had the following inscriptions engraved on it:- Text is as follows:—

Savina vināyakāna aram kāsapagotam upa-
daya aram ca Vāchisuvijayitam vināyaka.

Translation:

(Relics) of all the teachers, including Ara Kāsapagota.

(Arhat Kāsyapagotra) and Ara Vāchi (Arhat Vātsi)- Suvijayita, the teacher (or teachers).

Fig. 9 Steatite Casket No. I Outside lid.

Text: Sapurisa Kasapagotasa sava Hema-
vatācariyasa

Translation:

(Relics of the saint Kasapagota (Kasyapa-
gotra). the Teacher of all the Hemavatas
(Haimavatas).

Fig. 10 Steatite Casket No. I Inside lid.

Text: Sapurisa Majhimasa

Translation:

(Relics) of the saint Majhima (Madhyama)

Fig. 11 Steatite Casket No. I Bottom.

Text: Sapurisasa Hāritiputasa

Translation:

(Relics) of the saint Hāritiputa (Hāritiputra)

Fig. 12 Steatite Casket No. II Outer Circle.

Text: Sapurisasa Vāchiya - Suvijāyatasasa
Gat - ātevāsino

Translation:

(Relics) of the saint Vāchiya - Suvijāyata,
the pupil of Gota (Goupta)

Fig. 13 Steatite Casket No. II Inner Circle.

Text: Kākanava-pab hāsa-siha (n) ā dana
The gift of the pupils of the light of
Kākanava.

Fig. 14 Steatite Casket No. III Outside lid.

Text: Sapurisasa Mahavanāyasa sapurisa-
Āpagirasa.

Translation:

(Relics) of the saint Mahavanāya (Mahā-
van-ārya ?)

(Relics) of the saint Āpagira

Fig. 15 Steatite Casket No. III Inside lid.

Text: Sapurisasa Kodiniputasa

Translation:

(Relics) of the saint Kodiniputa (Kauṇḍinī-
putra)

Fig. 16 Steatite Casket No. IV Outside lid.

Text: Sapurisasa Kosikiputasa

Translation:

(Relics) of the saint Kosikiputa (Kausiki-
putra)

Fig. 17 Steatite Casket No. VI Inside lid.

Text: Sapurisasa Gotiputasa

Translation:

(Relics) of the saint Gotiputasa (Gautiputra)

Fig. 18 Steatite Casket No. IV Bottom.

Text: Sapurisasa Mogaliputasa

Translation:

(Relics) of the saint Mogaliputa (Maudgaliputra)

Cunningham writes: **Steatite Casket No. I** "The names of Kasyapa and Madhyama are recorded in the Mahawansa as two of the five missionaries who were despatched to the Hemavanta country, after the meeting of the Third Synod in 241."

Steatite Casket No. II

"Vacchi-suvigayata must have been a man of some consequence..... Kakanava Prabhasana was the son of Goti, and a descendant of Kodini of Kohudinya, one of Buddha's eighty disciples."

Steatite Casket No. III

"Of Maha Vanaya and Apagira I know nothing."

Steatite Casket No. IV

"I know nothing of Koshiputra; but Gotiputra, as we learn from one of the Andher inscriptions, was a descendant of Kodini or Kohudinya. Mogali or Maudgalaputra was the well-known head of the Buddhist Church who superintended the proceedings of the Third Synod, during the reign of Asoka in B. C. 241. The discovery in this Tope consisted of the relics of no less than ten the leading men of the Buddhist Church, during the reign of Asoka."

The lines quoted above are from the Bhilsa Topes by Cunningham. However it should be noted here that N. G. Majumdar, who commended on the Inscriptions on the stone-boxes and caskets, gave a quite different reading and interpretation. He refused to accept the identification of certain of the saints, and specially Mogaliputa with Mogaliputta Tissa of the Mahavamsa. The author of the article for the first time publishes here Steatite Casket No. I. Sir John Marshall has not included it in his great work. He was under the impression that the Casket No. 1 was lost.

He writes "This casket is not in the British Museum and seems to have been lost." But the casket is quite safe and secure at Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

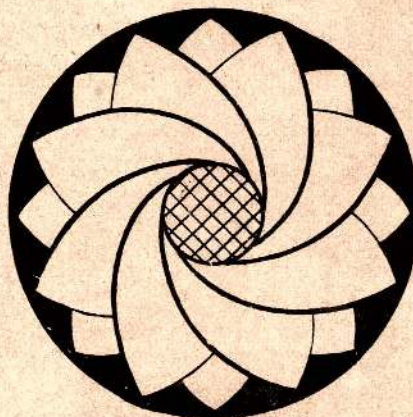


PLATE 4

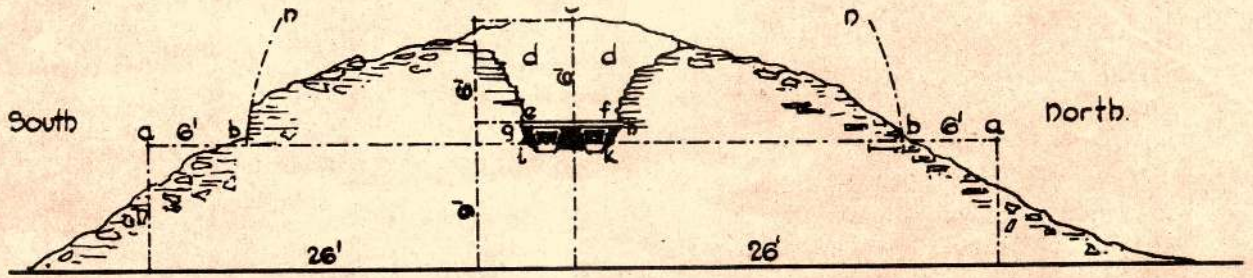


Fig. 1

Fig. 2

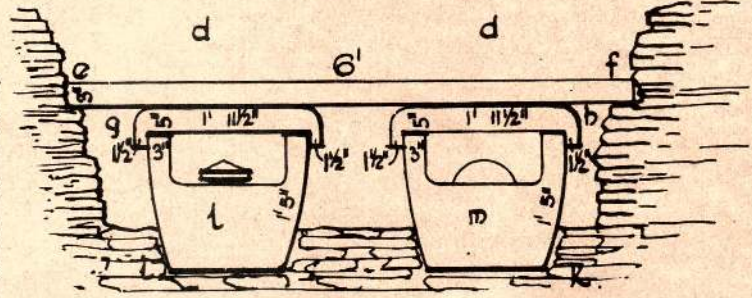
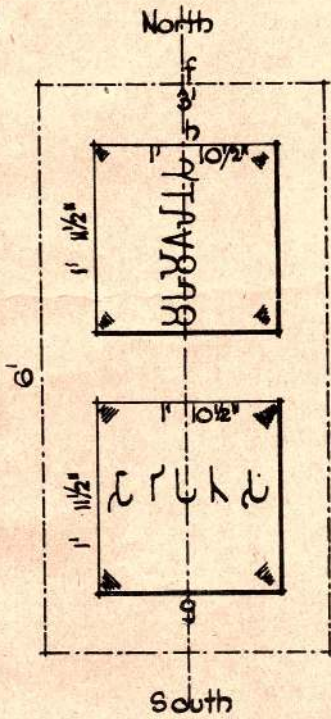


Fig. 3

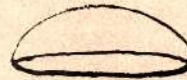


Fig. 4

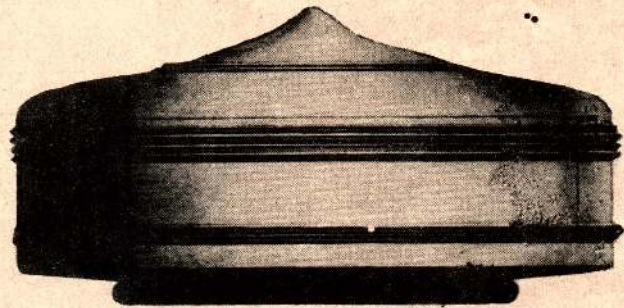


Fig. 5



Fig. 6 Fig. 7 Fig. 8 Fig. 9 Fig. 10 Fig. 11

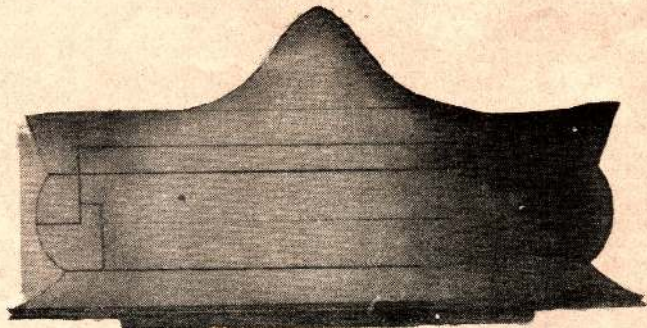


Fig. 12

PLATE 4

(The Bhilsa Topes No. XXII Maisey's Relic Series Plate 3.)

