

# BULLETIN OF THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

VOLUME XXXV

BOSTON, OCTOBER, 1937

NUMBER 211



The Ladies of Hsiang (detail)

Chinese, twelfth-thirteenth century

Archibald Cary Coolidge Fund

PUBLISHED BIMONTHLY

SUBSCRIPTION ONE DOLLAR

Duperray. Further there is notable work by the Vernets, Guérin, Devéria, Bourgeois, Thiénon, Engelmann, and many others. From Switzerland two early works are shown, one by Heinrich Lips, about 1810. Also there is a fine early Italian portrait, sketches by the Emperor Franz Joseph of Austria, an example by Trementsky of Vienna, two animated scenes by the Russian painter Orlovsky, and a Japanese lithograph of 1879—not the earliest, but within twenty years of the establishing of lithography in Japan and executed by the pupil of the pupil of the first Japanese lithographer.

Representing this country there are on view the two landscapes made by Bass Otis in 1819 for the *Analectic Magazine*—the first lithographs made in America which can be said to possess artistic qualities. In portraiture there are numerous examples by the painters Badger, Frothingham, and Rembrandt Peale; by the lithographers Bowen, Bufford, Childs, Newsam, Pendleton, and Sharp. Of a somewhat later date we find Thomas Moran's lovely view on Lake Superior, and by Winslow Homer those two superb water-colors, *The Watch*, *Eastern Shore* and *Fly-Fishing in the Canadian Woods*, together with the remarkable chromo-lithographs which Homer made from them.

In assembling this exhibition a number of minor "finds" were made, perhaps the most interesting being the discovery of twenty-four small lithographs printed in colors, undoubtedly drawn by Winslow Homer. So far as the writer is aware they have hitherto remained unknown and undescribed. They consist of two series of twelve cards. Originally each series was contained in a pictorial envelope bearing the title *Camp Life, Part I* and *Camp Life, Part II*. They are amusing little sketches of camp life, incidents during the Civil War days, and were published by L. Prang, Boston, in 1864. The cards measure  $4\frac{1}{8}$  by  $2\frac{7}{16}$  inches. A poor thing perhaps, in this international galaxy, but our own.

H. P. R.

### Two Egyptian Portraits

ONE of the Museum's outstanding treasures is a small portrait head in greenish slate which has, for many years, been exhibited among the objects of Saïte and Ptolemaic date in the Egyptian galleries.<sup>1</sup> Because it measures hardly more than four inches in height it has attracted little attention from the general public, and it has never been published in this *BULLETIN*, although a small picture of it has appeared regularly in successive editions of the *Handbook*. Its only other publication was in 1912 by R. Delbrück in his *Antike Porträts*, where it figures as one of fourteen selected examples of Egyptian portraiture, four of them taken from the collections of this Museum. It seems opportune to publish this fine piece at the present time since the Museum has recently acquired another portrait of approximately the same date with which it may be

compared. The new head<sup>1</sup>, of black granite, for many years belonged to a private collection, and only came on the market within the year.

Both heads once formed parts of complete figures and, by a curious coincidence, both have suffered almost identical damage. In each case the head has been broken from the torso at the throat, and each has lost the lower part of its nose. The smaller of the two has suffered a slight abrasion on the left temple, while the larger one has undergone minor damage to the left side of the lower lip. In both pieces the upper part of a plinth at the back, once inscribed with name and titles of the subject, is preserved.

