

**THE MEN OF THE BARMA-
GRANDE (BAOUSSÉ-ROUSSÉ):
AN ACCOUNT OF THE OBJECTS
COLLECTED IN THE MUSEUM
PRAEHISTORICUM, PP.6-142**

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THE MEN OF THE BARMA-GRANDE

(BAOUSSE-ROUSSE)

AN ACCOUNT OF THE OBJECTS COLLECTED

IN THE

MUSEUM PRÆHISTORICUM

Founded by Commendator **TH. HANBURY**

NEAR MENTONE

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

Le Docteur R. VERNEAU

FR. ABBO, PUBLISHER

BAOUSSE-ROUSSE, NEAR MENTONE

1900

Today many who visit the sunny slopes of the Riviera make an excursion to the Baoussé-Roussé to view the remains of prehistoric men found in the caves. For the researches, carried on without intermission by M. Abbo since February 1892, resulted in the discovery of five more skeletons which were left on the spot. Many relics of primitive handiwork met with in the proximity of the human bones, or at a lower level, show us what the ancient inhabitants of the Mediterranean coast were capable of doing. But the importance of these finds can only be properly appreciated by a small band of scientific specialists. A few amateurs may derive some profit from their excursions to the Baoussé-Roussé ; but, it must be said, that the majority of tourists who are ungrounded in prehistoric lore go away without any perceptible increase of knowledge. There was no convenient handbook to explain to them the interest of the objects upon which they gazed. Yet works devoted to the caves of the " Red Rocks " are comparatively numerous ; but they consist of technical memoranda, scattered moreover through a mass of publications which are difficult of access, or of large volumes which would take too long to read. Thus I

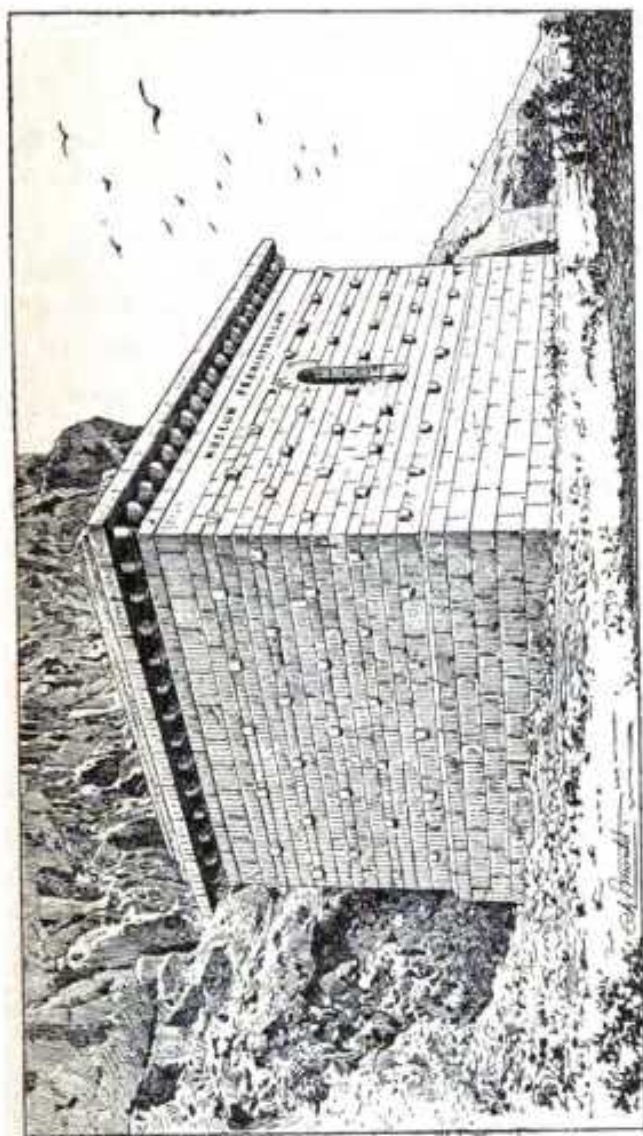


FIG. 1. — The prehistoric Museum at the Baoussé-Roussé.

thought that a small work on the subject would be found useful. The time seemed to me favourable for its publication, as all the objects collected by M. Abbo in the Barma-Grande are shortly to be gathered into a Museum built at the entrance of the cave, where it will be easy to examine them. Thanks indeed to Commendatore Thomas Hanbury of La Mortola a building is now erected a few yards from the cave, and on it may be read : — Museum Præhistoricum. By his instructions all these precious relics will be systematically arranged and exposed to view in this museum (fig. 1).

M^r Hanbury has conferred many benefits on the district in which he resides, and being interested in Natural History, Archæology, etc., he could not allow these priceless relics of prehistoric times, which were discovered so near his home, to be scattered abroad. M^r Hanbury's beautiful botanic gardens of La Mortola are well known to visitors to the Riviera.

In the near future, no doubt, a catalogue of the contents of this museum will be published. But until this classification is carried out, it would not be possible to write an exhaustive description of all the remains which

the Barma-Grande has yielded. Moreover, before drawing up a systematic catalogue, it might perhaps be as well to write a little book giving a summary of that which is known at the present time about the Baoussé-Roussé in general. I was in some measure prepared to undertake this work, as in February 1892 I was commissioned to make a study of the remains which had then just been discovered, and in March of this year (1899) I made a second journey to the Red Rocks to complete my investigations. I have read nearly everything which has been written on the subject, and I have myself published several memoirs containing the results of my observations.

I thought it might be useful to preface my present work with an introduction containing a sketch of the geological epochs and of prehistoric man, in order to furnish those who care to read the book with the means of thoroughly understanding it. And that I might not waste their time I have condensed, as much as I was able, the information which we possess about the caves of the Red Rocks and especially about the Barma-Grande. Finally with the object of enabling even those who have but little leisure to form an idea of the

interest of the discoveries which have been made, I have concentrated into the few pages which constitute the last chapter the facts mentioned in the preceding chapters. And I have endeavoured to show what conclusions may be deduced from these facts.

Numerous figures will help the reader to understand the text. Nearly all of them have already appeared in "*l'Anthropologie*" and have been kindly placed at my disposal by the editors of that Review. I wish here to express my indebtedness to their courtesy.

I am aware that my little sketch is not free from defects. Many questions yet remain to be elucidated, and I have refrained from creating the impression that they are solved. It seemed to me preferable to draw attention to the lacunæ which exist in our knowledge rather than to attempt to fill these pages with hypotheses.

Paris, August 24, 1899.

INTRODUCTION

I. — Geological Epochs.

If there be at this time a well established fact it is that the earth has not always been as we now know it. Geologists tell us that it was formerly in a molten condition, and that as the result of cooling it gradually became solid on the surface. The earth was swathed in an atmosphere which contained a quantity of aqueous vapour ; this vapour, as it condensed gave rise to very abundant rains which falling on to the terrestrial crust, formed on it an undisturbed sheet of water. At this stage of its evolution our planet showed no inequalities on its surface. But the gases and vapours, which were imprisoned by the solidified crust, upheaved it at certain points and thrust up in the middle of a shoreless ocean first islands then vaster continents. The temperature was at that time too high for life to exist upon the earth ; therefore this period has been called the *azoic epoch* or the age without life.

The temperature became gradually lower and the waters deposited in their depths the substances which they held in solution ; thus layers were formed which are known as *sedimentary deposits*. When the temperature became sufficiently cool, plants and animals of