SĀNCHĪ STUPA No. III

Sir John Marshall's work *The Monuments of Sānchī* gives full reference to **The Bhilsa Topes**. But no reproduction of the relic caskets of Sariputra and Mahā-Maudgalyāyana was there. The author of this article for the first time reproduced here the illustrations of the two caskets from Maisey's drawings, the details about the layout of the stupa and its relic-chamber, the exact manner and condition the caskets found deposited at the time of the opening up of the stupa. He also made it clear a few years back that the relic caskets of Sāriputra and Mahāmaudgalyāyana brought to Ceylon and subsequently returned to India are not from Sanchi, but from Satdhara. Further he has succeeded in identifying 34 caskets removed from the stupas at Bhilsa. It appears very unlikely that these two caskets of Sāriputra and Mahāmaudgalyāyana ever reached the museums in England. The museum authorities in London remained silent right through on this matter. Five years back the author wrote to the *Times of Ceylon*, a series of articles on the stupas at Bhilsa and had this to say:— "Most important is my conviction that the two caskets sent to Ceylon and India, containing the relics of Sāriputra and Mahāmoggalāna are not, as believed, from Sanchi. In fact, they came from Satdhara." This does not, of course, detract in any way from the religious significance of the relics. But it is a point of considerable historical importance. Such an authority as Sir John Marshall in an article on the relics of these disciples published in *The Illustrated London News* of January 1949, failed to recognise Satdhara as the place of origin of the two caskets returned to India. The Department of Archaeology does not seem to have rectified the mistake. The question remains as to what happened to the caskets and relics of Sāriputra and Mahāmoggalāna from the Stupa No. III at Sānchī. The author at first thought that were lost in the sea. For Cunningham's India antiquities were lost in the wrecked "Indus." But now the author is in a position to solve the mystery of the relic

caskets. Here is the letter from the pen of Sir Alexander Cunningham, which tells the tale of the relic caskets.

"Simla

23rd Oct. 1874.

Dear Sir,

I was much grateful by the receipt of your kind letter of the 11th September. I can assure you that no introduction was necessary as the name of the learned priest of Ceylon, Subhuti, the helper of Mr. Childers and Fausboll in their Buddhistical studies, is well known to me.

Mr. Childers has already written to me mentioning your anxious wish to obtain some of the relics which I had been fortunate enough to discover. But it had been my ill luck to lose everything that I left behind me in England by the great fire at the Pantech (e) nicon, including all my Buddhist antiquities and relics. These were authentic relics of Sāriputra and Mahāmoggalāna as well as Mogaliputra and Majjhima, the contemporaries of Asoka, and several others. But all are now lost. The relics which I have recently procured are of comparatively late date, probably not older than A. D. 800 or 1000 and as they were not accompanied by any inscriptions. I think that they must be only the corporeal remains of high priests of the time.

.....
..... It is my intention when on my way to England to pay a visit to Ceylon so as to become personally acquainted with its ancient Buddhist buildings and inscriptions and I hope at the same time to make acquaintance with your learned self and other gentlemen I shall always be glad to hear from you and in the meantime I subscribe myself.
..... Yours Truly,
A. Cunningham."

The above mentioned letter to Waskaduwe Sri Subhuti Nayake Thero from Sir A. Cunningham solved the mystery of the caskets.

Explanation

Fig. 1. Section No. 3 Stupa, Sanchi, showing the position of the relics: a. b. supposed outline of basement: b. c. b. present mound: b. n. original outline of dome.

d. d. Excavation made to reach the relics: e. f. stone slab 6' x 3.'

(The letters of reference are alike in Figs. 1, 2, and 3)

Fig. 2. Plan showing the top of the stone chests. (l. m. of Fig. 3)

Fig. 3. Section on e. f. of Fig. 2: l. chest inscribed with inscription No. 264: m. Little inscribed with inscription No. 265.

Fig. 4. Lid or cover of black glazed pottery which covered the relic boxes: that belonged to Fig. 5 was broken.

Fig. 5. Steatite box found in chest 1. It contained a small bit of bone and seven beads, an amethyst. Fig. 6 crystal Fig. 7 Ruby or Garnet Fig. 8. Lapislazuli Fig. 9 Mother of Pearl Fig. 10 and two pearls Fig. 11 inside the lid was written in ink 'sa' the initial syllable of Sariputra.

Fig. 12. Steatite box found in chest m: it contained two bits of bone. Inside the lid, in ink 'ma' the initial of Maha Moggalana (The lines in Fig. 5 and 12 show the inner section).

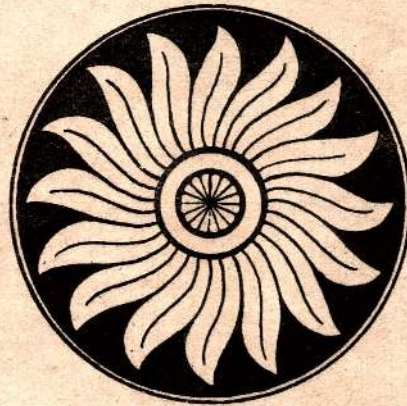
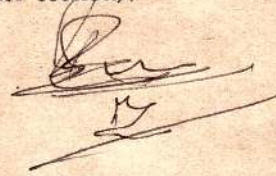


PLATE 5

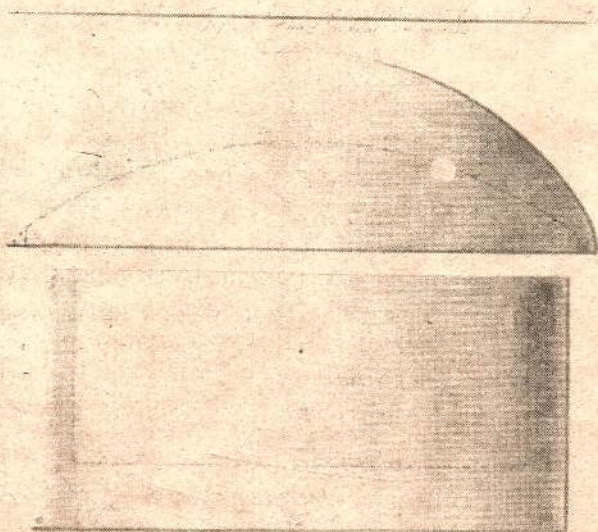


Fig. 1

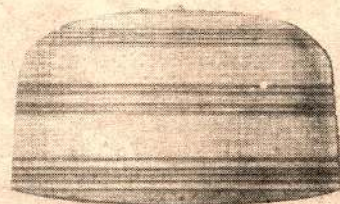


Fig. 2



Fig. 3

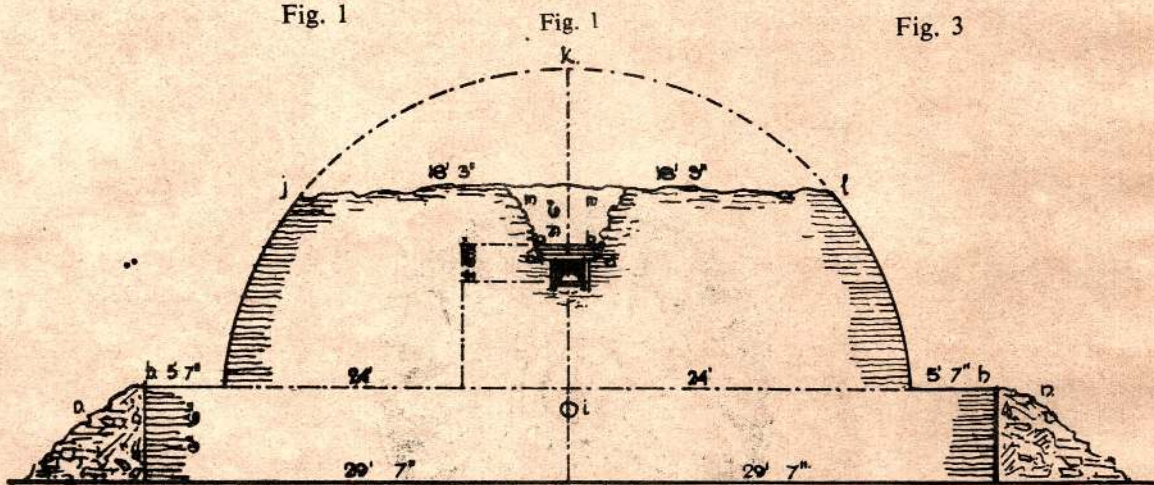


Fig. 1

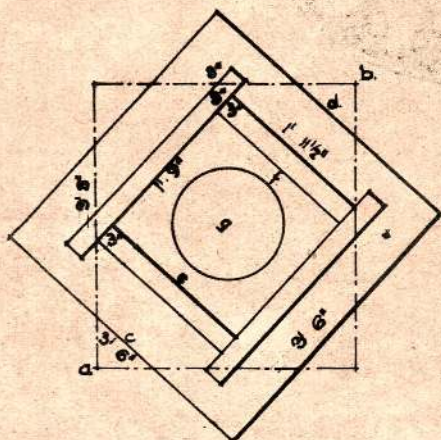


Fig. 2

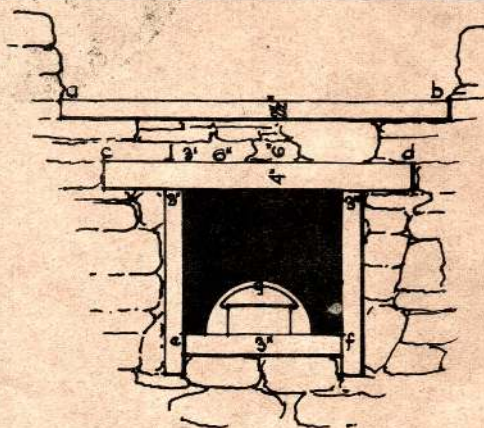


Fig. 3

PLATE 5

(The Bhilsa Topes No. XXIII)

SONARI STUPA No. 1

SONARI is situated on a low spur of a hill, between the Betwa and Besali. The name is a desigatory form of Suvarnari, which is a symbol of Buddha as Bodhisatva. The stupas were situated on the top of the hill. The layout of the stupa No. 1 at Sonari followed the pattern of the period, except the relic-chamber, which is slightly different from other stupas. Cunningham, referring to the rock crystal casket which was found enshrined within three other caskets writes as follows:- "This little casket must once have enshrined some minute portion of bone, or perhaps a single tooth of the holy Buddha; but, after the most careful search of the Chambers, no trace of any relic was discovered." However,

Maisey in his report says "In it was some powder and sediment of reddish brown colour."

