

DATABASES FOR SHABTIS OF THE THIRD INTERMEDIATE PERIOD  
(c. 1069-525 BC)

Iry

*Iry*



Third Intermediate Period, 22nd Dynasty  
From Abydos, North Cemeteries, Cemetery D, tomb I I



## Iry

Faience, pale green glaze, details added in black  
Third Intermediate Period, 22nd Dynasty  
From Abydos, North Cemeteries, Cemetery D, tomb 11  
H. 10.8 cm. W. 4.0 cm. D. 2.9 cm.  
ex Anthony Donohue Collection, Oxford (1944-2016)



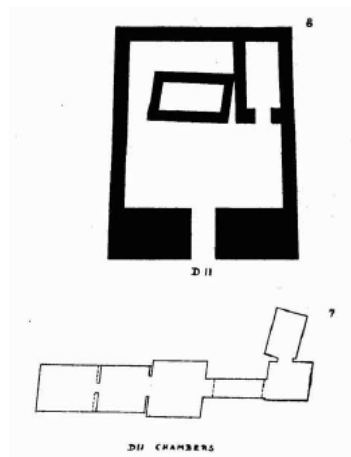
A mummiform *shabti* wearing a plain tripartite wig with a *seshed* headband that is tied at the back added in black. When viewed in profile the wig is quite voluminous. The arms are crossed right over left above the waist and the elbows gently protrude. The hands hold a pair of hoes that are added in black. A large rectangular basket is outlined in black on the back of the *shabti*. The basket extends across the entire width of the back. There are short shoulder straps extending from the upper corners of the basket. The face is small and poorly modelled, the only detail being the eyes that are painted as black dots with eyebrows above. The front of the feet are missing but they would have extended at right angles with the back that is straight and gently curved across its width. A vertical column of a crudely written inscription on the front of the figure names the owner as Iry.<sup>1</sup>

The inscription has outlined hieroglyphs as also found on other examples from the series. The *wš* hieroglyph (𓏏) is very large on all examples although it is missing on one parallel example to be found in Bolton (see p. 3). Some examples have a vertical line in the *wš* hieroglyph (𓏏). The *i* hieroglyph (𓏩) is very stylised in its execution on parallel examples in Bristol, Greenock and Liverpool.

A particular parallel example to be found in Derby (see pp. 2 & 3) has a blue glaze, this being the original colour of the other *shabti* in the series where the colour of the glaze has been degraded to green because of dampness or different environmental conditions in the tomb.

*Shabtis* for Iry are recorded as coming from Tomb 11 in the North Cemeteries, Cemetery D during excavations carried out in 1899–1900.<sup>2</sup> Arthur Mace describes the tomb as consisting of a large open court, a pit and an inner chamber that was probably arched and with several chambers underground (see Fig. 1). It is dated to the New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty but *shabtis* of a later date were thrown around and ended up all over the place. Newberry comments: ‘Throughout the whole of cemetery D not a single burial was found intact; several of the pits had been reused twice, and plundered each time. Where the pits were close together, as on the ridge overlooking the valley, the chambers were plundered one from another to such an extent that it was possible to go through the chambers of four or five pits without coming to the surface. That the plunderers sometimes worked in ignorance is evident from the presence of aimless passages, cut out for a length of six or seven feet and then abandoned. Owing to this wholesale plundering it was sometimes a little difficult to settle which tomb an object belonged to. This was especially the case with regard to the ushabtis, which were scattered all over the chambers, and thrown from one chamber to another.’<sup>3</sup>

With regard to the *shabtis*, Mace writes that: ‘Mr. Percy Newberry very kindly gave up a good deal of his valuable time to the unattractive work of sorting and identifying several thousands of ushabtis.’<sup>4</sup>



### Inscription



*Wsir Iry m3<sup>c</sup>-hrw*

The Osiris, Iry, justified.

Fig. 1. A plan of Abydos, North Cemeteries, Cemetery D, tomb 11.  
(Randall-MacIver & Mace 1902, pl. XXV [nos. 6 & 7].)

## Typology and database of *shabtis* for Iry

*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; green or blue glazed faience (the latter would have been the original colour); details are added in black; plain tripartite wig with a *sheshed* headband tied at the back; the face is quite small and simply modelled; the eyes are added as black dots or lines, some with eyebrows; ears are barely discernable and protrude in the front of the lappets of the wig; arms are crossed right over left above the waist; clenched hands hold a pair of hoes that are added in black; most have an outlined rectangular basket without carrying straps – one example has diamond-hatched detail and very short carrying straps; a vertical column of a painted hieroglyphic inscription is added on the front without framing lines; most of the hieroglyphs are drawn in outline only. 10.6–11.2 cm in height.

- Aberdeen (ABDUA 20366).<sup>5</sup> ①
- Batley (KLMUS 966.42).<sup>6</sup>
- Bolton (BOLMG 1900.54.119).<sup>7</sup> ②
- Bournemouth (BNSS C2S318& C2S319).<sup>8</sup> ③ ④
- Bristol (BMs H2346, HaH5920 ⑤ & Ha6505).<sup>9</sup>
- Cambridge Mass. (HAM 1977.216.2123.338).<sup>10</sup> ⑥
- Derby (DMAG 1931–309/2).<sup>11</sup> ⑦
- Detroit (DIA 1990.323).<sup>12</sup>
- Edinburgh (NMS A.1900.212.15B).<sup>13</sup> ⑧
- Glasgow (GLAHM D.9 ⑨ & D.10 ⑩;<sup>14</sup> KGM 1900.126.bc).<sup>15</sup> ⑪
- Greenock (MMAG 1987.411).<sup>16</sup> ⑫

- Liverpool (WM 44.19.2, ⑬ 56.5.69 ⑭ & 1967.195.18).<sup>17</sup>
- Manchester (MM 9387 ⑮;<sup>18</sup> MAG 1918.65).
- Philadelphia (PUM E14502).<sup>19</sup>
- St. Helens (SAHMG 1902.011.0017).<sup>20</sup> ⑯
- Swansea (EC W5020).<sup>21</sup> ⑰
- Private collection (Hyde, Greater Manchester).<sup>18</sup> ⑱
- Bonhams 2005b, part of lot 16 – formerly in the Hugh Stanley Russell Collection – see also the website of *shabti* scholar Niek de Haan: [www.shabticollections.com](http://www.shabticollections.com) [no. SC/3].<sup>20</sup>
- Bonhams 2007b, part of lot 336;
- Sotheby's 1989d, part of lot 273.





