



## EGYPTIAN ACCESSIONS

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The Museum has recently added five small, unrelated objects to its Egyptian collection. Each belongs to a well-known class of antiquities, but four have features which are highly unusual. The fifth was acquired for the purely sentimental reasons which the self-respecting archaeologist is usually at pains to disclaim.

The Egyptians have always been plagued by scorpions. In ancient times they protected themselves with amulets of various sorts, often inscribed with spells addressed to the deities who were considered particularly efficacious in dealing with the pest. The most potent of these was Isis, who numbered seven scorpion divinities in her train and who, moreover, had been able to bring her own son, Horus, back to life after he had died of a scorpion's sting. The amulet illustrated above was made for a certain Pa-en-Ius- $\zeta$ os. It takes the form of a small limestone plaque inscribed with words to be uttered by the goddess herself: "Recitation by Isis: 'I abjure all thine evils (*i.e.*, any evil which may happen to thee). I am satisfied with all the prayers of the priest (of the Treasury?) Pa-en-

Ius- $\zeta$ os.'" The figure of a scorpion in relief makes clear which particular evil the owner had in mind. More important, the very fact that he possessed such an image gave him a magic power over it.

In spite of its worn appearance the plaque is probably almost complete. Originally the outline must have been more regular, with straight sides, a curved top, and a flat base. The name of the owner as well as the style of carving shows that it was made in the late dynastic period.

In purpose and general appearance the plaque brings to mind the so-called *cippi of Horus*, with which it was contemporary and which also served as charms against noisome beasts. The larger *cippi* were set up in temples, smaller ones being kept as a protection in the house. It is possible that our plaque was for similar home use. If so, we can imagine it being dipped into a vessel of water when need arose. The water, having absorbed the magic virtue of the spell, would then be drunk by the afflicted Pa-en-Ius- $\zeta$ os—a cure being instantly effected.

*H. 3 $\frac{1}{8}$  in. Dodge Fund.*



Small limestone stele bearing religious pictures and sentiments were frequently offered to the gods by devout Egyptians of moderate means. Such a stela is illustrated above. It shows the goddess Ipet (“the Great One, Mistress of Heaven”) standing in an acacia tree and facing the goddess Mūt; over the latter is written “Mūt, the Great, Mistress of Ashru.” The two goddesses are separated by a libation vase on an offering stand. The roughly scratched inscription below—obviously added for the ancient purchaser—tells us that the stela was “(made for the [title]) of Amūn, Khonsu.”

Mūt, the wife of Amūn and mother of the god Khonsu, was the great goddess of Thebes. Her temple, on a lake called Ashru at the south of Karnak, was rebuilt by Amen-hotpe III. This representation of her as a head resting on an

altar seems to be unique. Nor do we know of any other example of Ipet as a tree divinity. She is, however, closely associated with Isis, who is frequently represented in this role. Finally, the fact that the tree is an acacia (identified by its long, indented pods), is surprising. The acacia was a sacred tree, and one of the sacred groves of Thebes consisted of acacias; but the acacia does not ordinarily appear in representations of tree divinities. Its description in a late text as the “tree in which life and death are contained” may offer a clue to its appearance in this scene with the two great mother goddesses.

The face of Mūt is characteristic of reliefs of the reign of Amen-hotpe III. Therefore, it is quite probable that the stela was offered at the temple of Mūt-in-Ashru and that it is of contemporary date. *H. 7 in. Dodge Fund.*



This admirable portrait shows us an official of the Old Kingdom. It is a middle-aged face, nervous and forceful, with small, prominent eyes, full lips, thin cheeks, and high cheekbones; the nose was curved and broad at the base. The artist has not spared his subject and he has achieved a likeness of great character. We feel that it must have been the sitter himself who insisted that no wrinkle be omitted. The head is from a funerary statuette, standing or seated, depending on whether a flat projection behind the shoulders is the back of a chair or the top of a pillar-like support. It was almost certainly made during the V Dynasty, when small, inexpensive figures of good quality first became available. Its realism, also characteristic of the V Dynasty, was an inheritance from the preceding period. But there seems to be no exact parallel for our head. Realism was not often carried so far as to show a man in his later years; the Egyptian preferred to be portrayed for posterity in the vigor of youth. In

this case the whole treatment seems to have been dictated by the individual features of the subject rather than by any traditional school to which the sculptor may have belonged.

The following points may be noted: the plastic handling of forehead and eyebrows; the furrows between the eyebrows and the horizontal ridge above the nose; the fold of the upper eyelid and the indication of the bony structure below the eyes; the double lines from the nose to the corners of the mouth; the firm edge of the lips; the bunching of the muscles at the corners of the lips and the subtle suggestion of the muscles of the cheeks. The face is painted a brownish yellow; the eyebrows, the rims of the eyes, and probably the pupils were once black. The short, full wig is also black.

*H. 4 $\frac{3}{8}$  in. Dodge Fund.*

Bronze figures of divinities, sometimes attended by one or more worshippers, were often placed in temples as offerings to the gods. The statuette shown here probably formed part of a



more than usually intricate group representing priests and perhaps the king adoring a divine symbol. The duty of this particular man was to “sprinkle with water and to purify with incense,” one of the important ritual acts from the Old Kingdom onwards. The treatment and proportions of the figure and the shape of the head suggest that the statuette was made during the XIX Dynasty; this dating is borne out by the style of the costume and the form of the incense burner. The statuette is cast solid, the arms being made separately and attached by tenons. The libation vase and incense burner, cast in one with the arms, were overlaid with gold. Tenons under the feet show how the figure was set into the common base.

*H. 4½ in. Chapman Fund.*

The figure on the right was made for the

burial of the “one in honor with Osiris, Ḥat-nufer.” Its interest for us lies in the fact that Ḥat-nufer was the mother of Sen-mūt, the great steward of Queen Ḥat-shepsūt and the architect of her temple at Deir el Bahri. In 1936, in the course of excavations at this site, the Egyptian Expedition of this Museum discovered the tomb in which Ḥat-nufer, her husband Raḥ-mose, and several other members of the family had been buried in 1494 B.C. Two figures exactly similar to the one above were found at the entrance to the tomb. One bears the name of Aḥ-hotpe, a relative of Sen-mūt; the other is inscribed the “deceased . . .”, the space for the name being left blank. All three figures are of wood, the mummiform body unpainted, the eyes, wig, and inscription in black.

*H. 6⅛ in. Dodge Fund.*