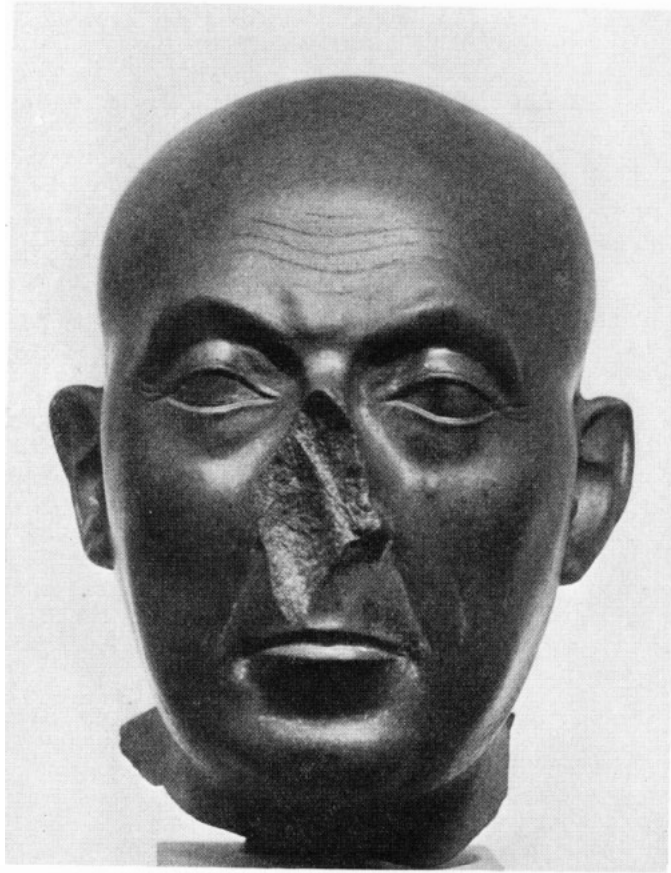
That the smaller piece is the portrait of a priest is indicated by the fact that the head is shaven. It is a remarkably individualized likeness, almost totally without the conventionalization often found in Egyptian sculpture, more especially of the later periods. In this respect the head is most closely paralleled by the well-known "large green head" in Berlin, with which it is to be ranked in quality. The face is that of an elderly man: his brow is furrowed, there are crow's-feet at the corners of his heavy-lidded eyes, and deep lines run from the nostrils to the corners of the close-lipped mouth. It is evident in profile that the nose was strongly aquiline, almost to be described as a beak, while the chin, although of good width, recedes sharply. It is the face of a strong, intelligent, but thoroughly disillusioned man, perhaps a rather cruel and crafty one. The plinth with its inscription has largely disappeared, and now gives us only the name of the god Ptah-Socharis: the individual himself must remain nameless.

We are in only slightly better case when we seek to identify the man represented in the newly acquired granite head. Here what remains of the inscription reads, "The local god to the Hereditary Noble, [Count?] . . . In the temple of (here follows the first element in the name or epithet of a god, who must be either Amün of Karnak or Ptah of Memphis). . . ." The man is shown wearing the heavy bag-wig common at the period; he is, therefore, represented as a layman, not a priest. The face is sensitively modelled and strongly characterized, but lacks the brutal realism of detail seen in the smaller portrait. The differences in the treatment of the eyes and in the rendering of the bony structure of the brows and the bridge of the nose mark this head as decidedly the more conventional of the two works. And yet it is by no means a lifeless "type," such as is so commonly found in the sculpture of the Saïte-Ptolemaic Period. It is an individualized portrait of a strong, self-satisfied man, placid and assured, but not over intelligent.

This newly acquired head is a welcome addition to the collections of the Department. While it lacks the extraordinary realism of our little green head, and cannot claim to be a masterpiece of like

<sup>1</sup>Reg. No. 04.1749. Height 10.5 cm. Purchased 1904, Henry Lillie Pierce Fund.

<sup>1</sup>Reg. No. 37.377. Height 21.8 cm. Purchased 1937, Seth K. Sweetser Fund.



