

PORTRAIT OF KING AMEN-HOTPE I

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The New Kingdom had just reached its thirty-fifth year when, in 1545 B.C., Djoser-ka-Rē^c Amen-hotpe came to the throne of Egypt. Thebes, recently transformed by the military prowess of King Ḥ-mose I from a hard-fighting provincial town into the capital of a great empire, had not yet achieved the splendor with which the great pharaohs of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties were soon to endow it, or formed the habits of luxury and soft living which in the Twentieth Dynasty were to contribute to its decline. Its temples were still being constructed of mud brick, with trim and revetments of limestone, and though built with skill and decorated in the excellent artistic style carried over from the Middle Kingdom, two centuries earlier, they were modest in size and unpretentious in design.

From such a building comes a fragment of fine limestone relief with a profile head of Amen-hotpe I (ill. opp.). The scale of the figure, which was over life-size, and that of the partially preserved hieroglyphs suggest that the chamber once adorned by the relief was of more monumental proportions than those of the known buildings of the king in the Theban necropolis, notably his mortuary temple in the plain below the Dira Abu'n Naga and his brick shrine to the goddess Ḥat-Ḥōr at Deir el Bahri. The most likely source for the block is the temple of Amūn at Karnak, which at this time

was largely of limestone and to which King Amen-hotpe himself contributed, in addition to an alabaster shrine for the barque of the god, a chamber or building with an inscribed limestone doorway.

