

might by this time have become quite high, to walk down into the open fields to work during the day, and as they would climb back up the long ascent each evening, they would begin to wonder why this extra effort was necessary. In case after case during the Roman era, people abandoned their old homes and carried the name of their town to a new location down in the plain. The name might continue for centuries in the new location, while somewhere within a few miles a "tell" might stand as a deserted ruin, soon so covered over with sand that no one would even remember that a town had ever been there, and bearing such a name as "hill of beans" or "mound of the house of the man who makes the camel run fast." If only this discovery had been made twenty years earlier, so that all of these hills with unimportant-sounding names would have been included in the map of Palestine, archeology would have moved forward more rapidly than it did.

The second discovery that Petrie made, that of the importance of pottery for dating, was equally vital. It consisted in the application to Palestine of something that he had learned in Egypt, while attempting to arrange prehistoric tombs in chronological order. He had observed that pottery (ancient dishes) was used everywhere, ever since it was first invented, back in prehistoric times. Pots are easily broken and once broken are extremely difficult to mend. It is usually far simpler to get new ones than to try to mend old ones. No matter how badly pottery is broken up, it is easy to distinguish it from anything else. Wherever people have lived for any length of time, at least a few pieces of broken pottery are sure to be found. Not only does pottery tell whether people have lived at a place or not; it can give an idea of the time when they were there. This is because there are so many ways in which the style of pottery can change from time to time. It can be plain, decorated in one color, or decorated in various colors. It can be decorated with geometrical figures, or with naturalistic pictures.