

# *Egyptians are one day going to dive freely*

by Lloyd Borrett, VSAG.

They could have done it, the Carthaginians. Or the Etruscans, or the Egyptians. Four thousand years ago, five thousand years ago, they could have gone scuba diving.

If you and I were living then, knowing what we know, we could have built a primitive set of scuba gear. Sure, it might be very crude, but we could have gone underwater in cautious forays, maybe, to

explore the ancient underwater world at shallow depths.

Then we would have gone back to the workshop, having proved it possible, and alone or with the Pharaoh's skilled technicians, we could have advanced the quality of the scuba gear and the depths we could dive to. Learning the principles, the men around us would have discovered scuba diving, would have helped the art in their own way, and before too



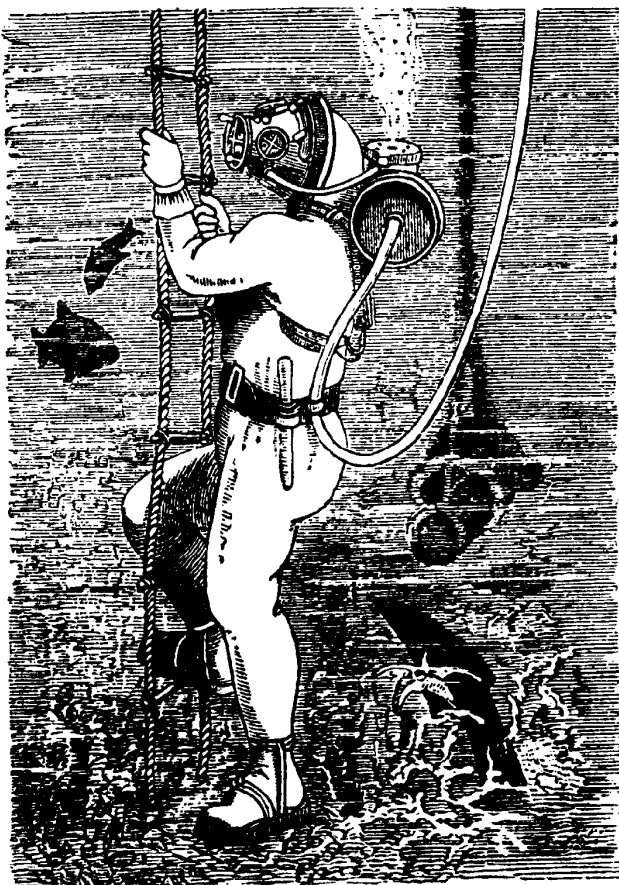
Diving non-events. A montage of diagrams of Vegetius Hood (1511), an Assyrian Frieze (900 B.C.) and Alexander the Great submerged in a Diving Bell (3rd Century B.C.)

many years we'd be scuba diving to greater depths, for longer periods.

Meanwhile, for fun, we'd start to work on rebreathers, compressors, gas separation and gas mixing.

It was possible, all those years ago, it could have been done. But it wasn't. Nobody applied the principles of scuba diving because nobody understood them and nobody understood them because nobody believed scuba diving was possible for human beings.

But no matter what people believed or didn't believe, the principles were there.



The Rouquayrol-Denayrouze apparatus was the first regulator to be mass produced (from 1865 to 1965)

Boyles law, gas physiology and the effects of pressure are applicable today, a thousand years from now, or ten thousand years ago. The principle doesn't care. It knows itself, and is always true.

It's us, it's all mankind that cares, that stands to gain all kinds of freedom from the knowing. Believe that some good thing is possible, find the principle that makes it so, put the principle into practice, and voila! Freedom!

Time means nothing. Time is just the way we measure the gaps between not knowing something and knowing it, or not doing something and doing it.

The scuba diving gear used widely around the world today, would have been proof or miraculous God-like-power a few centuries ago. This century there are millions of scuba divers seeking out the underwater depths, and nobody considers their dives supernatural.

For more of us than care to admit, I'll bet, the ideal of diving lies beyond current scuba gear. Some of us just might nourish a secret thought that the very best kind of diving would be to get rid of the diving gear altogether, to find a principle, somehow, that would turn us loose all alone underwater. The freedivers, who have come closest to the secret, also stay underwater only for very limited time periods, which doesn't quite qualify as diving.



An early rebreather.

With the mechanical things, the regulators, the cylinders, the buoyancy compensators, the dream is gone — without the tin you're dead, run out of air and you drown.

I propose that one day we find a way to dive without the heavy and cumbersome scuba diving equipment. I propose that right now a principle exists that makes this not only possible, but simple.

There are those who say that now and then through history it's already been done. I don't know about that, but I think

that the answer lies in somehow harnessing the power that put the whole universe together, that power of which the principle of diving is only an expression in a way that we can see with our eyes, measure with our instruments, and touch with the clumsy crude steel and plastics of our scuba gear.

If the answer to harnessing this power lies beyond machinery, then it must lie within our thought. The researchers in extrasensory perception and telekinesis, as well as those who practice philosophies suggesting man as an unlimited idea of primal power, are on an interesting path.

Maybe there are people working from advanced laboratories, diving freely at one with the ocean in controlled experiments this moment. I refuse to say it's impossible, though for the moment it would look supernatural. In just the same way that our first dive would have looked scary-weird to the Egyptians standing on the water edge.

For the time being, while we work on the problem, the old heavy and crude substitute called “scuba gear” will have to stand between us and the water. But sooner or later — I can't help but believe it — all us Egyptians are somehow going to dive freely. ❖