Gallery 19
Egyptian Galleries
Book 2

Large Font Label Book
Please do not remove from Gallery
Case 11 is located to the left hand side as you enter from Gallery 20 and continues in an anti-clockwise direction around the room.
Case 11

Religion in ancient Egypt

Egyptian religion was closely linked with the natural world and was a fundamental part of all other aspects of Egyptian life.

Many gods were of both national and local significance and were frequently depicted in different forms. Thoth, for example, could be shown as an ibis or a baboon, or with the head of an ibis but the body of a man.

Gods might be represented on earth by various living creatures. The Apis Bull, for example, was the embodiment of Ptah of Memphis. The Bull was selected for his special markings, and when he died received an elaborate burial, attended by the king.

Temples were cult centres and sacred spaces. A formal hierarchy of priests was associated with most temples: only chief priests were permitted to tend the statues of the gods after observing a strict cleansing ritual. All priests were representatives of the King, himself the embodiment of Horus in life and Osiris in death, and like him they acted as a link between the worlds of gods and men.
1 Painted terracotta group

The figures are of Isis and Harpocrates, or Hathor and Dionysos. The terracotta is made according to traditional Egyptian methods, but the male figure is of a kind mostly found on Greek terracottas in Egypt. This object was dedicated as a votive.

About 400-250 BC

Temple of Isis, Saqqara

Given by the Egypt Exploration Society
E.14.1969

2 Copper alloy figure of Isis and Horus

Dedicated by Hatiufankh, whose name is inscribed on the base.

About 200-100 BC

Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg
E.122.1954
3 Faience figure of Isis and Horus
Isis has the throne hieroglyph on her head, spelling her name, and holds her young son.
Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937 E.60.1937

4 Copper alloy figure of Osiris
King of the underworld.
Late Period (746-336 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.156.1954

5 Copper alloy statue of a priest holding an Osiris figure
Third Intermediate Period (1070-714 BC)
Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.50.1949

6 Copper alloy statue of Osiris
He is wrapped in linen showing how his body was preserved after his murder by his brother, Seth.
About 400-100 BC
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.152.1954
7 Serpentine figure of a kneeling man
The man holds a shrine housing a figure of Osiris.
Late Period (746-336 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.331.1954

8 Clay figure of Osiris-Canopus
This form of Osiris first appeared in the Roman period.
About AD 80-200
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.268.1932

9 Copper alloy figure of Horus as a hawk
The ruling king of Egypt was believed to be the living embodiment of the god Horus, son of Isis and Osiris.
Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Given by D.H.T. Hanbury E.1.1940
10 Copper alloy figure of Horus
Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.1434.1947

11 Copper alloy figure of Horus
Shown here in human form with a hawk’s head.
Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.11.1939

12 Copper alloy figure of Horus
The god stands on an oryx. This object was dedicated by a priest of Amun.
About 200-100 BC
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.207.1954

13 Clay lamp holder in the form of Harpocrates
A small votive lamp would have been placed in the bottom section.
About 100-200 AD
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2930.1943
14 Copper alloy figure of Imhotep
Old Kingdom official of King Djoser (2690-2670 BC), who was later deified.
About 500-300 BC
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.59.1954

15 Gilded wooden figure of Thoth
Thoth was the scribe of the gods.
Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.202.1954

16 Painted limestone relief of the Tree Goddess
The tree goddess appears in funerary contexts. She gives refreshment to the soul/spirit of the deceased, shown in the form of a Ba bird. The sign behind the tree represents the Western Desert.
New Kingdom (1550-1186 BC)
From tomb R103, Abydos
Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.53.1913
17 Gilded wooden Ba Bird

The ancient Egyptians believed that the human soul was made up of different elements. The Ba was closely connected to the personality and after death stayed close to the deceased. The different parts of the soul were reunited in the afterlife to allow the person to continue ‘living’. It is typically shown as a winged bird with a human head.

Ptolemaic Period (323-30 BC)

Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937 E.95.1937

18 Copper alloy figure of Sekhmet

Sekhmet was the consort of Ptah and mother of Nefertum. She was believed to be savage, breathing fire on to the enemies of Egypt. She was also seen as a healer. Many granite statues of the goddess were found at the temple of Mut (one of the three main Theban gods) at Karnak.

Late Period (746-336 BC)

Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.64.1954

19 Copper alloy figure of Ptah

Ptah lived at Memphis and was a creator god. He is typically mummiform and wears a skullcap, which distinguishes him from Osiris.

Fourth to third centuries BC

Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.160.1954
20 Silver amulets of Path and Apis

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.159.1954
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.55a.1939

21 Faience figure of Ptah-Sokar

This god is a composite of two: Ptah and Sokar. Sokar was a hawk-headed god of the necropolis at Memphis and so the combined Ptah-Sokar was more closely connected to the afterlife than Ptah, a creator god. This figure has two heads, emphasizing the god’s dual identity.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.136.1949

22 Painted wooden figure of Anubis

Anubis was shown in the form of a jackal. He was the god of embalming and cemeteries. On Theban tomb paintings a second jackal is often shown with Anubis: Wepwawet, the jackal god of Upper Egypt.

Third Intermediate Period (1070-714 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4315.1943
23 Copper alloy figure of Selkis

Selkis (sometimes called Selket) was a scorpion goddess associated with the protection of the king. She was also responsible for protecting the Canopic jar containing the intestines and so appears in a funerary context.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Given by Sir William Elderton E.3.1955

24 Copper alloy figure of a woman making an offering

Dynasty 25 (746-690 BC)
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.19.1939

25 Copper alloy figure of a kneeling priest

Late Period (746-336 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.216.1954

26 Limestone pyramidion from a tomb

Three sides show the deceased worshipping; the fourth shows the sun worshipped by two baboons beneath.

Dynasty 19 (1292-1070 BC)
Given by the Revd. G. Peacock E.1.1827
27 Limestone relief of a man offering incense

Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4538.1943

28 Sandstone reliefs showing worshippers

Amarna period (1351-1333 BC)

Amarna

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4510.1943; E.GA.4529.1943

29 Gold ring

Inscribed with the name of the wearer and figures of gods, including Amun.

New Kingdom to Late Period (1550-336 BC)

Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.618.1954

30 Gold inlay of Isis

Ptolemaic period (332-30 BC)

Given by F.W. Green E.22.1950
31 Wooden statue of a lion-headed deity or demon

Demons guarded the gateways to the afterlife and are typically shown holding a knife.

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.546.1947

32 Copper alloy figures of Bastet

This cat goddess was daughter of the sun god Ra.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir R. Greg E.69.1954; E.70.1954

33 Copper alloy figure of Atum in the form of an eel

Atum was a sun god and creator of the universe. His cult centre was at Heliopolis.

Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.360.1932

34 Copper alloy statue of Neith

The goddess of Sais who was often associated with warfare. She wears the crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt.

Late Period (746-336 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.162.1954
35 Plaster head of Hathor

Probably used as a model. Hathor appears as both a cow and a cow-headed human. Her face was used on a type of column within chapels and temples dedicated to her. Like Isis, she was associated with the mother of the king of Egypt.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3072.1943

36 Copper alloy figure of a cow

Probably representing Hathor.

About 400-30 BC

Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.16.1932

37 Diorite figure of Taweret

This goddess protected women during childbirth. This figure has a crocodile on its back.

Late Period (746-336 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4573.1943
38 Clay figure of Bes as a Roman soldier

In this period Bes became a military god.

About AD 50-150

Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.207.1932

39 Painted figure of Bes made of plaster and wood

This god protected pregnant women and children.

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)

Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.521.1947
40 Limestone relief of Hapi
Hapi was god of the inundation (flood). He was often shown in double form wearing symbols of Upper and Lower Egypt.

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3147.1943

41 Copper alloy figure of Amun-Min
The fertility aspect of Amun.

Late Period (746-336 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.496.1954

42 Sandstone relief of Amun-Min
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
E.SS.51

43 Faience figure of a ram
Representing Amun or Khnum.

About 1 BC-AD 70
Bequeathed by A.J.H. Smith E.6.1964
44 Limestone stela of Amenemhab

Showing the Theban triad of gods: Amun, Mut and Khonsu, who are transported in shrines on their boats.

Dynasty 19 (1292-1070 BC)
E.SS.52

45 Copper alloy prow

For a sacred boat.

Late Period (746-336 BC)
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937
E.18.1937

46 Copper alloy fitting

In the form of a ram’s head. Probably representing Amun.

Late Period (746-336 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4403.1943

47 Copper alloy figure of Ammon, a Hellenized Amun

Ammon wears ram’s horns.

Ptolemaic Period (323-30 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4367.1943
48 Copper alloy figure of Amun

Amun rose to prominence during the New Kingdom at Thebes. Different aspects of the cult of Amun were celebrated at the temples now in modern day Karnak and Luxor.

Late Period (746-336 BC)
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.4.1939

49 Limestone cobra

The cobra protected the royal family and was worn on the brow or placed above doorways.

Ptolemaic Period (323-30 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4536.1943

50 Painted wooden stela

A man called Iufaa offers incense to Re-Harakhty, the sun god of the underworld.

Dynasty 22 (946-730 BC)
Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.119.1949
51 The sun hymn
New Kingdom (1292-1070 BC)
Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.1479.1947

52 Faience figure of Shu
God of sunlight and air.
Late Period (746-336 BC)
Bequesthed by Sir Robert Greg E.13.1903

53 Gold winged sundisk
Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Given by F.W. Green E.21.1950
Case 12

New religions in Egypt

The traditional Egyptian gods were not the only ones worshipped in Egypt. At different times the worship of other gods was permitted in specific places.

From about 600 BC Greek traders at Naukratis in the Nile Delta established sanctuaries to their own gods, including Apollo, Artemis, and Hera. From 332 BC, when Egypt was ruled by Macedonian Greeks, sanctuaries throughout Egypt were dedicated both to Greek gods and to Hellenised versions of established Egyptian deities.

According to tradition, Christianity was brought to Alexandria by the Apostle Mark in AD 69. During the reign of the Emperor Theodosius (AD 379–94), it became the official religion of the entire Roman Empire, including Egypt. Egyptian Christians are known as ‘Copts’, a corruption of the Greek word for Egyptians, Aiguptioi.

Egypt came under Islamic rule in the mid-seventh century AD, and the country remains predominantly Islamic today.
1 Faience vessel
Decorated with a bird and a flower. The script is Neskh.
End of Ayyubid period (AD 935-1252)
C.503.1991

2 Limestone relief
A winged Eros plays the pipes and rides a dolphin.
About AD 300-400

3 Steatite figure of Serapis
A Hellenised version of an Egyptian god, popular during the Roman period.
About AD 100
E.87.1900

4 Limestone relief
A panther chases a bull amid spiral acanthus leaves.
About AD 300-400
Said to be from Bawit, the Monastery of Apa Apollo
E.3.1965
5 Clay figure of Isis-Aphrodite

Accompanied by the god Pan and a wine amphora, Isis is identified by her knotted garment. This type of image of the goddess, with her dress falling around her thighs, copies Classical statues of Venus and Aphrodite. The two halves of this figure are from separate terracottas suggesting that several were found together and mismatched by the excavator.

About AD 100-200
E.P.358

6 Silver figure of Bastet

This figure has several features that are typical of Roman representations of Bastet. Most notably the way in which she holds her situla (which appears as a basket) over her forearm, her decorated dress, and the over-sized sistrum (rattle) in her right hand. The nose has been rubbed and shines as a result.

About 30 BC-AD 200
E.20.1900

7 Copper alloy figure of Herakles

Identified by his club.

About AD 150-250
E.12.1900
8 Clay fertility figure
The subject covers her nudity in the manner of a Hellenistic Greek or Roman Aphrodite.
About AD 600-700
E.P.347

9 Clay orans figure
The word orans (plural orantes) comes from the Latin ‘to pray’.
About AD 500-600
Shurufa
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.169.1912

10 Painted clay figure of a woman
About AD 600-700
E.P.353

11 Ivory fertility figure
Many Late Antique figures are carved in this abstract manner.
About AD 300-600
Given by the Trustees of the Wellcome Bequest E.431.1982
12 Wood stamps for liturgical bread
Inscribed: IC/XP/NI/KA (Christ conquers all) and FOTIN
About AD 400-500
Bequeathed by E. T. Whyte E.248.1932, E.331.1932

13 Coptic bread
Eucharistic bread from a Coptic church.
Modern
Bequeathed by Sir H. Thompson E.16.1944

14 Copper alloy censer
In the form of a head of a youth wearing a Phrygian cap.
About AD 400-500
Given by the Trustees of the Wellcome Collection E.24.1981

15 Clay ostrakon
An ostrakon is a reused fragment of pottery or stone and can contain notes, sketches, receipts or letters. The example here is a letter in Saidic Coptic from the priest Markos to a holy father, begging him to send incense through a certain Kyriakos, as arranged.
About AD 400-600
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4690.1943
16 Painted clay vessel fragment
With a representation of a Coptic saint.
About AD 400
Shurafa
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.182.1912

17 Painted clay vessel fragment
About AD 400-500
Saqqara
Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.19.1971
18 Clay lamp in the form of a fish
About AD 200-300
Naukratis
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund GR.29.1899

19 Clay St Menas flasks
These pilgrim flasks stored oil from the lamps burning over the graves of Coptic saints.
About AD 400-700
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.83.1932; E.208.1932

20 Steatite amulet of St Menas
St Menas was an Egyptian-born martyr. He served in the Roman army but left following an edict of the emperor Diocletian against the practice of Christianity. Following a declaration of his faith, Menas was tortured and beheaded in AD 295. He was a patron saint of travellers and was thus linked to St Christopher.
About AD 500-600
Given by G. F. Rogers E.2.1924

21 Glass cross amulet
About AD 400-600
E.A.59
22 Bone pendant of a saint
Possibly St George and the dragon. The head of the animal is similar to that of a donkey. The pendant may therefore represent another saint on the back of a donkey.
About AD 400-500
E.5.1887

23 Copper alloy cruciform sceptre
About AD 400-600
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.42.1939

24 Fragment of a red-figured stand for a round-bottomed vessel
With the figures of Apollo, Artemis and other Greek gods.
About 460-450 BC
Naukratis, made in Athens
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund
GR.P.13

25 Fragments of red- and black-figured vessels
With the Greek gods Hermes, Poseidon and Dionysos.
About 540–400 BC
Naukratis, made in Athens
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund
GR.148.1899, 130.1888, 146.1899

26 Fragment of a partially glazed cup
With a graffito ‘[Gl]aukos dedicated me to Hera’.
About 600-500 BC
Naukratis, made on Samos
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund
GR.227.1899

27 Fragment from the foot of a black-glazed cup
With a graffito ‘of [A]phrodite’.
About 440-400 BC
Naukratis, made in Athens
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund
GR.106.1899

28 Fragment from a chalice
With a graffito ‘Hermesiphanes dedicated me to Aphrodite’.
About 580–520 BC
Naukratis, made on Chios
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund GR.54.1894
29 Fragment of the rim of a black-glazed skyphos

With a graffito ‘to Artemi[s]’.

About 520-480 BC
Naukratis, made in Athens
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund GR.100.1899

30 Limestone statue of a female figure

The worshipper holds a small bird as an offering. This type of statue is typical of Archaic Greek art and is thought to have been influenced by Egyptian statuary of the Late Period. This type of statue would be dedicated at a sanctuary.

About 680-520 BC
Naukratis
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund GR.2.1887

31 Limestone statue of Isis

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Naukratis
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.4.1909
32 Clay head of a goddess, probably Aphrodite
About 460-430 BC
Naukratis, perhaps made on Rhodes
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund GR.20.1899

33 Marble statue of Eros
Wings were originally attached to the back.
About 200-30 BC
Naukratis
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund GR.24.1899

34 Plaster head of a satyr
About 100-30 BC
Naukratis
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund GR.61.1887
Case 13

Ritual and ‘Magic’

Specific objects were used in the rituals that formed an important part of Egyptian religion. It is difficult to draw a meaningful distinction between ritual and magic in an Egyptian context. Spells and texts that may seem ‘magical’ to us featured both in the prayers of individuals and in organised religious practice. Objects that may seem part of everyday life, such as rattles or cymbals, were used in religious ceremonies and so had a ritual significance.

Special priests carried out the more magical-seeming rites, while many ordinary people wore small amulets, such as figurines of particular gods, for personal protection. Other types of object also served to protect the owner during his or her lifetime and after death. Images of demons, often shown seated and holding a knife, were believed to protect those who invoked them and harm anyone who posed a threat. Demon images also appear on ivory ‘wands’ or ritual knives, used to ward off natural and supernatural threats.
1 Clay figure of an offerant
About AD 500-600
Shurufa
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.184.1912

2 Clay figure of an offerant
Such figures functioned as votive offerings and grave goods; some have been found in household shrines.
About AD 200-300
E.P.315

3 Clay figure of an offerant
In front of the figure is a table of offerings, including cake, bread and fruit. The hands are raised in prayer.
About AD 100-200
E.1.1995

4 Clay figure of Harpocrates
The god wears a festival crown and holds a bowl.
About AD 100-200
E.P.357
5 Calcite vessel in the form of a pregnant woman

The wig is that of Hathor and is a reference to fertility.

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3061.1943

6 Clay fertility figures

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)

Given by the Trustees of the Wellcome Foundation E.430.1982; Bequeathed by P.M. Cook E.2.1981; Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.278.1949

7 Clay rattle of a woman giving birth

Probably used during childbirth.

About AD 100-150

Antinoe

Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.86.1914

8 Clay amulet of a woman giving birth

About 100 BC-AD 50

Antinoe

Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.104.1914
9 Copper alloy figure of a woman and Bes

Bes protected pregnant women and children.

Late Period (about 746-525 BC)

Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937
E.6.1937

10 Ebony, wood and ivory furniture fittings

In the form of Bes.

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)

Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937 E.67a-c.1937; E.68.1937

11 Clay Bes jar

About 500-300 BC

Saqqara, West of the Nectanebo Wall

Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.20.1971

12 Wood figure of a crocodile demon

Such beings protected gateways between this and the afterlife.

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)

Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.545.1947
13 Painted wood attachments
The uraeus (cobra) was a protective symbol.
Late Period (746-332 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2863a-c.1943

14 Mud figure of Osiris
The god wears a string of beads.
Dynasty 30 (380-342 BC)
Abydos, Tomb of Djer
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.20.1901
15 Wood shabti

A shabti (shawabti or ushabti) is a small mummiform figure that was put in tombs in order to 'answer the call' to perform tasks on behalf of the deceased such as tilling and irrigating the lands. This example is inscribed with a magic spell in the hieratic script.

About 1794-1550 BC
Possibly Thebes
Given by Sir William Elderton E.79.1955

16 Clay execration figure

Representing a bound woman. Her body is tattooed and her short wig suggests that she was a foreigner.

First Intermediate Period to Middle Kingdom (2170-1794 BC)
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.189.1939

17 Wood sun-dial

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4596.1943
18 Clay amphora

A note accompanying this object states that it was ‘used for carrying water from the Nile by women of the country’. The unusual figures, which cover the entire surface of the pot, date it to the Roman period. They include Pan, Bes, a Ba bird and people wearing festival costumes. The script is unknown and is probably magical.

About AD 200-350

Given by A.G.W. Murray E.155.1913

19 Wood and linen corn Osiris

Corn was wrapped in linen to symbolize the re-birth of Osiris. The image of corn growing out of a mummy was a common funerary image (see the mummy board in case 17 opposite). Corn Osiris figures were given as offerings and also found in tombs.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)

Rifeh

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.3.1907

20 Stone footprint

Visitors carved such prints onto the processional walkways of temples.

Probably about 30 BC-AD 400

E.SS.50
21 Reed sandals
With a votive inscription written in demotic script.
Ptolemaic Period (323-30 BC)
Saqqara, the west dump
Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.79a-b.1975

22 Limestone ‘ear stela’
This stela was probably dedicated at the Dynasty 18 temple of Hatshepsut. Votive objects were often cleared out of temples to make room for new offerings. This object was found on an earlier temple site, close to the New Kingdom complex where it was no doubt discarded.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Deir el Bahri, the site of the Montuhotep temple
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.14.1907

23 Wood votive figures
This crudely cut figure would have had a phallus attached and is probably a reference to fertility. The phallus figures were also an obvious reference to fertility and were probably left as individual objects rather than being attached to a statue.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Deir el Bahri, the site of the Montuhotep temple
24 Copper alloy situla

A situla was used as a ritual vessel, to hold sacred water. In the Roman period Isis is often shown carrying this type of vessel.

About 30 BC-AD 130

Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.160.1932

25 Faience new year flask

Such flasks were made to celebrate the coming of the new year and the annual flooding of the Nile. The latest examples date to the Persian period. The name of the king is often inscribed on these vessels, in recognition of his role. During the inundation the king was not permitted to sail on the Nile; this was deemed to be unlucky.

Late Period (746-332 BC)

Given by G.D. Hornblower E.268.1939

26 Faience bowl

This is a Roman equivalent to the New Year flask. The wine krater may refer to a festival.

About AD 20-100

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3097.1943
27 Copper alloy figure of a dog
Representing the rising of the dog star Sirius.
About AD 200-300
E.1.1900

28 Copper alloy figure of a locust
Late Period (746-332 BC)
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937
E.9.1937

29 Copper alloy staff terminals
The handles are decorated with a bull and lotus motif. The staffs are missing.
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937
E.14.1937; E.15.1937

30 Faience staff
In three separate sections.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3234.1943; E.GA.3235.1943; E.GA.3236.1943
31 Copper alloy sceptre

A baboon holding a cymbal or offering bowl surmounts the top.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)

Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937
E.16.1937

32 Wood staffs

Such sceptres were often buried with officials. One of these sceptres has the head of Anubis.

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)


33 Wood ibis ‘wand’

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2855.1943

34 Copper alloy cobra ‘wand’

Found with magical texts and implements in tomb 5, under the Ramesseum at Thebes.

Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)

Thebes, West Bank

Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.63.1896
35 Ivory magic knives
To offer protection.
Dynasty 13 (1794-1648 BC)
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.40.1926 Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.394a.1932

36 Steatite stela
With an image of Horus-Cippus. The god holds (is victorious over) snakes, scorpions. On the back is a magical inscription.
Ptolemaic Period (323-30 BC)
Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.108.1949

37 Steatite magical rods
Decorated with a crocodile and lion, and a crocodile and cat.
Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)
Given by the Trustees of the Wellcome Foundation E.426.1982
Given by Jack Ogden E.2.1986

38 Wood votive sword
With imitation cloth.
Predynastic period (about 3000 BC)
E.212.1900
39 Painted wooden shrine door

A man plays cymbals. His dress and the fact he has hair suggest he is a festival participant rather than a priest.

About AD 200-300

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4332.1943
40 Copper alloy cymbals
About 30 BC-AD 300
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.158.1932

41 Ivory clappers
In the form of hands and with animal heads. They were struck together to produce a sound.
Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC) Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.394a.1932; E.20a-b.1887

42 Copper alloy sistrum (rattle)
Used in temple ceremonies. The lower section is decorated with the head of Hathor.
About AD 100-200
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.376.1932
Case 14

Daily life

The ancient Egyptians were often buried with objects of daily use. Their preservation enables us to form a picture of the way people lived and the objects they used in their homes.

As religion was part of everyday life many ‘ordinary’ objects, including some that we might think were toys, had a religious significance. The group of terracotta figures shown here were found in houses at Ehnasya and Antinoopolis; some of them portray gods and would have been kept in domestic shrines. Other domestic objects have religious imagery: among those displayed here are copper-alloy weights in the form of Serapis and the tyet-knot (a divine symbol) from a piece of furniture.

The Egyptians seem to have enjoyed board games, using gaming pieces and decorated sticks for dice. From the Roman period onwards real toys were made, like the mouse with moving jaw and tail.

The pottery shown here spans a variety of periods: while some shapes changed or developed over time others remained current for long periods.
1 Clay vessel with ancient repair

Breaks were often repaired with metal dowels. The holes here seem to have been used in this way.

Predynastic Period (about 5000 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4667.1943

2 Clay bottle

Probably used as a water jar.

Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)

E.P.113

3 Clay water jar

This type of vessel is found throughout Egypt today.

Modern, about 1920

Bequeathed by E. Sellar E.4.2002

4 Clay jar

Dynasty 1 (3032-2853 BC)

Tarkhan, tomb 1060

Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.81.1912
5 Clay stand

Because many Egyptian vessels had a rounded or pointed base, they required a stand to remain upright.

Predynastic Period (about 3000 BC)
Possibly from Ballas
E.P.34

6 Faience cup

About AD 14-98
Given by W.P. Elderton E.70.1955

7 Painted clay bowl

Depicting an ostrich and leaves.
About AD 1100
E.2.1990

8 Clay amphora

This type of ribbed amphora is typical of the Roman period in Egypt.

Roman
Hawara or Memphis
Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.81.1911
9 Painted clay jar with lid
About AD 300-400
Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.136.1900

10 Clay vessels
Of a ware known as ‘barbotine’.
About AD 14-37
E.187.1899; E.190.1899

11 Copper alloy steelyard
Used for weighing.
About AD 100-400
E.188.1899

12 Copper alloy steelyard weights
In the form of a head of Aphrodite and a bust of Serapis.
About AD 200-400
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2834.1943 and E.GA.2840.1943
13 Copper alloy weights
A cow, a turtle and a frog.
Late Period (746–336 BC)

14 Clay vessels
African red slip was produced in Tunisia. These fragments show a lion hunt, a gladiatorial scene and a fish.
About AD 400–430
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2938-40.1943

15 Faience vessel
Showing a hunting scene.
Dynasty 26 (664–525 BC)
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.256.1939

16 Clay oil lamps
The glazed lamps are typical of Islamic pottery.
Fatimid period (AD 969–1171)
Lent by Corpus Christi College Loan Ant.103.225;
Given by A. Dibley E.20.1919
17 Clay oil lamps
About AD 500-600
Bequeathed by E. Sellars E.1.2002; E.3.2002

18 Wooden vessels
Beaker.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Bowl.
About AD 1-100
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.194.1932; E.277.1932

19 Glass conical lamp
About AD 300-400
E.1.1986

20 Iron and copper alloy door keys
Roman (30 BC-AD 395)
Given by Rev. G. Chester E.80.1891 E.miss.108

21 Copper alloy lamp
In the form of a peacock.
About AD 200-300
Lent by Corpus Christi College Loan Ant.103.51
22 Faience chalice in the form of a lotus
Such objects were either buried with people, dedicated at temples or used by the elite.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.255.1939

23 Clay figure of a child god
About AD 100-200
Antinoe
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.108.1914

24 Clay figure of a rider
Possibly a Persian. The branch suggests a festival participant.
About AD 250
Ehnasya, House K
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.124.1904

25 Clay figure of Isis-Aphrodite
About AD 100-200
Ehnasya, House K
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.126.1904
26 Clay figures of Harpocrates
About AD 100-200
Ehnasya, Houses N and H
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.127.1904; E.119.1904

27 Clay figure of a Nubian warrior
About AD 100-200
Ehnasya, House F
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.122.1904

28 Clay figure of Serapis
About AD 70-150
Ehnasya
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.125.1904

29 Clay figures of dogs
Representing the dog star.
About AD 200-350
Hawara
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.98.1911;
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2932.1943
30 Wooden toy mouse
About AD 100-400
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4594.1943

31 Ivory gaming rods and bone die
The rods are decorated with incised circles, similar to those on a modern die.
About AD 1-300
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.493a-b.1954; E.misc.82

32 Wooden gaming board and faience gaming pieces
The pieces represent Asiatic captives, Anubis and a tower. This game of Senet or 30-squares was inscribed for Harmosi, 'excellent recorder of the senior superintendant of his divine majesty'.
Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Game: given by D.H.T. Hanbury E.29.1940 Pieces:
Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.267.1949;
E.GA.4601.1949;
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.263.1939;
Given by Sir W.P. Elderton E.63.1955
33 Wooden ‘pick up’ sticks
In the form of fingers with an animal head terminal.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2858a-c.1943

34 Ivory game stick
In the form of an ibex.
Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937
E.97.1937

35 Wooden stool and fragment
The terminals of the legs are in the form of a lion’s paws.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4564.1943; E.GA.2712.1943

36 Copper alloy furniture fitting
In the form of the goddess Besit, the female companion of Bes.
About AD 1-220
Given by Rev. A.B. Cheales E.3.1853
37 Copper alloy furniture fitting
In the form of the god Bes. The crown is restored.
Late Period (746-336 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4369.1943

38 Wooden furniture fitting
In the form of a ‘Tyet’ knot.
Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Thebes, the tomb of a royal servant
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4565.1943

39 Copper alloy furniture fitting
An offering bearer with a gazelle.
Dynasties 22-23 (946-722 BC)
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937
E.17.1937

40 Gilded copper alloy fitting
In the form of a sycamore leaf. Possibly from an item of furniture.
About AD 1-300
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4703.1943
41 Clay bowls
Such bowls were often used as lids for larger vessels.
About 30 BC-AD 100
Fayoum
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.17.1909; E.19.1909

42 Clay barrel jar
Around AD 250-450
Western Desert
E.P.216

43 Clay ostrakon
From a ‘Gaza’ ware amphora. Inscribed with the contents of the jar ‘Pistac[cio]’ (nuts).
About AD 300-500
E.P.532
Case 15

Carving, Painting and Writing

Large numbers of painted and written fragments of limestone have been found at Deir-el-Medina, the settlement used by the craftsmen working on the tombs of the Valley of the Kings near Thebes. The inscriptions provide a wealth of information about the lives and working practices of these people. Some of the pictorial fragments show stories from animal fables and other sketches.

The other incomplete stone reliefs and pieces of sculpture in the round represent sculptors’ trial pieces or workshop models. Some unfinished pieces are also displayed here, along with tools and waste products from the manufacture of stone vessels.

Keeping written records was an important part of all Egyptian administrative life, carried out by officials whom we now call ‘scribes’. These were respected people who occupied an important place in the administrative hierarchy. Basic writing equipment consisted of a wooden palette holding reed pens and cakes of ink. The ibis and the baboon were sacred to Thoth, the patron god of scribes.
1 Limestone ostrakon of a man driving an ox
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4288.1943

2 Limestone ostrakon of a bull
Possibly a reference to the king.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4297.1943

3 Limestone ostraka
A monkey in a palm tree and a monkey followed by the legs of his (youthful) keeper.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4292.1943; E.GA.4293.1943

4 Limestone ostrakon
A war chariot is shown speeding over rocky ground.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4287.1943
5 Limestone ostrakon
Showing the foreign goddess Astarte riding a stallion.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4290.1943

6 Limestone ostrakon
A seated cat.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3859.1943

7 Clay ostrakon
An unkempt man carries bags on a stick, possibly a yoke.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.106.1949
8 Clay ostrakon

Two sketches of a lion. In black the lion’s mouth is closed and in a red painted overlay, it roars.

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4289.1943

9 Limestone ostrakon

Showing the god Seth in the form of a composite animal.

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4300.1943

10 Limestone ostrakon

 Showing a jackal wearing a robe and carrying a sceptre. Below is a captive calf.

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4291.1943

11 Limestone ostrakon

A sketch of a Greek warship.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)

Saqqara, Temple of Isis, mother of Apis

Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.13.1969
12 Copper alloy figure of a metal worker
The worker holds a heavy bar to beat the heated metal.
Late Period (746-336 BC)
E.2.1993

13 Limestone ostrakon
A design of a door. A draughtsman’s sketch of a shrine door with blank name panels, the head of Ptah, figures of a man. The inscription reads: ‘the nine bows’, who were the traditional enemies of Egypt. On the reverse is a drawing of an official.
Dynasty 19 (1292-1070 BC)
Thebes
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4298.1943
14 Wooden cubit rod
Divided into 6 palms, each of 4 fingers. Its length is 53.6 cm. Egyptian royal cubits are 45 cm and 52.5 cm.
Late Period (746-336 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2692.1943

15 Basalt ceremonial plumb-bob
Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.287.1949

16 Limestone model columns
Palm, floral and Hathor types. It is not certain if such objects were votives or architectural models. All of these forms of column can be found in Egyptian temples of this period.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937 E.30.1937
Given and bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3556.1943; E.GA.96.1949
17 Clay pigment pots

Containing natrojarosite (yellow), carbon (black) and madder (pink). Small bowls such as these were used for a variety of functions from cups to lids for larger vessels. These pigment pots came from a tomb context.