Explanation

Fig. 1. Sandstone jar or box which contained the others: it was originally enclosed in an outer case of earthenware (the dotted lines show the inside section).

Fig. 2. Sandstone box found inside Fig. 1: it contained the debris of another smaller one, and also Fig. 3.

Fig. 3. Small crystal pot found inside Fig. 2: in it was some powder or sediment of reddish brown colour.

(the above were found in No. A Stupa at Sonari)

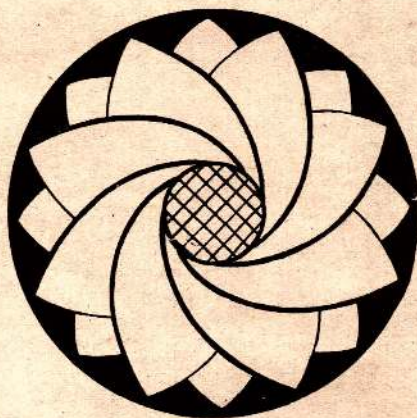


PLATE 6a

inches 2 3 4 5 feet.

Fig. 1

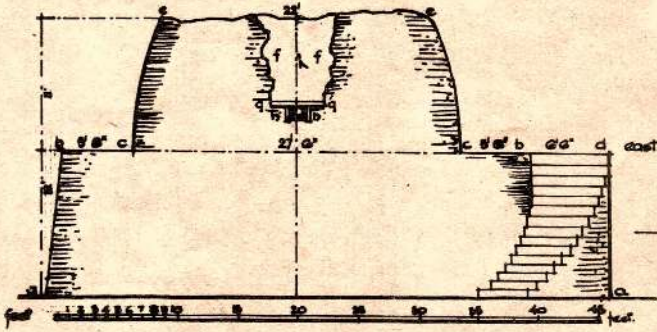


Fig. 2

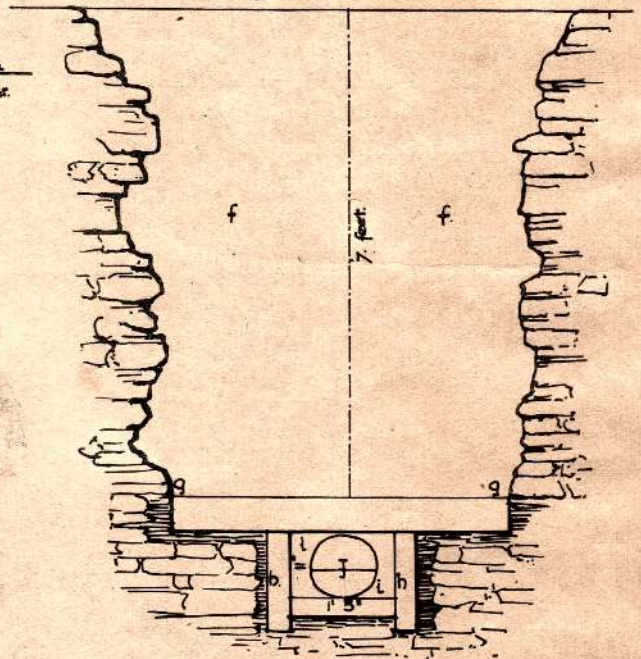
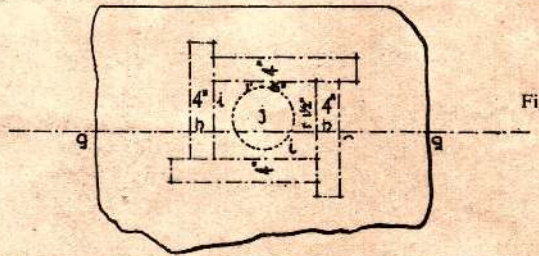


Fig. 3



Fig. 4

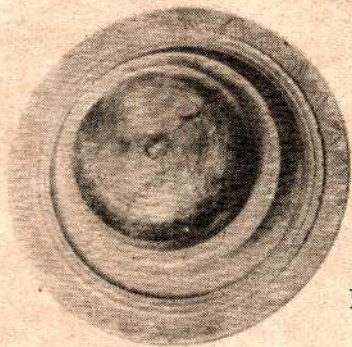
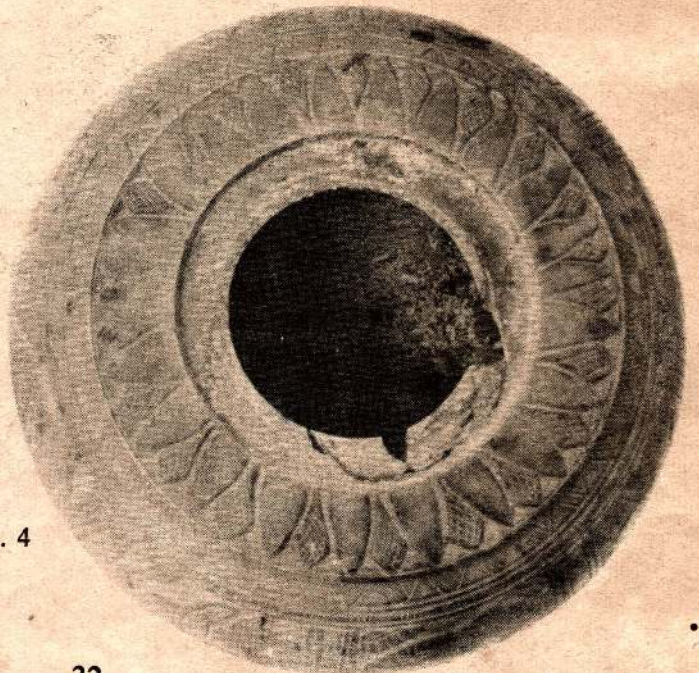


Fig. 4

lid



when open

PLATE 6b.



Profile



Fig. 5



Two sides of the lid

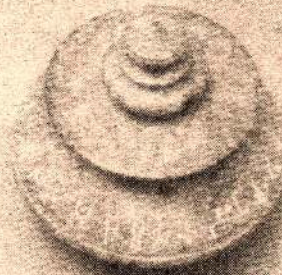


Fig. 6



Fig. 7

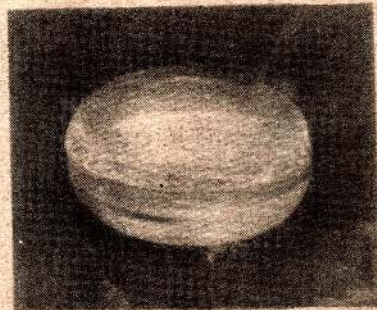


Fig. 8

PLATE 6

(The Bhilsa Topes No. XXIV Maisey's Relic Series Nos. 8 and 9)

SONARI STUPA No. II

This Stupa was situated to the north-west of the Stupa No. 1 at Sonari. According to Cunningham, the situation of the Three Stupas at Sonari was similar to the situation of the three Stupas at Sānchī. In the Relic-Chamber he found a beautiful ornamented steatite casket. On the outside of the casket were engraved figures of elephants horses and mythical winged animals. Inside this casket were found five other relic-caskets with an inscription recording the name of the person whose relics were enshrined therein.

No. I is a crystal casket with a piece of stone bearing the inscription "(Relics) of the emancipated Gotiputra, the brother of religion amongst the Dardabhisaras of the Hemawanta." These great saints Asoka despatched to different countries to propagate the Dharma,

No. II. "Relic Casket is of a dark mottled steatite nearly hemispherical in shape, with a flat bottom and pinnacled top." The inscription engraved on the outside of the lid. Text: Sapurisasa Majhimasa Kodini-putasa. Translation: "(Relics) of the emancipated Majhima, the son of Kodini." It should be noted here that it is at the Stupa No. II, Sanchi, that the of relics Majhima were found.

