

DATABASES FOR SHABTIS OF THE THIRD INTERMEDIATE PERIOD
(c. 1069-656 BC)

Ament-em-heb

ʿImn.t-m-ḥb



Third Intermediate Period, 22nd Dynasty
From Western Thebes, the Ramesseum



Ament-em-heb

Pottery, light blue wash, details added in black
 Third Intermediate Period, 22nd Dynasty
 From Western Thebes, the Ramesseum
 H. 10.4 cm. W. 4.0 cm. D. 4.0 cm.
 ex Major James Findlay Collection, Aberdeen, Scotland



A mummiform *shabti* wearing a plain tripartite wig with a *seshed* headband tied at the back that is added in black, although it is very faded like other details on the *shabti*. The arms are crossed on the chest and the clenched hands hold a pair of hoes that are added in black. A large rectangular-shaped basket with square-hatched detail is painted across the width of the back of the *shabti*. Facial details are poorly defined and all details are virtually indistinguishable. The *shabti* is flat-backed and the large feet gently curve forwards. A vertical column of a now very faded painted inscription is added within framing lines that are closed at the top names the owner as Ament-em-heb¹ (Ament is in Festival).

Shabtis for Ament-em-heb are recorded as coming from the excavations undertaken by James Quibell at the Ramesseum, Western Thebes in 1895–96.²

In ancient Egyptian mythology, Ament (She of the West) represented the necropolises on the west bank of the Nile. Her husband was Aqen who guided the solar barque of the sun god Re through the underworld.

Assuming an old label attached to the back of a parallel example that is to be found in Liverpool (WM 52.55.118 – see the following database) is correct in stating the name of the owner as Ament-em-heb, it would appear that *shabtis* of two sizes exist for this owner. With this one exception, it must be noted that no parallels of the smaller type appear to be known

although perhaps they are yet to be identified. For this reason the author has not created a subtype for the smaller type in the following database.

‘Overseer’ *shabtis* are not known for Ament-em-heb although they could be awaiting identification.

The inscription, which is very indistinct on the present example and on many parallels, begins with a seemingly unique preliminary of *nty*, which translates as The one who or The one which.³ It is a mystery as to why the scribe who wrote the inscription on the *shabtis* for Ament-em-heb did not use this preliminary on other *shabtis* for different owners.

Inscription



[nty] *Wsir Imn.t-m-ḥb m3^c.t-hrw*

[The one who] Osiris, Ament-em-heb justifies.

Typology and database of parallel *shabtis* for Ament-em-heb

Shabti types and subtypes from a study of parallel examples to be found in museum collections, private collections and those offered for sale at auctions and by dealers (images are not to scale).

WORKERS – mummiform, most having a rather dumpy and squat appearance; pottery with a light blue wash; details are added in black; wearing a tripartite wig with a *seshed* headband that is tied at the back and painted black; the lower ends of the front lappets have a horizontal line across their width although this is often impossible to observe; the rear lappet is not indicated; the facial details are generally very rudimentary in their execution although there are one or two exceptions where the face is rather well modelled; eyes and eyebrows are added in black although in nearly all example these are very faded as to be indistinguishable; ears, sometimes well modelled, protrude in front of the lappets of the wig; the arms are crossed on the chest and clenched hands hold a pair of hoes that are added in black; a large rectangular-shaped basket with square-hatched or diamond-hatched detail is added on the back; the *shabtis* are flat backed with thickly defined feet that curve forwards; a vertical column of a painted hieroglyphic inscription is added on the front within framing lines that are closed at the top; the inscription is often illegible but two parallel examples give a unique opening preliminary of *nty* ‘who’; the owner is named as Ament-em-heb.

c. 9.7–10.9 cm in height. Note that Liverpool WM 52.55.118 is 8.8 cm in height.

- Aberdeen (ABDUA 20362 & 23123).⁴ ① ②
- Bolton (BOLMG 1968.A.49 – ex Lady Lever Art Gallery).⁵ ③
- Bristol (BMs H2354, ④Ha6495 & Ha6541).⁶
- Glasgow (GLAHM D.1929.30 & D.1936.1).⁷ ⑤ ⑥
- Harrogate (HARGM 7616, 7623 & 3703).⁸ ⑦–⑨
- Liverpool (WM 52.55.118, 52.55.143 & 58.32.8).⁹ ⑩–⑫
- London (BM EA 67045, 67046, 71122 & 71198 ⑬–⑮;¹⁰ UC

- 29967 – three *shabtis* ⑰ ⑱, 40251 ⑲ & 40441 ⑳).¹¹
- Manchester (MM 4654a–c – all recorded as coming from the
Ramesseum, and 11693, 11710, 11712 & 21445).¹² ㉔–㉖
- Oxford (AM 1971.1405).¹³
- Sydney (AsM E 39768 & E 020088).¹⁴
- Toronto (ROM 984x2.39 & 984x2.771).¹⁵
- Kemehu Collection.^⑳





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10



11

12

13



14



67046
1987
10-19
2

15



71122
1988
10-19
4

16



17



18



AMENT-EM

71138
1988
10-19
164

19



UC10441

20



4654

21



22



4654

23



4654

24





Photo credits:

GJ with the exceptions of **WORKERS**: Bolton = Anthony Donohue; Harrogate = courtesy of Dr. Ken Griffin; London = courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum and courtesy of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian and Sudanese Archaeology, UCL.

1. Thirion, M., 'Notes d'onomastique – contribution à une révision du Ranke PN,' *RdE* Vol. 46 (Paris, 1995), p. 176ff for the significance of the 't.'
2. Quibell, J. E., *The Ramesseum* (London, 1898), pl. V, illustrated pl. II.
3. Faulkner, R. O., *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford, 1991), p. 142.
4. Communication with Dr. Abeer Eladany.
5. Communication with Tom Hardwick.
6. See the website of Bristol Museums: <http://museums.bristol.gov.uk/index.php>
7. Communication with Dr. Angela MacDonald. See the website of the University of Glasgow: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/collections/#/>
8. Communication with Ros Watson. See the website of the Harrogate Egyptian Collection: <https://harrogate.abasetcollections.com/>
9. Janes, G., *The Shabti Collections 6 – A selection from World Museum, Liverpool* (Lymm, 2016), pp. 209–210 [nos. 89a–c]. See also the website of World Museum: <https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/>
10. See the website of the British Museum: <https://www.britishmuseum.org/>
11. See the website of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian and Sudanese Archaeology: <https://collections.ucl.ac.uk/>
12. Janes, G., *The Shabti Collections 5 – A selection from the Manchester Museum* (Lymm, 2012), pp. 178–180 [nos. 95a–g].
13. Communication with Dr. Helen Whitehouse.
14. Communication with Dr. Stan Florek.
15. Communication with Helen House.

Abbreviations

ABDUA	University of Aberdeen, Human Culture Collection.
AM	Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.
AsM	Australian Museum (Sydney).
BM	The British Museum, London.
BMs	Bristol Museums (Bristol, UK).

BOLMG Bolton Museum & Art Gallery (Bolton).
GLAHM The Hunterian Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow.
HARGM Royal Pump Room Museum, Harrogate.
MM The Manchester Museum (England).
RdE *Revue d'Égyptologie* (Paris).
ROM Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto.
UC University College, London (Petrie Museum of Egyptian and Sudanese Archaeology).