About AD 100-200

Hawara

Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.85.1911; E.94.1911; E.97.1911

18 Calcite pounder and grinder

Used for grinding pigments. Both are inscribed with the name of the royal secretary ‘Huy’.

Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3049-3050.1943

19 Limestone ostrakon

Ruled Egyptian text in Demotic script from the 'Tale of Pedubastet'. Both the Egyptian Demotic language and Greek co-existed during Ptolemaic period. Greek was the official language of administration. Demotic is a cursive form of the hieroglyphic script.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4695.1943
20 Limestone ostrakon
A hieratic text. Hieratic is a cursive form of the hieroglyphic script. The red ink corrects the black words.
New Kingdom (1550-1070)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.6118.1943

21 Clay tax receipt in Coptic
Coptic was an Egyptian language written in a Greek script with added characters.
AD 730
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.6377.1943

22 Limestone ostrakon
The owl spells an ‘m’ sound.
New Kingdom (1550-1070)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3858.1943
23 Wooden funerary stela
Hieroglyphs were used for formal writing. Here, the deceased stela owner offers to Osiris, Isis, Nephthys and Anubis.
The text here is a dedication to the gods.
Third Intermediate Period (1070-746 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4540.1943

24 Quartzite figure of Thoth
In the form of a baboon. Thoth was the scribe of the gods. He can also appear as an ibis, or as an ibis with a human body.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)

25 Figure of Thoth made of wood and copper alloy
The god is shown as an ibis.
Late Period (746-336 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.205.1954
26 Reed pens
About AD 300-600
Ehnasya (Herakleopolis Magna)
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.2a-b.1910

27 Wood scribe’s pen box
Third Intermediate Period (1070-746 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4557.1943

28 Reed ink holders
There is black pigment stored inside.
About AD 300-600 Ahnas el Medina
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.18a-b.1910

29 Basalt statue of a scribe
The rolls of fat indicate wealth. The scribe has an ink palette around his neck.
Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Given by C. Andrade E.11.1922
30 Slate colour palette
Inscribed with the name of the overseer of recruits for the palace, Ihy
Dynasty 5 (2504-2347 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4345.1943

31 Unfinished calcite cylinder jars
Old Kingdom (2707-2170 BC)
El Kab
Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.61.1898; E.SA.52a

32 Calcite drill cores
From cylinder jars.
Old Kingdom (2707-2170 BC)
Riggeh
Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.22.1913

33 Calcite unfinished vessels
Vessels were sometimes abandoned, often due to a flaw in the stone.
Old Kingdom (2707-2170 BC)
Bequeathed by F.W. Green E.12.1950; E.13.1950
34 Unfinished sandstone statue
The pitted surface shows ‘point chisel’ tool marks.
Dynasty 30 (380-342 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4013.1943

35 Basalt unfinished statue
A kneeling priest or king holds onto a shrine.
Late Period (746-336 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4344.1943

36 Copper alloy chisels
A flat chisel and a point chisel, used for carving stone.
Dynasty 1 (about 3032-2853 BC)
Abydos
Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.7a-b.1926

37 Wooden mallet
Used by stone masons and sculptors.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4556.1943

38 Ostrakon of a stone mason
A man with a stubbly chin is shown holding a mallet and a chisel. He has his head thrown back and appears to be singing. On the reverse the scribe Imyshe, son of Nebnufer, offers to the snake goddess Meretseger.

Dynasty 19 (1292-1070 BC)
Thebes, Deir el Medina

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4324A.1943
39 Plaster hand
Taken from a mould. Probably from a sculptor’s workshop.

Dynasty 18, Akhenaten (1351-1334 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4517.1943

40 Basalt statue fragment
The elongated fingers of this hand are typical of the Amarna period.

Dynasty 18, Akhenaten (1351-1334 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4525.1943

41 Limestone practice piece
Such objects can be divided into student practice pieces, master sculptor’s trial pieces and models. This object is likely to have been a practice piece. On other examples the student repeats the exercise. Here, there would have been space for 3 other heads (as is normal) but for whatever reason the relief was abandoned.

Dynasty 18, Akhenaten (1351-1334 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4508.1943

42 Limestone trial piece
A poorly executed and unfinished head of the god Bes.

Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4509.1943
43 Limestone practice piece
The original chariot relief has been recarved with an ear, hieroglyphs, hands and a head.
Dynsaty 18, Akhenaten (1351-1334 BC)
Given by R.G.Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3129.1943

44 Limestone block with sketch
Reliefs were first sketched then carved. Here, a bull has been sketched in red and black ink. The grid is still visible behind.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.589.1939

45 Limestone relief with grid
A smiting scene. The guidance grids are still visible.
Late Period (746-336 BC)
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.214.1939
46 Limestone bust of a ruler
Such busts were used as models in workshops throughout Egypt. This would ensure continuity of the royal 'portrait' type.

About 380-30 BC
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3209.1943

47 Limestone body studies
Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3212.1943; E.GA.3214.1943

48 Limestone face of a lion
There are many examples of lion’s faces, identical to these. This might suggest that they were a standard practice piece.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir R. Greg E.79.1954

49 Plaster face of a lion
Mould made.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.287.1932
Limestone Relief

With the cartouches of Ramesses II. The figures at the bottom of the relief can be identified by the feathers they wear as Libyans. Libyans were one of the traditional enemies of Egypt and so the King. The blocks were found re-used in a church.

1279-1213 BC

Saqqara, the Ptah temple complex

Given by the British School of Archaology in Egypt E.63.1911
The clothes, jewellery or other items in this case come mainly from burial contexts, but show us what wealthier people would have worn or presented to each other when alive.

Both men and women wore earrings, and cosmetic jars have been found in the graves of both sexes. Rings, used as seals, as amulets (charms) or simply for decoration, were worn either at the base or towards the top joint of the finger. Necklaces were made of beads in glass or faience (a glazed substance with a crushed quartz core), metals (silver, gold, copper alloy) or natural products such as semi-precious stones or shells. Amulets would have hung from some necklaces to protect the wearer.

Clay figurines and some female mummies have been found with tattoos, a special form of personal decoration that may have had religious significance.

The finished garments and fragments of wool and linen cloth owe their survival to the exceptionally dry Egyptian climate. Their varied and sophisticated techniques offer a glimpse of ancient textile workers’ skill and versatility.
1 Serpentine double cosmetic spoon
A man carries jars on a yoke.
Dynasty 25 (746-665 BC)
Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.282.1949

2 Wood and ivory fan handles
Decorated with a lotus design.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.423.1932;
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937
E.96.1937

3 Copper alloy figure of Aphrodite
The goddess looks at her reflection in a mirror.
About AD 50-150
Corpus Christi College Loan Ant.103.474
4 Copper alloy mirrors

The handles are ivory and steatite.

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)

Given and bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.280.1949; E.GA.3521.1943

5 Steatite head of Aphrodite

Unusually the gold earrings survive.

About AD 100-150

Given by the Trustees of the Wellcome Foundation E.21.1981

6 Copper alloy razor

The handle is wooden.

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)

Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.152.1932
7 Copper alloy cosmetic tool
About 1000-332 BC
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4579.1943

8 Wooden comb
Decorated with a carved gazelle.
About AD 400-600
Akhmim (?)
Bequeathed by E. T. Whyte E.361.1932
9 Wooden comb
Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Lent by Westminster College Loan Ant.108.2

10 Gold boat-shaped earrings
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)

11 Red jasper, gold, striped glass and carnelian hair-rings
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Bequeathed by E. T. Whyte E.229.1932
12 Ivory and iron pins

The ivory pin with ebony cow and calf head, the iron pin with lead goose head.

New Kingdom or Late Period (1550 – 335 BC)

Bequeathed and given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson
E.GA.125.1949; E.GA.3448.1943

13 Beads

From the top:
Black, unfired mud and blue faience.

4000-3000 BC

Given by the Revd. G.Chester E.114.1891

Obsidian flakes.

3000-2000 BC

E.B.82

Mitra shells.

Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.1415.1947

Shell, faience and glass.

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)

From Badari

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.7.1925
Carnelian biconical beads.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir R. Greg E.500.1954

Green and yellow glass.
About 30 BC-AD 300
Given by the Rev. G. Chester E.115.1891

Coloured quartz and emerald.
About 30 BC-AD 300
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.127c.1939

Blue, white and yellow glass.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Bequeathed by C. Aldred E.7.1979

Faience discs.
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by C. Aldred E.8.1979

Garnets.
Ptolemaic Period (323-30 BC)
E.B.42
14 Rings

Faience, wedjat eyes and leaf.
New Kingdom or Late Period (1550-336 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.6374.1943; E.GA.6487.1943
Given by G.T. Rogers E.81.1934

Copper alloy, with Horus child and lion.
Ptolemaic Period (323-30 BC)

Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.85.1947; E.GA.84.1947

Green glass and chalcedony

Roman Period (AD 1-300)


15 Bracelet

Gold casings enclosing blue glass flies with red jasper eyes, set in pairs, back to back

New Kingdom
(1550-1070 BC)

Given by G.D. Hornblower
E.67a.1939
16 Glass bracelets
About AD 1800-1900
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3187.1943

17 Faience cosmetic bowls
About 100-30 BC
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.289a.1939;
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3082.1943

18 Ivory bowl
Decorated with a carved donkey, lioness and gazelle.
About AD 300-600
Bequeathed by Sir R. Greg E.495.1954

19 Glazed steatite eye-paint jar
Decorated with an openwork pattern of protective deities.
Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Bequeathed by E. T. Whyte E.72.1932
20 Eye-paint tubes made of wood and faience

Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)

Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.W.30; E.424.1932;
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4575.1943; E.GA.3233.1943

21 Ivory kohl pot

The two kohl tubes are placed on either side of a female figure. Found in a mass of bone and ivory in the entry of a re-used tomb.

Third Intermediate Period (1070-714 BC)

Qau el Kebir

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.1.1923

22 Clay perfume jar

In the form of the club of Herakles.

About AD 100-200

Bequeathed by R. G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2919.1943

23 Clay perfume jar

With a palm design on the neck.

Persian period (525-404 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3083.1943
24 Kohl pots made of faience and wood
In the form of a squatting man, and a monkey.
Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Bequeathed by Dr L.C.G. Clarke E.2.1961;
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.343.1954

25 Wooden kohl pot
In the form of a pregnant sow.
Third Intermediate Period (1070-714 BC)
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.167.1939

26 Wooden cosmetic boxes
In the form of ducks. Painted and inlaid.
Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937
E.47.1937; E.46.1937

27 Wooden box
Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4567.1943
28 Faience dish
In the form of an ape clinging to a cartouche.
Late Period (746-336 BC)
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.273.1939

29 Ivory cosmetic dish
Made from hippopotamus ivory and decorated with a gazelle.
About 1479-1292 BC
Qau el Kebir, cemetery 400
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.44.1923

30 Cosmetic spoons
A wooden and slate hand, holding a shell; wooden human figures incorporated into the handles; a calcite mussel spoon.
Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.365.1932;
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson EGA.4582.1943;
Given by the Trustees of the Wellcome Foundation E.429.1982

31 Wood cosmetic spoon
The handle is in the form of a bird.
About AD 300-600
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.162.1939
32 Tapestry square

The multi-coloured tapestry square has been applied to a linen backing that has wrapped loops surrounding the central panel. This object may have been a cover for a cushion. The decoration shows male figures, tulip-like flowers and baskets of fruit.

About AD 400–600

Provenance unknown E.T.29a

33 Textile square in six colours

Probably part of a wall hanging. The textile is made with a coarse linen warp, through which is woven the woollen weft, consisting of two or three threads. There is a selvedge on one side. The decoration shows images of baskets of fruit and hares within circular medallions.

About AD 400–600

Provenance unknown E.T.116
34 Sandal made of palm leaf

Only the wealthy wore sandals in ancient Egypt. It is not clear whether this sandal has ever been used because the sole, which is made of reed and coarse leather, shows no sign of wear. The size suggests it may have been made for a man.

New Kingdom, Dynasty 18 (about 1550–1290 BC)
Given by the Revd Greville J. Chester E.185.1891

35 Part of a textile band with decorative figures

This piece of textile was probably an ornamental strip applied to a tunic. The decoration shows a stylised bird and an anthropoid figure of a rarely depicted divinity called Anthousa, who represents blossoming plants. It is extremely fragmented and has been glued on to a supportive backing at some time.

About AD 700–1000
Given by Professor E.H. Minns, Pembroke College E.T.156
36 Fragment of linen with a floral motif

The floral decoration was separately made, of a dark red woollen thread, and applied to a larger piece of linen that was used as a table covering, possibly an altar cloth. The edge includes a fringe, a decorative area of bare warp threads and a simple border decoration of two coloured wefts.

About AD 700–1000

Bequeathed by E. Towry Whyte E.T.172

37 Large decorated linen fragment

This may have come from a cloak worn over a tunic. The diamond-shaped decoration is created using woollen threads in six colours. The edge of the fabric is undecorated; there is also evidence of burning, but the reason for this is unknown.

About AD 600-800

Provenance unknown E.T.134
38 A band decorated with hares and vines

A strip of decorated fabric sewn into plain linen, probably in antiquity. The pattern, woven in dark, reddish-brown wool, has been cut through, perhaps to remove an area of damage. The motif of animals (frequently hares or rabbits) with vine leaves was popular in the Roman Period and continued to be used in Coptic times.

About AD 500–600

Provenance unknown E.T.115

39 Red textile band

This slender band is made of linen and wool, and has a selvedge on either side. The pattern is created by yellow threads woven into a dark red background. The band may have been sewn on to a larger piece of linen used as a table covering or altar cloth.

About AD 600–1000

Provenance unknown E.T.107
40 Decorated roundel

The fragment was probably originally sewn on to another larger piece of textile. It is decorated with stylised images of birds, plants and a small, cherub-like figure in the middle, using five different colours.

About AD 600–900

Given by Frederick Leverton Harris E.T.125
Case 17

The coffins of Nespawershefyt

This set of coffins was made to contain the body of Nespawershefyt, an important official at the temple of Amun at Karnak who lived around 990 – 940 BC. At this period people no longer had elaborately decorated tomb chapels, choosing to put the decoration on the coffins instead.

As good-quality wood is scarce in Egypt, wooden objects are often made up of many pieces of wood. These coffins include pieces of Ziziphus spina-Christi (Christ’s thorn) and Ficus sycomorus (sycomore fig). To cover up any joins or patches, a thin layer of gesso (plaster) was laid over the wood, which provided a good surface for the application of coloured pigments. The glossy, bright yellow varnish is very typical of the finish applied to decorated surfaces at this period.

Many of the scenes and texts on the coffins are taken from the Book of the Dead, a series of spells and instructions to help the dead person in the Afterlife. The back of the mummy-board (now displayed vertically) shows scenes of the night sky, a motif that appears on the ceiling of burial chambers in the Valley of the Kings.
The coffins were given to the University of Cambridge by B. Hanbury and G. Waddington in 1822. It is not known where they acquired them, or what happened to the body of Nespawershefyt, but he is likely to have been buried at Thebes, near Karnak.

E.1.1822
Gallery 19
Egyptian Galleries
Book 3

Large Font Label Book
Please do not remove from the Gallery
Case 18 is located to the left hand side as you enter from Gallery 20 and continues in an anti-clockwise direction around the room.
Case 18

Animals and animal burials

Animals clearly had an important place in Egyptian life at all periods, as divine beings, pets and livestock. Animal images appear very early in Egyptian material culture.

Visitors to temples often dedicated images of the divine animals, such as bronze and terracotta figurines; the clay figures were also taken away as souvenirs. Some animals were reared in order to be mummified and buried in special tombs (catacombs) that could be visited by the general public. Animal cults were especially popular from the Late Period to the Roman period (380 B - AD 200).

Many animals were believed to be living representatives of particular gods. The crocodile, for example, represented the god Sobek at temples such as Kom Ombo. The Sobek crocodile was fed special cakes and adorned with gold necklaces. When it died it was elaborately mummified.

Excavations, texts and modern investigative methods have shown that many mummies are not of a single, complete animal, and some contain no animal bones at
all. The ‘crocodile’ mummy shown here, for example, though ancient, contains only broken pottery and stones.
1 Plaster relief of a cobra

The cobra protected the king of Egypt and his family.

About AD 100-200

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3150.1943

2 Copper alloy figure of a mongoose (Herpestes ichneumon)

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)

Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.363.1932

3 Copper alloy figure of an ichneumon

The ichneumon, also known as the Pharaoh's rat, was a furry animal, about 65 cm in length with a 45 cm tail, which lived in papyrus thickets. It was prized as a controller of rodents and snakes. The ichneumon was also associated with the sun god.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)

Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.214.1954
4-5 Faience jerboa and hedgehog

Tomb figures. The reason why figures like these were included in burials is not clear. From the beginning of the Second Intermediate Period (about 1794 BC), animal figures like these became less popular, although hippopotamus figures continued to be included in burials into Dynasty 17 (1650–1550 BC).

 Dynasty 12 (1976-1793 BC)

Given by G.D. Hornblower E.279.1939; Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.345.1954
6 Copper alloy fish on a sledge

This figure was probably part of a coffin for a mummified fish. Heavier coffins were sometimes pulled on a sledge.

Late Period (746-336 BC)

Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.198.1954

7 Limestone figure of lion cubs at play

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)

Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.140.1932

8 Clay figure of a lion

In the Roman period lions often appeared in tombs. This figure probably came from a grave with the idea of protecting the owner.

About AD 100-200

Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937 E.101.1937
9 Copper alloy figure of a cat

Probably from the top of a case for a mummified cat. The eyes are inlaid with glass and foil. The figure was cast upside down; the surface has the appearance of fur, part of the original casting. The cat has a necklace and wedjat eye over the left pectoral and a scarab on top of her head. These two features are associated with the sun god, Ra.

About AD 200

Bequeathed by C.B. Marlay E.4.1912

10 Copper alloy figure of a cat

The goddess Bastet was shown as a domestic cat and figures like this may have been made for pilgrims to buy at her temple.

About 380-30 BC

Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.165.1954

11 Mummified cat

A CT-scan of this mummy reveals that it contains the body of a kitten only a few days old when it died. Unlike many examples, there is no indication as to how it died; many had their necks broken.

Dynasty 26 (664-525 BC)

Beni Hasan

Given by Rev. G. Chester E.132.1891
12 Painted wooden coffin of a dog

During the Middle Kingdom there was an increase in the appearance of dogs on tomb reliefs. Dogs were hunters, watchdogs or pets. Unlike later burials of mummified dogs, this one was given his own tomb and his name, Heb, appears five times in the inscriptions on the coffin.

Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)

Beni Hasan, tomb 17 E

E.47.1902

13 Mummified crocodiles

The smaller of these ‘crocodiles’ has a piece of animal bone in the wrappings. The larger, more elaborate example contains only stone and pottery sherds. Ptolemy V (204-180 BC) decreed that each pot bought at a necropolis should contain the mummy of one animal.

About 30 BC-AD 100

Hawara
14 Limestone sculptor’s model

This fragment shows the head of a crocodile, with particularly prominent teeth and elaborately carved eyelashes.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4545.1943

15 Wooden figure of a crocodile

About 300 BC-AD 100

Given by D. Hanbury E.32.1940

16 Clay figure of a crocodile

This hand-modelled terracotta crocodile holds a fish or cake in its mouth. Such figures were produced for festivals and dedicated at sanctuaries.
17 Limestone bowl with a crocodile

About AD 100-200

Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.587.1947

18 Mummified ibis

The wrappings are decorated with an image of the ibis-headed god Thoth.

Ptolemaic period (3223-30 BC)

Saqqara, ibis cemetery

Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.3.1969
19 Mummified falcon

Ptolemaic period (332-30 BC)

Saqqara, Falcon galleries

Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.7.1971

20 Limestone relief

Showing the Apis bull travelling on a barque. Underneath the shrine are rollers to enable the heavy weight to move. Priests usually carried statues of gods. The bull was seen to be a living embodiment of the god Ptah and so had to be transported as any other god.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)

Saqqara

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.74.1911

21 Faience shabti for the Apis bull

This shabti figure has a bull’s head rather than that of a human. The shabti would help the deceased Apis fulfill tasks in the afterlife. The French Egyptologist Mariette found it during the original excavations of the Apis bull burial chambers.

Dynasty 19 (1292-1070 BC)

Saqqara, burial chambers of the Apis bull

Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.51.1932
22 Clay bust of the Apis bull

Such figures were purchased on site and dedicated by worshippers.

About 30 BC-AD 100
Saqqara
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.18.1913

23 Mud figure of a pregnant hippopotamus

Date uncertain
Bequeathed by Sir R. Mond E.61.1946

24 Faience figure of a hippopotamus

The hippopotamus represented the god Seth (who murdered his brother Osiris) in later period. The ancient Egyptians saw the animal as ferocious; however, figures were often included in burials. The Romans often included hippopotami on wall paintings and mosaics representing Egypt. They are often shown hunted.

Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir R. Greg E.341.1954
25 Fragment of a faience figure of a hippopotamus

Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)

Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937 E.277.1939

26 Clay figure of an unknown animal

This seemingly early figure of an animal is made in an abstract form.

Date uncertain

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3092.1943

27 Clay frog and palm lamps

Such lamps were manufactured during the Roman period to celebrate the annual flooding of the Nile and replace earlier New Year flasks.

There are a wide variety of types, often featuring a whole frog or the legs with an additional motif; corn and palms are common.

About 30 BC-AD 150

Naukratis and Saqqara

Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund GR.200.1899; GR.211.1899; Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.18.1971
28 Breccia figure of a frog

Probably from a tomb context.

Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)

Bequeathed by Sir R. Greg E.349.1954
Case 19

Late Period to Islamic burial practices

During the Late Period traditional mummification practices continued. Officials and other wealthy Egyptians could afford elaborate coffins, either stone or painted.

Most Hellenistic Greeks in Egypt (about 320–30 BC) preferred cremation. In third-century BC Alexandria the ashes were often placed in a hydria (water jar), on which the name of the dead person might be inscribed. The jar would then be placed either in an individual tomb, or more often in a loculus (sealed niche) within a larger, subterranean funerary complex.

In Roman Egypt similar practices continued, though simple burials are also found. Others chose mummification, but bodies were now simply dried and bound with linen, the organs remaining intact. Tomb scenes, however, still show traditional mummification practices. Instead of stylised faces naturalistic portraits were now painted on wooden panels. Some of these may be accurate portraits of the dead, painted during life or shortly after death.
Christian and Muslim graves were marked with a headstone, often indicating the name and family of the dead person.
1 Limestone stela

Re-used from an earlier stela (relief). The top register shows the Roman god Helios (left) and Isis-Thermouthis on an altar (right). In the middle is the Egyptian god Tu-Tu who appears in the form of a sphinx. The text from the lower section is missing. The outline of an earlier drawing in black ink is visible.

About AD 50-200

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.10.1922

2 Clay vessels

These vessels were found in various graves, dating to the late Roman period. The forms are typical of those used in everyday life, but decorated pots were often reserved for burials.

Roman, about AD 300-600

Shurafa, Abydos and Thebes

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.5.1914; E.167.1912; E.P.14
3 Mummy portrait of a girl

This portrait is painted in encaustic and tempera on sycomore wood. An inscription in Greek indicates that the owner of this portrait was a girl named ‘Didyma’, who was seven years of age when she died. The shape of the panel is typical of those from Antinoopolis.

About AD 180-200

Probably Antinoopolis

E.5.1981
Mummy portrait of a woman

The portrait is painted using the encaustic technique on lime panels. This was an imported Mediterranean wood and was used for the majority of the Hawara portraits. This panel would have been placed over the face of a mummy, as below.

About AD 100-150

Hawara

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.102.1911
3 Mummy portrait of a man

The man is bearded and wears the usual toga. The panel is painted using the encaustic technique. This portrait was given to the museum by Petrie, rather than coming from one of his excavations. The provenance is uncertain.

About AD 100-150

Hawara or Negatine-Ella

Given by William Mathew Flinders Petrie E.2.1888
4 Plaster coffin fragments

These faces formed the top section of a type of coffin that was popular in Roman Egypt. The facial features and hairstyles of the examples here seem individual, but such masks were mass-produced by pouring plaster in moulds (see under the glass).

About AD100-150

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3009.1943; E.GA.3006.1943

5 Marble Islamic stela

Written in Cufic, a form of old ornamental Arabic. The marble block may have originally been used as decoration on the inside of a Roman house. The stela was for a woman named Hujjat, the daughter of Abdhar Rahiam. It states that her father was Persian.

About AD 869-870

Old Cairo

Given by F.W. Green E.57.1914
6 Sandstone Islamic stela

The text is in Cufic. The inscription is poorly preserved but it is evident that the owner was a woman, who died in late April or May AD 1056. The surface is blackened with smoke damage and so the stela was doubtless re-used.

AD 1056
Aswan
Given by F.W. Green E.38.1930

7 Clay vessels

These vessels were found in various graves, dating to the late Roman period. The forms are typical of those used in everyday life, but decorated pots were often reserved for burials.

Roman, about AD 300-600
Shurafa, Abydos and Thebes
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.166.1912; E.73.1914; E.75.1914; E.67.1914

8 Clay lamp

About AD 500-600
Bequeathed by E. Sellars E.2.2002
9 Glass bowls
About AD 300-400
Given by C.H. Read E.13a-b.1910;
Bequeathed by J.W.L. Glaisher E.7.1928

10 Clay flask
Decorated with crosses and a retrograde inscription reading ‘Lord help us’.
About AD 400-500
Lent by Corpus Christi College Loan Ant.103.134

11 Limestone stela
The cross refers to Christianity.
About AD 500-600
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.66.1914

12 Limestone stela
Written in Coptic. The first letter of the name is missing; it has been suggested that the woman to whom the stela belonged was called Sia. The text is translated: ‘she went to rest in the month of Pashons on day 8 in the peace of god, Amen’.
About AD 400
Hawara
E.SS.43
13 Copper alloy tomb models

Model baskets on a yoke and model hoes.

About 30 BC-AD 200

Given by G.D. Hornblower E.26a-c.1939; E.26d-e.1939;
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3451.1943

14 Gold Ba bird

The Ba represented one of the spirits (souls) of the deceased.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.5502a.1943

15 Faience shabti figures

A shabti (shawabti or ushabti) is a small figure that was put in a tomb to 'answer the call' to perform tasks on behalf of the deceased such as tilling and irrigating the lands. The paler blue example can be dated to the Roman period on account of the type of faience (a glazed, crushed quartz). The other two are Ptolemaic.

About 30 BC-AD 100

Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.339.1954;
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.271.1939; E.272.1939
16 Limestone statue

Part of a funerary monument for an élite burial. The veil indicates that the subject is deceased.

About AD 300-400

E.4.1982

17 Wooden mummy tags

These tags with name, parentage, titles, age, written in demotic Egyptian and Greek, were attached to the deceased. Here, they were women. Tags were used to identify bodies because cemeteries were often some distance from the home of the deceased.

About 30 BC-AD 200

Given by Rev. G.J. Chester E.75.1891; E.W.54; E.75.1891
18 Wooden mirror
A model mirror from a tomb.
About 400-30 BC
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2903.1943

19 Limestone stela
Inscribed in Greek, which was the official language of Egypt in the Ptolemaic and Roman Periods. Anubis presents the deceased to Osiris (seated) and Isis. There is a traditional offering table in front of the gods. The text reads: ‘May the memory of Isidoros, son of Sarapion, who died before his time, be for the whole of time’.
About AD 100-200
Abydos
E.65.1901

20 Limestone stela
The deceased woman sits in a shrine, with an image of Anubis.
About AD 150-200
Kom Abu Billo
Purchased through the Duplicate Antiquities and Greg Funds E.83.1975
21 Wooden coffin fragments
Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Kharga Oasis
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.3.1908; E.4.1908

22 Faience winged scarab
The Egyptian word for a dung beetle (scarab) means ‘coming into being’. It was used to symbolise rebirth in the afterlife.
Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.133.1932

23 Porphyry coffin attachment
In the form of a comedy mask.
About AD 50-100
Given by the Trustees of the Wellcome Foundation E.33.1982
24 Copper alloy fitting

Representing Isis-Thermouthis and Dionysos as serpents, a funerary motif. Isis wears a Roman version of a crown originally worn by Ptolemaic queens. Dionysos wears a corn measure, which is a reference to fertility and rebirth. The long beard is typical of the imagery of Dionysos Sardanapolis.

About 30 BC-AD 100

Lent by Corpus Christi College, Loan Ant.103.364

25 Faience head of Medusa

Medusa was a figure of Greek mythology who could turn men to stone. Her face is usually shown front-on and she was believed to ward off evil. She often appears in funerary contexts, particularly on attachments that decorated coffins.

About AD 50-100

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.5989.1943

26 Clay head of Medusa

There are a considerable number of such heads from Naukratis in other museum collections.

About 100-30 BC

Naukratis

Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund GR.58.1887
27 Cartonnage mummy case

The subject holds a candle and a wreath. There are traditional Egyptian figures on the back of the headdress such as Anubis and Isis. In the hair are small plaster balls representing juniper. This case came to the museum in a badly damaged state and has been conserved for display.

About AD 20-100

Hawara

Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.103a.1911
27 Cartonnage foot case

On the underside (see under shelf) there are two bound captives: an Asiatic and a Libyan. These people were two of the traditional enemies of Egypt. The image of them trampled underfoot was initially reserved for royal iconography, but by the Roman period the motif was common on the foot cases of private individuals.

Hawara

Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.103b.1911
28 Human mummy

The mummy is that of a young man. Recent CT scans have shown that his internal organs were not removed. The body was wrapped some time after his death resulting in severe deformation. To support the shape, two wooden boards the length of the body were included in the wrappings.

About AD 100-150

El Hiba

Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.63.1903

29 Limestone door jamb

Originally from a tomb and re-used in the Palace of Apries. The deceased, who appears on both sides, was named Tha-iset-imu.

Dynasty 30 (380-336 BC)

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.5.1909

30 Faience Djed pillar

This motif was associated with Osiris.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)

Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.383.1954
31 Limestone stela of a Carian

Caria is in southwest Turkey. The stela had been re-used to form the lining of a votive pit. The two men are dressed in Greek-style clothes and embrace in a final farewell. Above is a traditional Egyptian motif, the winged sun disk. The inscription is in Carian Greek.

About 500-600 BC
Saqqara, Sacred animal necropolis
Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.1.1971

32 Limestone false door stela

Written in Carian. This stela was re-used in the baboon galleries at Saqqara. The form of stela is that of a traditional Egyptian false door — an earlier example can be seen in case 23 opposite.

About 600-500 BC
Saqqara, the Baboon galleries
Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.2.1971

33 Wooden pair-statue

Representing a husband and wife.

Dynasty 30 (380-336 BC)
Saqqara
Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.12.1969
34 Wooden shabti box

In the form of a shrine. Images of a door and the four sons of Horus (who appear in funerary contexts) are painted on to the outsides.

Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
Thebes
E.10.1887

35 Clay figure of Isis-Aphrodite

The goddess is naked except for jewellery and an elaborate crown. Such images were often painted inside coffins during this period. In an Egyptian context these figures may represent Hathor of the West, a female equivalent to Osiris.

About 100–30 BC
Given by Mr and Mrs F.E. Brooks E.6.1988

36 Clay pomegranate bowl

With a new comedy mask decorating the side.

About 200 BC
Given by Rev. G. Chester E.160.1891
37 Clay ‘Hadra’ hydria

Many of these vases were imported from Crete to Alexandria, where they were used for storing cremations. The Egyptians soon began to produce their own versions of the water jars, which take their name from the Hadra cemetery in Eastern Alexandria. The name of the owner, who was Greek, is Peisias.

About 230-200 BC

Given by R.A. Cecil GR.9.1977

38 Wooden coffin fragment

The hairstyle indicates that the subject was female and that this object dates to the late Ptolemaic to early Roman periods.