No. III. Relic casket is of dark-coloured and mottled steatite. The inscription engraved around the top lid. Text: Sapurisasa Kotiputasa Kasapa Gotasa Sava Hemavanatachariyasa. "(Relics) of the emancipated son of Koti, Kasyapagotra, the missionary to the whole Hemawanta." The relics of Kasyapa were found in the Stupa No. II at Sanchi.

No. IV Relic casket is made of dark and mottled steatite with the inscription engraved on the top of it.

Text: Sapurisasa Kosikiputasa.

Translation: "(Relics) of the emancipated Kosikiputra." The author of this article could not trace this casket in any of the museums in London.

No. V. Relic Casket is of black steatite. The inscription is incised on lower half of the casket.

Text: Sapurisa(sa) Atabagirasa,

"(Relics) of the emancipated Atabagiri."

The relics of Atabagiri were found in the Stupa No. II, Sānchī. "The erection of this Tope (Stupa,) which contained the relics of no less than four of the Buddhist teachers whose ashes had already been discovered in No. 2. Tope (Stupa) at Sanchi, must evidently be referred to the same period, towards the end of the third century before our era, by which time all the eminent missionaries employed by Asoka for the propagation of his religion must have closed their earthly career."

—The Bhilsa Topes-Cunningham.

Maisey's drawings of the general layout of the Stupa, its relic-chamber and the manner in which the Relic-Casket was found deposited there furnish us with the ideas of cross-sections of a Stupa, which for all practical purposes now exist on paper only.

REFERENCE

Fig. 1. Section of No. 2 Stupa at Sonari.

a.a. ground line: b.b. basement of drum 12' high.

b.c. berm 5'8" wide: b.d. double stairs to Litlo.

c.c. base diameter of Stupa 27' 6": e.e. present summit.

f.g.h. portion excavated, chamber etc. a. vide. Fig. 2 & 3.

Fig. 2. Plan of the relic chamber & covering slab. g.g. stone slab about 4'3" x 6" over relic chamber.

h.h. plan of chamber forming a "Swastika" or sacred cross: size of chamber 1'5" x 1' 1½" 11" deep (i.i.)

J. Outer earthenware case, enclosing the relic casket.

Fig. 3. Section of Fig. 1 & 2 lettered to correspond. f.f. Excavation 7' deep to reach the relics. (Material of Stupa dark sandstone with rubble.)

Explanation

Fig. 4. Steatite vase or urn found in relic chamber (Fig. 2) which contained some burnt wood or other substance; a few

beads; 5 small pots or boxes. (Fig. 5) and bits of resin.

Fig. 5. Steatite box contained in the urn (Fig 4) at a.a. is Inscription No. 268.

Fig. 6. Steatite box contained in the urn Fig.4. at b.b. is Inscription No. 269. A third box contained in the urn of similar shape

to Figs. 2, 3, but more slender, has inscribed on it Inscription No. 270.

Fig. 7. Steatite box contained in the urn (Fig. 4) at c.c. is Inscription No. 271.

Fig 8. Crystal box contained in the urn Fig. 4. All these smaller boxes contained calcined bone.

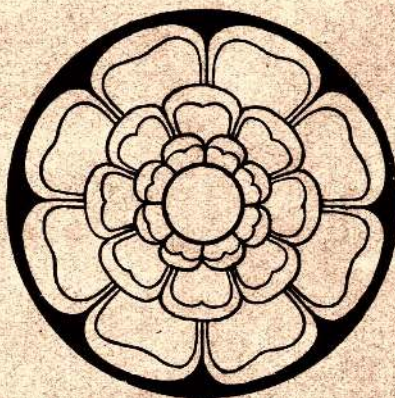


PLATE 7a

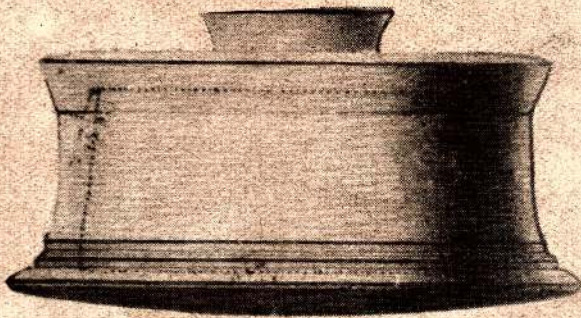
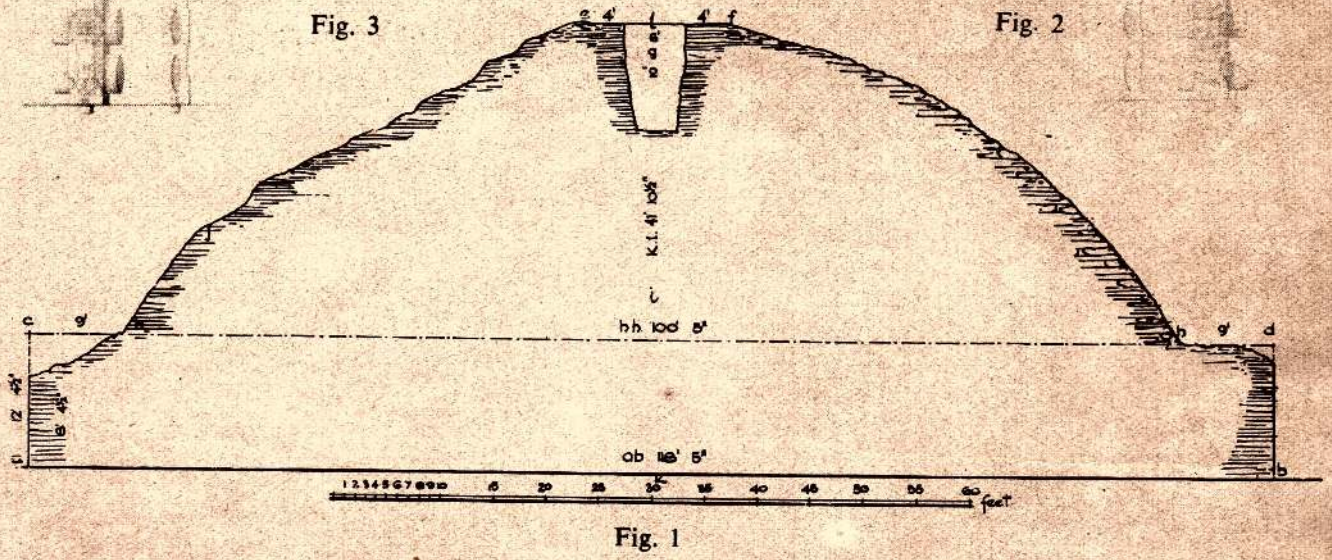