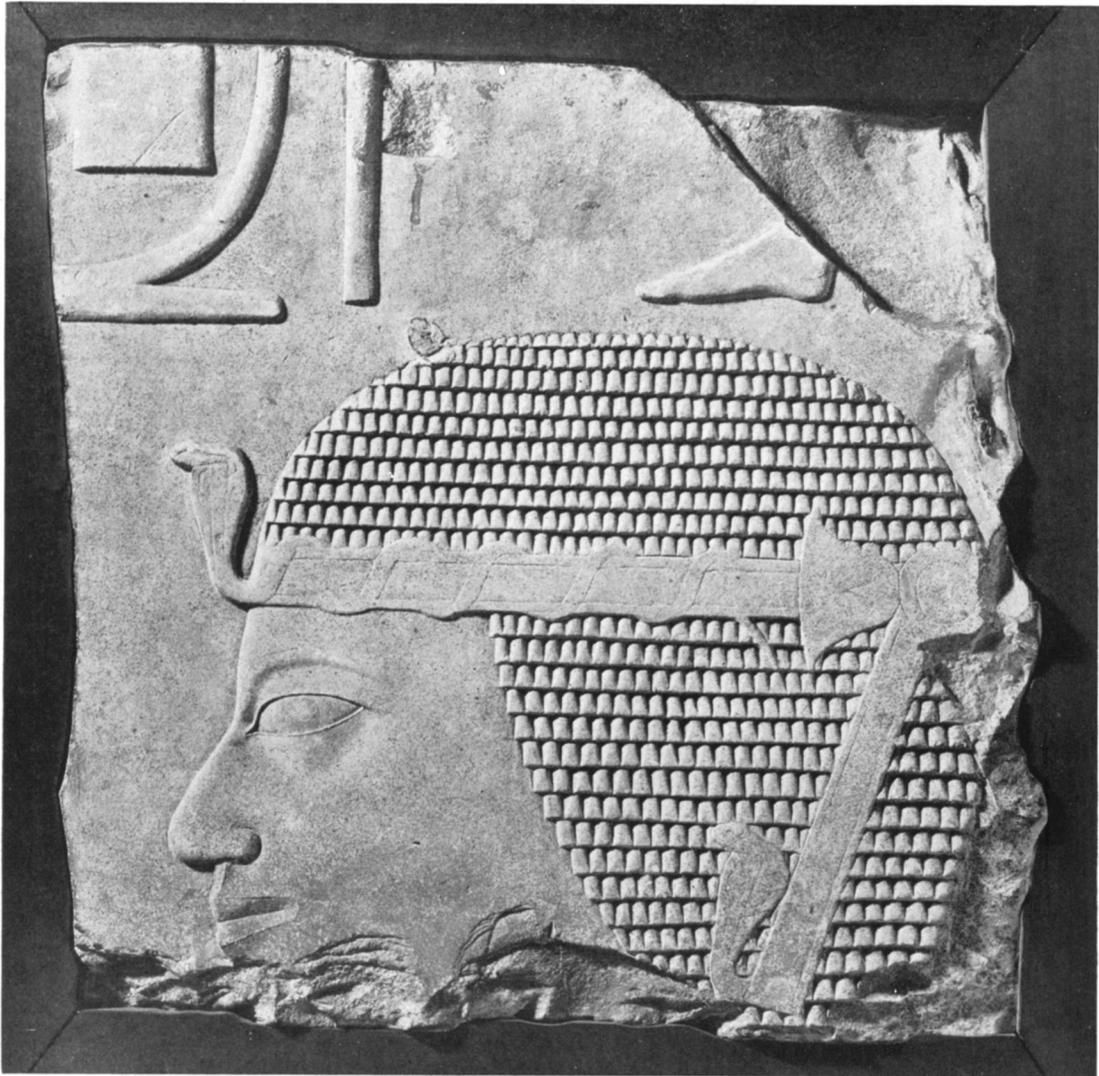


King Amen-hotpe I. Sandstone head found at Deir el Bahri by the Metropolitan Museum's Egyptian Expedition in 1926

The identification of the king portrayed in our relief presents no difficulty. At the upper left-hand corner of the fragment is part of the bottom of a cartouche in which is preserved the *p* (𓂏) at the end of the name *'Imn-ḥtp*. Of the four kings of Egypt who bore this name, Djoser-ka-Rē^c Amen-hotpe I is the only one who regularly wrote his personal name without a following epithet (e.g., "Ruler of Thebes," "Ruler of Heliopolis," etc.) and is therefore the only king whose cartouche would show as its last sign the hieroglyph 𓂏.

This somewhat detailed method of identification is confirmed by simply comparing the head of the king in the present relief with any good portrait of Amen-hotpe I. Here again our task is made easy by the rugged individuality of the king's face: the prominent, arched nose, the small, tight mouth, the hard, narrow eyes, and the high, massive cheekbones—the clearly defined face of a man of action, a fighter, and an autocrat.

Allowing for the slight difference in appearance occasioned by the fact that in the relief the sculptor has depicted the king's eye in full-front view and has shown more of the mouth

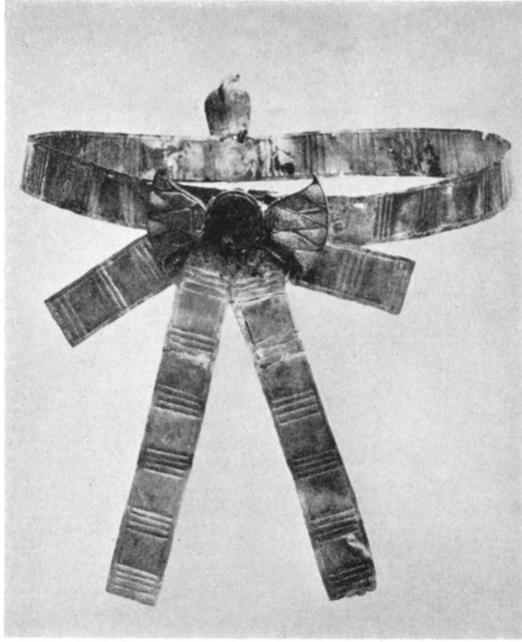


*King Amen-hotpe I (1545-1524 B.C.). Limestone relief, Egyptian, XVIII Dynasty.
Rogers Fund, 1945*

than would normally appear in profile, we have not the slightest difficulty in seeing that the same face is represented in the sandstone head of another portrait (ill. p. 140). This head, found in 1926 by the Museum's Egyptian Expedition, is from an over life-size statue of Amen-hotpe I in the guise of the mummiform god Osiris. Many of these statues once lined the avenue leading to the king's temple of Ḥat-Ḥōr at Deir el Baḥri.