About 30 BC-AD 50

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3016.1943
39 Clay coffin lids

Such coffins were manufactured throughout Egyptian history and appear at a number of cemetery sites. They are difficult to date because the abstract features remain constant throughout and often differ considerably within the same period and at the same site.

Persian period? (525-401 BC)
Bahariya Oasis

Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.8.1909; E.P.291 and 234; E.P.228

40 Wooden Ptah-Sokar-Osiris box

Placed in élite burials of the Late Period; the box contains a papyrus scroll.

Late Period (746-336 BC)
E.23.1887
41 Limestone coffin lid

Belonging to Nakht-har-hebi, who held the title ‘prophet of the statues of Nectanebo II’. The owner was a priest who tended to the divine images of King Nectanebo II in the main temple at Abydos. This would account for the stone coffin, as usually only officials, priests or elite members of society were afforded this type of sarcophagus.

Nectanebo II (360-342 BC)

Abydos

E.48.1901
Case 20

1 Wooden coffin fragment

A face mask from a coffin lid.

Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)

Probably from Abydos

Given by The British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.49.1926

2 Wooden coffin fragment

The face mask from a coffin lid. The beard was attached separately. The eyes are inlaid with calcite; the pupils are missing.

Dynasty 20 (1186-1070 BC)

Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.500.1947

3 Wooden coffin fragment

The face is gilded, and the eyes and eyebrows are inlaid.

Dynasty 20 (1186-1070 BC)
4 Painted limestone stela

The owner was a priest, who can be seen making an offering to the god Re-Harakhty. The offering table is laden with animals, bread and flowers. This stela came from the same tomb as the canopic jars below.

Dynasty 26 (664-525 BC)
Abydos, tomb E 11

Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.259.1900

5 Limestone relief

An official named Ray makes an offering to Osiris and his consort. In the lower register Ray and his wife, Tatji, sit facing another couple called Piy and Tay. There is a small monkey hiding under Tay’s chair. The relief is believed to have come from Saqqara.

Dynasty 19 (1292-1070 BC)
Perhaps Saqqara
E.SS.49

6 Limestone shabti figure

With hieratic text in ink. Made for Amenemwia, servant in the wine-hall.

New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
E.8.1887
7 Wood shabti figure
Made from pitched wood for Kenamun.
Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.210.1932

8 Limestone shabti figure
Belonging to Thutmosis, who was a priest of the god Thoth. The elaborate pleated linen clothes of this shabti are typical of figures dating to Dynasty 19.
Dynasty 19 (1292-1185 BC)
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937 E.34.1937

9 Faience shabti figure
As time went on, the Egyptians believed that it was better for the dead to have a large number of shabtis (up to 365) included in their burial equipment. It became more common to make shabtis in moulds, like this one.
Dynasty 26 (664-525 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.337.1954
10 Limestone canopic jars

These jars take their name from Canopus, a city near Alexandria, which is named after the mythological pilot of King Menelaos. The heads of these jars are in the form of the four sons of Horus. These limestone examples are typical of Dynasty 26.

Dynasty 26 (664-525 BC)

Abydos, tomb E 11

Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.217a-d.1900
Case 21

Middle Kingdom to New Kingdom burials

During the early Middle Kingdom (about 2046-1840 BC), the dead were usually buried in rectangular coffins made of wood. These coffins were decorated with inscriptions giving the name of the deceased, and also increasingly with figures and other motifs.

Inside the coffins, the mummified bodies were laid out in extended form, rather than crouched, often on their sides and with a mask covering the head. Internal organs were mummified separately and placed in canopic jars. The earliest canopic jars had lids in the form of human heads, but over time these were replaced with the heads of the four sons of Horus, protective deities with the heads of a man, a jackal, a baboon and a bird of prey.

There was also an increase in the quantity of objects buried with the dead, including pottery, jewellery and cosmetic items.

By 1850 BC, the dead were closely associated with the god Osiris and the shape of coffins began to change: coffins in the perfect, eternal sah form became popular, having the shape of a person wrapped in white linen and wearing a funerary mask. Box-shaped coffins,
however, continued to be made until the early New Kingdom (about 1520 BC).
1 Calcite amphora

Found in Tomb 6 in the New Kingdom cemetery at Gurob, together with some shabti figures, pottery (including a piece from the Aegean) and the skull of a monkey.

Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Gurob

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.41.1921

2 Clay shabti jar

Inscribed for Tasen, daughter of Tentawi. The lid is in the form of a baboon head and there are Anubis figures on the sides.

Shabti figures were stored in containers like this or, more often, in wooden boxes.

Dynasty 20 (1186-1070 BC)
Abydos, grave D 37

Given by the Egypt Exploration E.91-2.1902

3a Clay vessel

In the form of a bundle of dom palm fruit.

About 1479-1425 BC
Abydos, tomb 249

Given by the Trustees of the Wellcome Foundation E.29.1982
3b Clay horn-shaped vessel
Probably used for storing ointment.
About 1479-1425 BC
Given by the Trustees of the Wellcome Foundation E.7.1981

3c Clay juglet
With black beaded decoration.
Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Hu
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.144.1899

4 Faience vessel
Imitating black and white stone.
Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4678.1943

5 Wooden headrest
New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2666.1943
6 Wooden hoe

About 2119-1550 BC
Deir el Bahri

Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.19.1907

7 Calcite jars

A stand has been carved as part of one of the vessels.

About 1479-1425 BC
Mazghuna, Thutmosis III cemetery

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.15.1911; E.16.1911

8 Faience jars with lids

About 1550-1388 BC
From Tûna el-Gebel

Given by G.D. Hornblower E.274.1939, E.275.1939
9 Wall painting

A representation of the goddess of the West. This goddess was closely linked to Osiris, and the West was the region where the dead were believed to live.

Thebes, probably Theban Tomb 172

Given by A.G.W. Murray E.84.1913

10 Human-headed clay lid

From a canopic jar

About 1479-1351 BC
Sedment Grave 273

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.40.1921
11 Tomb Group

Objects found in the mid-Dynasty 18 tomb of Ipusheri: a plaster mask; vessels of pottery, calcite and wood; a greywacke heart scarab inscribed for Ipusheri; a limestone monkey jar; a faience seal; and a hematite headrest amulet. The burial was in three re-used tomb shafts of Dynasty 12.

About 1318-1292 BC
Abydos, tomb E 158

Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.4.1900; E.111-116.1900; E.118-124.1900; E.132-134.1900

12 Painted wooden coffin

This coffin shows a funeral procession including mourners, offering bearers and men carrying the coffin. Unlike the Middle Kingdom coffins with two eyes shown on a single panel, this example has one eye on each of the side panels.

Dynasty 17 (1645-1550 BC)
Abydos

Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.283.1900
13 Limestone pair-statue
Statue of Karema and his wife, Abykhy, sitting side-by-side. The back of the seat is inscribed. The figures at the side of the seat represent their sons, and the figure on the front, beside Abykhy’s leg, is a daughter. Karema (or Kerem) was a doorkeeper at the cult temple of Thutmosis III at Thebes.

Dynasty 20 (1186-1070 BC)
E.21.1887

14 Clay vessel stand
Decorated with a female figure.

Dynasty 12 (1976-1794 BC)
Beni Hasan, tomb 83

Given by the Beni Hasan Excavation Committee E.180.1902

15 Vegetable fibre vessel holder
About 1976-1648 BC
Beni Hasan

Given by the Beni Hasan Excavation Committee E.120.1903
16 Reed basket

Under ultraviolet light the woven pattern is clear. The lid was originally decorated with jackals (one reconstructed on photo).

About 1976-1648 BC
Beni Hasan

Given by the Beni Hasan Excavation Committee E.121.1903

17 Reed basket lid

About 1976-1648 BC
Beni Hasan

Given by the Beni Hasan Excavation Committee E.122.1903

18 Clay tomb servant

First Intermediate Period (about 2170-2020 BC)
Beni Hasan, tomb 187

Given by Beni Hasan Excavation Committee E.35.1903

19 Wooden steering oar

From a model boat. In the form of a falcon head.

Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)
Beni Hasan, tomb 36

Given by the Beni Hasan Excavation Committee E.8.1903
20 Copper alloy figure
Representing a woman, probably as a fertility figure. The woman’s pubic area is marked by a triangle of ‘black bronze’, a composition including a small amount of gold, specially treated to acquire a black patina.

Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937 E.8.1937

21 Carnelian Amulets
In the form of hippopotamus heads.

Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Given G.D. Hornblower E.80.1939; E.128c. 1939

22 Tomb group
These objects were found in the tomb of a woman: wooden and bone box, mirror, cloth-knife, calcite and serpentine cosmetic jars, faience bowl, and steatite eye-paint jar, carnelian and glazed steatite scarabs and carnelian frog amulet.

1479-1425 BC
Sedment, tomb 1723

Given by the British School of Archaeology E.1-2.1921; E.20-38.1921
23 Tomb group

Objects from a man’s tomb: a clay jar, a flask and a cosmetic jar of ivory, a monkey eye-paint jar, a faience armlet, a glazed steatite scarab and oval plaques (one with the name of the King Thutmose III).

About 1479-1425 BC
Abydos, tomb D 108

Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.10.1901, E.13- 19.1901

24 Wooden bowl

Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Beni Hasan, tomb 287

Given by the Beni Hasan Excavation Committee E.7.1903

25 Clay vessel

This is an imported vessel, which was found in a grave.

Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Riqqeh

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.74.1914

26 Calcite bowl

Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Riqqeh

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.20.1913
27 Faience and carnelian necklaces

Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)
Beni Hasan

Given by the Beni Hasan Excavation Committee E.52.1903

28 Limestone offering table

The inscriptions around the edge are for offerings for the seal-bearer of the god, Neferperet. The central part is decorated with a hetep-sign (meaning offering table) with images of the food offerings on it. There are also interconnecting troughs for liquid offerings.

Dynasty 11 (2119-1976 BC)
Abydos

Given by the the British School of Archaeology E.6.1922
29 Cartonnage mask

Belonging to the steward Thay. This mask consists of layers of plaster and linen forming an idealised face. This type of mask was placed directly over the wrapped head of the corpse. At Beni Hasan during this period corpses were not fully mummified, but simply wrapped in linen and plaster.

Dynasty 11 (2119-1976 BC)
Beni Hasan, tomb 275

Given by the Beni Hasan Excavation Committee E.198.1903
30 Wooden steering oar

From a model boat. The two eyes are the same as those shown on the side panels of coffins dating to this period.

Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)
Beni Hasan, tomb 75

Given by the Beni Hasan Excavation Committee E.106.1903

During the Old Kingdom and early Middle Kingdom (about 2600-1900 BC), coffins were left largely undecorated, apart from the depiction of eyes on the eastern side for the dead to see the rising sun. In particular, no humans or gods were shown.

Statues of men and women were included in burials, however. Some of these show the deceased in an idealised form, while others are offering bearers, often women, or fertility figures.

31 Wooden bust of a woman

This may come from a large figure of an offering bearer. The eyes are inlaid with copper, obsidian and calcite.

Dynasty 12 (1976-1794 BC)

Given by the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum E.1.1989
32 Wooden offering bearer

First Intermediate Period (2170-2020 BC)

Given by G.D. Hornblower E.201.1939

33 Wooden ‘paddle doll’

‘Paddle dolls’ are found in tombs of the Middle Kingdom. They are shaped like the counterweight to a heavy necklace, called a menat. The decoration depicts a very stylised female figure, wearing a bead net dress, with necklaces. The pubic region is emphasised and the ‘doll’ has no proper head. Such figures may have served as fertility symbols.

Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)

Bequeathed by Sir Robert Mond E.50.1946

34 Greywacke statue of a woman

An idealized figure of a woman wearing a Hathor wig, which was common at this time.

Dynasty 13 (1794-1648 BC)

Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.67.1932
35 Fertility figure made of clay

Such figures were placed in tombs and graves to symbolise rebirth in the afterlife. Their swollen thighs and abdomens emphasise their fertility.

Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.188.1939

36 Steatite statue of a seated man

The man is shown sitting on a chair, indicated by a solid block of stone with a low back. His ears are noticeably large and indicate the importance of the sense of hearing in the afterlife.

Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4674.1943

37 Wooden statue of an official

Such images were placed in tombs of the wealthy and were intended to represent the tomb owner.

Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)
Given by the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum E.3.1922
38 Copper figure

Analysis has shown that this figure was cast from pure copper, which is very difficult to melt unless mixed with an alloy. The surface is much pitted –probably because the ancient surface was removed in modern times, revealing the underlying structure of the object.

First Intermediate Period (2170-2020 BC)
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.4.1926

39 Painted wooden coffin panels

From the side of a box coffin. The eye-panels on the exterior of this type of coffin allow the deceased to see out of the coffin.

Dynasty 12 (1976-1794 BC)
Beni Hasan, tomb 94

Given by the Beni Hasan Excavation Committee E.69.1903
Case 22

1 Painted limestone relief

The animal at the right is a genet, a cat-like carnivore, which is now extinct in Egypt. Genets will take young chicks from birds’ nests, as is shown here.

This motif is common in the Old Kingdom (2707–2170 BC). The relief, however, comes from the funerary temple of King Montuhotep II, who brought Egypt back under the control of a single king after a time of disunity (the First Intermediate Period, about 2170–2119 BC). He became the founder of the following period, now known as the Middle Kingdom. Other reliefs from his temple can be seen in Case 3 (gallery 20).

Dynasty 11, reign of Montuhotep II (2046-1995 BC)
Deir el Bahri, temple of Montuhotep II

Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.5.1906
The stela shows a woman named Senet, wearing a dress decorated with a zigzag pattern and smelling a lotus flower in front of a table of offerings. The inscription reads: ‘Invocation offerings: a thousand of bread and beer, oxen and fowl for the revered Senet, born of Hapy’.

About 1970-1870 BC

E.SS.14
3 Basalt statue of woman and child

This small statue was found in the tomb of an unidentified woman. The smaller figure is of a child, indicated by having his finger to his lips and his hair pulled into a single lock on one side of his head.

Middle Kingdom (2119–1794 BC)

Haraga, tomb 162

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.3.1914

4 Limestone statue of a man with a bowl

The bowl is a container for cosmetics, probably eye paint, used by men and women in life, and also required after death so that they could appear properly made-up before
meeting Osiris in the afterlife. This comes from the same tomb as no. 3.

Middle Kingdom (2119–1794 BC)
Haraga, tomb 162
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.6.1914

5 Faience figure of a dwarf

The Egyptians depicted dwarfs with large, flat heads, a protruding belly, and short, thick arms and legs. Dwarfs fulfilled an important ritual role in ancient Egypt.

Dynasty 12 (1976–1794 BC)
E.60.1984

6 Painted limestone stela

This was made for a man named Amenemhat Nebwy, overseer of the house of divine offerings. He is shown twice. In the top part of the stela, he sits in front of a table of offerings, with his mother Nefret and another woman, probably his wife, named Senet seated behind him. In the lower part, he is shown standing to receive goods identified as ‘tribute’, brought by a number of named men. The stela had been set up in a chapel at Abydos, a place of pilgrimage because it was believed to be the burial place of the god Osiris.
There is no evidence that Amenemhat Nebwy was buried at Abydos and the chapel was probably simply a cenotaph.

About 1853-1794 BC
Abydos, cemetery E, tomb 295
Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.207.1900

7 Serpentine shabti figure

Shabtis (also called shawabtis or ushabtis) are small mummiform figures that were put in a tomb and meant to ‘answer the call’ to perform tasks on behalf of the deceased such as tilling the soil and irrigating the fields.

About 1976-1648 BC
Hu, tomb W 38
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.252.1899

8 Basalt shabti figure

In this example the figure appears to be wrapped in a cloak, rather than in the form of a mummy. It is inscribed with an offering formula for the ‘soldier of the town regiment, Inherhotep’.

Dynasty 12 (1976-1794 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.641.1954
9 Limestone stela

The stela was made for a man named Senebwy, who held high priestly titles, including ‘chief priest of his god’, ‘lector priest’ and ‘the great controller of craftsmen of the Lord of All’ (a title held by the High Priest at Memphis). He was also described as ‘one whose coming to the temple is awaited on the day of the rising of Sothis’, referring to celebrations at the beginning of the new year. Below the inscription is Senbuy (centre) with his wife Nubemheb (left) and his son Ra-Seth (right). The faces and feet of the figures, Senebuy's left wrist and Ra-Seth's elbow have been deliberately damaged, as has the Seth-hieroglyph in the son's name.

Dynasty 13 (1794-1648 BC)

Possibly Saqqara

Purchased for the museum by W.M.F. Petrie E.SS.37
Case 23

Death and burial in the Old and Middle Kingdoms

By 3500 BC, the Egyptians had developed the concept of preparing a corpse for burial, with clear evidence of the use of linen wrappings by the beginning of Dynasty 1 (around 3030 BC).

In the Old Kingdom (2707-2170 BC) it became important to transform the body into a special form, a sah. This was a perfect, eternal image of the dead person, eventually represented by a body wrapped in white linen, with a mask covering the head. In a very few cases, bodies were dismembered but this practice ceased by the end of the period.

At the same time the Egyptians began to build substantial tombs, including offering chapels decorated with scenes to ensure the continued existence of the dead in the afterlife. Burials often included statues of the deceased where their ka-spirits could receive offerings.
Tombs cut out of the rock developed in the Old Kingdom, becoming very popular during the Middle Kingdom (2046-1793 BC). Figures of offering bearers and other wooden models were often included in burials at this time, as well as shabtis, figures which would carry out work for the dead in the afterlife.
1 Clay vessel
Egyptian burials usually included clay bowls, jars, etc., often actually containing food for the dead or as symbolic containers.

Dynasty 12 (1976-1794 BC)
Riqqeh, cemetery A
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.17.1913

2 Clay vessel
Dynasty 6 (2347-2216 BC)
Hu, cemetery Y
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.200.1899

3 Clay dish
Dynasty 6 (2347-2216 BC)
Abydos grave T 53
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.4.1910

4 Wooden canopy from a model boat
Boats were one of the standard means of transport in Egypt. Even the sun god was believed to travel through the sky in a boat. A canopy on a boat was used to provide shade to passengers.
5 Wooden model of a shield
Painted to look as if it is covered in cowhide.

6 Wooden oar
From a model boat.

7 Model boat
This boat is for travelling north, using the current of the Nile.
8 Model boat with a sail

This boat is for travelling south, using the prevailing wind, which blows from the north.

Late Dynasty 11 or early Dynasty 12 (around 1985–1950 BC)

Found in the tomb of Khety (whose coffin is displayed in the opposite case) at Beni Hasan.
9 Faience miniature vessels

Such vessels were made as models to go in the tomb, as substitutes for full-sized examples.

About 1976-1648 BC


10 Calcite vessel with monkeys

Used as a jar for eye paint.

Dynasty 12 (1976-1794 BC)

Given by G.D. Hornblower E.266.1939

11 Two miniature calcite vessels

One is carved with an integral stand.

Dynasty 12 (1976-1794 BC)

Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937 E.51.1937
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.272.1954
12 Miniature stone vessel with a spout

Early Dynastic Period (3032-2707 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.84.1954

13 Spouted vessel

This full-sized vessel was used for pouring water during rituals at the tomb.

Dynasty 6 (2347-2216 BC)
Abydos grave R 19
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.42.1910

14 Wooden offering bearer

A female figure carrying a basket. Processions of offering bearers were often carved or painted on to the walls of tombs, showing food and other goods being brought for rituals or to be included in burials. Models of offering bearers were used as substitutes for, or in addition to, such tomb scenes.

First Intermediate Period (2170-2020 BC)
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.194.1939
15 Wooden figures of tomb servants

The figure on the left has one hand raised to his head and the other in front of him. These gestures are typical in representations of people singing. It is not clear what the other figure is doing.

Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)


16 Limestone false door stela

False doors allowed their owners’ spirits to pass through from the afterlife into this world, so that they could receive offerings at the tomb. The owner of this example was a woman called Hemire (also known as Hemi), a priestess of Hathor. Her husband is mentioned at the bottom of one column, but he is not named.

Dynasty 10 (2170-2020 BC)

Busiris

E.6.1909
17 Limestone stela

The priest Montuhotep is shown with his wife Senet, and his parents Neferperet and Hathoremhat, in front of a table of offerings. Before him are his sisters, his son, daughters, the nurse, the maidservants and various dependents, all bringing offerings.

About 1976-1879 BC

Abydos

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.9.1922
18 Model granary

Men fill and carry baskets of grain up to the roof of a granary where there are two more figures. One is a scribe, who records the grain. The granary entrance is shown by a red rectangle on the outside.

Late Dynasty 11 or early Dynasty 12 (around 1985–1950 BC)

Found in the tomb of Khety (whose coffin is displayed in the opposite case) at Beni Hasan.

Given by the Beni Hasan Excavation Committee E.71e.1903

19 Model showing baking and brewing

At the left, bread is prepared and at the front a pile of conical bread moulds is being baked. Behind that, beer is brewed. Bread and beer were the staples of the ancient Egyptian diet.

Late Dynasty 11 or early Dynasty 12 (around 1985–1950 BC)

Found in the tomb of Khety (whose coffin is displayed in the opposite case) at Beni Hasan.

Given by the Beni Hasan Excavation Committee E.71d.1903
20 Model showing butchery

The blood from a slaughtered cow is caught in a bowl. What looks like a three-legged stool is actually an ancient butcher’s block.

Late Dynasty 11 or early Dynasty 12 (around 1985–1950 BC)

Found in the tomb of Khety (whose coffin is displayed in the opposite case) at Beni Hasan.

Given by the Beni Hasan Excavation Committee E.71c.1903
21 Clay model house

This provided a dwelling space for the soul of the deceased. Hence, models like these are often called ‘soul houses’. This example also includes offerings, which can be seen lying on the floor of the lower courtyard. Stairs on the exterior allow access to the upper floor.

Rifa

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.58.1907
22 Objects from a single tomb

These necklaces and vessels of clay and stone, as well as the clay donkey, the fragment of a clay fertility figure, the ivory figure of a woman with silver jewellery and the fragmentary silver disk, were all found together in a tomb. It was excavated by W.M.F. Petrie in 1898–9. He concluded that it had contained a number of different burials, although the contents had been very much disturbed by tomb robbers before it was excavated.

About 1976-1648 BC
Hu, tomb W 72
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.10-18.1899; E.19a.1899; E.210.1899; E.40.1899; E.35.1899

23 Limestone relief

At the left, part of a vine grows up over a trellis and men, identified as kanu (gardeners), carry away baskets of grapes. Wine jars were labelled with the place where the grapes were grown and the year.

Possibly from Saqqara

About 2505-2216 BC
Given by the family of F.W. Green E.5.1950
24 Clay water jug

This style of vessel, decorated with four miniature vases around the neck, was popular in Upper (southern) Egypt in the early part of the Middle Kingdom.

Dynasty 11 (2119-1976 BC)
Hu

Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.28.1903

25 Calcite jar

Made in three sections. This was found together with a palette for eye paint and two pebble grinders (see 35 in this case). Stone vessels were often used to hold liquids, especially oils.

Dynasty 3 (2707-2639 BC)
El Kab, tomb 5

Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.11.1902

26 Calcite cylinder jar

Dynasty 5 (2504-2347 BC)
Matmar, grave 3251

Given by the Brunton Expedition Committee E.9.1933

27 Breccia jar

Dynasty 3 (2702-2639 BC)

Given by G.D. Hornblower E.176.1939
28 Limestone statue of Heti and Khenut

Heti was a judge and overseer of scribes. Khenut is described as his sister. Her mother’s name is also specified as Meresankh. Since Heti’s mother’s name is not given, perhaps she was his half-sister.

Dynasty 5 (2504-2347 BC)

Giza, tomb G 5480

Given by the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum E.62.1926

29 Calcite headrest

Headrests were sometimes provided inside Egyptian coffins to support the head of the deceased. They came to be seen as an essential part of the protection of the dead and miniature versions could be included in the wrappings close to the neck of a mummy.

Dynasty 6 (2347-2216 BC)

E.9.1899
30 Limestone relief

Inetkaes, priestess of Hathor and Neith, is accompanied by her four daughters (Henutsen and Niankhbastet in the upper row, Nikauhathor and Niankhkhthor in the lower row) and a young girl identified as Neferpedjes.

About 2504-2216 BC

Probably Giza

E.7.1909

31 Limestone statue of a man

His name, Ankhwedjes, is inscribed on the base of the statue. He is shown in the classic pose of a seated Old Kingdom official, holding a folded cloth in one hand. The statue was probably originally made for his tomb.

Dynasty 5 (2504-2307 BC)

E.35.1907

32 Juglet made of Tell el-Yahudiya ware

The site of Tell el-Yahudiya is northeast of Cairo. A large quantity of pottery, with a distinctive dark colour and decorated with impressed dots, was found there. It is also found in Cyprus and other parts of the Near East. Analysis shows that this example is made of Nile silt.

Dynasty 13 (1794-1648 BC)

Given by the Trustees of the Wellcome Foundation E.6.1981
33 Cosmetic container decorated with vultures

Made of anhydrite, a type of stone especially prized because of its distinctive colour and for being translucent. The vultures may represent Nekhbet, the patron goddess of Upper (southern) Egypt.

Dynasty 12 (1976-1794 BC)

Akhmim

Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937 E.54.1937

34 Calcite lid of a cylinder jar

Inscribed with the name of a king of Dynasty 6, Nemtiemsaf Merenre. There is some debate about whether there were two kings with this name during that period. The lid may have come from the tomb of an official, rather than a royal tomb. The jar it covered was probably a container for oil.

About 2219-2218 BC

E.2.1901
35 Palette and grinders

For the preparation of eye paint. The palette shows traces of use in the centre. These objects were found with No. 25, a calcite jar.

Dynasty 3 (2707-2639 BC)
El Kab, tomb 5
Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.14.1902

36 Copper alloy mirror

The Egyptian term for a mirror was ankh, the word which also meant ‘life’. So, in a play on words, providing the dead with a mirror in a tomb meant providing them with life. Many mirrors are shaped like the ankh-hieroglyph, although the handle of this example is rather different.

Dynasty 13 (1794-1648 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3524.1943

37 Diorite offering table

Scenes on the walls of Egyptian tombs frequently show the dead, in the afterlife, receiving offerings of food placed on tables.

Dynasty 4 (2639-2504 BC)
Tarkhan, context 555
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.50.1912
38 Inlaid limestone relief
Showing the sacrifice of an oryx. This technique of inlaying was only used for a short period.
About 2707-2504 BC
Maidum, tomb of Itet
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.23.1910

39 Axe made of wood and copper alloy
From about 2100 BC onwards, burials included weapons (or images of them painted on the insides of coffins).
About 2170-1976 BC
Given by the family of F.W. Green E.14.1950

40 Copper alloy daggers
With ivory and wooden handles.
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.431.1932; E.377.1932

41 Copper alloy vessels
This bowl and ewer (lid missing) were made by hammering an alloy of copper. Their shapes are identical to those shown in a relief in this case (No. 17) of later date, where they appear below the offering table. This shows the degree of consistency of some forms of vessel.
About 2504-2216 BC

42 Painted wooden statue of an official

Figures of the dead usually show them in the prime of life, as they wish to exist in the afterlife. In the event of the body being destroyed, the statue could be a substitute home for the spirits of the deceased. (The staff is modern.)

Dynasty 6 (2347-2216 BC)
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937 E.40.1937

43 Limestone head from a statue

Pink limestone, plastered and painted. The skin colour suggests the subject may have been a woman, shown wearing a cap.

Dynasty 4 (2639-2504 BC)
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937 E.27.1937

44 Part of a wooden statue of an official

Representing a man wearing a short braided wig. The arms (now missing) were made separately and attached using dowels.
Dynasty 6 (2347-2216 BC)

Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937
E.41.1937

45 Clay vessel

Rope marks can be seen clearly on the exterior of this large vessel. Such objects could be used in burials and also as lids for pot burials (see 46 below).

Old Kingdom (2707-2170 BC)
E.P.550

46 Clay coffin jar

The skeleton found in this jar was that of a child. A flint and a small number of pottery vessels accompanied the body.

Old Kingdom (2707-2170 BC)
Hierakonpolis
E.P.550
Case 24

Early burial practices

The last prehistoric period in Egypt is usually called the Predynastic period, and it lasted from about 6000 to 3000 BC. At this time, when people died they were generally buried in simple pits, laid in a crouched position on their side. The effect of burying a body in the hot, dry sand in Egypt was to dry it out very rapidly. It is not clear whether this drying effect was intentional or achieved by chance, but bodies found in such burials are often well preserved.

Burials of this period usually contained objects, such as pots, jewellery and stone palettes. This suggests that there was at this period some belief in a continued existence after death.

The stone palettes are a very distinctive feature of the period and were associated with grinding up powder for eye makeup. They were made from a specially selected type of stone and take the form of animals, birds and especially fish.
1 Clay hanging vessel
The spirals imitate stone.
About 3500 BC
Given by Rev. G. Chester E.157.1891

2 Clay double hanging jar
Nile silt clay, black burnished imitating stone
About 3500-3000 BC
Given by the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum E.2.1980

3 Volcanic ash vessels
A beaker with flared mouth, a flask inspired by Palestinian forms and a spouted bowl.
Dynasty 1 (3032-2853 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir R. Greg E.110.1954; E.111.1954;
Given by the family of F.W. Green E.9.1950

4 Clay hanging vessel
With a painted ship.
About 3500 BC
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4571.1943
5 Clay jar
Decorated with two ships, a man, a goddess, a hunter and an antelope.
About 3000 BC
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.170.1939

6 Clay jar
Decorated with a ship with oars and standards, and birds and trees on the river bank.
About 3000 BC
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.1.1928

7 Serpentine vessel
In the form of a boat.
About 3000 BC
Hierakonpolis
Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.103.1898

8 Burnished clay beakers
Nile silt clay, black-topped ware.
About 4500-4000 BC
Hierakonpolis, grave 213
Given by Egyptian Research Account E.71.1898; E.73.1898
9 Gold spoon
From a child’s grave.
About 3000 BC
Hierakonpolis
Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.5.1900

10 Limestone figure of a man
About 3500-3000 BC
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson EGA.3154.1943

11 Ivory figure of a woman
About 3500-3000 BC
Matmar, grave 2682
Given by the British Museum E.W.22
12 Mudstone palette
In the form of a bird. Recent study has shown these palettes are made of mudstone, and not of slate (as previously thought).

About 4000-3000 BC
Matmar, grave 2631
Given by the British Museum E.16.1930

13 Burnished clay bowl
About 5000-4500 BC
Matmar, grave 2517
Given by the British Museum E.83.1930

14 Burnished clay bowl
From a grave belonging to an elderly woman. Made from Nile silt clay.

About 5000-4500 BC
Matmar, grave 2517
Given by the British Museum E.12.1931

15 Shell necklace
About 5000-4500 BC
Matmar, grave 203
Given by the British Museum E.83.1931
16 Clay jar
Marl clay, with painted criss-cross 'net' lines and relief wavy-line.
About 3000 BC
Ballas or Naqada
Given by Sir. W.M.F. Petrie E.86.189

17 Burnished clay beaker
Nile silt clay, black-topped ware
About 4500-4000 BC
Naqada, grave 1611
Given by Egyptian Research Account E.18.1896

18 Burnished clay flask
Nile silt clay, red washed ware.
About 3500 BC
Naqada, grave 185
Given by Egyptian Research Account E.54.1896
19 Bone harpoon
About 3500-3000 BC
Abydos, grave X 22
Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.221.1900

20 Mudstone palette or pendant
In the form of a double bird.
About 3500-3000 BC
Abydos
Given by Rev. G. Chester E.148.1891

21 Clay box
Nile silt clay with burnished red slip.
About 3500-3000 BC
Abydos, cemetery G
Given by Egypt Exploration Society E.260.1900

22 Ivory spoon
About 3000 BC
Abydos, grave X 75
Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.62.1903
23 Mud sealing

With an impression from a cylinder seal of the name of one of the last kings of Dynasty 2. During this period rival kings ruled in Egypt.