Fig. 4

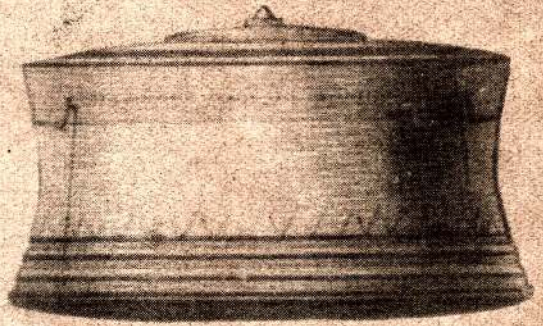


Fig. 5

PLATE 7b

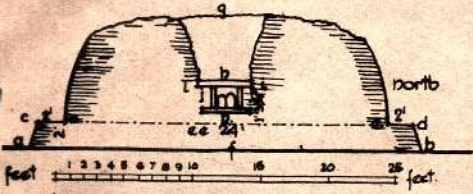


Fig. 6

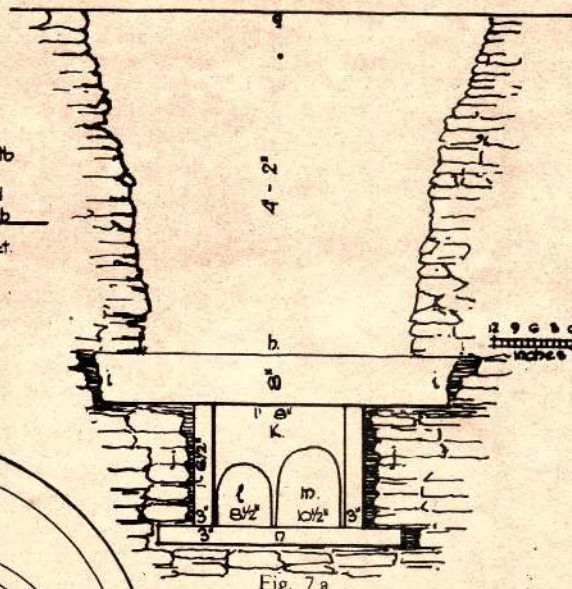


Fig. 7a

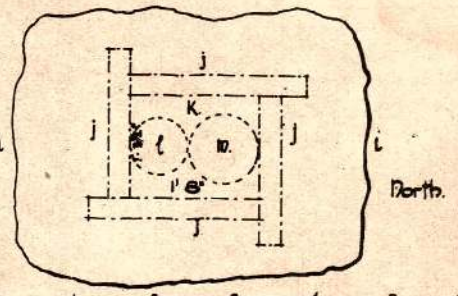


Fig. 7

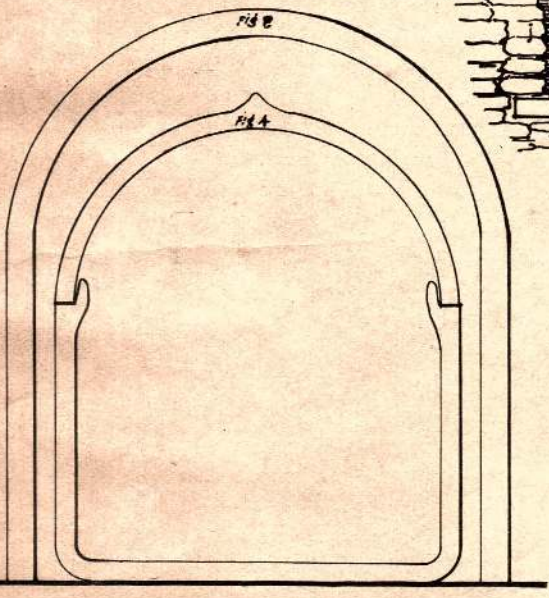


Fig. 8



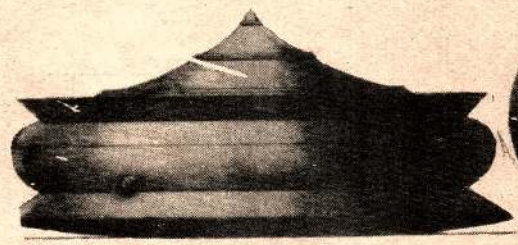
Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



37

Fig. 12



PLATE 7

(The Bhilsa Topes No. XXV Maisey's Relic Series No. 11, No. 12 and No. 13.)

Satdhara Stupa No. I Satdhara Stupa No. II Satdhara Stupa No. VII

Satdhara means the hundred streams. Cunningham thinks "the place most probably received its name from the number of streams which meet at this point. The hill on which the Topes (Stupas) stand here forms a perpendicular cliff, beneath which flows the Besali River through a deep rocky glen. The selection of this lovely spot shows that the Buddhist Bhikkhu was not without a lively appreciation of the beauties of that nature which he worshipped under the name of Dharma." Like Sanchi and Sonari Satdhara too, with all its natural beauty was full of ruins. To the common people, these ruins were known as "Siddha-ka-Makare"

SATDHARA STUPA No. 1

Here is Maisey's Explanation

"Figure 1: Section of No. 1. Stupa at Satdhara: the inner portion of the mass is brick work, and the outer sandstone slabs. a.b. Ground line: c.d. Basement 118', 5" in diameter and 12', 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high; there are traces of stairs, or a Ramp on the east side of present Summit 41', 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ " above ground (K.L.) of excavation made 10' deep for relics. None was found, and probably, as in the large Sanchi Stupa, none exist, if any were deposited, they would probably be found about 10' h true base Stupa 100'-5" leaving berm h c d 9' wide j.h. measured portion of exterior slope; probably a little sunk, from the internal dilapidation.

Figure 2. Pillar and cross bars of a stone Palisade, which probably once surrounded a Tee or Chatta at the summit of the Stupa.

Figure 3. Pillar, cross bars and coping of a stone palisade which originally enclosed, either the berm cd or the summit, probably the latter.

NB. At Andher, a coping or balustrade only, like M encircled the berm or tarrace of the principal Stupa."

Cunningham's description of this does not contain any diagram. Maisey in his report gives quite a different picture of the Stupa No. I at Satdhara, or Saints' houses. As the term Siddha, the "perfected" or "finished, was a common title of the Bodhisatvas, it is probable that these places are only the remains of their residences."

Maisey's report does not contain any plan with regard to the general layout of the Stupa No. 11, in which the two relic caskets of Sariputra and Maha Maudgalyayana were found enshrined. The two caskets were made of pale mottled steatite with inscriptions on them. Maisey's description gives full information regarding the two caskets. These are the two caskets, which were brought to Ceylon and subsequently removed to India and enshrined at Sanchi.

REFERENCE



Fig. 4. Casket or Box of light coloured mottled Steatite which contained some fragments of human bone (unburnt). On the inside of the lid is cut the following Pali inscription in rude letters:  "Sariputasa"-(Relics) of Sariputra.

Fig. 5. Casket of similar material, and also containing bits of (unburnt) human bone. On the inside of lid is cut the following Pali inscription in rude letters:-  "Maha Mogalanasa - Relics of the great Mogalana. These two boxes are drawn of their real size: the dotted lines show the inside section.

The Stupa in which they were found (No. 2) is now a mere mound, a few feet high and about 24 feet in diameter there was no chamber found in it.

SATDHARA STUPA No. VII

Maisey in his report gives the general layout of the Stupa, its relic-chamber, the ground plan of the relic-chamber, the relic chamber and the description of the caskets found enshrined in the Stupa. The author gives below Maisey's Description:

Explanation

Fig. 6. Section (North and South) of No. 7 Stupa Satdhara ab Ground line cd Basements 28" in diameter and 2' high forming berm c e, d e 2' wide.

Total height about 9' 2". g h. Excavation made to reach relics i.e. rough slab 8" thick covering Relic Chamber K. j.j. side slabs of chamber K 1'8" x 1'3½" and 1'6½" deep l.m. Earthenware Covers over the relics (for section of 1. vide fig. 3)

Fig. 7. Plan of relic chamber in the form of a Swastika (lettered to correspond).

Fig. 7a. Section on i.i. of fig. 7. (lettered to correspond with figs. 6,7.)

Fig. 8. Section of one of the dome shaped covers (L. figs. 7,7a) over the relic caskets, the other ((m. Figs. 7,7A) is precisely similar but a little larger: they are of rather coarse earthenware (red).

Fig. 9. Covered jar of fine red earthenware found under fig. 8. as in section. It contained figs. 11 and 12. A similar jar (rather more squat in shape) was found under the larger cover (m) and contained fig. 10.

Fig. 10. Covered jar or pot of dark mottled Steatite found as above. It contained some calcined (human) bone; bone dust and ashes.

Fig. 11. Covered box of dark mottled Steatite found inside fig. 9. It contained some bits of calcined (human) bone.

Fig. 12. Covered box of coarse red earthenware found inside Fig. 9. It contained some bits of calcined (human) bone and ashes.

The author feels it worth adding here a few lines from **The Bhilsa Topes**. "The remaining Topes (Stupas) are now little more than mere circles of stone, from 12 to 20 feet in diameter. Two of them are hollow in the centre, and contain trees; and it is therefore possible that these circular walls may once have been only the enclosures around different holy trees. It is remarkable, however, that at Satdhara we found one solitary trace of the real builders of these Topes (Stupas), in the name of Buddha Bitha or "Buddha's Topes" which is the name still current amongst the people for these massive and mysterious piles."