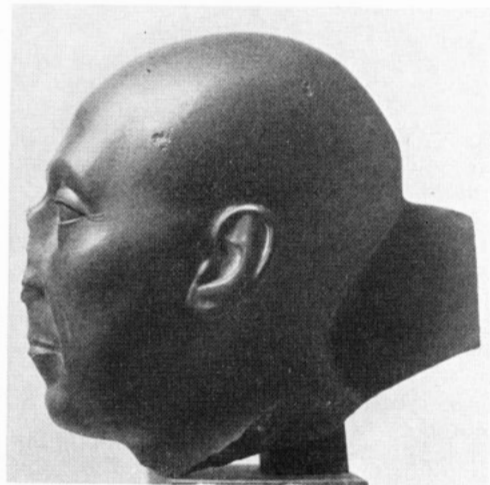
Portrait Head

Green Slate  
Henry Lillie Pierce Fund

Saite-Ptolemaic Period



Slate Head



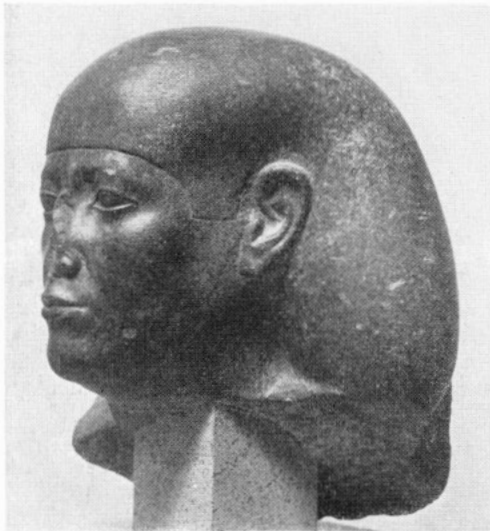
Slate Head



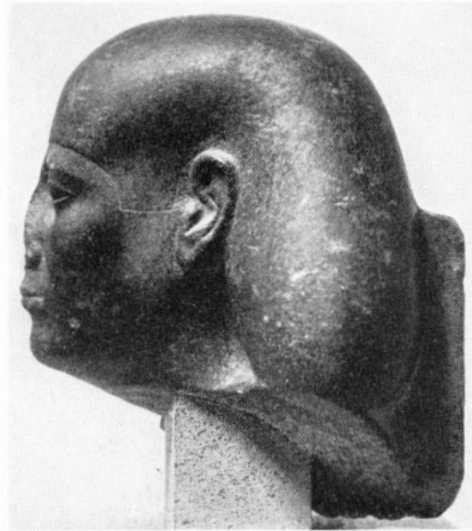
Head of a Nobleman

Black Granite  
Seth K. Sweetser Fund

Saite-Ptolemaic Period



Granite Head



Granite Head



Limestone Hawk Head from Lisht

Twelfth Dynasty

Exchange with Metropolitan Museum of Art

quality, it does mark a half-way point between the latter and the utterly lifeless, though technically proficient work generally associated with the last centuries of Egypt's artistic history. The vital spark of the ancient genius for portraiture was not yet wholly extinguished, and in such pieces as this it flickers into life before being finally engulfed in the advancing flood of Greek and Roman culture.

DOWS DUNHAM.

#### Exchange of Egyptian Antiquities with the Metropolitan Museum

THIS Museum's Egyptian Expedition has excavated for many years on sites of the Old Kingdom, principally at Giza. The Expedition of the Metropolitan Museum in New York, on the other hand, has devoted its major efforts to places such as Lisht and the Theban Necropolis, sites primarily of the Middle and New Kingdoms. As a result each institution has acquired collections especially strong in different fields, and possesses in duplicate examples certain classes of objects which the other totally lacks. For some time past the Departments here and in New York have been conferring together with a view to effecting an exchange of objects which would, without weakening either collection, materially strengthen both. During the past summer a small group of antiquities of the Middle and New

Kingdoms was sent to us by the Trustees of the Metropolitan Museum, and in exchange we have sent them an equivalent group of Old Kingdom duplicates from our collections.

To New York have gone one large pottery vessel of the Sixth Dynasty, a series of four limestone food cases of the same date, and a small unfinished limestone statuette of King Mycerinus, interesting because it shows the technical methods employed in carving statues. This last object is duplicated in two examples in our collection, and the other pieces sent are likewise fully represented in Boston.

The objects received from New York are welcome additions both to our main galleries and to our study series. To the first category belongs the striking limestone fragment in high relief of the upper part of a colossal hawk,<sup>1</sup> from the enclosing wall of the Pyramid of Sesostri I of the Twelfth Dynasty at Lisht. This wall had been decorated at intervals with panels giving the so-called "Horus Name" of the king. Such names are written in hieroglyphs in a rectangular panel surmounting a conventional representation of the palace, and over all stands the figure of a hawk wearing the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt. The head of this figure originally stood about fifteen feet above the ground and was intended to be seen from below. It is a fine example of vigorous representation, and is remark-

<sup>1</sup>Reg. No. 37.590. Height 62.5 cm.