Dynasty 2 (2734-2707 BC)
Abydos, tomb 1098
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.58.1901

24 Mud sealings

Two of several from the same grave with the name of King Narmer.

About 3032 BC
Tarkhan, grave 414
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.185.1-6.1912

25 Ivory comb

About 3500-3000 BC
Abydos, grave G 78
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.62.1900
26 Carnelian necklace
About 3000 BC
Tarkhan, tomb 415
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.59.1912

27 Part of a tomb group
Ivory gaming pieces, calcite jar and rock crystal bowl.
Dynasty 1 (3032-2853 BC)
Tarkhan, tomb 1060
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.34.1912; E.41a-c.1912; E.42.1912; E.43.1912

28 Limestone and calcite tusk pendants
About 3000 BC
Bequeathed by Sir R. Greg E.547.1954; Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson EGA.3189.1943

29 Squat jars made of stone
Dynasty 1 (3032-2853 BC)
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937 E.35c.1937; E.35h.1937
30 Limestone spouted bowl
Dynasty 2 (2853-2707 BC)
Given by the family of F.W. Green E.11.1950

31 Porphyry and gold cylinder jar
Dynasty 1 (3032-2853 BC)
Bequeathed by Oscar Raphael E.4.1946

32 Burnished clay dish
Nile silt clay, black-topped ware.
About 4000-3500 BC
Naqada, grave 1845
Given by Egyptian Research Account E.37.1896

33 Burnished clay vessel
Nile silt clay, black-topped ware.
About 3500-3000 BC
Ballas, grave 223
Given by Egyptian Research Account E.15.1896
34 Mudstone Palette
In the form of a fish.
About 3000 BC
Ballas, grave 613
Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.11.1896

35 Clay hanging flask
Nile silt clay, burnished black ware imitating stone.
About 3000 BC
Ballas, grave 569
Given by Egyptian Research Account E.83.1896

36 Mudstone palette
In the form of a gazelle. Palettes were used for grinding pigment.
About 4000-3500 BC
Ballas
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.372.1932

37 Serpentine bound gazelle
Dynasty I (3032-2853 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3197.1943
38 Mudstone palette
In the form of a turtle.
About 4000-3000 BC
Gerzeh, grave 105
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.7.1911

39 Limestone cosmetic dish
In the form of a turtle.
Dynasty 1 (3032-2853 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3201.1943

40 Clay vessel
Probably in the form of a hedgehog. Marl clay with traces of red wash.
About 3500 BC
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4330.1943
41 Mudstone palette
In the form of a double bird motif.
About 4000-3000 BC
E.S.101

42 Clay bowl
Nile silt clay, white-painted ware. Decorated with birds, a crocodile and hippopotami.
About 3500 BC
Given by the family of F.W. Green E.4.1950

43 Limestone pendant
In the form of a hippopotamus.
About 3500-3000 BC
E.A.21

44 Burnished clay flask
Made of marl clay.
Dynasties 2-3 (2853-2707 BC)
Tarkhan, grave 73
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.27.1912
45 Mudstone palettes

Rectangular and oval. Only the latter is associated with a grave number.

Tarkhan, grave 1593

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.64.1914; E.16.1913

46 Faience necklace and shell bangles

About 3500-3000 BC

Hu, grave H 94

Given by The Egypt Exploration Fund E.37.1899; E.221a-d.1899

47 Calcite bowl

Decorated with a festival inscription of the god Seth.

Dynasty 1 (3032-2853 BC)

Purchased in Qena

Purchased by F.W. Green E.3.1901
Case 25

The Burial of Nakhtefmut

The mummy-case of Nakhtefmut is displayed here with objects found buried with him. Inscriptions show that Nakhtefmut was the ‘Fourth Priest of Amun’. His burial can be dated to around 925 – 890 BC.

The tomb of Nakhtefmut was discovered by J.E. Quibell in 1895 within the temple precinct of Ramesses II (the Ramesseum) at Thebes. The mummified body was removed and examined by the excavator, who recovered the amulets, leather straps, flowers and papyrus from the wrappings. The four wooden figures and the box of ushabtis (funerary figures) were found close to the mummy-case.

The mummy-case is made of a material known as cartonnage. This was produced by wrapping layers of linen soaked in glue around a mud core in the shape of a body. After it had dried, the cartonnage was cut open at the back and the mud core removed. The mummified body was then inserted and the back of the cartonnage laced up.
The four wooden figures represent the Sons of Horus, who were protective minor gods, and the papyrus contains spells from the Book of the Dead, to help Nakhtefmut in the Afterlife.

Given by the Egypt Research Account
E.64.1896 etc.
Case 25

Inner coffin of Userhet

The burial of Userhet was excavated in 1903 at Beni Hasan by J. Garstang. This coffin originally contained the mummy of Userhet, who lived about 1885 – 1850 BC. It was found inside an outer coffin that is now in the collection of the University of Liverpool.

The main part of the coffin is made from a single piece of Ficus sycomorus (sycomore fig) which was cut in half and hollowed out. The decoration is painted on to a thin layer of plaster and shows Userhet wrapped in white linen, with a funerary mask covering his face. His face is painted black to represent the colour of the rich soil of Egypt, from which new life grew each year after the annual flood. Gods were often depicted with blue wigs and beards, and at the time that Userhet’s coffin was made the dead were beginning to be associated with Osiris, the principal god of the Afterlife.

The inscription also links Userhet with Osiris, and it calls upon the sky-goddess Nut to cover him.

Given by J. Garstang
E.88.1903
The coffins of Pakepu were among thirty coffins discovered in a deep pit somewhere at Thebes in 1868-1869. Twenty of these were presented to the then Prince of Wales, who gave this set to the University of Cambridge in 1869. The coffins of Pakepu’s parents, found in the same pit, are now in Edinburgh and Oxford.

According to the titles on his coffins, Pakepu was a ‘Water carrier on the west of Thebes’, probably an official who was responsible for the maintenance of some part of the ditches and sluices that regulated the supply of water from the Nile. He lived around 700–650 BC.

These coffins give the impression of being more quickly and cheaply made than those of Nespawersheft. The wood is patched together, the joins covered with a thick layer of plaster. The cruder, larger-scale painting would have been much quicker to execute.

Given by HRH the Prince of Wales (the future Edward VII)

E.2.1869
Case 25

The burial of Khety

The coffin of Khety and the models shown with it were found in tomb 366 at Beni Hasan by J. Garstang in 1903. The site lies in Middle Egypt, fairly close to Amarna, and contained numerous burials of local officials from the immediate area.

Khety’s burial dates to late Dynasty II or early Dynasty 12, around 1980 – 1950 BC. His coffin is a typical rectangular box coffin with the rather plain decoration usual for this date. The inscriptions give Khety’s name while the eyes painted on the outside on the coffin enabled the dead person to see out.

Photographs taken at the time of the excavation show the two boats and the three other models on the lid of the coffin. The model granary and the models of butchery, and brewing and baking activities, were placed there in order to provide food and drink for Khety in the Afterlife. The two model boats, one with a sail and the other powered by oars, would enable him to travel on the Nile.

E.71.1903
Gallery 20
Egyptian Galleries
Book 1

Large Font Label Book
Please do not remove from Gallery
Case 1 is located to the left hand side as you enter from the Greek and Roman galleries and continues in an anti-clockwise direction around the gallery.
Case 1

Hierakonpolis: the Main Temple Deposit

These objects are part of a group of more than one thousand items deposited in the temple of Horus at Hierakonpolis. The offering was made by Narmer, one of the earliest kings of Egypt, around 3050 BC.

In addition to the temple, large numbers of early burials of both humans and animals, including an elephant, have been found at the site.

Many of the objects in the Deposit relate to or symbolise kingship. The mace-heads, originally used as weapons, were a symbol of royal authority. The scorpion images and figurines may refer to a ‘Scorpion king’, either one earlier than Narmer or Narmer himself. However, the sharp sting of the scorpion may simply express any king’s dual role of attacking his enemies and defending his own people. The inclusion of the dwarf figurine reflects the belief that dwarfs had magical properties and powers.
Objects from a temple deposit
Dedicated by Narmer, the first named king of Egypt.
Around 3000 BC
Main Temple Deposit, Hierakonpolis
Given by the Egyptian Research Account

1 Schist hanging jar
Squat with lug handles.
E.19.1898

2 Stone hanging jar
The handles are carved in the form of a bull’s head.
Bulls and lions were closely linked to the iconography of the king.
E.13.1898

3 Stone hanging vessel
With wavy line decoration around the handles.
E.20.1898

4 Serpentine hanging flask
E.12.1898
5 Limestone hanging jar
With three sections.
Around 3000 BC
E.85.1898

6 Calcite bowls
Inscribed with a scorpion and inverted ‘ka’ sign.
E.22.1898; E.23.1898

7 Calcite bowl
Inscribed with a falcon over a moon disk and an inverted ‘ka’ sign. The Horus falcon may refer to a royal festival.
E.24.1898

8 Faience model
This model shows a squat jar similar to the example outside this case, sitting on top of a stand.
E.21.1898

9 Diorite head of a male
Fragment of a statuette, perhaps representing the ruler Narmer.
E.109.1898
10 Limestone figure of a dwarf

Dwarfs were special in ancient Egypt and are often depicted taking part in rituals or festivals. There are several statues of officials who were dwarfs dating to the Old Kingdom.

E.10.1898

11 Faience beads

Possibly part of a wig from a statue. Some of the beads have an elongated edge, suggesting the end of braided hair.

E.15.1898

12 Stone and faience birds

The stone example is a hanging vessel. The small faience bird is an amulet.

E.9.1898

13 Greywacke palette in the form of a scorpion

Scorpions could be protective or threatening. They commonly appear during the early dynastic period. They are possibly a reference to the ‘Scorpion King’ who ruled before Narmer.

E.8.1898
14 Faience and steatite figures and amulets of scorpions
E.18, 104, 105, 107.1898; E.11.1898

15 Faience necklace
E.15a.1898

16 Faience animal figures
A frog, a pig or boar and two baboons. Baboons feature in other early dynastic dedications and are possibly a fertility symbol as later in Egyptian culture. Frogs were associated with the inundation (annual flooding) of the Nile.
E.108.1898; E.90.1898; E.86.1898; E.91.1898

17 Stone mace heads
Mace heads are symbolic of the power of the king. The ruler is often shown on temple reliefs smiting Egyptian enemies with such a weapon.

The different shapes are now called ‘pear-shaped’, ‘squat or convex’ and ‘disk’.
E.17, 25-32.1898
18 Flint knives
Functional, ritual or symbolic.
E.16a-b.1898

19 Glazed quartz ‘pebble’
We do not fully understand the purpose of this object. It is possible that it represents an early foundation deposit (a dedication made by the King at a new temple).
E.106.1898

20 Glazed quartz ‘tablets’
Possibly foundation plaques (a dedication made by the King at a new temple).
E.37a-b.1898

21 Glazed quartz beads (?)
The holes suggest that these objects were tied onto something. Their exact function is uncertain.
E.36a-d.1898
Case 2

Royal Burials at Abydos

The so-called Early Dynastic or Archaic period of Egyptian history lasted from about 3030 to 2700 BC. This period, which runs from just before the start of the First Dynasty to the end of the Second, saw Egypt becoming unified under a single ruler, and evidence of a common material culture spreading throughout the country.

The objects in this case come from Abydos, where the first kings of Egypt were buried alongside officials and women from the royal household. The roughly shaped pieces of limestone, which were found outside the tombs, may have served either as tomb-markers or as
votive offerings. Many of the signs carved on them are difficult to interpret, but it is likely that most represent the names of those who placed them here. Other items from the tombs include flint knives, animal figurines, jewellery, furniture, clay sealings and vessels engraved with the names of the kings.
1-27 Objects from the royal and subsidiary tombs

The individual tombs are listed, where known.

Dynasty 1 (c. 3032-2853 BC)
Abydos
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt

1 Limestone stelae (relief)
A stela was a grave marker.
Tomb 442 and tomb 453
E.42.1926 and E.58.1926

2 Calcite cylinder jar
Tomb 199
E.57.1926

3 Calcite cylinder jar
Tomb of Merneith
E.56.1926
4 Flint knife
Tomb of Semerkhet
E.190.1910

5 Ivory docket
Tomb of Semerkhet
E.86.1900

6 Ivory furniture fragments
A bundle of reeds, possibly a leg from a stool and an inlay.
Tomb of Semerkhet
E.45.1900; E.40.1900

7 Limestone stelae
Tomb of Semerkhet
E.253.1900; E.255.1900; E.276.1900

8 Ivory arrow points
Tomb of Djet (?)
E.71.1900
9 Stone vessel fragments
Inscribed for a festival.
Tomb of Semerkhet
E.25.1900; E.27.1900

10 Mud sealing
Stamped with the name of King Semerkhet.
Tomb of Semerkhet
E.57.1901

11 Calcite vessel
Tomb of Qa
E.227.1900

12 Clay sealing
With the Horus name of Qa.
Tomb of Qa
E.61.1901

13 Ivory inlays
Tomb of Qa
E.52.1900; E.53.1900; E.54.1900
14 Clay jar
Decorated with the names of King Qa and his wife Ha.
Tomb of Qa
E.228.1900

15 Clay jar
Decorated with the titles of an early king.
Tomb of Qa
E.96.1900

16 Calcite and greywacke bracelets
Tomb of Djer
E.85a-b.1900

17 Greywacke bowl
Tomb of Den
E.34.1900

18 Ivory stool leg
Tomb of Den
E.38.1900

19 Limestone stelae
Inscribed with the owner’s name. One stela is inscribed with a female name, as indicated by the feminine ‘t’ at the end.

Subsidiary grave of the tomb of Djet
E.254.1900; E.256.1900

20 Ivory gaming pieces
In the form of a lion and lioness.

Subsidiary grave of the tomb of Djet
E.4.1927; E.5.1927
21 Ivory throw-stick
Inscribed with the name of Aha.
E.64.1900

22 Ivory docket
Inscribed with the name of Djer.
Subsidiary grave of the tomb of Djer
E.15.1926

23 Ivory gaming piece
In the form of a dog.
Tomb of Djer
E.98.1900

24 Ivory leg of a stool
In the form of a bull’s leg.
Tomb of Djer
E.46.1900
25 Wooden leg of a stool
In the form of a bull’s leg.
Tomb of Djer
E.47.1900

26 Ivory and hard-stone bracelets
Subsidiary grave of the tomb of Djer
E.32a-c.1900; E.33a-c.1900; E.84a-c.1900

27 Wooden throw-stick
Tomb of Djer
E.65a-b.1900

28 Flint scrapers
Tomb 640
E.21.1926; E.22.1926

29 Flint knife
Tomb 640
E.20.1926
30 Basalt petal and jar
Abydos, tomb M69 (fragment only)
E.9.1903; Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.5484.1943

31 Faience baboons
The Temple of Osiris
E.23.1903; E.15a-b.1903; E.21.1903

32 Faience gaming pieces
The Temple of Osiris
E.14a-b.1903
Case 3

Old Kingdom and Middle Kingdom Egypt

The Old Kingdom (2707–2170 BC) is best known as the age of the pyramids. The faience tiles shown here come from the elaborate complex of rooms and corridors under the earliest pyramid, built for the burial of King Djoser at Saqqara around 2700 BC. Later kings continued to build pyramids, and many officials chose to be buried close to their king. The inscriptions in these tombs show the complex administrative structure now developing.

After a time when the power of the ruler was fragmented, King Mentuhotep II reunited Egypt and became the first ruler of the period now called the Middle Kingdom (2046–1793 BC). During this period representations of the king show him in a non-idealised way, often with mature or careworn features. This may reflect the burden carried by the king during a period that Egyptian texts portray as deeply troubled.
1 Limestone reliefs

The reliefs represent the god Amun identifiable by the plumes on his crown; a female, who might be a royal person or servant; a representation of the King, who receives the gift of life from a god.

Dynasty 11, Mentuhotep II (2119-2103 BC)

Deir el Bahri, Temple of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3127.1943;
E.GA.3143.1943

2 Sandstone head of a ruler

Probably representing a ruler of the Dynasty 11. The style of carving is still reminiscent of the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period. Compare the so-called ‘realistic’ style of portrait adopted by the rulers in Dynasty 12 (see nos. 4 and 7 in this case).

Middle Kingdom (2119-1794 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.6502.1943
3 Limestone reliefs
Including the hieroglyph for a gang of workmen with the symbol of a drill. Drills were formed by attaching a shaped flint to a stick, which was then turned.

Dynasty 12, Senusret II (1882-1972 BC)
Lahun, the lesser pyramid
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.52.1914; E.55.1914; E.158.1914

4 Granite statues of Senusret III
These statues show the so-called ‘realistic’ type of portrait common in Dynasty 12. It is thought that the features were deliberately aged in order to show the difficulties faced by the king in Egypt during this period. It has also been suggested that the features are African.

Dynasty 12, Senusret III (1872-1853 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3005.1943; E.GA.82.1949

5 Shell pendants
Dynasty 12, Senusret I (1956-1911 BC)
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.270.1932; E.203.1900
6 Basalt figurine of the soldier Khnemu

Khnemu was son of Nemtyemhat. The face imitates that of the king.

Dynasties 12-13 (1872-1648 BC)
Atawla, near Asyut
Given by the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum E.500.1932

7 Shelly limestone statue of Amenemhat III

Only the shoulders and head are preserved; the base is modern. The facial features are a softer version of the so-called ‘realistic portraits’ of Senusret III. In this way the ruler was able to promote a visual link to his predecessor.

Dynasty 12, Amenemhat III (1853-1806 BC)
Aswan, Private Tomb
Bequeathed by Oscar Raphael E.2.1946

8 Limestone statue of Ptah-Tanen

Only the middle section is preserved. The god wears a penis sheath.

Dynasty 12, Amenemhat III (1853-1806 BC)
Hawara, the mortuary temple of Amenemhat III
Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.67.1911
9  Limestone door jamb

From the tomb of Minnefer, a royal official. It is unusual because it records the name of Minnefer’s son, Hetepniptah, which is the name of the owner of another tomb close by. There are very few examples where a relationship between tomb owners can be established at such an early date.

Dynasty 5 (2504-2347 BC)

Giza, tomb G2427

E.SS.77
10. Limestone painted relief
Dynasty 5, Niuserre (2445-2414 BC)
Abusir, the sun temple
Bequeathed by Sir Herbert Thompson E.17.1944

11 Basalt weight
Inscribed with the cartouche of King Niuserre.
Dynasty 5, Niuserre (2445-2414 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2848.1943

12 Hematite cylinder seal
Inscribed with the cartouche (name) of King Sahure.
Dynasty 5, Sahure (2496-2483 BC)
Bought from W. Robertson Smith E.141.1891

13 Calcite cylinder jar lid
Inscribed with the name of King Pepy I.
Dynasty 6, Pepy I (2335-2285 BC)
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.76.1932
14 Limestone statue

Back pillar from a statue.

Dynasty 6, Pepy II (2279-2219 BC)

Hierakonpolis

Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.185.1900

15 Limestone figure

The king of Egypt is often shown smiting or trampling his enemies, who appear bound as his prisoners. The long hair indicates that this is a Libyan; the other two traditional enemies are Nubians and Asiatics. The dowel hole at the top of the head suggests this figure was attached to something.

Dynasty 3 (2707-2639 BC)

Bought from the University Purchase Fund E.5.1972
16 Faience wall tiles

Faience is crushed quartz with a vitreous (glassy) glaze. These tiles were strung together and plastered onto the walls in the funerary apartment of King Djoser.

Dynasty 3, Djoser (2690-2670 BC)

Saqqara, the step pyramid

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4426.1943; E.GA.4453.1943; E.GA.4359.1943
17 Limestone relief

Showing a man’s head. This is likely to be part of a scene of bringing offerings into the temple.

Dynasty 6, Pepy II (2279-2219 BC)

Probably the sanctuary of Pepy II’s mortuary temple, Saqqara

Given by E.D. Hornblower E.182.1939
Uncased

Fragment of a granite statue of Senusret III
Granite, 12th Dynasty
Given by F.W. Green E.37.1930

Statue of Amenhotep III
Sandstone, 18th Dynasty
Given by British School of Archaeology E.82.1913
Case 4

Early Dynasty 18

After a short period under the rule of foreign kings, known as the Hyksos, an Egyptian king regained control of Egypt around 1550 BC. Contact with foreign lands continued as Egypt increased its trading activities and expanded its borders as far as the Euphrates (in modern Iraq).

Royal women played a more active role at this time. Hatshepsut, for example, ruled as a king, first as regent for and later as co-ruler with her younger relative Thutmosis III. Some time after her death he removed her name from numerous monuments, replacing it with his own, in an attempt to erase her from history.

Several of the relief fragments shown here come from the temple of the cult of the dead King Hatshepsut at the area known today as Deir el-Bahri: many such temples were constructed nearby at this time.
1 Limestone relief with a cartouche
Dynasty 18, Thutmosis I (1504-1492 BC)
Deir el Bahri, West wall of the chapel of Thutmosis I
E.SS.39

2 Limestone relief representing Thutmosis III
Dynasty 18, Thutmosis III (1479-1425 BC)
Deir el Bahri, the funerary temple of Hatshepsut
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3003.1943
3 Limestone relief of a sphinx wearing royal regalia

It has been suggested that this image represents Hatshepsut.

Early Dynasty 18 (1550-1425 BC)

University Purchase Grant, the American Friends and the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum E.1.1992

4 Limestone reliefs

One shows an oarsman from a barge, and the other has an image of Ahmose Nefertari, who was the mother of Hatshepsut and a very influential queen. The wig was re-carved in antiquity to depict the divine vulture and her staff altered to a sceptre.

Dynasty 18, Hatshepsut (1478-1458 BC)

Deir el Bahri, the temple of Hatshepsut

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4501.1943; E.GA.3100.1943
5 Silver diadem
The two cobras (uraei) on the front indicate that this would have been worn by a queen. The only other example of such a diadem is in the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden
Believed to be late Dynasty 17 (1600–1550 BC)
Possibly Thebes
Loan Ant.120

6 Limestone Relief
Cartouche of Thutmosis III
Dynasty 18, Thutmosis III (1479-1425 BC)
Deir el Bahri, the funerary temple of Hatshepsut
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.59.1907

7 Silver ring
Dynasty 18, Thutmosis III (1479-1425 BC)
Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.30.1947
8 Faience inlay
Cartouche of Thutmosis III
Dynasty 18, Thutmosis III (1479-1425 BC)
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.296.1932

9 Limestone stela
Thutmosis III offers to the Middle Kingdom ruler, Senusret I
Dynasty 18, Thutmosis III (1479-1425 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3074.1943

10 Faience bowl with floral decoration and an inscription
Early Dynasty 18 (1550-1425 BC)
Unprovenanced
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3226.1943

11 Limestone relief showing the deified Amenhotep I
An offering is being made to the king
Early Dynasty 18 (1504-1388 BC)
12 Limestone stela depicting Merytamun, sister and consort of Amenhotep I

Dynasty 18, Amenhotep I (1525-1504 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3070.1943

13 Faience Hes-jar

Dynasty 18, Amenhotep II (1428-1395 BC)

Thebes, Valley of the Kings tomb 35- tomb of Amenhotep II

Given by the family of F.W. Green E.18.1950
14 Copper alloy weight inscribed with the cartouche of Amenhotep III

Dynasty 18, Amenhotep III (1388-1351 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2803.1943

15 Faience staff top in the form of a lotus and with the cartouche of Amenhotep III

Dynasty 18, Amenhotep III (1388-1351 BC)

Given by G.D. Hornblower E.259.1939

16 Inlaid wooden shabti

Dynasty 18, Amenhotep III (1388-1351 BC)

Thebes, Valley of the kings tomb 32- tomb of Amenhotep III

Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.39.1932

17 Head from a copper alloy figurine

The features are typical of the portraits of Amenhotep III. The ruler wears the Blue Crown.

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4504.1943
18 Sandstone statue
Head of an official
Dynasty 18, reign of Amenhotep III (1388-1351 BC)
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon E.58.1937

19 Faience cartouches of Amenhotep III
Dynasty 18, Amenhotep III (1388-1351 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4609.1943; E.GA.4610.1943; E.GA.4612.1943

Egyptian-blue crown
The ‘blue crown’ represents the royal crown of war.
Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.347.1932

20 Granite obelisk inscribed with the cartouche of Thutmosis III
Dynasty 18, Thutmosis III (1479-1425 BC)
Probably Abydos
E.SS.74
Case 5

Amarna: the royal family

The ‘Amarna period’ takes its name from the modern Egyptian name for Akhetaten, a city founded by King Akhenaten (1351–1334 BC). It is often seen as a period that introduced radical changes in both art and religion.

Amarna period images of the royal family show such features as swollen abdomens, skulls and hips, rounded thighs and exaggeratedly elongated fingers. Some of these features already appear in the reign of Akhenaten’s father, Amenhotep III. Amenhotep’s powerful wife, Tiye, survived her husband, and remained an influential figure in the early years of her son’s reign.

Akhenaten first reigned as Amenhotep IV. Soon, however, he moved the site of his capital city from Thebes to Akhetaten. He introduced the worship of just one god, the Aten or sun disk, through himself and his principal wife, Nefertiti. Many royal images are relaxed family groups including the three royal daughters, playing or embracing under the protective rays of the Aten.
1 Sandstone statue
Representing Akhenaten, and typical of early in his reign.
Karnak, Aten temple
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4516.1943

2 Limestone statue
Nefertiti, or a princess.
Dynasty 18, Akhenaten (1351-1334 BC)
Probably Amarna
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4524.1943

3 Limestone relief
Depicting Nefertiti, who wears a short wig of braided hair.
Dynasty 18, Akhenaten (1351-1334 BC)
Probably Amarna
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4530.1943

4 Plaster model of Tiye
The mother of Akhenaten.
Dynasty 18, Akhenaten (1351-1334 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4555.1943
5 Faience vessel
With a representation of Amenhotep III and Tiye. Tiye survived her husband took the title of King’s Mother at the Amarna court. Images of Tiye and Amenhotep III with their children were also produced, and provided a model for such images in the Amarna court.

Dynasty 18, Amenhotep III (1388-1351 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4605.1943

6 Limestone relief
Probably representing Nefertiti.

Dynasty 18, Akhenaten (1351-1334 BC)
Probably Amarna
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4513.1943
7 Limestone relief

Showing Akhenaten with worshippers. The arms of the Aten rain down on the king. This scene shows the Sed festival, which was usually celebrated after 30 years of rule. Akhenaten’s Sed festival (a renewal of the King’s power) took place about 3 years into his reign at around the time he changed his name from Amenhotep to Akhenaten.

 Dynasty 18, Akhenaten (1351-1334 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2300.1943
8 Sandstone statue
Representing Nefertiti or a princess. The swollen head is typical of sculpture of this period.
Dynasty 18, Akhenaten (1351-1334 BC)
Probably Amarna
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2303.1943

9 Carnelian gem
Showing the rulers Akhenaten and Nefertiti embracing their daughters. Such scenes were a common part of Amarna iconography. The gem is unfinished.
Dynasty 18, Akhenaten (1351-1334 BC)
Probably Amarna
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4606.1943

10 Sandstone and limestone shabti figures
Representing Akhenaten. He was buried in the desert cliffs behind his new capital, Amarna. Although the Aten was the principal god at this time, these figures are mummiform, a form which is closely associated with the more traditional god Osiris.
Dynasty 18, Akhenaten (1351-1334 BC)
Probably Amarna
11 Sandstone relief
With the names and fragment of a figure of Nefertiti. The swollen thighs are typical of statues from this period and are a reference to fertility.
Amarna, probably from the sanctuary of the Great temple of the Aten
Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.2.1927

12 Granite balustrade
Possibly from a stairway or second level of a building. On one side there is a depiction of a princess holding a sistrum (rattle), and on the other side is a depiction of the Aten (sun-disk) with rays in the form of arms and hands touching lotus flowers.
Dynasty 18, Amenhotep III (1388-1351 BC)
Given by the Family of F.W. Green E.16.1954

13 Amenhotep III
Faience inlay and rings.
Dynasty 18, Amenhotep III (1388-1351 BC)
14 Akhenaten
Clay mould for making faience with the name of the king.
Dynasty 18, Akhenaten (1351-1334 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3605.1943

15 Faience arm with blank cartouche
Dynasty 18, Akhenaten (1351-1334 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3919.1943

16 Smenkhare
Clay ring mould with the name
Dynasty 18, Smenkhare (1337-1333 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3608.1943

17 Tutankhamun
Clay mould, turquoise and faience rings.
Dynasty 18, (1333-1323 BC)
18 Horemheb

Faience double cartouche ring, and clay bead-mould.

Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937
E.94.1937; Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3868.1943
Uncased

Quartzite block statue
About 1300-1201 BC
Bought from Spink & Son. E.5.1968

Granite Sarcophagus
About 1225 BC
Given by Barnard Hanbury E.1.1835

Granite Sarcophagus lid of Ramesses III
About 1200 BC
Given by G. Belzoni E.1.1823

Male figure
The prophet of Horus at Hierakonpolis, Harpakhepesh (Archypsis), son of Paheter and Wawa.
About 100-1 BC
Bought from Robin Symes E.4.1970

Female figure
80–30 BC
Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum E.27.1981

Alexander the Great
Marble, about 100 BC
Bought GR.69.1970
Case 6

Amarna: life in the city of Akhetaten

The city of Akhetaten, now known as Amarna, was the purpose-built capital of Egypt from about 1350 to 1330 BC. Objects from the site are well-preserved because the city was only inhabited for so short a time and abandoned early in the reign of Tutankhamun.

The stone reliefs with their lively scenes of soldiers and captives, along with occasional vessels imported from Greece, give an impression of a busy, cosmopolitan city.

The faience tiles and other decorative elements came from the palaces and were manufactured on site, as is shown by kilns, moulds and waste products discovered in excavations there. The production of brightly coloured vessels and other objects in glass became a significant industry at this time. The distinctive, blue-painted pottery reflects the same interest in colour. Despite the emphasis now placed by official religion on worship of the Aten through the royal family, ordinary Egyptians continued to worship domestic gods such as Bes and Hathor: see the two large pottery fragments shown here.
1 Clay vessel fragments
Decorated with moulded heads of the goddess Hathor
Amarna Period (1350-1330 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.6191.1943; E.GA.4684.1943

2 Clay vessel fragment
Showing the head of the goddess Hathor
Amarna Period (1350-1330 BC)
Amarna
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.6185.1943

3 Clay storage jar
This fragment came from a large storage jar, decorated with a distinctive blue pigment that occurred frequently, but not exclusively, in Dynasty 18. This type of blue painted pottery was also popular in Dynasties 19 and 20. It is thought to have originated at Memphis. All the examples in this case are probably from Amarna.

Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.6200.1943
4 Clay figure
Representing a bull.
Amarna Period (1350-1330 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.6010.1943

5 Blue painted clay jar
Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
E.P.37

6 Clay vessel fragment
With a drawing of the god Bes, who plays the pipes.
Amarna Period (1350-1330 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.6188.1943

7 Limestone relief
Showing a man eating fruit in front of an offering table.
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2302.1943
8 Clay figures

Representing a gazelle (left), and a blindfolded donkey playing a harp (right). These figures were probably attachments from a vessel. There are parallels for blind musicians and animals playing instruments on tomb reliefs. The blind-bolded donkey seems to combine these two traditions.

Amarna Period (1350-1330 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4686.1943; E.GA.4685.1943

9 Clay vessel fragments

A hand-modelled ‘wadjet’ eye from an open vessel; a rim sherd from a carinated (ridged) bowl with a stylized floral pattern; and a body sherd from a closed vessel.

Amarna Period (1350-1330 BC)

Amarna or Memphis

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.5999.1943; E.GA.6016.1943; E.GA.6021.1943
10 Faience wall tiles and a clay mould

In the form of a bunch of grapes.

Amarna Period (1350-1330 BC)

Amarna

Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.28.1926;
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.286.1939;
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4650.1943; E.GA.4651.1943;
E.GA.5715.1943; E.GA.5986.1943

11 Clay and faience vessels of Greek ‘stirrup jar’ shape

One of these vessels was imported from Greece. The faience and coarser clay version are local Egyptian copies.

Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.6008.1943;
Given by G.D. Hornblower E.5.1928; E.5.1984

12 Glass kohl pot and rods

Glass was first produced in Egypt during Dynasty 18. The vessel shown here would have been used for cosmetics. The rods were produced as a means of storing glass, which could then be used for manufacturing vessels of different colours.

Dynasty 18 (1550-1292 BC)
13 Painted plaster fresco

The feet are those of a pigeon.

Amarna Period (1350-1330 BC)

The North palace, Amarna

Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.16.1927

14 Faience wall tiles

In the forms of fish and of foliage; tiles like these were used in a variety of different domestic and religious contexts.

Amarna Period (1350-1330 BC)

The Western residential quarters, outside the entrance to the temenos (boundary) of the Great temple and the magazine south of the Great temple, Amarna

Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.25.1927; E.28.1927; E.1a-c.1933; E.2a, d-f.1933; E.103.1937; E.104.1937

15 Limestone relief

Showing a ship and its crew moored to a bank. There are trees around the edges. The steering oar is decorated with an image in the style of Akhenaten.

Memphis

Given by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt E.19.1913
The last ruler of Dynasty 18, a general named Horemheb, tried to obliterate all traces of the Amarna period. The first ruler of Dynasty 19 was another general, Ramesses. He and his successors founded new settlements and palaces in the Delta. Royal burials continued to take place at Thebes, where elaborate temples to the cult of the dead king were built.

The Ramesside rulers also paid for the building of many other temples throughout Egypt and Nubia, dedicated both to traditional gods and to the cult of the royal family.

The king’s principal wife continued to play a key religious and political role, and many representations of royal women survive from this period. Political marriages between the Egyptian kings and women from neighbouring royal households in Syria and the Near East were common: this was a way of marking and strengthening political and military alliances.
1 Staff of an official made of wood and faience

Dynasty 19 (1292-1070 BC)

Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.539.1947

2 Faience wall tiles with alabaster inlays

Early Dynasty 19 (1292-1213 BC)

Said to be from Qantir

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3284.1943; E.GA.3285.1943

3 Faience tiles

In the forms of rosettes, lotus flowers, a bull and rekhyt-birds.

Ramesses III (1183-1152 BC)

The royal palace, Tell el Yahudiyeh

Given by G.S. Bird E.13d, e and g.1934; E.202-203.1934.
Given by M. Bird E.305.1949.
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.163.1932; E.310.1932.
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3227.1943
4 Clay funerary plaque

Stamped with an inscription, similar to a funerary cone, with some of the names of Ramesses III.

Ramesses III (1183-1152 BC)

Given by the Trustees of the late J.J. Stevenson E.29.1935

5a Faience and glass tiles

With the cartouche of Ramesses II.

Ramesses II (1279-1213 BC)

Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.299.1932; E.300.1932

5b Faience amulet or inlay

Ramesses II (1279-1213 BC)

Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.367.1932

6 Faience tile

With the cartouche of Ramesses VI.

Ramesses VI (1142-1134 BC)

Said to be from Qantir

Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.89.1932
7 Limestone relief

Representing a king. Stylistically the relief can be dated to the reign of either Seti I or Ramesses II.

Thebes

Dynasty 19 (1292-1213 BC)

Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.73.1949

8 Limestone stela

A subject adores the earlier Dynasty 18 king Amenhotep I and his principal wife Ahmose Nefertari. The wife is deified, as seen from the vulture headdress, and wears the crown of Amun. Amenhotep wears the ‘Blue’ crown associated with warfare. Stelae depicting earlier rulers were commonly produced in the Ramesside Period.

Probably from Thebes

Dynasty 19 (1292-1070 BC)

E.SS.31
9 Sandstone stela

At the top is a solar barque transporting Re-Harakhty. The main scene shows a man offering to the deified Ahmose Nefertari who was a principal royal wife. The vulture headdress indicates her divine status and the crown of Amun (two plumes) shows that she fulfilled the role of God’s Wife.

Dynasty 19 (1292-1070 BC)
Thebes
E.SS.38

10 Quartzite statue

Representing Nefertari, principal wife of Ramesses II. Her status is shown by the fact that she has two cobras on her brow instead of a single one, as worn by other queens. As a royal wife, she also wears the sun disk and cow’s horns of the goddess Hathor.

Ramesses II (1279-1213 BC)
Temple of Hathor, Serabit el Kadim, Sinai
Given by the Egyptian Research Fund
E.4.1905
11 Limestone statue

Representing Ramesses II. The king wears the crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt. Many statues were produced during the reign of Ramesses II. Some earlier sculptures were re-carved, or the name of Ramesses simply replaced that of the previous king.

Ramesses II (1279-1213 BC)

E.SU.160

12 Faience jar

Decorated with the names of Ramesses II.

Ramesses II (1279-1213 BC)

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3288.1943

13 Faience foundation deposit

Foundation deposits were dedicated by Kings when a temple was built. This group includes cartouches with the names of the ruler and depictions of typical dedications, such as a bull’s head and trussed animal.

Ramesses II (1279-1213 BC)

The Ramesseum, Thebes

Given by the Egyptian Research Account E.65.1896; E.66.1896
14 Faience scarab

Inscribed on the underside with one of the names of Ramesses II, flanked by a feather and a cobra.

Ramesses II (1279-1213 BC)

Given by Sir H. Thompson E.69.1920

15 Faience scarab

The scene on the underside shows Ramesses II being carried on a throne.

Ramesses II (1279-1213 BC)

Given by Sir H. Thompson E.66.1920

16 Painted limestone shabti of Senedjem

Sennedjem was a workman responsible for creating the tombs in the Valley of the Kings. His own tomb, at Deir el Medina, is usually open to the public. It was discovered intact in 1886 by Italian archaeologists.

Dynasty 19 (1292-1070 BC)

Deir el Medina

Purchased by E.W. Budge E.9.1887
17 Limestone relief
Showing Ramesses II making an offering.
Ramesses II (1279-1213 BC)
The Temple of Herishef, Herakleopolis Magna
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.91.1904

18 Steatite scarab
With the title Usermaatre.
Possibly Ramesses VI (1142-1134 BC)
Given by Sir H. Thompson E.70.1920
Uncased

Basalt statue of Psammetichus II
About 596 BC
Given by E.D. Clarke E.1.1865

Male figure
Late Period
Bought Spink & Son E.31.1973
Case 8

The Late Period and the Persians

A long period of disunity (the Third Intermediate Period) was succeeded around 746 BC by Dynasty 25, the rulers of which were black pharaohs from Napata and Kush in Nubia (modern Sudan). These kings called themselves sons of the god ‘Amun of Napata’, and declared they were descended from earlier pharaohs: to promote this idea they had themselves portrayed in a traditionally Egyptian style. The royal women of this dynasty played an important role in religion. They were the ‘wives’ of the god Amun, a position that brought them considerable financial and political advantage.

In the 660s the Kushite rulers were driven south by the Libyan founder or founders of Dynasty 26, which soon controlled much of Egypt from a new capital at Sais in the Delta. These kings embarked on an active foreign policy that brought many foreigners, including Greek mercenaries, to Egypt. During this period a Greek trading post was set up at Naukratis, where the Greeks were allowed to worship their own gods (see Case 12).

In 525 BC the Persian King Cambyses seized control of Egypt, initiating a period of foreign rule by an absent ruler.
1 Sandstone relief of a divine consort

Representing Amenirdas, sister of King Shabaka, or her successor, Shepenwepet, who appears on the reliefs of her chapel making offerings.

c. 715-700 BC

The Chapel of Amenirdas, Medinat Habu

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4542.1943

2 Faience cartouche of Amenirdas

Dynasty 25 (746-664 BC)

Given by Sir Herbert Thompson E.77.1920

3 Copper alloy relief of Amun

Originally inlaid.

Dynasty 25 (746-664 BC)

Saqqara

Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.7.1969
4 Faience vessel
Decorated with a marsh scene and featuring a Nubian, as identified by the short wig.

Dynasty 25 (746-664 BC)
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.356.1932

5 Limestone sculpture of a Nubian woman
The back is re-carved.

Dynasty 25 (746-664 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4550.1943

6 Copper alloy figurine
Representing a woman holding a statue of the young Horus.

Dynasty 25 (746-664 BC)
Given by Sir William P. Elderton E.8.1955
7 Copper alloy figurine
The crown suggests the subject is a priestess. The nakedness might suggest a fertility aspect.
Dynasty 25 (746-664 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4385.1943

8 Calcite shabti figure
For King Taharqa.
Taharqa (690-664 BC)
E.1.1979

9 Clay funerary cone
With the name of King Taharqa.
Taharqa (690-664 BC)
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.88.1932

10 Copper alloy figurine
Probably representing Taharqa. Kushite royal men often wore two cobras rather than a single one on their brows, perhaps to represent the kingdoms of Kush and Egypt.
Taharqa (690-664 BC)
E.3.1974
11 Copper alloy figurine
Taharqa (690-664 BC)
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.74.1954

12 Limestone relief
The style of this relief is archaizing and looks back to the Old Kingdom. The subject is a Sem Priest who looked after cults of the deceased. The relief is probably from a tomb.

Dynasty 25 (746-664 BC)
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4694.1943

15 Limestone archaizing relief
Late Period (746-525 BC)
Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.72.1949

16 Copper alloy ring
With the name of Smendes, the first ruler of Dynasty 21.

Smendes I (1070-1044 BC)
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.420.1932
17 Limestone relief
Decorated with the cartouches of Osorkon II and Sheshonq III.
Sheshonq III (837-785 BC)
E.SS.67

18 Glassy frit statuette
The back pillar is inscribed with the name of Sheshonq V.
774-736 BC
Saqqara
Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.6.1969

19 Plaster sculptor’s model
Probably for a royal subject of Dynasties 21 to 22.
1070-737 BC
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4696.1943

20 Faience new year flask
With the cartouche of Amasis.
Amasis 570-526 BC
Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3093.1943
21 Copper alloy incense holder
With the cartouche of Amasis. The king kneels in front of a cartouche-shaped burner.
Amasis 570-526 BC
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937
E.13.1937

22 Faience plaque
In the form of a Persian sphinx.
First Persian period (525-401 BC)
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.90.1932

23 Faience vessel
In the form of a woman making bread. The woman wears an archaizing ‘Hathor’ wig; a type popular in the Middle Kingdom.
Dynasty 26 (664-525 BC)
Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937
E.88.1937

24 Faience perfume pot
In the form of a hedgehog.
Dynasty 26 (664-525 BC)
25 Sandstone relief
Representing King Achoris, a ruler of Dynasty 29.
Achoris (393-380 BC)
Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.75.1949
Case 9

The last Dynasties of Egypt

The first period of Persian rule in Egypt ended around 400 BC when native Egyptian rulers regained political control. The rule of the pharaohs of Dynasty 30, Nectanebo I, Teos and Nectanebo II, was ended by a second Persian invasion in 359 BC. Ancient Greek and Roman authors imply that the Persian rulers had little interest in Egyptian culture. Archaeological evidence, however, shows that many temples were built and new royal palaces constructed at Memphis at this time.

In 332 BC Alexander the Great took control of Egypt, succeeded on his death by his general, Ptolemy I. The Ptolemaic dynasty lasted until the death of Egypt’s most famous queen, Cleopatra VII, in 30 BC. The fifteen Ptolemaic rulers, all named ‘Ptolemaios’ (Ptolemy), were distinguished from each other by their Greek cult titles such as ‘Soter’ (Saviour) or ‘Euergetes’ (Benefactor). Many married their sisters, and women played an important political and religious role from the reign of Ptolemy II onwards.
1 Faience oinochoe (jug)

Earlier cult vases were decorated with the image and name of the queen. Ptolemy IV used his own name.

Ptolemy IV (221-204 BC)

The Lewis Collection, Corpus Christi College Loan 103.34

2 Marble head of Berenike II

The band around the head indicates that the subject is royal. The rounded facial features are typical of this particular queen’s images. Ptolemaic statues usually have a marble head fitted into a body of another material.

Berenike II (246-221 BC)

Naukratis

Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund GR.22.1899

3 Limestone sculptor’s model

Cleopatra III or VII as a goddess. The reverse has an image of a prince. Both queens ruled with their sons.

141-30 BC

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.4338.1943
4 Copper alloy and gilded statue fitting

141-30 BC

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3358.1943

5 Limestone sculptor’s model

Representing a goddess or deified queen. On the reverse is a bull. The piece can be dated to the first century BC on stylistic grounds and perhaps associated with Cleopatra VII on account of the bull. The ruler made dedications to the Buchis bull at Armant.

Cleopatra VII (52-30 BC)

Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.89.1949

6 Limestone relief

Representing an early Ptolemaic queen. The subject wears a diadem and uraeus (cobra).

Third century BC

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3142.1943

7 Gold coin of Arsinoe II

Octodrachm.

Ptolemy III (246-221 BC)

Given by A.A. de Pass CM.6.294-1933; McClean Collection CM.MC.9775
8 Gold coin showing Berenike II
Attic pentadrachm.
Ptolemy III (246-221 BC)
McClean Collection CM.MC.9790

9 Copper alloy coins showing Cleopatra III and Cleopatra VII
The two hairstyles: corkscrew locks and so-called melon coiffure in a bun are illustrated here.
About 46-44 BC
Leake Collection; CM.577-1950, CM.LK.863

10 Copper alloy statuette of a Ptolemaic king
Second century BC
Bequeathed by E.T. Whyte E.157.1932

11 Basalt head of a priest
Priests were required to shave all of their body hair.
About 300-200 BC
Bequeathed by O.C. Raphael E.3.1946
12 Limestone sculptor’s models

This ‘portrait type’ was used by the Greek rulers to associate them with those of Dynasty 30.

Bequeathed by Sir R. Greg E.78.1954
Given and Bequeathed by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.3218.1943; E.GA.4543.1943; E.GA.91.1949

13 Clay poll tax receipt

Ptolemaic (305-30 BC)

Dakke, Nubia

Given by the Nubian Archaeological Survey E.156.1914

14 Limestone head of Ptolemy VIII

This ruler can be identified by his closely set eyes and bloated cheeks. He was called ‘Fatty’ by the Alexandrians.

Ptolemy VIII (145-116 BC)

Given by G.D. Hornblower E.197.1939

15 Limestone statuette of a boy

Possibly a prince or Harpocrates.

Second century BC

Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937 E.32.1937
16 Steatite statuette in the form of a Herm

This is one of a series showing the ruler with a twisted diadem.

Ptolemy XV (c. 46-30 BC)

Purchased through the Greg Fund and the V&A Purchase Fund
E.2.2003

17 Silver coin showing the head of Alexander the Great

Tetradrachm. Alexander wears an elephant cap and the horn of Ammon beneath his ear. This is a posthumous ‘portrait’.

Ptolemy I (about 320 BC or after)

Given by A. W. Young CM.YG.1110-R
18 Gold coin of Ptolemy III
Ptolemy IV (221-204 BC)
McClean Collection CM.MC.9783

19 Gold coins showing the saviour gods and the sibling gods
Ptolemy I with Berenike II and Ptolemy II with Arsinoe II.
Reigns of Ptolemy II (about 260-240 BC) and Ptolemy V (204-180 BC)
McClean Collection 9774; Given by A.W. Young CM.YG.1113-R

20 Gold coin of Ptolemy I
Pentadrachm.
About 305-246 BC
McClean Collection CM.MC.9772

21 Silver coin showing Ptolemy IV
Didrachm. The king appears as Dionysos.
About 221-180 BC
McClean Collection CM.MC.9812
22 Silver coin showing Ptolemy V
Tetradrachm.
About 204-180 BC
McClean Collection CM.MC.9802

23 Limestone sphinx
The head is restored.
Dynasty 30 (380-342 BC)
Saqqara
Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.11.1971

24 Copper alloy staff head in the form of the god Khnum
Dynasty 30 (380-342 BC)
Saqqara, votive cache 6
Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.13.1971

25 Wooden statue
Of a priest, Nefertum son of Sep, whose title was ‘Regulator of the House of Ptah’.
Fourth century BC
Saqqara
Given by the Egypt Exploration Society E.8.1969
26 Gold stater of Nectanebo II

With the hieroglyph for gold.

Nectanebo II 360-342 BC

Purchased through the Elderton Fund CM.107-1958

27 Steatite statue

Showing Pedikhons, who held the title ‘Chief Lute Player’.

Fourth century BC

Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937 E.55.1937

28 Basalt statue

An official wearing a bag-wig. The facial features indicate that the statue dates to Dynasty 30 or the Ptolemaic period.

380-30 BC

Given by Dr E.D. Clarke E.3.1865
Case 10

Roman and later Egypt

In 30 BC, after the death of Cleopatra VII, Egypt became part of the Roman Empire. As in the Persian periods, the country was run by largely absentee rulers.

The Roman pharaohs, however, continued many of the traditions of the Ptolemaic kings. They financed new building projects and were depicted on the walls of temples, making offerings to the Egyptian gods, and so carrying out the traditional role of the Kings. At this time the more generic title of ‘Pharaoh’, rather than the current ruler’s own names, frequently appeared in cartouches.

Individual emperors showed varying degrees of interest in Egypt. Vespasian, Domitian and Hadrian all appear to have been genuinely interested in the province and its culture. These emperors founded sanctuaries to Egyptian gods not just in Egypt but also in Italy, and so helped to increase awareness of Egyptian culture in the wider world.

In AD 642 Islamic rulers took control of Egypt, founding a new city at el-Fustat, now a suburb of modern Cairo.
1 Marble statue of Serapis

Serapis was a Roman version of the Greco-Egyptian god Sarapis. He was a Hellenised version of Osiris Apis, who was worshiped through the cult of the dead Apis bull at Memphis. From the second century AD the Roman emperors were closely associated with this Egyptian deity.

Second century AD

Probably Italy

Given by Dr J. Disney GR.15.1850

2 Steatite statuette

Representing a priest or official.

First century BC-AD

Egypt

Given by the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum E.46.1971

3 Faience portrait of Tiberius

Possibly an inlay from a cult vessel.

Tiberius AD 14-37

Bequeathed by C.S. Ricketts and C.H. Shannon, received 1937

GR.115.1937
4 Limestone stela
Dedicated in honour of the cult of the Emperor Nero. The upper section is carved in Egyptian style; the inscription is in Greek, the official language of Egypt during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods.
Nero AD 54-68
Lykopolites
E.49.1901

5 Meta-Basalt statue of Vespasian (AD 69-79)
Bequeathed by Sir Robert Greg E.83.1954

6 Sandstone temple relief
Showing Domitian (AD81-96) as pharaoh. The emperor makes an offering to Amun-Ra in the form of a ram.
Dahkleh Oasis
Purchased through the Greg Fund E.1.2003

7 Lead medallion
Showing Marcus Aurelius (right) facing a male deity.
Oxyrhynchus
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund E.12.1904
8 Porphyry statuette of a Late Roman Emperor

Fourth century AD

Given by R.G. Gayer-Anderson E.GA.2207.1943

9 Marble figure of Bes as a fountain

Egyptianising statues such as this were popular in Rome.

Rome

About AD 117-250

Given by A. Gregory GR.1.1818

10 Cleopatra as Isis/Aphrodite and Caesarion as Horus

Minted in Cyprus to celebrate the birth of Ptolemy XV.

About 47-38 BC

CM.MC.9846-R
11 Mark Antony & Cleopatra
Probably minted in Antioch, Syria. The ruler of Egypt and the Roman general appear on each side of this coin.

36 BC
CM.LK.864-R, CM.6.300-1933

12 Silver coin of Augustus
A crocodile and inscription: ‘on the capture of Egypt’. Such coins were minted in Rome.

27 BC-AD 14
CM.1487-1963

13 Crocodile tethered to a palm
The roman victory of Egypt. Minted at Nemausus in France.

9-3 BC
Given by A.W. Young CM.YG.1142-R

14 Tetradrachm coin with a bust of Alexandria
Nero is pictured on the other side.

Nero (AD 54-68)
15 The Pharos of Alexandria
Commodus (AD 180-192)

16 Isis Pharia and the Pharos
Faustina II (AD 148-149)

17 Alexandrian temple of Zeus
Trajan (AD 98-117)

18 Alexandrian Serapeum
Lucius Verus (AD 161-169)

19 Alexandrian temple of the deified Julius Caesar
Antoninus Pius (AD 138-161)
20 Alexandrian Iseum
Antoninus Pius (AD 138-161)
CM.87-1934

21 Egyptian temple
Hadrian (AD 117-138)
CM.81-1934

22 Triumphal arch in Rome
Trajan (AD 98-117)
CM.54-1934

23 Isis, Serapis & Harpocrates
Modern reproduction (electro-type) of a drachm of Hadrian.
CM.LS.2063-R

24 Harpocrates and sphinx
Trajan (AD 98-117)
CM.46-1934
25 Sultan Al-Zahir Rukn al din Baybars
Minted at Alexandria.
About AD 1260-1277
Given by Prof. P. Grierson PG.6772

26 The Persian King Cosroes II
Heraclius, about AD 610-641
CM.325-1939

27 A palm tree
Heraclius, about AD 610-641
CM.326-1939
THE FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM

GALLERY 21
GREEK AND ROMAN

LARGE FONT LABEL BOOK
Please do not remove from Gallery
1

Female figurine

This stylised figure has small breasts above her folded arms and a pronounced waist. When viewed from the side, the backward tilt of her head is very noticeable.

Made in the Cyclades about 2700–2400 BC
Marble
Found on Amorgos
Given by R.C. Bosanquet, GR.33.1901

2

A Cycladic figurine

Here the sculptor has elegantly reduced the human form to a few key components: head, neck, arms, legs, torso. The position of the feet suggests the figure was designed to lie down rather than stand upright, as displayed today. What were such figurines for? Most of them are female, suggesting a connection with fertility. Many, but not all of them, are found in graves. Like later marble sculpture, some preserve faint traces of the bright colours with which they were originally painted.

Made in the Cyclades, probably on Melos, about 2700–2400 BC
Found on Melos
Marble
Given by the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.17.1924
3
Conical cup
The base of the cup bears the impression of a vine leaf. Leaf impressions are quite common on cups of this type and are likely to be a deliberate form of decoration.

Made in the Cyclades about 2700–2200 BC
Found at Chalandriani on Syros
Fired clay, hand-made
Given by the Greek Government, GR.7g.1923

4
Blade from a dagger
The blade has a pronounced midrib. The holes at the wider end would have been used to attach it to a wooden handle.

Made in the Cyclades about 2400–2200 BC
Found on Amorgos
Copper alloy
Given by R.C. Bosanquet, GR.14b.1901

5
Collared jar with lugs and incised lines
The shape of the body resembles the shell of a sea urchin. The smooth, shiny appearance was achieved by rubbing or burnishing the pot before it was fired.

Made in the Cyclades about 3200–2800 BC
Found on Melos
Fired clay, hand-made
Given by the Greek Government, GR.51.1902

6
Female figurine
This figure is different in style from the other two shown here, flat from front to back, with very broad, sloping shoulders and a body
that tapers into narrow hips and legs. The pubic area is marked with incised lines.

Made in the Cyclades about 2500–2300 BC
Marble
Found on Amorgos
Given by R.C. Bosanquet, GR.33a.1901

7
Marble stemmed bowl
The walls of this delicate bowl are extremely thin: clearly it is the work of an expert marble carver.

Made in the Cyclades about 2700–2200 BC
Found at Chalandriani on Syros
Marble
Given by the Greek Government, GR.7b.1923

8
Green schist jar
Schist is a type of soapstone that is softer and easier to carve than marble. This example is regular in shape, with a short foot and four evenly spaced handle lugs.

Made in the Cyclades about 2700–2200 BC
Found on Naxos
Chlorite schist
Given by R.C. Bosanquet, GR.34.1901

9
Double jar
Carved from a single block of marble, each jar is decorated with groups of vertical incised lines. The small lugs at each side would have served as handles.

Made in the Cyclades about 2700–2200 BC
Marble
Given by R.C. Bosanquet, GR.3.1922
10  Tray or palette

Some palettes of this type show signs of having had coloured pigments ground on them. This may have been for decorating the faces either of actual people or of the marble figurines, some of which do preserve traces of painted decoration.

Made in the Cyclades about 2700–2200 BC

Marble

Given by R.C. Bosanquet, GR.35.1901

11  Bracelet

Archaeological research has shown that silver was mined on Siphnos from an early period. Finds of Cycladic jewellery have included diadems, beads and dress pins as well as simple bracelets like this one.

Made in the Cyclades about 2500–1900 BC

Found on Pholegandros

Silver

Given by R.C. Bosanquet, GR.7.1901

12  Marble vase (*kandila*)

Several hundred vases of this design have been found in the Cyclades: the central section of the vase resembles a sea-urchin. The craftsmen who made these vases probably used tools of stone, wood or bone to rub and grind the marble until they had achieved a perfect shape. This type of vase is often known as a *kandila*, the modern Greek word for ‘lamp’, because its shape is thought to resemble that of the sanctuary lamps traditionally found in Greek churches.

Made in the Cyclades about 3200–2800 BC
Found on Amorgos
Marble
Given by R.C. Bosanquet, GR.38.1901

13
Conical drinking horn (*rhyton*)
This drinking horn has a hole in the centre of the base: the drinker would need to keep his finger over it to hold the liquid in. The shape closely resembles Minoan versions.

Made at Phylakopi, Melos, about 1500 BC
Found at Phylakopi
Fired clay
Given by the Greek Government, GR.70.1902

14
Cluster vase (*kernos*)
The nine individual vessels that make up this multiple vase may have been used to offer small quantities of different types of food, such as grain or fruit, to a god or goddess. The extravagant shape and the decoration of dark stripes and chevrons painted over a light-coloured slip, are both characteristic of the pottery produced on Melos at this period.

Made in Melos about 2200–1800 BC
Said to have been found at Phylakopi, Melos
Fired clay
Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.8.1925

15
Cups with flaring rims
The shape of these cups and the decoration of stylised reeds and rocks show the influence of Minoan pottery styles. Much of the subject-matter of Minoan art was drawn from observation of the natural world.

Made in and found at Phylakopi, Melos, about 1500 BC
Fired clay
Obsidian blades and core

Obsidian (a naturally occurring, black, volcanic glass) can be chipped into extremely sharp knife blades, equally useful for weapons or for carving marble.

About 3000-2000 BC

Found on Melos

Given by R.C. Bosanquet, GR.46, 46a.1901

Pot fragment: octopus

The octopus motif was popular in the so-called ‘Marine Style’ of pottery, which originated in Late Bronze Age Crete but was quickly adopted by mainland potters too. Scientific examination of fragments very similar to this in Oxford, and quite probably from the same pot, has suggested they are likely to have been made on the Greek mainland. The fact that these fragments were found at Phylakopi therefore demonstrates the extent and complexity of the trading patterns of the period.

The fragment probably comes from a stirrup jar, like 25 and 27.

Probably made on the Greek mainland about 1500 BC

Found at Phylakopi, Melos

Given by the Greek Government, GR.148.1902

Pedestal bowl

The bowl is decorated with a petal design, and the hole in the top would allow liquid to pass through and out by means of another hole in the bottom of the pedestal. A number of very similar Minoan examples are known, several of them found in ritual contexts. This example from Phylakopi suggests the influence of Minoan culture on the inhabitants at this time.

Made on Melos about 1500 BC

Found at Phylakopi, Melos
Fired clay

Given by the Greek Government, GR.72.1902

19

Fragment from the lower part of a jug

The sides of the jug are decorated with finely painted reeds or grasses in red and black, separated by areas of cross-hatching.

Made at Phylakopi, Melos, about 1500–1200 BC

Found at Phylakopi

Fired clay

Given by the Greek Government, GR.146.1902

20

Rim fragment from a large jar (pithos)

The thickness of this fragment, and the very slight curve of its wall, suggest that it must come from an extremely large vessel. Below the rim is the top of a spiral design.

Made at Phylakopi, Melos, about 1500–1200 BC

Found at Phylakopi

Fired clay

Given by the Greek Government, GR.99.1902

21

Woven mat impression on the base of a heavy jar

The impression results from the potter using a woven mat as a platform on which to shape the base of the coil-made pot. This would help to keep it flat and could be easily peeled off when the pot was finished. A large number of similar impressions have been found at Phylakopi. They provide valuable evidence for weaving as well as potting practices.

Made at Phylakopi, Melos, about 2200–2000 BC

Found at Phylakopi

Fired clay

Given by the Greek Government, GR.58b.1902
22

‘Frying pan’

Around 200 of these objects have been found: this is one of a small group with decoration relating to ships and the sea. The poor condition of the surface makes the design hard to see, but in the centre is a long, many-oared ship and above it to the right a fish. The stamped, running spirals may be intended to represent waves. The name ‘Frying pan’ has been given to these objects because of their shape, but their real function is unknown. They are concave underneath and one suggestion is that, filled with oil or water, they could have served as mirrors. Or they may have had a more symbolic meaning, perhaps one connected with fertility.

Made in the Cyclades about 2700–2200 BC
Fired clay, hand-made
Bequeathed by W. Lamb, GR.18.1963

23

Tripod jar, with animal-paw feet

Probably made on Rhodes about 1400–1200 BC
Found on Rhodes
Fired clay
Given by A.J.B. Wace, GR.22a.1924

24

High-stemmed drinking cup

The sea-shell decoration is characteristic of pottery of this period.

Made on Crete about 1300–1200 BC
Found on Crete
Fired clay
Given by M.R. James, GR.80.1906

25

Stirrup jar
Stirrup jars are so-called because the shape of the handles has been thought to resemble a stirrup. They were used to hold perfumed oil and were sent throughout the Mediterranean.

Made on the Greek mainland, about 1400–1200 BC
Found on Rhodes
Fired clay
GR.89.1896

Three-handled jar

Made on the Greek mainland about 1400–1300 BC
Fired clay
GR.91.1896

Stirrup jar

Made on the Greek mainland about 1400–1200 BC
Found at Gurob, Egypt
Fired clay
E.76.1896

Two bi-conical cornelian beads
The beads are engraved with Egyptian hieroglyphs: one names a ‘Libation Priest of the god Ptah’. Their probable find-place, Mycenae, demonstrates the contact between the Mycenaeans and Egypt at this time.

Made in Egypt about 1500–1200 BC
Said to be from Mycenae
Cornelian
Bequeathed by W. Lamb, E.8a–b.1963

(Mounted on panel)
A record from the ancient perfume industry
This clay tablet dates to the period when the Mycenaeans controlled much of Crete. It records the transfer of large quantities of coriander for use in the perfume industry at Knossos. The language is an early form of Greek, written in a script known as Linear B, which combines small pictures of objects with signs for syllables and numbers.

Thousands of Linear B tablets have been found in the great palaces of the Mycenaean world including Knossos, Pylos and Mycenae itself. Designed as short-term records, they survived through being baked in the fires that destroyed the palaces and brought the Mycenaean world to an end. Most tablets list the day-to-day transactions of the complex industries controlled by the Mycenaeans.

About 1350 BC. Found at Knossos, Crete.
Baked clay
Given by Sir Arthur Evans, GR.1.1911
30
Neolithic figure of a woman
The woman is extremely fat, with heavy thighs and a sagging and protruding stomach. Her arms are folded one above the other, rather like those of the Cycladic figurines displayed at the other end of this case. This figure is not Mycenaean but is displayed here alongside the Mycenaean ‘psi’ and ‘phi’ figurines as an example of an earlier, and very different, way of depicting the human form.

Probably made in Thessaly, northern Greece, about 3000–2500 BC
Found at Avaritsa, Thessaly, Greece
Marble
Given by R.M. Dawkins, GR.157b.1909
31
Terracotta ‘psi’ and ‘phi’ figurines
These small, hand-made figurines have been nick-named ‘psi’ and ‘phi’ by archaeologists because their stylised shapes resemble these two letters of the Greek alphabet (ψ and φ). Figurines of this type have been found in both graves and sanctuaries. Their breasts
show that they are intended to be female, but it is not known whether they were seen as goddesses or ordinary women, perhaps worshippers.