In the relief the king wears a close-cropped wig and a diadem, probably of metal, but imi-

tating a fillet of ribbon tied in a bow knot at the back of the head with the ends pendent. The hooded head of the royal cobra, or *uraeus*, rises from the front of the circlet and appears again on the streamers at the back. The loops of the bow have been given the form of two papyrus umbels springing from a circular boss. To offset the often puzzling conventions of ancient Egyptian drawing and to obviate a wordy description of this common royal head-dress, two actual diadems of very similar type are illustrated here. The inlaid silver circlet of



Silver diadem of King Nūb-kheper-Rē^c 'Intef. XVI Dynasty. In the Rijksmuseum, Leiden

King Nūb-kheper-Rē^c 'Intef of the Sixteenth Dynasty was made a century and a half before the days of Amen-hotpe I, the more elaborate diadem of King Tūt-ankh-Amūn over two centuries after his time.

The small human foot which appears rather incongruously above the head of the king is the final hieroglyph in a stereotype formula that wishes the pharaoh life, prosperity, and health and that invariably follows, like the tail of a kite, the merest mention of the royal name. In the case of Amen-hotpe I it was a wish come true, for his reign was long and prosperous, and, in view of the portrait before us, we can hardly doubt that he was aggressively healthy and very, very much alive.

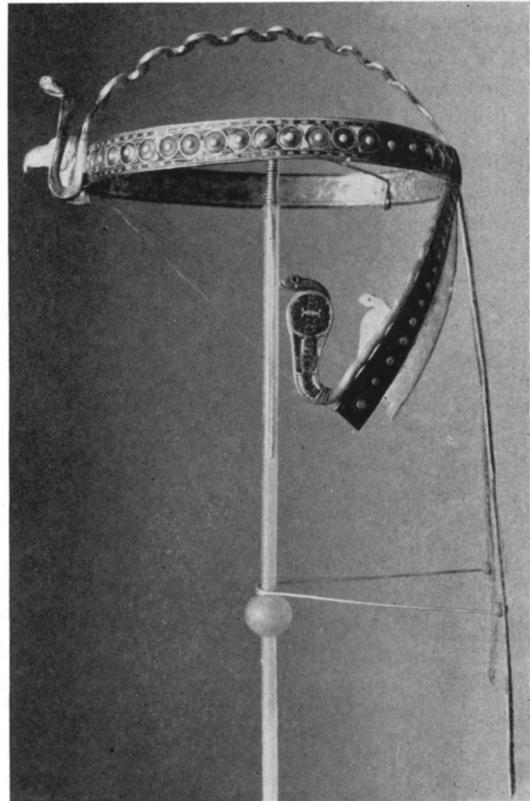
The relief head of Amen-hotpe I (acc. no. 45.2.7), recently purchased in New York, was formerly in the Alphonse Kann collection (American Art Association, 1927, part 1, no. 28). Only the left edge of the stone is broken. The others are rough dressed and are the sides of the original block. The piece measures 44

by 44 cm. (17½ by 17½ in.).

The discovery of the sandstone head (acc. no. 26.3.30 A)—first believed to be from a statue of Neb-hepet-Rē^c Mentū-hotpe of the Eleventh Dynasty—is described by Winlock in the *Museum Bulletin*, February, 1928, Section II, p. 24. See also Winlock, *Excavations at Deir el Bahri*, pp. 131, 208-9, and Naville, *XIth Dynasty Temple*, vol. I, pp. 26, 60, 69, pl. xxv A.

For the buildings of Amen-hotpe I mentioned above, see Winlock, *ibid.*; Pillet, *Annales du Service des antiquités de l'Égypte*, vol. xxii (1922), pp. 238-40, pl. 1; Legrain, *Annales*, vol. iv (1904), p. 14, pl. v.

The diadems illustrated are published, respectively, by Boeser, *Beschreibung . . . Leiden*, vol. III, p. 8, pl. xviii, and Carter, *Tomb of Tutankh-Amen*, vol. II, p. 110, pl. LXXV.



Diadem of King Tūt-ankh-Amūn. Gold, inlaid with carnelian, lapis lazuli, turquoise, malachite, and sardonyx. XVIII Dynasty. In the Egyptian Museum, Cairo