

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



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,¹ 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-

¹Reg. No. 37.590. Height 62.5 cm.

able for the fact that the relief is much bolder than usual in Egyptian work; it may even be described as sculpture in the half-round against a background.

The other objects are primarily archaeological.¹ Perhaps most important is the little wax figure of a woman lying in a miniature wooden coffin. This illustrates an early development of the funerary custom which later gave rise to the well-known "shawabti-figure" common from the New Kingdom to the end of the Pharaonic Period. As the inscriptions painted on the little coffin show, the figure belonged to a Queen Neferu of the Eleventh Dynasty, and was found at Deir el Bahari. Of the same date as the preceding, and from the same region, are three triangular loaves of bread, found by the Metropolitan Expedition in a foundation deposit of the Temple of Mentuhotep III. Finally, we have received from New York a group of funerary food offerings found in a small Eighteenth Dynasty tomb at Thebes belonging to a man named Seniu. These consist of four wooden cases shaped to represent dressed fowl, which contain the actual birds, wrapped in linen bandages. The two small ones are quail and the larger ones ducks. These food cases fulfill the same function as, and should be compared with, the limestone cases found in our excavations at Giza and exhibited in the Old Kingdom study room.

DOWS DUNHAM.

¹Reg. Nos. 37.548 to 555 inclusive.

Walter Gay

WALTER GAY died in France on the fourteenth of last July at the age of eighty-one, full of years and honors. His friendliness toward the Museum was of long standing and was evinced from time to time by advice freely given for the asking as well as by tangible benefactions. This friendliness he held in common with his brother, the late Eben Howard Gay of Boston, among whose gifts to the Museum is the mid-eighteenth century room in Chippendale style from Woodcote Park in Surrey.

Walter Gay went to Paris to study painting when he was twenty years old and lived abroad for the rest of his life, devoting himself there not only to the successful pursuit of his art and to the collecting of drawings by Old Masters, but also to the cultivation of wide social contacts.

In 1927 he gave to the Museum twenty drawings, chiefly by modern French artists. Several of his own paintings are in the Museum's permanent collection. From 1900 until his death he accepted annual appointment by the Trustees as one of two representatives in Europe responsible for keeping at a high level the work of the holders of the Paige Travelling Fellowship, one of the most desired prizes offered to students of marked talent at the School of the Museum.

Acquisitions, June 4 through August 12, 1937

Asiatic Art.

Coin, Indian.

37.557. Coin of Antialkidas, circa second century B.C. Purchased.

Porcelain, Japanese.

Res. 37.49. Plate, Imari ware, middle nineteenth century. Gift of Miss Amelia Peabody in memory of Mrs. William Storer Eaton.

Stone, Indian.

37.556. Jeweler's mould, slate, circa second century A.D. Ross Collection.

Terra cotta, Indian.

37.558. Head, third millennium B.C. Purchased.

Textiles, Chinese.

Res. 37.51-58. Fragments of brocade, eighteenth century. Gift of Laurence Sickman.

Textile, Japanese.

Res. 37.50. Fragment of damask, middle nineteenth century. Gift of Mrs. William F. Wharton.

Classical Art.

Coins, Greek.

37.563. Gold stater, Macedon. 37.564. Silver didrachm, Ephesos. 37.565. Silver didrachm, Carthage. Gift of Herbert M. Sears.

Pottery, Cypriote.

37.562. Small jug. Gift of Mrs Sargent Bradlee.

Pottery, Rhodes.

37.559. Perfume jug in form of helmeted head, seventh century B.C. John Michael Rodocanachi Fund.

Decorative Arts.

Medal, Bronze.

37.566. Brussels Exposition, 1935, by Bonnetain. Gift of the Belgian Government in recognition of Museum's loan to Brussels Exhibition.