Made on the Greek mainland about 1300–1200 BC
Fired clay
Given by A.J.B. Wace, GR.21.1924; Chesterman Collection, GR.15 and 16.1984

32
Terracotta group
This hand-made figurine seems to show two figures in a wagon or chariot drawn by a horse or ox.

Made on the Greek mainland, about 1400–1200 BC
Fired clay
Chesterman Collection, GR.17.1984

33
Diadem of moulded glass plaques
These would originally have been strung together through the loops at the top. Glass was first made in Mesopotamia about 3000 BC, spreading from there to the rest of the Mediterranean world.

Made on the Greek mainland, about 1400–1200 BC
Glass
GR.4.1979

34
One-handed cup
The fine cream-coloured walls of the cup are decorated with a stylised lily design painted in a dark clay slip.

Probably made on the Greek mainland, about 1600–1500 BC
Fired clay
Purchased with the aid of the Resource / V&A Purchase Fund, GR.2.2002
35
Bronze swords
Made on Crete about 1200–1100 BC
Found at Siteia, Crete
Bronze (copper alloy)
GR.94a and b.1906

36
Double axe-head
Double axe-heads had ritual significance in Minoan Crete; many of them have been found in sacred contexts.
Made on Crete about 2000–1400 BC
Found at Kritsa, near Mirabello, Crete
Bronze (copper alloy)
GR.20.1901

37
Double axe-head
Made on Crete about 1600–1100 BC
Found on Crete
Bronze (copper alloy)
Given by R.C. Bosanquet, GR.2a.1901

38
Votive offerings from Petsofa
These small figurines were excavated at the peak sanctuary site of Petsofa. The Minoans appear to have thought their gods were especially present on the tops of high mountains, where many small sanctuaries have been found, consisting of a sacred area surrounded by a wall; the offerings themselves were often pushed into cracks in the rocks.
The Petsofa offerings include figurines of men, women and animals, and also parts of the human body such as arms or legs, presumably in the hope of recovery from an injury or sickness. This practice continued much later, as may be seen elsewhere in this gallery.
Made in Crete about 2000–1500 BC
Found at Petsofa, near Palaikastro, Crete
Fired clay
Given by the Greek Government, GR.157, 156, 158, 167, 169, 171, 172 and 185.1907

39
Bronze figures of worshippers
Each raises a hand to his head in a gesture of worship. Their elongated proportions and narrow waists are typical of Minoan figures.

Made on Crete between about 1800 and 1200 BC
Found on Crete
Bronze (copper alloy)
Given by F.W. Hasluck, GR.141.1908; given by W. Lamb, GR.4.1927; given by J. Marshall, GR.10.1931

40
Square stone bowl on a raised foot
The Psychro Cave, where this bowl was found, was a sacred site; it was where the infant Zeus was said to have been concealed from his father, Kronos.

Made in Crete about 1800–1100 BC
From the Psychro Cave in eastern Crete,
Limestone
Given by the Greek Government, GR.201.1907
Cow and calf
The design on this seal is of a cow suckling her calf; as the calf reaches up to suck, the cow bends round to nuzzle her offspring’s back. The miniature scene is carefully carved and well suited to the convex, circular surface of the stone. The use of seals was widespread in the Bronze Age, to mark either private ownership or official approval.

Lens-shaped (lentoid) sealstone
Minoan style, made in Crete or mainland Greece, about 1450–1350 BC
Sapphirine chalcedony
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.118.1937

Bone stamp seal with simple zigzag lines
Made on Crete about 3000–2000 BC
Bone
Erlenmeyer Collection, GR.1.2001

Seal in the shape of a boot
Made on Crete about 2000–1700 BC
Steatite
Erlenmeyer Collection, GR.5.2001

Seal engraved with a cuttlefish
Made on Crete about 1800–1700 BC
Yellow steatite
Given by R.W. Hutchinson, GR.4a.1939

45
Seal engraved with the foreparts of two fish
Made on Crete about 1600–1500 BC
GR.66.1901

46
Stone bowl
The bowl is carved to resemble a flower head.
Made in Crete about 1600–1400 BC
Found at Palaikastro, Crete
Steatite
Given by the Greek Government, GR.202.1907

47
Pottery, stone and bronze axe-heads, a bronze chisel and a clay lamp on a stand
Made on Crete about 1500–1200 BC
Found at Palaikastro, Crete
Given by the Greek Government,
GR.112,137,140,200,203,208,204.1907

48
Large jar on a pedestal foot
This storage jar was excavated, along with other similar examples, in the doorway between two rooms of a house. The tall foot may have been designed to be sunk in the ground.
Made on Crete about 1500-1200 BC
Found at Palaikastro, Crete
Fired clay
Given by the Greek Government, GR.154.1907

49
Large stirrup jar
Made on Crete about 1500-1200 BC
Found at Palaikastro, Crete
Fired clay
Given by the Greek Government, GR.132.1907
GREEK AND ROMAN GALLERY

CASE TWO
1

Box (pyxis) with a pointed base

All boxes are called pyxies after the Greek word for the box-wood tree, but they can be of different shapes, sizes and materials. This pyxis cannot stand on its own and would have been suspended from the two holes in the rim.

Made in Athens about 900–850 BC
Said to be found in a grave near Athens
Fired clay
Given by C.T. Seltman, GR.2c.1930

2

Jug (oinochoe) with a twisted handle

This is a particularly fine example of pottery from the Geometric period. The gleaming black and contrasting orange colours are typical of pottery from Athens.

Made in Athens about 850–800 BC
Fired clay
GR.21.1864

3

Jug (oinochoe)

Geometric patterns cover the entire body of the jug. The dark tones of both the pattern and background are the result of fire damage.

Made in Athens about 800–760 BC
Fired clay
Given by S. Goetze, GR.1.1943

4

Bronze horse figurine

This horse, like the smaller bronze bird (10, below), has a raised pattern on its base and may have been used as a seal. For other objects from the same sanctuary see Case 5.
Made in Sparta about 760–700 BC
Found at the Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia, Sparta
Bronze (copper alloy)
Given by the Greek Government through the British School at Athens, GR.16.1923

5
Cup (*kantharos*)
These very early pictures of horses show them as solid silhouettes. Although they lack any detail they are instantly recognisable. This silhouette style was used for figures on Athenian pottery for about fifty years.

Made in Athens about 750–720 BC
Fired clay, silhouette technique
Given by C.A. Lembessis, GR.98g.1906

6
Bronze horses
Bronze (copper alloy)
Right: Probably made in Arcadia, Greece about 850 BC.
Given by W. Lamb, GR.3.1957
Left: Made in Thessaly about 700–600 BC
Found at Pherae, Thessaly, Greece.
Given by W. Lamb, GR.6e.1927

7
Lidded bowl (*amphora*) with large pedestal
Here the horse is grazing. There are several patterns in the background of the picture, but the zigzag between the horse’s legs is thought to represent water.

Made in Boeotia about 725–700 BC
Fired clay, silhouette technique
Given by C.T. Seltman, GR.2a.1930
8
Wine-jug (*oinochoe*)
Made in Athens about 720 BC
Fired clay, silhouette technique
   GR.1.1935

9
Box (*pyxis*) with modelled horse on the lid
Made in Athens about 740 BC
Fired clay, silhouette technique
   GR.84.1907

10
Birds cast in bronze
   These echo the birds that appear on painted pottery of the same period.
Bronze (copper alloy)
   Left: made in Greece about 750–700 BC.
   Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.7.1934
   Right: made in Thessaly about 700–600 BC
   Found at Pherae, Thessaly.
   Given by W. Lamb, GR.6d.1927

11-13
A group of pots from a single grave
   The jug, two single-handled cups and the three-handled bowl were found together. They probably came from the same grave since their surface has been similarly affected by burial in the earth. They are typical of the pottery left in graves of this period.
Made in Athens about 900–850 BC
Fired clay
   Given by W. Lamb, GR.10a–d.1927
A pair of bracelets

These two spiral bracelets are decorated with stylised pomegranates. The fruit was a symbol of the goddess Persephone and was associated with both fertility and the underworld, the province of the dead.

Made in Thessaly about 900–800 BC
Bronze (copper alloy)
Lent by M.D. Abrams, Loan Ant.104

A jug (oinochoe) over 3000 years old

This is the earliest piece in this display case. The simple decoration of concentric semi-circles is confined to a small area of the pot. The design is obviously hand-drawn, but one hundred years later a brush and compass will be used to create the same pattern.

Made in Athens about 1100–1000 BC
Fired clay
GR.115.1908

Miniature versions of grave markers

This amphora and krater are tiny versions of the huge pots that were used as grave markers in Athenian cemeteries during the Geometric period. The full-size grave markers were well over a metre tall.

Made in Athens about 750–700 BC
GR.46.1896

Made in Athens about 900–850 BC
Given by T.C. Skeat, GR.5b.1931
18-20

Miniature pots of the Geometric period
See the information panel above.

Made in Athens about 750–700 BC
Fired clay

18: Lidded cup.
Given by M.R. James, GR.81a.1906

19: Jug (oinochoe) with a kneeling goat or ibex.
GR.22.1864

20: Jug (oinochoe) with a bird.
Given by M.R. James, GR.81c.1906
Miniature jug (*oinochoe*)

This jug shows the beginning of a new style of pottery decoration in Athens. The birds do not have solid heads shown in silhouette, as they would have had earlier. Now they are shown in outline with details filled in.

Made in Athens about 700–650 BC
Fired clay, outline technique, Phaleron ware
Given by W. Lamb, GR.18.1928

Cup (*kylix*)

This shallow drinking cup with a short foot is a common shape for a Greek cup. The design mixes real birds with imaginary winged creatures, a siren and sphinxes.

Made in Corinth about 580–560 BC
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Given by W. Lamb, GR.7.1926

Corinthian cup: animal decoration

The shape of this drinking cup (a *kotyle*, also called a *skyphos*) is typically Corinthian. It was copied in other areas of Greece when Corinthian pottery became widely imitated (see 60 for an Athenian version).

Made in Corinth about 600–570 BC
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Bequeathed by H.S. Reitlinger, GR.26.1991

Pottery from Boeotia

The double-handled jug (*oinochoe*) and stemmed bowl or cup (*kylix*) are typically Boeotian shapes, made from the pale local clay. They are decorated with simple
patterns, in contrast to the figure-decorated pottery produced in other areas of Greece at this time.

Made in Boeotia, Greece, about 600–575 BC
Fired clay
GR.P.9; GR.114a.1908

26-27
Figurines from Boeotia
This very crude seated figure and the rider on a horse look more like monkeys than men. Monkeys appear centuries earlier in Minoan wall paintings, but they were not native to Greece.

Made in Boeotia, Greece, about 600–550 BC

27: Found at Thebes, Greece
Chesterman collection, GR.33.1984; GR.114d.1908

28
Boeotian goddesses
The high crowns (poloi) worn by these stylised women suggest that they are goddesses. One also wears a necklace with pomegranate pendant, a symbol of fertility.

Made in Boeotia, Greece, about 600–550 BC
Fired clay
Chesterman collection, GR.32 and 31.1984; given by A.H. Laurie, GR.29.1980

29
Bowl (krater) with tall pedestal foot
Large lions with raised paw and grizzled muzzle decorate both sides of this pot. The unusual ‘egg’ shape would make it difficult to use for everyday storage, and it may have been made for a funerary purpose, either as a grave monument or to hold the remains of the dead.

Made in Athens about 675–650 BC
Fired clay, outline technique
Given by W. Lamb, GR.7.1925

30

Corinthian Geometric jug (*oinochoe*)

The creamy colour of the clay, together with its shape and decoration, shows that this jug was made in Corinth. It is a very different colour from the reddish-orange pots made in Athens, displayed at the left side of this case.

Made in Corinth about 750–710 BC
Fired clay
GR.4.1935

31

Jug (*olpe*) decorated with animals

A mixture of real and imaginary animals fills the three tiers of decoration.

Made in Corinth about 630 BC
Fired clay
Lent by Trinity College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.28
32 & 34
Two over-sized oil flasks (*alabastra*)
These are probably too large to hold expensive perfumed oil. They show the mythical winged creatures common on Corinthian pottery. On one are male and female sirens (part-human and part-bird) and on the other a bearded winged man.

Made in Corinth about 590–570 BC
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Given by M.R. James, GR. 58.1896; GR.42.1937

33
Oil flask (*alabastron*) : winged goddess
The winged goddess who holds two swans by the neck is called Mistress of the Animals (*Potnia Theron*). She is derived from a Near Eastern goddess type, but in Greece she is associated with the goddess Artemis.

Made in Corinth about 630–620 BC; attributed to the Typhon Painter
Fired clay, black-figure technique
GR.1.1936

35
Oil flask (*alabastron*) with a griffin-bird
The griffin was a winged monster with the head of an eagle, the body of a lion and a snake as a tail. Here a griffin's head has been attached to a bird's body to create another mythical creature.

Made in Corinth about 620–590 BC
Found at Camirus, Rhodes
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Given by C. Babington, GR.41.1865

36
Griffin-head cauldron attachment
Made on Samos about 640 BC
Bronze (copper alloy)
Purchased with the aid of the Art Fund, GR.2.1975

Shallow dish (lekanis) with lid
On the lid is a procession of animals including panthers and lions, with tails entwined, and a siren with spread wings. Some of the decoration has a red tint because the temperature was too high during firing.

Made in Corinth about 590–570 BC
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.21.1929

Wine jug (oinochoe)
Made in Corinth about 590-570 BC;
attributed to the Dodwell Painter.
Fired clay, black-figure technique
GR.59.1896
39-45

Oil Containers (*aryballoi*) from Corinth

The *aryballos* is the most common vase-type that survives from Corinth, probably because it is small with relatively thick, strong walls. The earliest versions are decorated with patterns, scales, or with designs of dogs chasing hares.

On later versions, birds or other winged figures fill the whole vase. The row of stylised warriors, whose heads and legs are all that show from behind round shields, is one of the latest types of decoration, as is a design of four leaves (quatrefoil) that fills the surface of a vase.

Made in Corinth between about 670 and 550 BC

42 Found on Rhodes

Fired clay, some in black-figure technique

Given by W. Lamb GR.1.1929 and GR.2.1929; bequeathed by W. Lamb, GR.3.1963; GR.126.1908; given by Sir W. Elderton, GR.38.1955; given by M.R. James, GR.82c.1906 and GR.82b.1906

46-53

Miniature pots from Corinth

46 Box (*pyxis*), lid missing

Made in Corinth about 730–700 BC

GR.3.2008

47 Jug (*oinochoe*) with conical base

Made in Corinth about 690–600 BC

Found at Camirus, Rhodes;

GR.7.1935

48 Jug (*oinochoe*) with conical base

Made in Corinth about 690–600 BC

Found in Italy.

Given by Col. A.B. Cotrell, GR.21.1910

49 Drinking cup (*kotyle*)

Made in Corinth about 600–500 BC

GR.P.68
50 Jug (*oinochoe*)
Made in Corinth about 550–500 BC
GR.132.1864

51 Dish for ritual (*kothon/exaleiptron*)
Made in Corinth about 650–600 BC.
Given by C.A. Lembessis, GR.98c.1906

52 Drinking cup (*kotyle*)
Found in a cemetery at Kranioloi, Kephallenia.
Given by D.F. Ansted, GR.54.1865

53 Box (*pyxis*)
Made in Corinth about 525 BC
Found in Italy.
Given by Colonel A.B. Cottell, GR.18.1910

54 Dish with high-stemmed foot: heads of birds
Made in east Greece about 625–600 BC
Said to be found at Camirus, Rhodes
Fired clay, Camiran ware
Given by C. Babington, GR.44.1865

55 Etruscan imitation of a Corinthian box (*pyxis*)
This imitation of a Corinthian *pyxis* decorated with a row of swans has been misfired, so that the decoration, which would usually be dark brown or black, has turned red.
Made in Etruria, Italy, about 600–550 BC
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Given by the Wellcome Trustees, GR.38.1982

56 Italian imitation of a Corinthian oil flask (*aryballos*)
The bodies of the animals on this have been stretched to fill the vase. This is common in Italian imitations but rare on Corinthian vases.

Made in Italy about 625–550 BC
Found at Cerveteri, Etruria, Italy
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Given by H.C. Caulfield, GR.60.1896

57
Large Boeotian oil flask (*alabastron*)
This is a close imitation of Corinthian pottery, in both shape and decoration.

Made in Boeotia, Greece, about 625–570 BC
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Given by R.C. Bosanquet, GR.44.1896

58
Two Etruscan oil flasks (*alabastra*)
Corinthian pottery was extremely popular in Italy and local Italian copies were also made. These two examples closely follow the shape and decoration of Corinthian pottery.

Made in Etruria, Italy, about 725–600 BC
Left: found at Viterbo, Etruria, Italy
Fired clay
Given by H.C. Caulfield, GR.63.1896 and GR.61.1896

59
Large Corinthian oil flask (*aryballos*)
The dancer wearing a padded costume, who appears here between two sirens, is a character invented in Corinth. He is associated with drinking and rituals of Dionysos, and this one holds a wine jug.

Made in Corinth about 590–570 BC; attributed to the Otterlo Painter
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Given by R.C. Bosanquet, GR.45.1896

60
Cup (*kotyle*)
Made in Athens about 585-550 BC
Found at Tamassos, Cyprus
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Given by Sir Henry Bulwer, GR.126.1892

61
Dish (*lekanis*): sirens
The design on this pot is careless and sketchy, yet pots by this painter have been found all over the Mediterranean region. Either the buyers did not value fine decoration, or it was the only pottery of this type available to them.
Made in Athens about 570 BC; attributed to the Polos Painter
Fired clay, black-figure technique
GR.3.1967
Cup showing a bird  
Made in East Greece about 650 BC  
Fired clay, outline technique  
Barrett Collection, GR.15.1952

Figure vases for perfumed oil  
The perfume was poured out of a hole in the top of the heads, and many of them have holes in the head or neck for suspension. They were all produced in moulds, and, with one exception (69), they were made of fired clay.  
Made in east Greece (Miletus or Rhodes) about 600–500 BC

Bust of young man: found in Etruria.  
GR.4.1961

Standing woman holding a dove.  
Chesterman collection, GR.23.1984

Helmeted head  
GR.1.1980

Siren: found on Rhodes.  
GR.37.1981

Siren  
Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.13.1928
Travelling People

The city of Naukratis in Egypt provides some clues as to how Greek trade worked. The Greek historian Herodotos claimed that this city was the only Greek trading post allowed in Egypt. Archaeological excavations have revealed Greek temples built in the sixth century BC, a sign of a Greek population. Plentiful fragments of pottery from all regions of Greece were also found (a small selection is shown here). This suggests that people from many areas of Greece were coming together in Egypt, bringing their local pottery with them, perhaps for trade.

A: Made in east Greece about 610-540 BC.
GR.14, 33 and 43.1894, GR.50 and 54d.1899

B: Made on the island of Chios about 600-560 BC.
GR.58, 63, 67, 81, 82, 87, 89 and 95. 1894

C: Made in Corinth about 600-550 BC.
GR.6 and 254.1894, GR.31.1899

D: Made in Athens about 600-500 BC.
GR.175, 205 and 217.1894, GR.116.1899

Found at Naukratis, Egypt

Given by the Egypt Exploration Society and the British School at Athens

69-75

Figure vases for perfumed oil

The perfume was poured out of a hole in the top of the heads, and many of them have holes in the head or neck for suspension. They were all produced in moulds, and, with one exception (69), they were made of fired clay.

69 Hedgehog: this piece is made of faience, an Egyptian speciality. There were Greek workshops that specialised in making faience-ware in east Greece, probably on Rhodes.
70 Two hares: made in Corinth about 625–550 BC
Given by M.R. James, GR.99b.1906; given by E.H. Topham, GR.15.1928

71 Bird: found in a tomb in Megara, Greece. Made in Corinth about 625–550 BC
Given by R.C. Bosanquet, GR.2.1903

72 Ram’s head: found on Melos.
Given by E.A. Gardner, GR.39.1896

73 Siren: made in Corinth about 625–550 BC
Given by M.R. James, GR.99a.1906

74 Ram: made in Corinth about 625–550 BC
Given by M.R. James, GR.99c.1906

75 Goose: made in Etruria about 600–500 BC
Given by W. Lamb, GR.3a.1924

76 Wine jar (amphora): dog chasing a hare
This pot was made in the same region and the same style as the two on the right. The characteristic sickle-shaped pattern relates the three to each other, but the background colour makes them look very different.

Made in east Greece about 550 BC
Found on Rhodes
Fired clay, Fikellura ware
Billioti Collection, GR.100.1896

77-78 Two wine jars (amphoriskoi)
These elongated jars were typically made in the islands of the eastern Aegean. A cream base colour is decorated with tiny
rosettes and lozenges. The sickle-shaped patterning at the base is characteristic of east Greek pottery.

Made in east Greece about 550 BC
From Rhodes
Fired clay, Fikellura ware
Biliotti Collection, GR.99.1896; given by W. Lamb, GR.1.924
GREEK AND ROMAN GALLERY

CASE THREE
East Greece, 600-450 BC

The Greek world reached beyond mainland Greece. The people living in the Aegean islands and even on the coast of modern-day Turkey identified themselves as Greek. They spoke the same language and followed the same religious and cultural customs. The Greeks themselves believed that Homer, the author of their earliest poetry, the epics of the Iliad and the Odyssey, lived not in mainland Greece but in one of the cities of the eastern Aegean.

Yet at the same time Greeks in different regions marked their own local identity in a number of ways, including differences in the way they spoke Greek, decorated objects, or buried their dead. The treatment of the dead varied between regions, between time-periods and with social status. Sometimes they were cremated, and sometimes they were buried, either in a simple stone or tile-lined pit, or in a coffin.

One way to bury the dead

Clay coffins like this one were used for wealthy burials in areas of East Greece for over one hundred years. They were decorated in the same technique as the local pottery, and were fired in large kilns, probably also used for tile production. These coffins are now known as ‘Clazomenian’, because many were found in the cemetery at Clazomenae, near modern Izmir in Turkey, but they have also been found elsewhere.

This coffin was found near the cemetery of Camirus on the island of Rhodes, and was probably made locally because it is too big and fragile to be transported far - the broken and mended sides of the coffin show the damage caused by its long journey to the Fitzwilliam Museum in 1902.

The decoration shows two panther-heads and the heads of two warriors, one bearded and one clean-shaven. Only the front rim and inside were painted, suggesting that these were the only areas visible during the burial ceremony because the coffin was already sunk in the ground.

Made in East Greece about 470 BC
Found in a farmyard near Camirus, Rhodes
Fired clay, black-figure technique
GR.7.1902
Similar coffins in the 1948-1951 excavations at Old Smyrna (modern Izmir)

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GREEK AND ROMAN GALLERY

CASE FOUR
1
‘Illyrian’ style helmet
This type of helmet was made in many parts of the Greek world, but has been called Illyrian because several have been found in Illyria in the western Balkans. The stalks on the top of the helmet would once have held plumes.
Made about 600–500 BC
Bronze (copper alloy)
GR.B.6

2
‘Corinthian’ style helmet
This is a common type of helmet, and similar ones are worn or carried by many warriors shown on vases. This example was probably a dedication, made after a battle.
Made about 600–500 BC
Found in the River Alpheios at Olympia, Elis
Bronze (copper alloy)
Given by R.C. Bosanquet, GR.1.1896

3
‘Illyrian’ style helmet
Some of the tears and dents in all three helmets may have occurred in battle.
Made about 600–500 BC
Bronze (copper alloy)
GR.B.5

4
Drinking cup (kylix) : a reveller
This wreathed reveller carries a knotted staff and a lyre. The scenes outside show a drinking party (symposium) and a battle.
Made in Athens about 500–480 BC; attributed to the wider circle of the Nikosthenes Painter
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.19.1937

5
Siana cup: inside, Dionysos and Ariadne
Siana cups are so-called after the site of Siana in Rhodes where many vases of this shape have been found.

Made in Athens about 550 BC; attributed to the Heidelberg Painter
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.4.1930

6
Oil flask (lekythos)

Made in Athens about 440 BC
Fired clay, white-ground technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.36.1937
7

Oil flask *(leythos)*: a man and woman at a tomb

The tall gravestone is decorated with sashes tied around it by the mourners.

Made in Athens about 440 BC
Fired clay, white-ground technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.34.1937

8

Oil flask *(leythos)*: Achilles and Hector

Achilles drags the dead body of Hector behind his chariot, around the walls of Troy and past the tomb mound of his dead friend Patroclus.

Made in Athens about 510–500 BC; attributed to the Leagros Group
Found in Sicily
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Given by W. Lamb, GR.2.1955

9

Miniature wine-jugs *(choes)*

Made in Athens about 440–400 BC
Fired clay, red-figure technique
GR.8.1952, GR.P.8

10

Oil flask *(leythos)*: Hermes and a woman

Hermes was the messenger god and one of his roles was to escort the dead to the Underworld. The woman holds out an offering dish towards the god.

Made in Athens about 450–440 BC; attributed to the Achilles Painter
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.30.1937
Wine jar (*amphora*): a warrior arming

The warrior is assisted by Winged Victory (*Nike*), who offers him his helmet. Her presence suggests that he will be victorious in battle, that the gods are on his side.

Made in Athens about 450–440 BC; attributed to the Painter of the Louvre Symposium
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Given by Lord Glenconner, GR.11.1917

12

Oil flask (*lekythos*): a warrior arming

The warrior bends to tie one of his greaves around his left leg. He already wears his corselet and his shield is on the ground in front of him.

Made in Athens about 510–500 BC; attributed to the Arming Painter
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Given by J. Charrington, GR.6.1917

13

Wine jar (*amphora*): Ajax and Achilles

The heroes are playing a board game, watched by the goddess Athena. This subject is popular in vase paintings of about 540–500 BC but not known from Greek literature of the time.

Made in Athens about 510–500 BC; attributed to the Antimenes Painter
Found at Vulci, Etruria, Italy
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Leake Collection, GR.29.1864

14

Water jar (*loutrophoros*): a bridal scene

The main scene shows women bringing gifts, including a finely decorated cap, to the bride who is seated on the other (more damaged) side of the vase. Traditionally, vases of this shape were used to carry water from one particular Athenian spring for the ritual
bathing of brides. They were also laid in the tombs of young people who died before marriage.

Marble funerary versions of the same shape of vase are displayed on the nearby plinth.

Made in Athens about 440–400 BC
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.13.1923

15
Wine jar (amphora) : a wheeling chariot
The charioteer has pulled the horses up so sharply that they rear into the air, tossing their heads and hooves. Horses and chariots played an important part in Athenian life.

Made in Athens about 510–500 BC; near the Lysippides Painter
Found at Vulci, Etruria, Italy
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Leake Collection, GR.31.1864

16
Wine jar (amphora) : Amazon, warrior
The warrior figures on either side of this vase are very similar, but one has an obvious breast, suggesting she is an Amazon, while the other does not, so may be her (male) opponent.

Made in Athens about 500–480 BC; attributed to the Berlin Painter
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Given by S.R. Courtauld, GR.5.1930

17
Wine bowl (stamnos) : a warrior leaving home
An offering is being poured to the gods by the warrior and his family. The popularity of such scenes in fifth-century Athens must reflect the frequency of wars and departures.

Made in Athens about 430–420 BC; attributed to the Kleophon Painter
Drinking cup: a drinker (*symposiast*)
Propped against a striped cushion, the man holds up a large drinking horn in one hand. The long fingers of his other hand are outstretched, perhaps applauding or marking time to a song. Above his legs hangs an animal-skin case for a musical instrument.

The composition is cleverly designed to fit the circular field at the painter’s disposal. Made in Athens about 500 BC; attributed to the Nikosthenes Painter.
Fired clay, red-figure technique

Eye-cup: maenads and Dionysos figures
The eyes on many cups of this period may be designed to preserve drinkers from evil. These eyes contain the head of the gorgon Medusa.

Made in Athens about 530–520 BC; attributed to the Painter of Cambridge 61, named from this vase.
Found at Vulci, Etruria, Italy
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Leake Collection, GR.39.1864

Eye-cup: Herakles and Kyknos, Dionysos and satyrs, vines at handles

Huge cups like this would have been extremely difficult to drink from, but are sometimes shown in use at a symposium.

Made in Athens about 530–520; attributed to the Lysippides Painter.
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.12.1937

Wine bowl (*volute-krater*): young man
On the other side is a reveller: the neck bears a lively battle scene. Single figures posed against the deep black background are characteristic of the Berlin Painter’s work.

Made in Athens about 500–480 BC; attributed to the Berlin Painter
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Barrett Collection, GR.5.1952

22
Ladle
A variety of ladles, dippers and jugs would be needed to transfer the wine from the bowl in which it was mixed with water (the krater) into the revellers’ cups.

Made about 500–300 BC
Bronze (copper alloy)
GR.B.8

23
Wine jug (oinochoe): a piping satyr
Satyrs, part-man and part-horse, were followers of the wine god Dionysos.

Made in Athens about 520–500 BC; attributed to the Goluchow Painter
Found at Vulci, Etruria, Italy
Fired clay, red-figure technique with white overpainting for the satyr’s tail
Leake Collection, GR.126.1864

24
Drinking cup (skyphos): a boar hunt
Hunting boar and other wild animals was a popular pursuit for wealthy Athenians, and would have been a normal conversation topic at a drinking party (symposium).

Made in Athens about 500–480 BC
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.180.1910
25
Lip cup: fighting cocks
Cock-fighting was a popular sport in antiquity: the letters behind the cocks do not form words and are purely decorative. Lip cups are so-called because of their deep-‘lipped’ shape.

Made in Athens about 540–530 BC
Found at Vulci, Etruria, Italy
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Leake Collection, GR.44.1864

26
Drinking cup (skyphos): an owl
The owl was one of the symbols of the goddess Athena, and also of the city of Athens. An owl with an olive twig was the standard design for the reverse of Athenian silver coins: see the examples in case 7.

Made in Athens about 440–400 BC
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Given by J. Charrington, GR.7.1917

27
Mug (oinochoe): an athlete
The young man prepares to scrape oil and sweat from his arm with a bronze strigil similar to the two shown here. His cloak hangs over a low column behind him.

Made in Athens about 460 BC; attributed to the Akestorides Painter
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.37.1937

28
Stemless cup: a young man running
The young man wears greaves and carries a shield and helmet. He may be a *hoplitodromos*, a participant in a race that was run wearing — or carrying — full armour.

Made in Athens about 500 BC; attributed to Skythes  
Found at Vulci, Etruria, Italy  
Fired clay, red-figure technique  
Leake Collection, GR.48.1864

Two strigils  
Strigils were used by Greeks and Romans to scrape dirt and sweat from the body. Perfumed oil would first be rubbed on to the skin, then scraped off along with the dirt.

Made about 450–300 BC  
Bronze (copper alloy)  
Lewis Collection, lent by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.103.373, and GR.B.11

Oil flask (*lekythos*): a young man  
The young man is dressed in a long cloak and leans on a long, knotted stick. Hanging up in front of him are a sponge and a strigil: he may be a spectator at the gymnasium.

Made in Athens about 460 BC; attributed to the Karlsruhe Painter  
Found in Athens  
Fired clay, red-figure technique  
Leake Collection, GR.122.1864

Drinking cup (*kylix*)

Made in Athens about 480 BC; attributed to the Foundry Painter  
Fired clay, red-figure technique  
Lewis Collection, lent by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.103.18
32
Wine jar (*amphora*): a music lesson
The teacher sits playing the pipes to accompany the song of the boy standing before him. On the other side of the vase an older man leans on his staff to listen.

Made in Athens about 470 BC; attributed to the Oionokles Painter
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Given by Winifred Lamb, GR.8.1955

33
Scent bottle in the form of a dead hare
Hares were admired for their speed, hunted with dogs, kept as pets and given as gifts between lovers. Scent bottles of this form were made in several parts of the Greek world.