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**OVERSEERS** – dress of daily life with a short triangular projecting apron but no obvious tunic; green glazed faience; details are added in black; plain tripartite wig with a *seshed* headband tied at the back; face is round in shape and simply modelled; eyes and eyebrows are added in black; the right arm is held across the waist and holds a whip that is added in black; the left arms hangs down by the side of the body; one of the two potential parallels so far known (Warrington WAGMG 1900.387 is unclear in its identity) has a large square-shaped basket added in thick outline on the back; the legs and feet are defined in the modelling; faded inscriptions without framing lines are painted on the front of the apron.

10.8–10.9 cm in height.

Southport (AT 200).<sup>22</sup> ①

Warrington (WAGMG 1900.387).<sup>23</sup> ②



## Photo credits:

GJ with the exceptions of **WORKERS**: Bolton = Anthony Donohue; Bournemouth = courtesy of Joyce Navarro; Cambridge = © President and Fellows of Harvard College; Swansea = courtesy of the Egypt Centre, Swansea University; Bonhams = © Bonhams, London.

1. Ranke, H., *Die Ägyptischen Personennamen I* (Glückstadt, 1935), p. 41 (8).
2. Randall-MacIver, D. & Mace, A. C., *El Amrah and Abydos 1899–1901* (London, 1902), pp. 63, 83, 97–98, pls. XXV [no. 6], LVII [no. 13]. See also Aston, D. A., *Burial Assemblages of Dynasty 21–25; Chronology – Typology – Developments* (Vienna, 2009), p. 148 [TG 595].
3. Randall-MacIver, D. & Mace, A. C., *El Amrah and Abydos 1899–1901* (London, 1902), pp. 65–66.
4. *ibid* 1902, p. 63.
5. Communication with Dr. Abeer Eladany. See the website of the University of Aberdeen: <https://calm.abdn.ac.uk/museums/>
6. Communication with Katina Bill. This example was reported stolen in 2005.
7. See the website of Bolton Museum & Art Gallery: <https://boltonsegypt.co.uk/>
8. Communication with Joyce Navarro
9. See the website of Bristol Museums: <http://museums.bristol.gov.uk/index.php>
10. See the website of Harvard Art Museums: <https://hvard.art/o/191920>
11. Communication with Rachel Atherton.
12. See the website of the Detroit Institute of Arts: <https://dia.org/collection/shabti-43459>
13. Communication with Dr. Dan Potter. See the website of the National Museum of Scotland: <https://www.nms.ac.uk/>
14. Communication with Dr. Angela MacDonald. See the website of the University of Glasgow: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/collections/#/>
15. Communication with Brian Weightman. See the website of Glasgow Museums: <https://collections.glasgowmuseums.com/>
16. See the website of the McLean Museum and Art Gallery: <https://mcleanmuseum.pastperfectonline.com/>
17. Janes, G., *The Shabti Collections 6 – A selection from World Museum, Liverpool* (Lymm, 2016), pp. 213–214 [nos. 91a–c].
18. Janes, G., *The Shabti Collections 3 – Rochdale Arts & Heritage Service* (Lymm, 2011), p. 183 [no. 97].
19. See the website of The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania: <https://www.penn.museum/collections/>
20. Communication with Helen Longworth.
21. Communication with Dr. Ken Griffin. See the website of the Egypt Centre, Swansea University: <https://egyptcentre.abasetcollections.com/>
22. Communication with Joanne Chamberlain.
23. Janes, G., *The Shabti Collections 2 – Warrington Museum & Art Gallery* (Lymm, 2011), p. 24 [no. 16].

## Abbreviations

ABDUA	University of Aberdeen, Human Culture Collection (Aberdeen, Scotland).
AT	The Atkinson (Southport, UK).
BM	Bristol Museums (Bristol, UK).
BNSS	Bournemouth Natural Science Society (Bournemouth, UK).
BOLMG	Museum & Art Gallery (Bolton, UK).
DIA	Detroit Institute of Arts (USA).
DMAG	Museum and Art Gallery (Derby, UK).
EC	Egypt Centre, University of Swansea (Wales).
GLAHM	The Hunterian Museum and Art Gallery (Glasgow, Scotland).
HAM	Harvard Art Museum (Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA).
KLMUS	Kirklees Museums and Galleries (Kirklees, UK).
MM	The Manchester Museum (England, UK).
MMAG	McLean Museum & Art Gallery (Greenock, Scotland).
NMS	National Museum of Scotland (Edinburgh).
PUM	The University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Philadelphia, USA).
SAHMG	Museum of Glass – World of Glass (St Helens, UK).
WM	World Museum (Liverpool, UK).

## Auction catalogue references

Bonhams (auctioneers, London); *Antiquities* (London, 20th October, 2005); *Antiquities* (London, 26th October, 2007). Sotheby's (auctioneers, London and New York); *Antiquities* (London, 11th December, 1989).