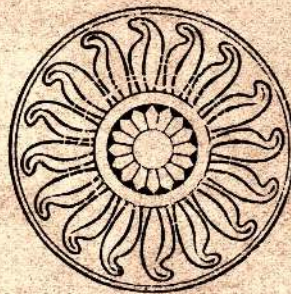


PLATE. 8a

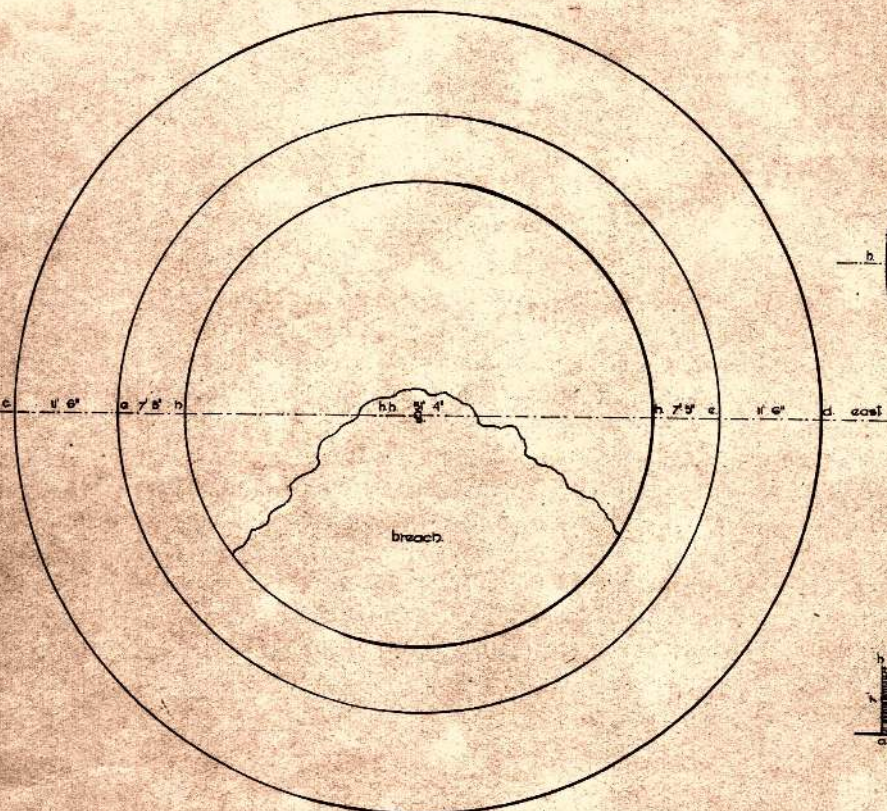


Fig. 1

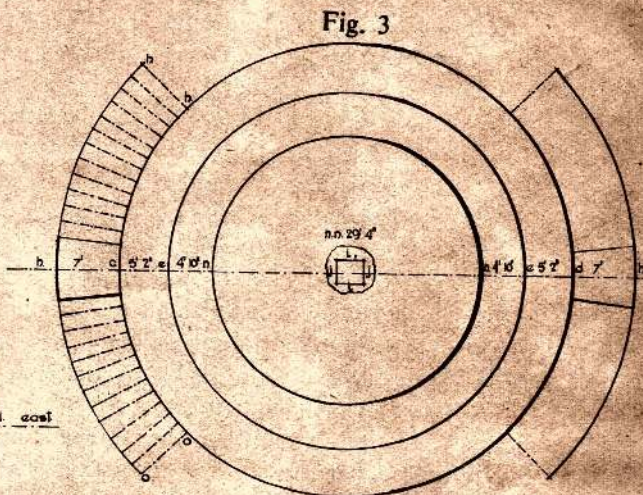


Fig. 3

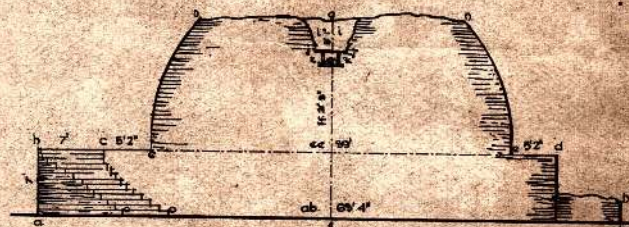


Fig. 4

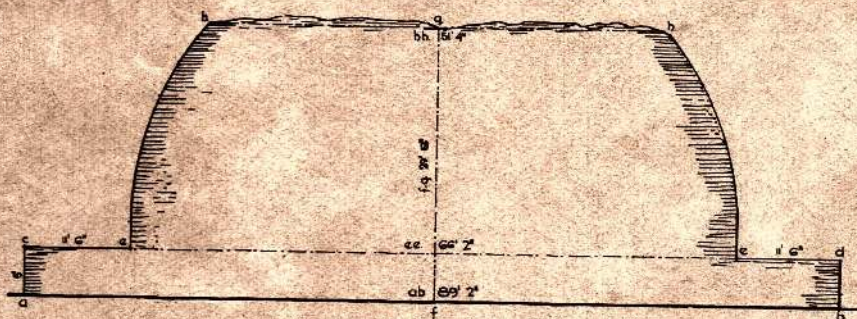


Fig. 2

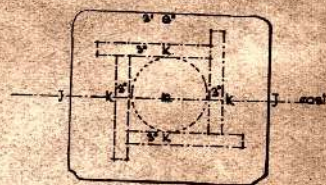


Fig. 5

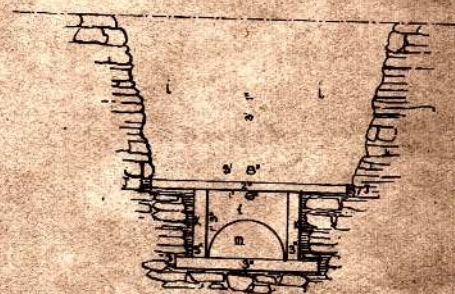


Fig. 6

PLATE 8b

Fig. 1

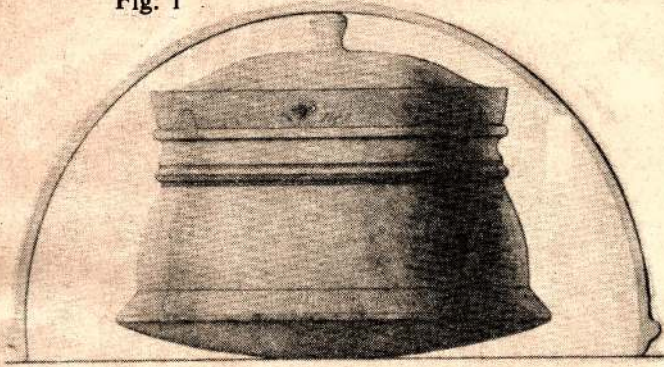


Fig. 2

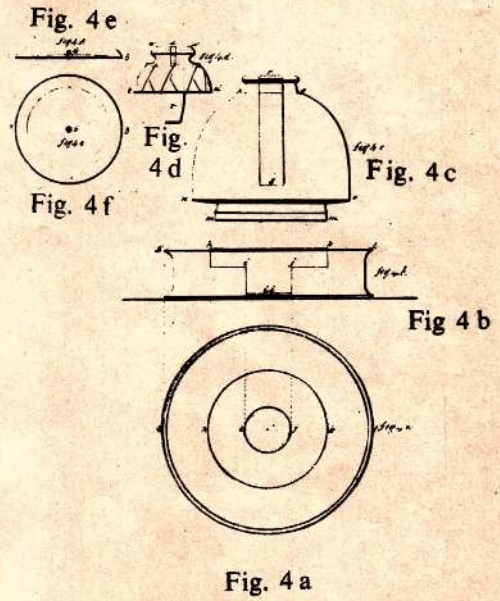


Fig. 3

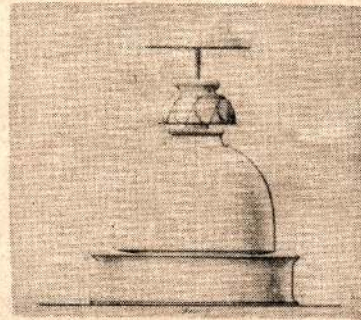


Fig. 3 Diagram

PLATE 8c

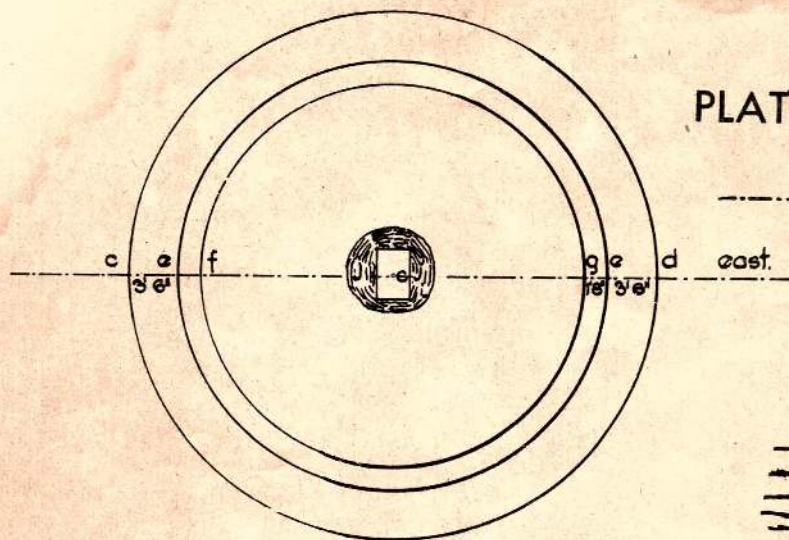


Fig. 1

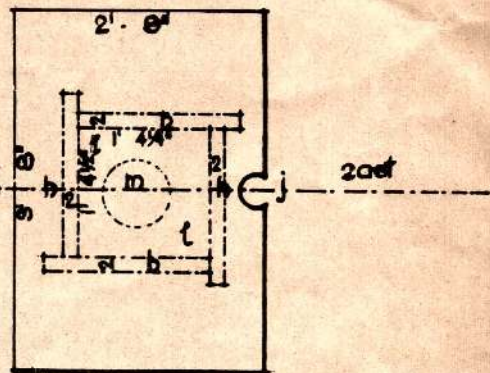


Fig. 3

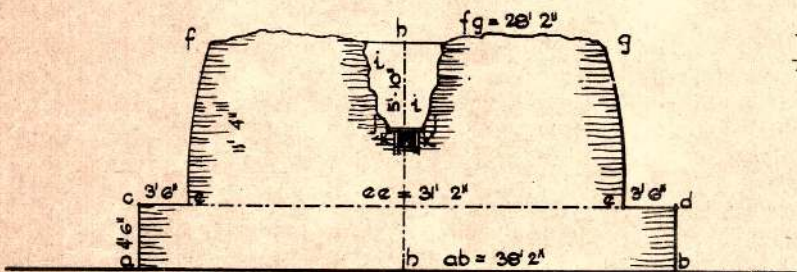


Fig. 2

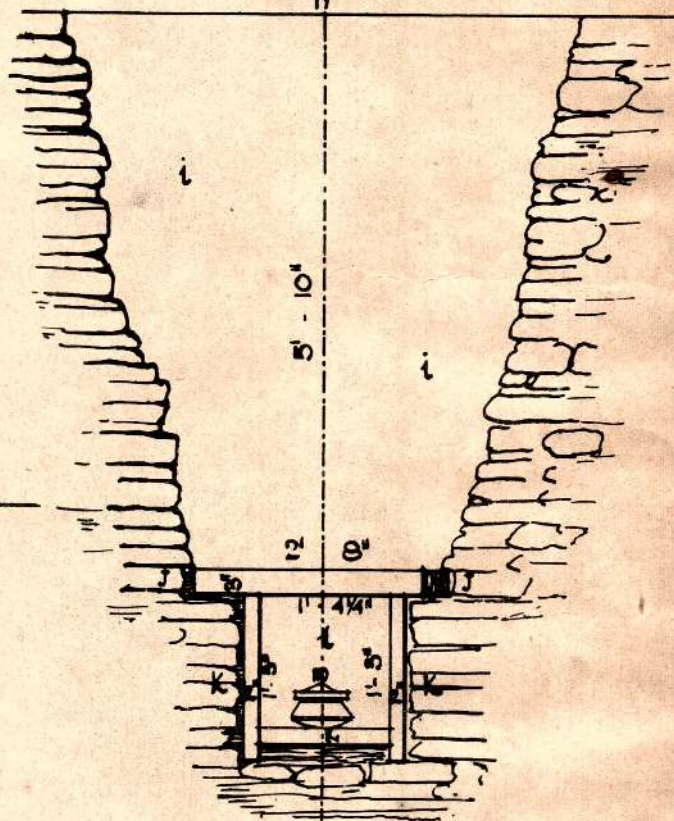


Fig. 4

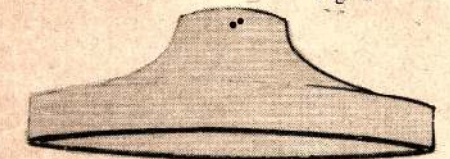


Fig. 5



Fig. 6

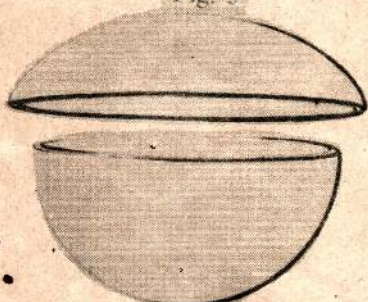


Fig. 7



Fig. 7

PLATE 8

(The Bhilsa Topes No. XXVI Maisey's Relic Series Nos. 16, 17 & 18.)

Bhojpur Stupa No. I
Bhojpur Stupa No. II
Bhojpur Stupa No. IV
Bhojpur Stupa No. VII (a)
Bhojpur Stupa No. IX (c)

Bhojpur was a deserted village when Maisey and Cunningham visited the site. The ruins of Stupas were found on hill tops on four successive stages in theatrical formation. The main Stupas were on the uppermost ridge. Maisey's drawings furnished us with good account of the exact condition of the Stupas at the middle of the last century. It is quite evident Cunningham accurately copied Maisey's drawing of the Stupas. They all agree. "This (Stupa No. I) is one of the most perfect of all the Topes around Bhilsa. The tope is, of course, gone, but the double flight of steps to the west is still complete, and the traveller may mount the terrace and perambulate the Tope" A shaft was sunk from the hermita of the stupa and reached the Relic-chamber, and they discovered "some minute pieces of bone. In the red earthen box there were several small pieces of bone." The author of the article would like to add a word here. According to a booklet issued by the Vidyalankara Pirivena, the relics, which the Pirivena received several years back is very likely the relics of the Bhojpur Stupa No. II.

REFERENCE

Plate 8 a

Fig. 1. The Plan of No. 1 Stupa at Bhojpur or Pipliya Bijoli.

Fig. 2. Section on c. d. of fig. 1 (lettered to correspond) material, Sandstone slabs and rubble. Large breach on south no stairs or ramp now apparent. a. b. ground line. c. d. Basement 89' 2" in diameter & 3. ft. high., leaving beam c. e. e. d., 11' 5" wide round Stupa. f. g. total height 29' 8" h. h. present summit 51' 4" in diameter. Nothing was found in this Stupa the excavation was only carried down about 12 feet so that relics may possibly exist. The Stupa stand in a walled enclosure about 250 x 214 feet in extent.

Fig 3. & 4. Plan and section of No. 2 Stupa at Bhojpur, showing the situation of the relic-chamber, it is of the same material as the preceding, and very perfect; it stands in an enclosure 240 x 210 feet in extent, and appears to have had a double flight of stairs on two sides. a. b. Groundline: c. d. Basement 49' 4" in diameter and 7 feet high leaving berm c. e. e. d. 5' 2" made round Stupa Fig. total height 21' 3" hc. hd. landings of the double stairs 7' x 7' x 7'; i. e. Excavation 3' 1" deep made to reach the relics J. K. L. M. to correspond with figs. 5 & 6: n. n. present Summit 29' 4" in diameter o. o. h. h. Foot of the (partly ruined) double stairs in West; those on the East are quite destroyed.

Fig. 5. & 6. Plan and section of the relic chamber in Sthupa No. 2. (lettered to correspond with Figs. 3 & 4.) J. J. stone slab 3' 8" x 3' 2" & 2' covering the chamber.