Made about 600–500 BC
Fired clay
Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.1.1925

34
Drinking cup (*kylix*)
Made in Athens about 440–430 BC; attributed to the Kodros Painter
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Purchased with the aid of the Art Fund and the V&A Purchase Grant Fund, GR.2.1977

35
Wine jar (*pelike*): a man and a boy
The pair seem to be conversing – but what about? The boy looks up quite boldly towards the man; the man appears worried, touches his beard as though perplexed, and uses his stick in a defensive-seeming manner.
On the other side of the vase the nature of the relationship between the two figures is much clearer. The boy has lost patience with his music teacher and runs away from the lesson, waving his lyre above his head. Music was an important part of a young man’s education: as an adult he would be expected to sing and perhaps play an instrument at a drinking party (*symposium*).

Made in Athens about 470–460 BC; attributed to the Aegisthus Painter
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.26.1937

36

*Water-jar (hydria): gods with chariot*

Athena holds the reins, with Apollo and Dionysos. The scene may have inspired drinkers to recite stories about the gods.

Made in Athens about 520–500 BC; attributed to the Leagros Group
Found at Vulci, Etruria, Italy
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Leake Collection, GR.35.1864

37

*Wine jar (pelike): revellers*

The wreathed revellers have come from a drinking party (*symposium*): one plays the pipes and another is too drunk to walk. Street processions often followed nights of drinking.

Made in Athens about 510 BC; attributed to the manner of the Acheloos Painter
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.57.1937
GREEK AND ROMAN GALLERY

CASE FIVE
1 Antefix from a temple roof: Gorgoneion

This head of the gorgon was one of a series that would line the outside edge of a roof, where the roof tiles met the wall. The gorgon was a popular decoration for the outside of Greek temples because it was believed to ward off evil with its terrifying gaze.

Made in Taranto, southern Italy, about 600–500 BC
Fired clay
GR.31.1896

2-3 Two female busts (protomai)

Heads of veiled women, showing either a goddess or a worshipper, were particularly popular in Greek sanctuaries in Italy.

Fired clay, traces of paint
2 Made on Rhodes about 500–400 BC
Found on Tharros, Sardinia, Italy
Given by Lt-General C.R. Fox, GR.3.1868
3 Made in Boeotia about 480 BC
Given by B.K. Burn, GR.4.1975

4 All objects in this section were excavated from the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia (see the panel below) and given by the Greek Government through the British School at Athens.

A Fragmentary clay masks

About 600–550 BC
GR.187, 188, 189, 197, 209 and 4530.1923

B Lead ornaments
The yellow colour of some pieces is caused by the minerals that accumulated while they were buried in the ground, while the dark
grey pieces have been cleaned back to their original ancient surface.

About 650–500 BC
Warriors: GR.426, 429, 1027, 1165, 1855 and 2412.1923
Winged Goddess: GR.1497, 1499, 1515, 1935 and 2176.1923
Goddess wearing an aegis: GR.1456 and 2385.1923
Female worshipper holding a wreath: GR.1948.1923
Animals: GR.428, 1001 and 2469.1923

C Iron spit or rod

About 600–200 BC
GR.4255, 4259 and 4260.1923

D Miniature axe heads

About 850–500 BC
Ivory: GR.139, 140 and 143.1923
Bronze: GR.19, 20 and 21.1923

E Bronze die with six sides

About 700–600 BC
GR.96.1923

F Seals and scarabs
Four-sided bone seal with carved bearded male head. On the other faces are a lion, a lioness and a bird.

About 775–600 BC
GR.145.1923
Three disc-shaped seals of bone and ivory. An eagle is carved on each base, and on each top is a rosette design.

About 750–650 BC
GR.146, 147 and 148.1923
Two ivory animals with designs carved into their base. Over 160 similar pieces, probably used as amulets, were excavated. These two represent a ram and a bear or lion.

About 800–630 BC
GR.132 and 133.1923
Imitation Egyptian scarabs of white and blue frit (a friable stone), probably from Phoenicia. They are carved with hieroglyphs, but the inscription is meaningless

Probably made in the Levant about 650–450 BC
GR.4020 and 4025.1923

G Dress pins and brooches
Bronze dress pins

About 800–600 BC
GR. 39, 40, 41, 42, 4093, 4094, 4098 and 4099.1923
Heads of bone dress pins that imitate the bronze versions

About 700–500 BC
GR.150, 151,171,4015, and 4017.1923

Silver button or toggle

About 650–550 BC
GR.123.1923
Bronze and bone safety-pins or brooches (fibulae)

Bronze fibula with spiral design: about 800–650 BC
GR.25.1923

Bone ‘spectacle’ fibula: about 750–600 BC
GR.137.1923

Bronze pin fastening for a fibula: about 750–600 BC
GR.22.1923

H Ivory Comb

Many decorative combs were found at the sanctuary. Carved into the top of this comb are two sphinxes facing each other. On the back is a lion; a scrap of gold still survives on the rim.
About 750 BC
GR.135.1923

I Bone plaque showing a water bird

About 600–500 BC
GR.138.1923

J Bone strips
Huge numbers of these patterned strips were found, but their use is still unknown.

About 700–550 BC
GR. 152, 153, 154 and 4000.1923

K Representations of the goddess Artemis

Fired clay upper part of a naked goddess. About 675–650 BC.
GR.302.1923

Stylised goddess with long neck made of bone. About 600–500 BC
GR.136.1923

Fired clay head of the goddess and horse. About 600–550 BC
GR.303.1923

L Miniature votive pots (kantharoi and aryballoi)

Aryballoi: 4413, 4414, 4434, 4440, 4506 and 4531–4535.1923.
Kantharoi: 4536–4541.1923

5
Terracotta votive shoe

At some sanctuaries representations of body parts were dedicated, in thanks for, or hope of, a cure for the particular area. Perhaps this finely moulded shoe referred to a problem with the dedicator’s foot.

Made in Etruria about 600–500 BC

Found in the Grosseto region of Etruria, Italy

Fired clay
Chesterman collection, GR.39.1984

6
Jug (oinochoe) : boy making an offering

The boy pours liquid, probably wine, onto a flaming altar on his right. In his left hand he holds a bowl (phiale) with offerings of food. This would have been the standard ‘sacrifice’ made to the gods. Animal sacrifices were expensive and therefore exceptional.

Made in Athens about 470 BC
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Given by W. Lamb, GR.14.1955

7
Corinthian bottle: procession of women

Corinthian bottles were strongly associated with rituals and are almost always found at sanctuaries of goddesses. They were often decorated with scenes believed to represent a religious procession in honour of a goddess.

Made in Corinth about 580–560 BC
Fired clay
Given by A. Fleet in memory of S. Fleet, Master of Downing & Hon. Treasurer of The Friends of the Fitzwilliam, GR.1.2008

8
Terracotta woman with pomegranate

This veiled young woman wearing a finely crinkled dress (chiton) was made in a mould. She was painted in white, red and blue, and traces of the paint survive. In the ancient world clay figurines were usually painted.

Made in east Greece about 480–470 BC
Fired clay
Ricketts & Shannon collection, GR.74.1937
9  
Ivory pin head  
This tiny woman is the head of a dress pin, and may have been a dedication to Artemis at her sanctuary at Ephesos. Similar dedications, left at the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia in Sparta, are exhibited above.  
Made in east Greece about 620–600 BC  
Probably found at the Sanctuary of Artemis, Ephesos  
Ivory with traces of gold leaf  
GR.63a.1905  

10  
Bronze woman  
In her left hand, which she uses to lift her skirt, the figure also holds a pomegranate. This is a symbol of fertility that is particularly associated with the goddess Persephone.  
Made in the north-east Peloponnese about 470–460 BC  
Bronze (copper alloy)  
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.107.1937  

11  
Ram of Xenoklees  
The inscription records that Xenoklees dedicated this to Poseidon ‘the Driver’. It may originally have accompanied a sacrifice to Poseidon of an actual ram.  
Made in the Peloponnese, possibly Laconia, about 540–500 BC  
Said to be found in Arcadia  
Bronze (copper alloy)  
Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.4.1933  

12  
Bronze woman holding a lotus bud
As with all the female figurines in this display case, this may represent a goddess or a mortal worshipper. However, the tall headdress (polos) she wears indicates her high status, suggesting that she is a goddess.

Probably made in Attica, Greece, about 540 BC
Bronze (copper alloy)
Given by Sir Alfred and Lady Chester Beatty, GR.10.1928

13
Bronze votive animals
These figurines were all solid-cast in bronze and were made together. They were likely to be part of a dedication at some small sanctuary in Çeşme (ancient Kysos) on the coast of modern Turkey. The selection here (a lion, a grazing stag, a dog, two sets of oxen yoked to a plough with a ploughman, two bulls, a goat, a sheep, a stoat and a fish) is part of a larger group that included more animals, as well as mythical creatures and men fighting with knives. The other pieces are now in different museums. The subjects chosen suggest that they were dedicated to a fertility goddess, perhaps Cybele.

Made in east Greece about 600–500 BC
Found at Çeşme, near modern Izmir, Turkey
Bronze (copper alloy)
Bequeathed by F. McClean, GR.9–16.1904
Bequeathed by J. Duncan, GR.4–6.1932
GREEK AND ROMAN GALLERY

CASE SIX
1

Stemless cup *(kylix)*

The potter stamped the palmette decoration inside the cup before applying the clay slip, which turned glossy black during firing. Vases that are completely coated in slip like this can be described as ‘black gloss’.

Made in Athens about 430–400 BC
Fired clay, black gloss technique
Collection of C.M. Robertson, given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.2.2008

2

Offering bowl *(phiale)*

This bowl was made in a mould that may have been taken from a silver vessel. The decoration shows Winged Victories (*Nikai*) driving Herakles and others in four-horse chariots.

Made in Campania, Italy, about 250 BC
Fired clay, moulded, black gloss technique
Reitlinger Bequest, GR.31.1991

Charles Ricketts (1866–1931) and Charles Shannon (1863–1937)

Most of the vases in this case were bequeathed to the Fitzwilliam Museum in 1937 by Charles Shannon. They came from the collection that he and his friend Charles Ricketts, both artists, had built up during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Fifty-eight vases or fragments from the Ricketts and Shannon Collection are now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, along with some of the sculpture shown in this gallery. There are also smaller works in bronze and terracotta, and some fine engraved sealstones, in addition to many Old Master and Pre-Raphaelite drawings.

Friends of Sidney Cockerell (Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum from 1908–1937) and of Winifred Lamb (Honorary Keeper of Antiquities from
1920–1958), Ricketts and Shannon formed their collection largely on aesthetic principles.

3-6
Small black gloss vases
The cup (a special shape of kylix), oil flask (askos), miniature wine jar (amphoriskos) and deep drinking cup (skyphos), were finely shaped, evenly coated in slip and carefully fired to achieve a fine, glossy surface.

Made in Athens about 450–380 BC
Fired clay, black gloss technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.49,51,54 and 53.1937

7
Wine-jug (oinochoe)
Made in Athens about 500 BC
Fired clay
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.7.1937

8
Oil flask (squat lekythos)
The figures of Aphrodite, Eros and a woman were modelled in clay and then applied to the vase. The pink, yellow and blue colours were added after firing.

Made in Athens about 380 BC
Found at Pantikapaion, Black Sea
Fired clay, partly moulded and with added colour
Lewis Collection, lent by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.103.26

9 Head vase (kantharos)
The black gloss emphasises the difference between the two heads, one of a white woman, the other of a black. The upper part of the vase was made on a wheel, while the heads and necks were moulded.
Made in Athens about 450 BC; Class G
Fired clay, partly moulded, partly black gloss technique
Acquired with the aid of the Art Fund, GR.2.1999

10
Conical bowl
The red, white and yellow decoration is clay-based and added over the black slip before firing.

Made in Apulia, Italy, about 350–300 BC
Found at Orvieto, Etruria, Italy
Fired clay, Gnathia style
GR.42.1982

White-ground technique
As an alternative to black- or red-figure, some vases were coated in a white slip, made from clay rich in kaolin. The decoration of ‘white-ground’ vases developed over time. At first the black-figure technique was applied over the white slip, but from about 470 BC onwards figures were generally outlined in either dilute clay slip or matt colour, and after about 440 BC extra colours were added after firing.
11
Oil flask *lekýthos* : a woman running

The simple composition, with a single figure set against the black background, suits the red-figure technique.

Made in Athens about 480–470 BC; attributed to the Berlin Painter
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.28.1937

12
Oil flask *lekýthos* : two women at a gravestone

One woman brings a basket of offerings; the other kneels on the ground, beating her breast in grief. The figures are drawn in matt outline, with solid areas of colour.

Made in Athens about 430–400 BC
Fired clay, white-ground technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.33.1937

13
Oil flask *lekýthos*

The figures of the man and woman were painted partly in outline, partly in solid areas of black slip; a white clay slip, slightly creamier in tone than the background, was used for the woman’s flesh.

Made in Athens about 475–450 BC; attributed to the Painter of Cambridge 3.1917, named after this vase
Fired clay, white-ground technique
Given by C. Fairfax Murray, GR.3.1917

14
Wine jug *oinochoe* : Judgment of Paris

Hermes leads Hera, Artemis and Aphrodite to the Trojan prince Paris, who has to decide which of them is the most beautiful. The
figures are shown in black-figure over a white ground; the shoulder decoration is black on the natural orange-red clay ground.

Made in Athens about 500–480 BC
Fired clay, white-ground and black-figure technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.8.1937

15
Oil flask (*alabastron*) : young men and women
Oil flasks like this were used by both men and women to hold perfumed oil.

Made in Athens about 500 BC; attributed to the Euergides Painter
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.39.1937

16
Oil flask (*alabastron*) : black African warrior
The outline and inner details of the figure are drawn in thick brownish-black slip. White *alabastra* imitate stone vases made of white calcite (alabaster).

Made in Athens about 480 BC; attributed to the Group of the Negro Alabastra
Fired clay, white-ground technique
GR.5.1968

17
Wine-jar (*amphora*) : warrior and youth with a horse, taking leave of Athena and a woman

Made in Athens about 470–460 BC; attributed to the Painter of Louvre G 231
Fired clay
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.21.1937
This detail of the vase clearly shows the preliminary sketch lines: the artist first drew the horse and then the young man standing in front of it. He also changed his mind over the position of the reins.
Firing pots in the kiln was a risky business: ‘misfired’ pots show what could go wrong. Some misfired pieces were probably destroyed, but these examples were thought good enough to be kept, sold and used. The fragment 19, for example, was dedicated to a god or goddess in one of the sanctuaries at Naukratis in Egypt.

18
Misfired fragment of a plate
The figures should be black, but instead are mostly red. Perhaps the temperature was not high enough to sinter the slip, or else air entered the kiln too soon.

Made in Athens about 575–525 BC
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Given by C.A. Lembessis, GR.3.1929

19
Misfired fragment of a wine jar (*pelike*)
The background is glossy red, not black, but the outline and inner details of the figure are properly black. Perhaps two different batches of slip were used, only one of which sintered.

Made in Athens about 450 BC
Found at Naukratis, Egypt
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Given by the Egypt Exploration Fund, GR.345.1899
20
Misfired small bowl
The attractive, mottled red gloss effect was almost certainly unintentional. Perhaps the slip was not applied thickly enough, or else the temperature in the kiln was too low.

Made in Athens about 375–350 BC
Fired clay, black gloss technique
Bequeathed by Winifred Lamb, GR.9.1963

21
Cosmetic box (*pyxis*) : a warrior leaving home
This vase was extensively restored before it came to the Museum. The edges of the foot, which does not belong, have been ground down to fit on to the bowl. Large areas are missing, and this, along with the jagged edges that remain, is quite distracting. But would complete re-restoration, with a new, more appropriately shaped foot, be misleading?

Made in Athens about 540 BC; attributed to the Princeton Group
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.4.1937

22
Cup (*kylix*) : chariot and a warrior
The device on the warrior’s shield is a tripod in white. On either side of the scene the artist has written “Hermogenes made me”

Made in Athens about 550–525 BC; signed by the ‘Little Master’, Hermogenes
Found at Vulci, Etruria, Italy
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Leake Collection, GR.41.1864

23
Eye cup
This type of kylix is called an eye cup after the exterior decoration. This particular artist has further emphasised the ‘human’ appearance of the cup by adding a small nose between the huge eyes. The cup handles look like ears.

Made in Athens about 525 BC; signed by Hischylos as potter
Fired clay, black- and red-figure technique (bilingual)
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.14.1937

24
Wine jar (amphora) : Eos pursuing a young man
Eos, goddess of the Dawn, pursued both Kephalos and Tithonos: when the youth is un-named his identity is not clear.

Made in Athens about 470 BC; attributed to the Pig Painter (see vase 31)
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.22.1937

25
Deep cup (skyphos) : Eos abducting a boy
In Greek mythology, it was usually male gods and heroes who pursued young women. The goddess Eos, who chased and abducted young men, was an exception to this rule.

Made in Athens about 460 BC; attributed to the Lewis Painter, named after this vase
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Lewis Collection, lent by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.103.19

26
Drinking cup (kylix) : Dionysos with satyrs and maenads
The anonymous painter of this cup has been named after a scene he painted several times, the ‘Dokimasia’, or annual parade and inspection of young Athenian horsemen. Vases 32 and 33 have been attributed to
painters working at the same date. The style of all three vases is close but not identical. The figures are slender and delicately drawn; they are almost dominated by the black background of the vases.

Made in Athens about 470 BC; attributed to the Dokimasia Painter
Collection of Sir Christopher Cockerell, CBE, FRS, purchased with the aid of the Art Fund with a contribution from the Wolfson Foundation, and the V&A/MLA Purchase Fund, GR.1.2004

27

Drinking cup (kylix) : women selling wreaths

This cup preserves the signature of the potter Hieron at one handle. The figures are more substantial-seeming than those on the Dokimasia Painter’s cup (26), the hanging folds of their garments broader and heavier-looking. The figures are also more closely grouped together, so that the lighter, red areas of the pot dominate the black background.

Made in Athens about 500–480 BC; signed by Hieron as potter and attributed to the painter Makron
Found at Poggia Sommavilla, Italy
Fired clay, red-figure technique
GR.12.1927
Drinking cup: eyes, with Herakles and the Lion under each handle

This cup was heavily restored before it was acquired by the Museum in 1864. In the late 19th century the restorations were removed, revealing some original areas but also the extensive damage caused by the first restorers. This included large gaps between the fragments where the edges had been filed down. Many Leake Collection vases (see also Cases 4 and 7) have been similarly treated. The damage caused by the first restoration cannot now be reversed. The appearance of these vases could only be improved by further, major intervention.

Made in Athens about 560 BC; signed by Hischylos as potter and Sakonides as painter
Found at Vulci, Etruria
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Leake Collection, GR.38.1864

Wine dipper (kyathos) : Dionysos

Areas of modern restoration were removed in 1992, and were not replaced. This makes it easy to see how much of the ancient object survives. This approach to conservation is very different from that used on 30.

Made in Athens about 500 BC
Fired clay, white-ground technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.9.1937
Wine dipper (*kyathos*): Dionysos

This vase may look intact but in fact it has been restored more than once, both before and after it entered the Museum. In contrast to the approach taken on 29, these restorers have tried to conceal their work. This allows us to appreciate the vase’s shape and decoration without being distracted by very obvious areas of damage.

*Detail of the vase in ultra-violet light: the restored areas fluoresce and appear yellow and greyish-white*

Made in Athens about 500 BC
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.10.1937

31
Wine jar (*pelike*)

Made in Athens about 470-460 BC
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Given by the Art Fund, GR.9.1917

32
Deep drinking cup (*skyphos*): a dancing satyr
The satyr prances in front of a drinking horn

Made in Athens about 480–470 BC; attributed to the Brygos Painter, named after the potter Brygos, with whom he often worked
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Hope Collection, given by Winifred Lamb, GR.12.1955
33

Wine jar (*amphora*) : Zeus pursuing Ganymede

The style of the painter of this vase, the Briseis Painter, is very close to that of the Dokimasia and Brygos Painters (see 26 and 32)

Made in Athens about 490–470 BC; attributed to the Briseis Painter

Fired clay, red-figure technique

Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.23.1937

34

Drinking cup (*kylix*)

Made in Athens about 525-500 BC; attributed to the wider circle of the Nikosthenes painter

Found at Vulci, Etruria, Italy

Fired clay, red-figure technique

Ricketts and Shannon Collection GR.17.1937

35

Drinking cup (*kylix*) : outside, youths and athletes between palmettes

Made in Athens about 500 BC; attributed to the Euergides Painter

Found at Vulci, Etruria

Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.15.1937
GREEK AND ROMAN GALLERY

CASE SEVEN
An ‘Olympic medal’
This medallion was bought by Colonel Leake during the Napoleonic wars (1799-1815), at Serres in northern Greece. He had been sent there to help the Turkish government organize the defence of Greece in case the French invaded. The style and subjects of the medallion – the head of Athena and Alexander the Great on horseback hunting a lion – recall earlier Greek designs. But this example was probably struck in AD 242, to mark the ‘Olympic’ games celebrated that year in Macedonia, in honour of Alexander the Great.

About AD 242
Found in Macedonia, northern Greece
Gold
CM.LK.4210-R

Greek Coins
Many of the 35,000 Greek coins in the Fitzwilliam Museum were collected by individuals who originally donated them either to the University of Cambridge or to specific Cambridge colleges. The two largest and most significant collections are those of W.M. Leake (see adjacent panel) and J.R. McClean (1872-1913), represented by the letters LK and MC in the accession numbers below

2
Electrum third of a stater: irregular lines
This is one of the earliest known coins, struck in electrum (an alloy of gold and silver), with simple patterns on the obverse (front) and punch marks on the reverse.

Made in Ionia, about 625-600 BC
Given by Professor A.J.B. Wace, CM.G.1-R
Electrum third of a *stater*: griffin head
Made in Ionia, perhaps Teos, about 580 BC
SNG 4586

Gold and silver *staters* of Croesus, King of Lydia: foreparts of a lion and bull
Croesus was the first to introduce coins made of pure gold and silver.
About 550 BC, CM.MC.8636-R, CM.33-1967

Silver *stater* of Aegina: a turtle
Aegina may have been the first city-state in mainland Greece to have minted coins.
About 530 BC, CM.MC.6010-R

Silver *stater* of Knossos, Crete: the Minotaur
About 500 BC, CM.MC.7050-R

Silver *stater* of Athens: an amphora
This is one of the earliest Athenian coins, which bear simple, heraldic-looking designs.
About 530 BC, CM.MC.7228-R

Silver 4-drachma coins (*tetradrachms*) of Athens: Athena and owl
These became the sole types used for more than 400 years on the city’s silver coinage.
Silver stater of Corinth: Pegasus
About 500 BC, CM.LK.3566-R

12-13
Silver staters of Caulonia, southern Italy: Apollo
12 and 13 show the obverse (front) and reverse of two coins of identical design. They are made by the ‘incuse’ technique: the design is the same on both sides, but appears in relief on the obverse and, like a photographic negative, reversed and ‘sunken’ on the reverse of the coin.

About 520 BC, CM.YG.1108-R and CM.MC.1589-R

14
Silver stater of Croton, southern Italy: tripod with bowl

About 510 BC, CM.LK.5121-R

15
Silver 2-drachma coin (didrachm) of Syracuse, Sicily: Arethusa
Arethusa was the local nymph of Syracuse and a symbol of the city: four dolphins circle her head.

About 490 BC, CM.LK.9039-R

16
Silver 4-drachma coin (tetradrachm) of Syracuse, Sicily: a four-horse chariot
Winged Victory (Nike) flies above the horses with a wreath

About 480 BC, CM.MC.2615-R

17
Silver stater of Gela: the river-god Acheloos as a man-headed bull

About 470 BC, CM.MC.2237-R

18
Silver 4-drachma coin (tetradrachm) of Naxos: Silenus
Silenus squats and raises a wine cup (kantharos) to his mouth. This is one of the finest surviving Greek coins.
About 460 BC, CM.MC.2466-R

19

Electrum stater of Cyzicus, Mysia: head of the gorgon, with tuna fish below

About 460 BC, CM.MC.7559-R

20

Silver stater of Elis (Olympia): an eagle with a snake

About 400 BC, CM.MC.6630-R

21

Bearded male figure, perhaps the god Zeus

The dark surface coating (patina) of this figure is very characteristic of bronzes from the Leake collection.

Probably made in Greece about 450–350 BC

Bronze (copper alloy)

Leake Collection, GR.5.1864

22

Miniature bronze helmeted head

In shape this resembles the scent bottles displayed in case 2, but it has no base, so could not have served as a container. The maker’s name, Koios, is inscribed above the eyebrows: boars decorate the cheek-pieces.

Made in Greece about 540–500 BC

Found near Elis, Greece

Bronze (copper alloy)

Leake Collection, GR.15.1864

Samuel Savage Lewis (1836–1891)

The Revd S.S. Lewis was a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, an energetic cleric, teacher and antiquary. His main collecting interests lay in the fields of ancient coins and engraved seal-stones, but some of the finest vases on display here were also
his. The Lewis Collection is on long-term loan to the Fitzwilliam Museum from Corpus Christi College.

23

Stemless cup (*kylix*) : the oracular head of Orpheus

According to some versions of the story of the legendary musician Orpheus, after he had lost his wife, Eurydice, he took no interest in any other women. The women of Thrace were so irritated by his indifference that they tore him into pieces. His head floated down various rivers to the sea, and was carried over to Lesbos where a shrine was set up for it and it uttered oracular sayings.

In this scene, a seated man is writing down the head’s words, watched by the god Apollo.

Made in Athens about 420 BC; attributed to the Painter of Ruvo 1346
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Lewis Collection, lent by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.103.25

24

Water-jar (*hydria*) : Herakles and Triton

Herakles wears his lion-skin and is locked in a wrestling hold with the fish-tailed monster. This is not one of the standard Twelve Labours of Herakles: some sources report that the hero had to fight Triton in order to discover from him the way to the Garden of the Hesperides.

Like many vases from the Leake collection, this one was heavily restored before it was acquired by the Museum in 1864. In the late 19th century the restorations were removed from the front of the vase, revealing the extensive damage caused by the first restorers. This included large gaps between the fragments where the edges had been filed down.

Made in Athens about 520–510 BC
Found at Vulci, Etruria, Italy
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Leake Collection, GR.33.1864
25

Wine jar (amphora): Ariadne flanked by satyrs

The dancing satyrs may be escorting Ariadne to their master, Dionysos.

Made in Athens about 550–540 BC; attributed to the Painter of Cambridge 47, named after this vase

Found at Vulci, Etruria, Italy

Fired clay, black-figure technique

Leake Collection, GR.26.1864

26

Wine bowl (dinos), the rim decorated with galloping horses

Bowls of this type were made and used by both Greeks and Etruscans. The ribbed sides and the style of the horses suggest this one is probably Greek.

Probably made in Campania, Italy, about 550–500 BC

Bronze (copper alloy)

GR.3.1939
27

*Bucchero* ware wine jar (*amphora*)

This is the shape of vase that the Athenian ‘Nikosthenic’ *amphora* beside it was imitating. More examples of Etruscan *bucchero* ware are displayed across the gallery in case 11.

Made in Etruria, Italy, about 550 BC
Fired clay, *bucchero* technique
Given by F. Brangwyn, GR.1.1934

28

Wine-jar (*amphora*)

Made in Athens about 530-510 BC; signed by Nikosthenes as potter and attributed to Painter N
Said to have been found in Orvieto, Etruria
Fired clay, black-figure technique
GR.3.1962

29

*Bucchero* ware wine dipper (*kyathos*)

The bowl of the dipper is decorated with an incised zigzag line: a head moulded in relief marks the inner junction of bowl and handle.

Made in Etruria, Italy, about 550 BC
Fired clay, *bucchero* technique
GR.19.1952
30
Wine dipper (kyathos): Dionysos with satyrs and maenads
This shape of vase was popular in Etruria before it was adopted at Athens. Although the find place of this example is unknown, it is very likely to have been exported from Athens to Etruria.

Made in Athens about 530–520 BC
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Bequeathed by F. McClean, GR.21.1904

31
Wine-jar (amphora)
Made in Athens about 530–520 BC; manner of the Lysippides Painter
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Leake Collection, GR.27.1864

32
Wine jar (neck-amphora): Herakles fights the Amazons
The other side of the vase shows a frieze of warriors running, holding circular shields.

Made in Athens about 570–560 BC; attributed to the Camtar Painter, so-called after this vase and another in Tarquinia
Found at Vulci, Etruria, Italy
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Leake Collection, GR.24.1864

33
Water jar (hydria): Herakles and the Erymanthian boar
Capturing this vicious boar was one of the Twelve Labours of Herakles. Here he presents it to the goddess Athena.

Made in Athens about 520–510 BC
Found at Vulci, Etruria, Italy
Winged Eros was an ancient god of both erotic love and fertility. Over time he became more of a personification and the companion of Aphrodite, goddess of love.

Made in Athens about 480–470 BC; attributed to the Bowdoin Painter

Athena, wearing her helmet and aegis, faces the winged figure of Nike, personification of Victory. Both carry equipment used by mortals for making offerings to the gods. In her hand Athena holds a bowl (phiale), and Nike has a jug (oinochoe) used for pouring libations.

The Greek gods do not need wings to carry them to their home on Mount Olympos. By the classical period, around 470 BC, it is only personifications, such as Nike, the messenger goddess Iris and the minor gods like Eros, who are winged.

Made in Athens about 450–440 BC; possibly to be attributed to the Achilles Painter

Made in Athens about 530-520 BC
37

Athena

Athena wears a helmet; her shield is now missing. Her right hand is raised ready to throw a spear, also missing. She closely resembles the Athena on the vase beside her.

Made in Attica, Greece, about 500 BC
Bronze (copper alloy)
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.108.1937

38

Zeus

The naked king of the gods is about to throw his particular weapon, the thunderbolt (now missing). He looks rather different from the amorous Zeus on the vase beside him.

Made in Greece about 500–450 BC
Bronze (copper alloy)
Agnes Lewis Collection, GR.1.2009

39

Round box (pyxís)

Made in Athens about 470–460 BC
Fired clay, red-figure technique
GR.10.1934

40

Wine jar (amphora) : Apollo holding out a dish to receive an offering (libation)

The wreath Apollo is wearing and the branch he holds, both of laurel, identify him as the god of divination. The woman holding the jug may be his sister, the goddess Artemis, or a mortal woman. She has no identifying attributes. Made in Athens about 440 BC
Found in Campania, Italy
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Given by C. Babington, GR. 52.1865
Wine jar (*amphora*): Dionysos

A female worshipper holding a torch pours a libation into a bowl (*phiale*) held by the god Dionysos. The god is identified by his *thrysos* (a pine cone on a stick).

Made in Athens about 450 BC
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Given by W. Lamb, GR.9.1955

Lip cup: Odysseus under the ram

Odysseus escapes from the cave of the Cyclops, Polyphemus, by hanging on beneath a large ram.

Made in Athens about 550 BC
Found at Vulci, Etruria, Italy
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Leake Collection, GR.45.1864

Wine-jar (*amphora*)

Made in Etruria, Italy, about 530 BC; ‘Pontic’ group
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Leake Collection, GR.23.1864
44
Engraved ringstone
Made in Etruria, Italy, about 400-350 BC
Banded agate (modern gold setting)
Given by A.A. de Pass, CG 124

![Image of Engraved Ringstone](image1)

45
Cornelian scarab
Like 44, this might show the suicide of Ajax: but the hero is shown as a much younger man than was usual in Greek art.
Made in Etruria about 400–350 BC
Cornelian (the gold ring hoop is modern, though copying an ancient type)
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, CG 100

![Image of Cornelian Scarab](image2)

46
Agate scarab: man and dog
A man in a pointed cap and a cloak stands leaning on a long staff: a dog turns its head to look up at him. Is this Odysseus, returning to Ithaca where his faithful hound Argos is the only one to recognise him after his long absence at Troy? The hat the man wears is similar
to that worn by the possible Odysseus on vase 31 in case 6. But he may be an unknown, Etruscan hero — or just an ordinary man.