K. K. side slabs Chamber 1. Formerly in plan a (reversed) swastika. Relic chamber 1' 6" x 1' 3" deep. The base of the chamber was 9' 9" above the level of the berm c. d. on level Base at Stupa. m. Hemispherical earthen ware Cover over the Relic Casket.

REFERENCE

Plate 8 b

Fig. 1. Hemispherical cover of coarse red earthenware placed over the relic casket Fig. 2.

Fig. 2. Covered jar or box of red earthenware inside which was found Fig. 3. The jar also contained some dust or powder (? remains of wood and bone), several minute flakes of Gold, a small pearl, a Garnet, and 3 crystal beads. On the outside of the lid were traces of ink or painted writing in the ancient Pali but quite illegible.

(Figs. 1. 2. are drawn half their real dimensions).

Fig 3. Crystal model of a Stupa found inside the jar Fig. 2.

Fig 4. a. b. c. d. e. f. The four separate pieces of the model, on the same scale, with the

interior plan and section coloured blue. (The letters of reference in all the figures correspond with Fig. 3 diagram). g. e. Basement: h. Socket into which the portion m. m. of Stupa fits when put together as in Fig. 3. i. j. Circular chamber, closed at bottom by a thin piece of crystal. i. i. This chamber probably originally contained a bone or other relic: and we may hence conclude that relics were sometimes deposited in the basements of Stupas, near Ground line. n. o. p. q. Body of Stupa proper. r. s. Cylindrical shaft or cell, in which were small pieces of human bone and bone dust (the position of the relics therefore corresponds with that of the chamber in most of the Tumuli we opened, viz. a little above the level of the Basement) t. v. u. w. w. Capital (or perhaps lower Tee or Chatta) the portion v. of which fits into r when put together; the portion t. u. is ornamented by a row of what resembles (r perhaps) the letter or syllable h. ta. X. socket for the staff y of the upper Chatta Z. This staff (y) was formed of a small piece of reed or straw whose upper and fitted into X.

BHOJPUR STUPA IV

This Stupa was situated to the south of the Stupa just described. Here Maisey gives in different sections the complete lay-out of the Stupa. Further Maisey gives the full account of the caskets; their contents etc. The letter **Mun**, which was written on the lid in Brahmi script Cunningham explains as follows: "In the Chamber we found a black earthenware box, containing an earthenware bowl covered by a lid of the same material, on which is the word.

Mun "the holy" - a title generally applied to Buddha himself."

REFERENCE

Plate 8 c

Fig. 1. Plan of No. 4 Stupa at Bhojpur or Pipliya Bijoli.

Fig. 2. Section in fig. 1. lettered to correspond. a. b. Ground line. c. d. Basement 38' 2" in diameter 84' 6" high leaving berm c. e. e. d. 3' 6" wide round base of Stupa e. e. f. g. present summit 28' 2" in diameter and 5' 10" above ground level. i. j. k. are lettered to correspond with figs. 3. 4.

Fig. 3. Plan of the relic chamber and its covering slab.

Fig. 4. Section of i. i. Excavation 5' 10" deep made to reach the relics j. j. stone slab 3' 2" x 2' 5" and 5" thick covering the chamber: its east side is cut into a circular socket as if a staff had once been let into it to support. A Chatta or some other crowning ornament k. k. side slabs of the relic chamber l. forming a 'Swastika' in plan; 1. chamber 1' 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 1' 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " and 1' 5" deep: containing leaves and dirt and the relic caskets figs. 5. 6. 7.

Fig. 5. Covered box or jar of fine blackish earthenware (in Figs. 3. 4) it contained Fig. 6 and a quantity of small stones dust and leaves.

Fig. 6. Covered bowl of some materials found inside Fig. 5 (the two placed together, and both lids forming one double lid as in m. fig. 4).

Fig. 6. Contained small stones, leaves dust and some pieces of (human) bone. On the lid Major Cunningham had read 'mun'. But I did not notice it when examining the bowl. It is more likely to be only a variety of the common symbols (vide note B to my Sanchi Report). This chamber (like many at Bhojpur) had apparently been rifled at a former period, which would account for the rubbish found, which perhaps may have been purposely placed there on the occasion.

Fig. 7. Crystal pot and cover found separately in the chamber debris were traces of a reddish brown powder.

BHOJPUR STUPA NO. VII (a)

This Stupa was situated on the eastern edge of the second stage. Maisey's report does not refer to this Stupa. Cunningham referring to the epigraph on the casket says "The smaller vase is of red earthenware, 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches in height and nearly 5" in width. On the upper surface of the bowl is the legend **Upahitakasa** "Relics of Upahitaka," which was no doubt the name of one of the leading monks of the Bhojpur fraternity."

BHOJPUR STUPA NO. IX (c)

Maisey does not refer to this Stupa in his report. This Stupa contained a "double-steatite vase of mottled purple colour, containing an abundance of human bones."

PLATE 9



Fig. 1

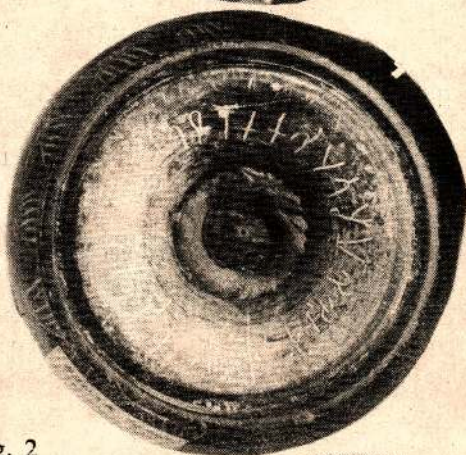


Fig. 2

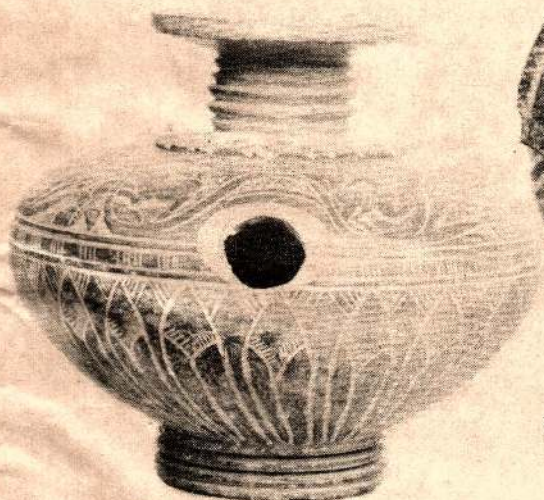


Fig. 3

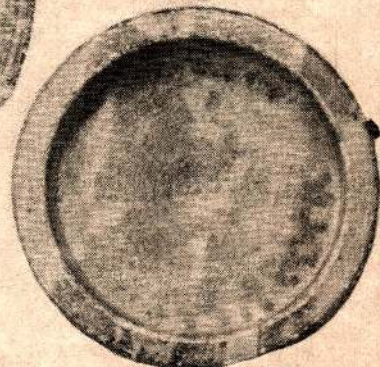
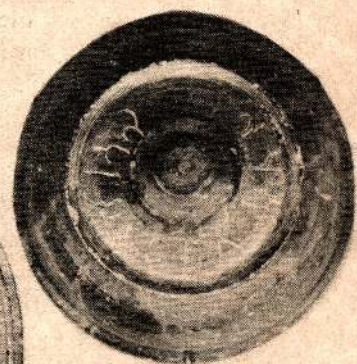


Fig. 4

PLATE '9

(The Bhilsa Topes NO. XXIX & NO. XXX)

Andher Stupa No. II Andher Stupa No. III

Andher is situated to the south-west of Bhilsa. Andher commands a very magnificent view of Bhilsa region. Maisey makes no reference to any of the Stupas at Andher, which were situated on the northern declivity of the hill.

Inside the Relic Chamber a large box red earthenware, a small flat casket, a tall steatite casket, a large steatite vase with the neck partly broken were found. There were signs that the Stupa had been opened earlier.

Fig. 1. The earthenware casket bears the inscription. Text: Sapurisasa Vachhiputara Gotiputa Atevasino. Translation: "(Relics) of the emancipated Vāchhi-putra (son of Vāchhi), the pupil of Goti-putra." The relics of Vāchhi were discovered in the Stupa No. II at Sānchī.

Fig. 2. The tall Steatite relic-casket is a very peculiar one. The inscription on the top of the lid is as follows. Text: Sapurisasa Gotiputasa Kākanava Pabhasanasa Kodinyagotasa. Translation: "(Relics) of the emancipated son of Goti, Kākanava Prabhasana, of the race of Kodini." It should be noted here that Vāchhi Suvijayata's name was mentioned in connection with epigraphs of the relic-chamber Stupa No. II at Sānchī.

Fig. 3. The large Steatite casket which was discovered here at Andher Stupa No. II bears striking resemblance to the one discovered at Sonari Stupa No. II. On the rim of the neck there is an epigraph.

Text: Sapurisasa Mogaliputasa Gotiputa Atevasino.

Translation: "(Relics) of the emancipated Mogaliputra, the pupil of Gotiputra."

ANDHER STUPA No. III

Fig. 4. Cunningham writes regarding this Stupa at Andher as follows: "This little Tope, which was the last that we had the pleasure of examining, was like one of the most complete in its preservation, and one of the most interesting in its contents." The relic-casket is quite a plain one. On the top of the lid the inscription runs as follows:

Text: Sapurisasa Haritiputasa

Translation: "(Relics) of the emancipated Haritiputra (son of Hariti)"

Inside the lid is the following epigraph written in ink.

Text: Asa Devasa danam

Translation: "Gift of Avsa Deva"

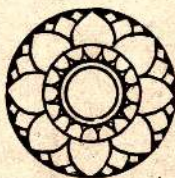


PLATE 10 a

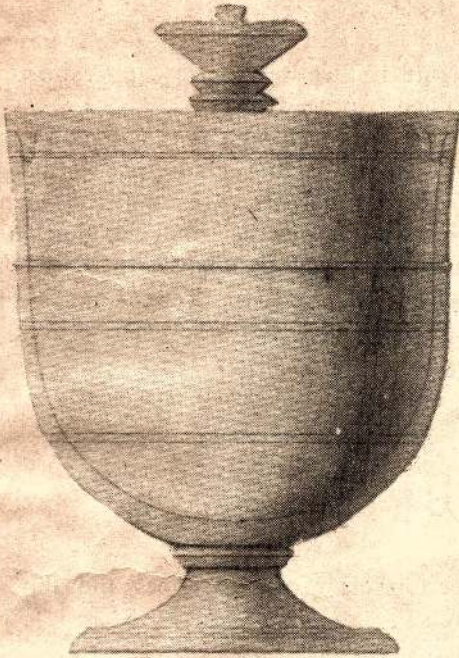


Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

PLATE 10 b

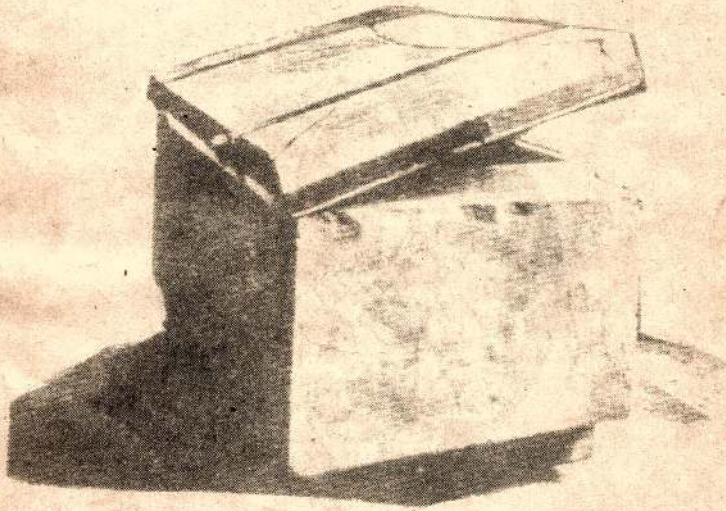


PLATE 10 a

(Maisey's Relic Series Plate No. 4)

Very uncommon Relic-casket Maisey has discovered "at the rounded end of the Building opposite the South Gate of Large Stupa, Sānchī."

Cunningham seem to be absolutely silent about this extraordinary casket. The shape of the casket and its lid is very curious. Here is Maisey's explanation.

Figure 1. Steatite vase or cup, restored, it contained two beads Figs. 2. 3.

Figure 4. A chiragh or common lamp. There were several bits of bone, piece of bangle, shells, broken pottery, ashes and iron clamps and nails dug up in the rounded portion of the building, which I suppose to have once contained a Dagaba, or Relic Chaitya. The red lines in Fig. 1 show the inner section.

PLATE 10 b

Please see Text—under the caption: Materials, Epigraphs, Shapes, Sizes, Contents

of the Caskets of Bhilsa Topes and Piprawa Caskets.