Made in Etruria about 400 BC
Banded agate (the gold ring hoop is modern, though copying an ancient type)
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, CG 99

47
Cylindrical box (cista) : the battle between gods and giants
Athena and Herakles, attended by Winged Victory (Nike) in a chariot, fight the giants. Some of the giants’ bodies end in typically Etruscan coiling snakes.

Made in Etruria about 300–200 BC
Bronze (copper alloy)
Purchased through the V&A/Resource Fund and the Art Fund, GR.3.1965

48
Water-jar (hydria) of ‘Chalcidian’ type: a group of men and women
This vase belongs to a distinctive group of vases known as ‘Chalcidian’ because many of them bear inscriptions that use the alphabet and letter forms of Chalcis in Euboea. As most of the vases have been found in southern Italy, it is probable that they were made by people who emigrated from Chalcis to the west, perhaps to Rhegion (now Reggio di Calabria), which was a colony of Chalcis.

Probably made in southern Italy about 550–530 BC
From Vulci, Etruria, Italy
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Leake Collection, GR.25.1864

49

Oil flask (*lekythos*): Herakles and the sun-god Helios
Herakles is said to have shot an arrow at Helios because he was enraged by the heat of the sun as he travelled across the desert to find the Cattle of Geryon.

Made in Athens about 490–480 BC
Found in Athens
Fired clay, black-figure technique

Leake Collection, GR.78.1864

50

Wine jar (neck-*amphora*): a battle between Greeks and Amazons
The Amazons were a tribe of warrior women who fought on the Trojan side at Troy: both Theseus and Herakles also encountered them.

Made in Athens about 550 BC; attributed to the Tyrrhenian Group
Fired clay, black-figure technique
Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.7.1932
GREEK AND ROMAN GALLERY

CASE EIGHT
Seeing double?

In the later Greek and Roman periods, popular statues were frequently reproduced in all sizes and materials. Small-scale examples had a variety of functions: they could be offered to the gods in sanctuaries, or they could decorate wealthy homes. Most of these figures are reflections or adaptations of large-scale statues created in the Greek world between about 400 and 200 BC. Some of the later figures show distinctive alterations to suit later tastes. It is not always possible - or useful – to describe the ‘reproductions’ as either ‘Greek’ or ‘Roman’: rather they serve to demonstrate the artistic continuity between Greece and Rome.

Two Herakles figures

These once decorated the shoulders of massive bronze wine bowls: on the more complete figure 2, the hero may be carrying the golden apples of the Hesperides in his cup. The two figures are ‘twins’ in terms of their pose, scale and original function. Several other very similar figures are known and they may all derive from a larger version of, perhaps, the fourth century BC. Figure 1 is much more carefully worked than figure 2: the finely modelled muscles of his arm, legs and torso reflect the tension of his pose, with arcing back and widely planted legs.

1
About 300-100 BC,  
Found at Agrinion, western Greece  
Bronze (copper alloy)  
Leake Collection, GR.1.1864

2
About 100 BC-AD 100  
Bronze (copper alloy)  
GR.5.1977

3,4
Two Aphrodite figures
Complete versions of this statue show that the goddess is raising her hands to wring out her wet hair (just visible here on her right shoulder). The moment shown is Aphrodite’s birth from the sea.

About 100 BC-AD 100
Found in Egypt
Marble
GREEK AND ROMAN GALLERY

CASE NINE
Young satyr or Pan playing the flute

It is difficult to decide who this young musician is. Round his head he wears an unusual wreath, made of pine branches. He has the tail and pointed ears of a satyr, one of the part-human, part-horse followers of the wine-god Dionysos. But he also has the small goat’s horns of Pan, who is more usually shown with the shaggy legs of a goat and whose preferred instrument is the ‘Pan pipes’. Figures of Pan or satyrs were popular in many sizes and different materials in the Roman period, perhaps because of their association with the countryside and nature. Most Greek and Roman marble statues were originally painted and sometimes gilded. However, the colour has generally been lost over time or through cleaning. This figure is unusual in preserving traces of gilding on the hair, wreath and flute. There are also remains of a dark, resinous coating on the rock and over the gilding on the hair and garland. This also appears to be original, but could be an embellishment added during the sculpture’s long modern history.

About AD 1-100
Marble
Given by J. Disney, GR.2.1850
GREEK AND ROMAN GALLERY

CASE 10
1
Wine bowl (*krater*) : Dionysos with satyrs and maenads
Dionysos was the god not only of wine, but also of the theatre, and the underworld. His worship was widespread in southern Italy.
Made in Lucania, southern Italy, about 400–380 BC; attributed to the Dolon Painter
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.70.1970

2
Oil-flask (*lekythos*) : Pan
The god Pan, part-man, part-goat, was worshipped in rural areas. He was associated with nature, wild animals and uncultivated land; he was often linked with Dionysos.
Made in Athens about 400–370 BC
Fired clay, partly moulded
Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.11.1977

3
Dionysos
On this decorative roundel, the youthful god wears ivy leaves and flowers in his flowing hair. The fawn-skin across one shoulder is a reminder of his worshippers’ practice of hunting and tearing apart wild animals.
About 300–100 BC
Bronze (copper alloy) with silver inlay
L.D. Cunliffe Bequest, GR.119.1937

4
Panthers and griffins
These animals, real and mythological, were companions of Dionysos. Such figures may have accompanied an image of the god in a shrine, or been offered in a sanctuary.
About 300–100 BC
Found in Egypt
Bronze (copper alloy)
Gregg Bequest, GR.6–9.1954

5

Crocodile drinking horn (*rhyton*)
Made in Taranto, southern Italy, about 350 BC
Fired clay, red-figure technique
GR.58.1865

6

Wine jar (*pelike*): youth and woman
The figure of Eros, Love, hovers between the two figures, suggesting the erotic nature of their relationship. The exaggeratedly elongated shape of the vase is typical of this period.
Made in Apulia, southern Italy, about 330–320 BC; attributed to the Circle of the Darius Painter
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Given by Professor C. Babington, GR.47.1865
7
Wine jug (chous) : Dionysos and maenad
The god pours a libation from a jug.
Made in Campania, southern Italy, about 340 BC; attributed to the Würzburg Painter
Given by the Trustees of the Wellcome Foundation, GR.78.1981

8
Box for jewellery or cosmetics (pyxis) : a woman’s head
The woman wears an elaborately decorated cap (sakkos). The white-outlined ivy-leaves on the lid are characteristic of Sicilian red-figure.
Made in Sicily about 330–310 BC; attributed to the Paterno Group
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Given by Professor C. Babington, GR.49.1865

9
Eros flying
This figure was made in several parts, with the arms, legs, wings and head individually moulded and fitted together before firing.
Perhaps made in southern Italy about 200–100 BC
Fired clay
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.81.1937

10-11
Erotes flying
One holds a torch, perhaps a reference to a wedding procession, as these generally took place at night.
Made about 300–100 BC
Fired clay
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.82.1937; Chesterman Collection, GR.99.1984
Alexander the Great

The image of Alexander was easily recognised by most people in antiquity. His long, wavy hair, for example, is a distinctive feature of all his portraits. Here, his right arm is raised to hold a spear (now missing). His pose recalls that of statues of the god Zeus, whose son he claimed to be. Later rulers were to model their own portraits on those of Alexander, in terms of both pose and physical appearance.

About 300–100 BC
Found at Tanis, Egypt
Bronze (copper alloy)
Leake Collection, GR.8.1864

Weary Herakles, leaning on his club

The hero is resting after his Labours. This style of Herakles statue is known as the ‘Farnese’ type after a large-scale marble version once in the collection of Cardinal Farnese, found in the Baths of Caracalla at Rome.

Made about 100 BC–AD 100
Bronze (copper alloy)
Leake Collection, GR.3.1864
14

Herakles

The face of this Herakles resembles those of philosopher statues: the hero seems deep in thought.

Perhaps made in Asia Minor, about 200–1 BC
Fired clay
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.88a.1937

15

Herakles with a wine cup (*kantharos*)

This Herakles carries his club in one hand and a wine cup of the type especially associated with Dionysos in the other.

Made about 100 BC–AD 100
Bronze (copper alloy)
Leake Collection, GR.2.1864

16

Head of Jupiter (Zeus)

This finely modelled head dates to the Roman period, but the Alexander- or Herakles-like style of the dramatically tousled hair and deep-set eyes reflect earlier Greek works.

Made in Italy about AD 1–100
Found at Lanuvium, near Rome
Fired clay
GR.16.1891

17

Herakles wrestling with Antaios

To defeat the giant Antaios, Herakles had to keep him out of contact with the Earth, who was Antaios’s mother. Here he holds Antaios high in the air while squeezing him to death.

Made about 100–1 BC
Found in Egypt
Bronze (copper alloy)
Gregg Bequest, GR.4.1954

18-19
10-drachma coins (*decadrachms*) of Syracuse
The obverse (18) shows a four-horse chariot, the charioteer being crowned by Winged Victory (*Nike*). The reverse design (19) is of the head of Arethusa, the local nymph of Syracuse, surrounded by four dolphins. The initial K on her headband stands for Kimon, the die engraver responsible for the coin: his name is engraved in full, in extremely small letters, on one of the dolphins. 18 is the work of a second, equally talented die- engraver, Euainetos.

Struck at Syracuse, Sicily, about 400 BC
Silver
CM.YG.1119–R, McClean Collection, CM.MC.2734–R

20
4-drachma coin (*tetradrachm*) of Agrigentum
An eagle pins a hare down on a rock. This is one of the finest animal studies found on ancient coins, made by a die engraver who was a highly accurate observer of nature.

Struck at Agrigentum, Sicily, about 410 BC
Silver
Mcclean Collection, CM.MC.2044

21
4-drachma coin (*tetradrachm*)

About 287-281 BC
Silver
CM.MC.4486-R
Double stater (distater) of Alexander the Great of Macedon
Athena wears a Corinthian-style helmet (for an example see case 4), decorated with a coiled snake. These distaters were the largest gold coins ever struck up to this time.

About 330–320 BC
Gold
CM.YG.1122–R

4-drachma coin (tetradrachm) of Ptolemy I Soter (323–305 BC)
This shows the head of Alexander the Great, with the ram’s horn of Zeus Ammon, clad in an elephant skin and aegis. This is one of the earliest coin portraits of Alexander.

Struck at Memphis, Egypt, about 318 BC
Silver
Given by the Revd H.St.J. Hart, CM.1402–1963

4-drachma coin (tetradrachm) of Mithridates II (123 – about 91 BC)
This portrait of Mithridates II of Parthia is probably the work of a Greek die-engraver.

Struck at Seleucia on the Tigris, Parthia (north-eastern Iran)
Silver
Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, CM.90–1950

4-drachma coin (tetradrachm) of Knossos
The design shows the famous labyrinth of Knossos, home of the Minotaur, a man-eating monster who was part man, part bull.

Struck at Knossos, Crete, about 80 BC
Silver
Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, CM.16–1938
26
4-drachma coin (*tetradrachm*) of Mithridates VI of Pontus (120–63 BC)

Mithridates claimed descent from both Alexander the Great, whose image he has adapted here, and Darius, king of Persia. He was the last great king in the Greek world to oppose the eastwards advance of the Romans.

About 83 BC
Silver
CM.YG.417-R

27
Wine jar (*bail-amphora*) : a woman

The woman carries a sash and an offering bowl. This shape of vase, with its high, twisted handle, was made only in Campania and imitates a local, Italic shape.

Made in Campania, southern Italy, about 340–330 BC; attributed to the Laghetto Painter
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Winifred Lamb Bequest, GR.13.1963

28
Water jar (*hydria*) : women at a tomb

The subject recalls that of earlier Athenian vases (see case 4) and shows how the Greeks in southern Italy maintained the funerary traditions of their mainland ancestors.

Made in Apulia, southern Italy, about 340–320 BC; attributed to the Circle of the Darius and Underworld Painters
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Barrett Collection, GR.28.1952
‘Fish plate’: a squid and two other fish
‘Fish plates’ were a speciality of Greek potters and painters in southern Italy and Sicily. The variety of fish shown reflects the many species available. Whether the plates were used to serve fish or had another function is unknown.

Made in Apulia, southern Italy, about 400–300 BC
Fired clay, red-figure technique
GR.11a.1896

30
Eros driving a cart drawn by peacocks
Peacocks are native to India and so link Eros with the Indian campaigns and triumphs of both Dionysos and Alexander the Great. This model also symbolises the power of Love to tame all creatures, even the most exotic.

Perhaps made in Myrina, Asia Minor, about 150 BC
Fired clay
Chesterman Collection, GR.100.1984

31
Head of Aphrodite
The pinkish marble of this finely cut head gives the goddess a warm glow, her smoothly polished face contrasting with the rougher finish of her hair.

Made about 300–1 BC
Marble
Given by Lord Walston, GR.27.1988

32-33
Aphrodite figures
Figures showing Aphrodite in many poses became extremely popular in the later Greek and Roman periods.
Made about AD 1–200, deriving from Greek versions of about 300–1 BC
Bronze (copper alloy), and marble
Rickets and Shannon Collection, GR.110.1937; Lewis Collection, lent by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.103.95

34

Aphrodite

Tradition says that around 350 BC the sculptor Praxiteles made two statues of Aphrodite for the island of Cos, one clothed and the other naked. The naked Aphrodite, the first ever made, was rejected as indecent by the Coans. But the people of nearby Cnidus took the statue, and it soon became extremely famous. Alternative versions of the naked goddess were created and all were copied in a variety of sizes and a range of materials, from marble to bronze and terracotta. Like the two marble figures in case 8, this may represent the birth of the goddess from the sea: she holds up her hands to tie a ribbon round her hair.

About 200–1 BC

Found in Egypt

Bronze (copper alloy)

GR.7.1891

35

Gold jewellery

Probably made in northern Greece at various dates between about 400 and 150 BC

Gold

Given by S.R. Courtauld, GR.9a-c, e, i-j, o-p.1931;

From Egypt, given by the family of F.W. Green, E.20,1950; given by A. Gow, GR.1.1928; given by C.G. Carrington, ANE.8 and 9.197
36
Engraved sealstone: the ‘pimp’ or ‘procurer’ of New Comedy
It is interesting to speculate on who might have wished to mark their property with this image.

Probably made in Italy about 100-1 BC
Cornelian (the gold mount is modern)
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, CG 210

37
Three gold rings
One is in the form of a snake; the other two show women engaged in sacred activities, one with a branch, the other at an incense burner.

Made in Greece about 400-200 BC
Gold
Lewis Collection, lent by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.103.707 and 708; given by S.R. Courtauld, GR.9k.1931

38
Figures with grotesquely distorted heads or bodies
Figures of this sort have been found in graves, sanctuaries and private houses in many parts of the Greek world. They may have been viewed in a variety of ways in different places and at different times. Some may be related to the crudely grinning theatrical masks and may simply have been seen as comic or amusing. Others may have been treated as good-luck charms, or used as a way to assert social or physical superiority. At all events, they embody the interest of the period in showing real people, not just beautiful, idealised figures.

Made about 300–1 BC
Fired clay
39

Actor figurines
These small figures represent characters from the comic plays performed throughout the Greek world at this period. One is dancing, some have padded costumes and most seem to wear masks. Most of these are similar to the large model mask shown above (43), but one resembles the head of a bird. Figurines of this type are mainly found in graves, those of children as well as of adults.

Made in Athens, Tanagra and elsewhere in the Greek world, about 300–150 BC
Copper alloy
Given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.4.1965
Fired clay
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.85a, c, d.1937; Chesterman Collection, GR.64.1984; Mustaki Collection, given by The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, GR.1.2002

40

Figurine
Made at Tanagra about 325–100 BC
Fired clay
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.85b.1937

41

Mould-made flask (askos) : Scylla
The monster Scylla was one of the hazards encountered by Odysseus on his journey home from Troy. Her body ends in snakes or sea-serpents; yapping dogs surround her waist.

Made at Canosa, southern Italy, about 300–200 BC
Fired clay, moulded
42
Box for jewellery or cosmetics (lekanis)
On one side of the lid is a hare. Hares were given as gifts between lovers and were also symbols of fertility. On the other side is an effeminate-looking Eros.

Made in Apulia, southern Italy, about 400–300 BC
Fired clay, red-figure technique
Winifred Lamb Bequest, GR.15.1963

43
Comic slave mask
The masks worn by actors were made of linen and leather. Clay versions like this would have served to decorate the house or been offered as gifts to the gods in sanctuaries. The vivid red hair reflects the bright colours used on actual masks.

Made about 200–100 BC
Fired clay
Chesterman Collection, GR.67.1984

44
Head of a child
Portraits of people of different ages, from young children to the very old, become popular at this time.

Made about 100 BC–AD 100
Pollock Bequest, GR.2.1992

45-46
Figurines
Made at Tanagra, about 350–100 BC
Fired clay
Like those of the adults, these figures give a vivid impression of what real children may have looked like, offering life-like details of dress, hairstyles and toys.

Made at Tanagra, Greece, about 300–150 BC
Fired clay

Boy jockey and young black boy
The jockey would originally have been equipped with a horse. The young black boy suggests the interest of the period in portraying people of different races.

Made about 200–1 BC
Bronze (copper alloy)

Small-scale versions of well-known statues were popular at this time. They are found in a variety of materials, in tombs, sanctuaries and domestic contexts. This example may reflect a statue made around 450 BC.

Perhaps made in Asia Minor about 200–1 BC
Fired clay

GR.T.27
Small Gnathia vessels
Vases like these could form an elegant but economical alternative to vessels of silver or bronze. The technique of painting in colour over
black slip was practised in many parts of the Greek world from around 300 BC onwards. The southern Italian version of the technique is known as ‘Gnathia’ after the city of Egnazia in Apulia, one of the main centres for the production of this type of vase.

Made in Apulia, southern Italy, about 330–250 BC
Fired clay, Gnathia technique
Leake Collection, GR.149.1864; GR.16.1896; given by H.C. Caulfield, GR.67.1896; Winifred Lamb Bequest, GR.17.1963

52
Silver perfume flask
The flask is decorated with a chased and gilded necklace of buds, hanging from a row of circles. Actual necklaces of similar design are known.

Made in southern Italy, perhaps Taranto, about 300 BC
Silver with gilding
Given by G. McKinley, GR.3.1979

53
Large two-handled dish
Eros is posed on the calyx of a flower, holding a wreath.
Made in Apulia, south Italy, about 340–320 BC; attributed to a painter close to the Baltimore Painter
Fired clay, red-figure technique, with some over-painting
GR.10.1896
GREEK AND ROMAN GALLERY

CASE 11
1-2
Box (*pyxis*) and drinking cup (*skyphos*)

The box is decorated with lively, stylised birds. On either side of the cup stands a warrior, equipped with a corselet and a crested helmet; under each handle is a fish.

Made in Etruria about 700–550 BC
Fired clay, burnished and incised
Given by W. Lamb, GR.1.1930; GR.17.1952

3-5
Wine jug (*oinochoe*) and two drinking cups (*kantharoi*)

Prowling lions decorate the jug. The larger of the two cups is carefully decorated with stamped designs; the wide, strap-like handles suggest the influence of metal vessels.

Made in Etruria about 600–500 BC
Fired clay, *bucchero* technique
GR.20.1952; GR.18.1952; GR.3.1935

6-7
Vase on three legs and oil flask (*askos*)

The lively style of these vases and the animal-like legs and handle of the three-legged example are typical of the pottery made by the Daunians, who lived in southern Italy.

Made in Apulia, south Italy, about 600–400 BC
The oil flask was found at Bari
Fired clay
GR.3a and 5c.1896

8-12
Warrior, incense burner and athletes

The helmeted warrior may once have held a spear. A dancing youth supports the incense burner. The athletes are javelin- and discus-throwers, and an acrobat with raised arms.

Made in Etruria about 550–400 BC
Bronze (copper alloy)
Given by F.W. Green, GR.11.1935; Leake Collection, GR.17.1864; GR.26.1924; given by the Wellcome Foundation, GR.110.1981; given by W. Lamb, GR.11.1923

13-14
A pair of vessel handles
The handles are cast in the form of acrobatic youths with strongly arched bodies. Above their heads, elongated panthers decorate the upper attachment of the handles to the vessel.

Made in Etruria about 500–400 BC

Bronze (copper alloy)
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.105 and 106.1937

15-16
Decorative attachments to tripods
One tripod attachment is in the form of the front parts of horses; the other shows the messenger goddess Iris. Tripods were used to support the large, round-bottomed bowls in which water and wine were mixed.

Made in Etruria about 600–450 BC

Bronze (copper alloy)
Given by W. Lamb, GR.1.1952; GR.2.1948

17
Deep cup (skyphos)
Affectionate pairs of reclining male and female fish-tailed Tritons link arms on each side of the cup. In Greek mythology Triton was a fish-tailed sea-god.

Made in Etruria, perhaps at Volterra, about 400–300 BC.

Fired clay, red-figure technique
Given by W. Lamb, GR.1.1939

18
Wine jar (amphora)
Long-necked birds, perhaps geese or swans, decorate the body of the vase, while a shoal of fish and dolphins dive across the shoulder.

Made in Etruria about 550–400 BC
Fired clay, black-figure technique
GR.22.1952

19

Figure of a woman holding a flower
The figure is cast in solid bronze. Her face, hair and diadem, and her finely draped and pleated garments, are shown in intricate detail.

Made in Etruria about 500–400 BC
Found in Rusellae, Etruria
Bronze (copper alloy)
Lent by Corpus Christi College, Loan Ant.103.42

20-23

Engraved mirrors and mirror handle
The scenes on the mirrors show, from left to right: a pair of embracing lovers (named Metios and Casia); the Judgment of Paris; Odysseus with the sorceress Circe. The engravings decorate the backs of the mirrors: the fronts would have been highly polished to provide a clear reflecting surface.

Many of the scenes on the mirrors are recognisable as episodes from Greek myth, but some are unknown or the characters have Etruscan names, like Metios and Casia.

The Medusa heads on the detached mirror handle may have been intended to avert the evil eye from the mirror’s user.

Made in Etruria about 400–200 BC
Bronze (copper alloy) and bone
Lewis Collection, lent by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.103.36, Loan Ant.103.39; GR.10.1972; Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.122.1937
Offerings to the gods

Thousands of similar figurines have been found in mountain-top sanctuaries around Perugia, in Umbria, central Italy. Some are recognisably male or female, but all have the same stylised, elongated proportions. They show how the early Italians developed an artistic style very different from that of their Greek neighbours. The practice of offering figurines to the gods, however, was shared by many ancient peoples.

Made in Umbria, Italy, about 600–550 BC
Found near Perugia
Bronze (copper alloy)
Given by R.C. Bosanquet, GR.32.1904, 33a-e.1904, 160q-s.1910, 5a-b.1928

Perfume bottle *(aryballos)*

Made in Etruria, Italy, about 700–600 BC
Fired clay, *bucchero* technique
Given by Winifred Lamb, GR.4.1929

Large bi-conical urn, small pot and one-handled bowl or cup
The urn and the small pot were used to hold the ashes of a dead person; the remains of burnt bones are still present in the small pot.

Made in Etruria about 900–700 BC
Fired clay, burnished
The small pot was found at Cumae, the bowl near Rome
GR.160a.1910, GR.12.1910 and GR.160b.1910

Spiral armlet and clasp *(fibula)*
Belt and belt clasp

Bronze warrior belts of this type are found in the tombs of the south Italian Samnites. These people fiercely opposed the rise of Rome until the last of them were slaughtered by the Roman general Sulla in 82 BC.

Made in south Italy about 400–300 BC
Bronze (copper alloy)
GR.93.1906; Leake Collection, GR.14.1864
GREEK AND ROMAN GALLERY

CASE 12
1-3
Two globular vessels and one double perfume flask (*unguentarium*)

Applying a thin trail of molten glass to a vessel was a simple and popular form of decoration.

Made in Syria about AD 200–400
The globular flasks were found at Bethlehem, Palestine, the double flask at Nazareth, Israel
Blown glass
Given by M. Sykes, GR.5c and 5g.1902; Towry-Whyte Bequest, GR.21.1932

4-7
Square bottle, small jar and two flasks (*aryballoi*)

The glass vessels were made in Syria about AD 200–400; the bronze flask was made, perhaps in Italy, about AD 100–200
The square bottle was found in Palestine
Blown glass; bronze (copper alloy)
Given by Sir William Elderton, GR.27 and 33.1955; Marlay Bequest, GR.2a.1912; given by the Trustees of the Wellcome Foundation, GR.171.1981

8-10
Small mosaic glass flask and bowl and a flat glass dish
The manufacture of mosaic glass vessels involved the skilful manipulation of canes of glass of various colours and gold leaf.

Made about AD 1–100
Glass, the bowl and dish shaped over a form, the flask moulded
Given by C. Fairfax Murray, GR.1.1973; Murray Bequest, GR.20.1917; Marlay Bequest, GR.2d.1912

11-14
Portraits and cameos
The bronze head shows Caligula (Emperor AD 37–41), the woman Agrippina the Elder (wife of Germanicus, see 30), or one of her
daughters, the child a member of the imperial family. Aphrodite is carved on the sapphire cameo.

Made in Italy about AD 1–50
Bronze (copper alloy), onyx, sapphire

Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.111.1937; CG 539; CG 540; CG 523

15-16
Large wine flask and flagon
The flask with hunting scenes requests the drinker to help himself and pass it on. On the flagon is the figure of a potter at his wheel.

The flask was made in Germany, the flagon in North Africa, about AD 200–300
The flask was found near Cologne, Germany
Fired clay, red slip ware
Lewis Collection, lent by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.103.89; GR.2.1984

17-20
Silver and bone spoons and bone knife-handle in the shape of a leg
The silver spoon is inscribed ‘Paulus’ (the Apostle Paul).

Made about AD 1–500
The knife handle and one bone spoon were found at Ephesus, the other bone spoon on Malta
Silver, bone
Lent by D. Sherlock, Loan Ant.109; GR.137c and f.1908; given by the Revd Greville Chester, GR.19.1891

21
Gladiator figurine
Figurines very similar to this have been found in some of the houses at Pompeii. They may have been souvenirs from gladiatorial shows.

Probably made in Italy about AD 1–100
Vessels from Roman Cambridgeshire and an openwork roundel from a vessel

The bowl (*patera*) is finely decorated, with a central roundel showing a winged griffin attacking a deer. The fluted handle, which was once attached to a similar vessel, ends in a finely modelled ram’s head. Both the bowl and the handle were inlaid with silver. The roundel shows Cupid hunting a horned animal with dogs. The jug, bowl and bowl-handle were probably made in Italy about AD 1–200, while the square dish is likely to have been made locally in Britain, about AD 150–250. The roundel was made about AD 200–300.

The jug, bowl and handle were found at Dan Hill, Cambridgeshire, the dish in the River Ouse near Ely

The jug, bowl, bowl-handle and roundel are bronze (copper alloy), the bowl and handle with silver inlay, the square dish pewter (an alloy of tin and lead)

Lent by Trinity College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.36, 37 and 38; GR.239.1933; given by W. Lamb, GR.8.1931

**Mercury, Mars, a pantheistic goddess, a household god (a *Lar*) and a priest**

The pantheistic goddess combines the characteristics of several different deities including Good Fortune (Tyche).

The priest is temporarily displayed nearby in Case 14.

Made about 1–200 AD

Bronze (copper alloy); Mars with silver inlaid eyes, the pantheistic goddess and the *Lar* gilded over bronze.

Lewis Collection, lent by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.103.363 and 410; lent by Trinity College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.42; Marlay Bequest, GR.1.1969
32
Silver *denarius*
Helmeted head of the goddess Roma
Struck at an Italian mint, 206-200 BC
Given by A.W. Young, CM.YG.490-R

33
Silver *denarius* of Julius Caesar
Head of Caesar wearing a golden crown. His use of his own portrait on coins was much criticised at the time, but became normal in the Roman empire.
Moneyer L. Aemilius Buca, struck at Rome, 44 BC
CM.YG.1043-R

34
Silver *denarius* of Brutus
Created by order of Brutus himself, the reverse inscription names the Ides of March, below the daggers used to murder Julius Caesar in the name of liberty.
Moneyer L. Plaetorius Caestianus, 42 BC
CM.1474-1963

35
Brass *sestertius* of Caligula
Caligula (Emperor AD 37–41) is shown sacrificing at the temple of Augustus. One attendant leads a bull to the altar while another holds a libation bowl (*patera*).
Struck at Rome, AD 39-40
CM.LS.3208-R

36
Bronze (copper alloy) double *sestertius* of Decius (AD 249-251)
The size of this new, short-lived coin gave the die engraver the chance to create a magnificent portrait of the ageing, but still tough and determined-looking, emperor.
Struck at Rome about AD 250
CM.YG.367-R

37
Roman engraved seal-stones The punishment of Dirce, tied to a bull

Probably made in Italy about 100-1 BC.
Banded agate (the gold setting is modern)
Story-Maskelyne and Forster Collections, CG 140

Hermes, signed by Dioskourides
Dioskourides is reported to have engraved a seal for the Emperor Augustus

Made in Italy about 25-1 BC
Cornelian (the gold setting is modern)
Many collections from 1585 onwards, most recently Richard Shannon, CG 165

Diomedes stealing the Palladion (a statue of Athena) from Troy

Probably made in Italy about 50-1 BC.
Cornelian (the gold setting is modern)
Given by A.A. de Pass, CG 197

Eros at an altar, in front of a temple

Probably made in Italy, about AD 100-200.
Onyx (the gold setting is modern)
Hertz, Meyer and Roach Smith Collections, McClean Bequest, CG 301
38

Gold ring

Inscribed ‘FIDEM CONSTANTINO’, the ring may have been a sign of the Emperor’s favour and worn as a token of loyalty.

Made between AD 306 and 337

Found at Amiens, France

GR.1.1975

39

A Roman ‘Swiss Army’ knife?

As well as a knife, spoon, and fork, this implement provides a spike, spatula and small pick. The spike might have helped in extracting the meat from snails, and the spatula in poking sauce out of narrow-necked bottles: the pick could have served as a tooth-pick. While many less elaborate folding knives survive in bronze, this one’s complexity and the fact that it is made of silver suggest it is a luxury item, perhaps a useful gadget for a wealthy traveller.

About AD 200-300

Silver, with iron knife-blade

GR.1.1991

40-41

Images of imperial power

The size of the Roman empire made it difficult to maintain political control: small-scale, portable images could play a crucial part. The cameo may portray Germanicus (16/15 BC-AD 19), a favourite of the Emperor Augustus and the Roman people. The coin was issued by Claudius (Emperor AD 41-54), whose portrait appears on the obverse (front). The reverse design, Claudius in a chariot and the words ‘DE BRITANNIS’, celebrates the conquest of Britain in AD
43.

2-drachma coin (didrachm):

Struck at Caesarea, Cappadocia, about AD 43-48
Silver
CM.98-1929

Cameo: about AD 1-10
Onyx (the gold setting is modern)
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, CG 524

42-47
Lamps and lamp-filler; lock and keys
Lamps provided the main source of lighting in most Roman houses; some were extremely ornate. The lock may come from a strong box.

Made in various parts of the Roman world, the lamps about AD 1–300, the lock and key set about 100–1 BC
The lock and key set was found at Melde, Turkey
Fired clay and bronze (copper alloy)
Lent by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.103.52, 69,75,408; GR.23.1904; GR.107a–c.1907

48
Red slip ware flask
Roman; made in France or Germany about AD 200–300
Found at Beauvais, France

49
Black slipped flask inscribed ‘Use, happy man!’
Roman; made in Germany about AD 200–300, found near Guilden Morden, Cambridgeshire

50
Black slipped pot

Roman; made in England about AD 300–400

51
Barbotine ware cup (*skyphos*)

Roman; made in France about AD 1–100
Found at Avignon, France

52
Red slip ware bowl with sea monsters

Roman; made in France or Germany about AD 1–100
Found at Cologne
Fired clay
Lent by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.103.87, 85, 88 and 90; Winifred Lamb Bequest, GR.33.1963
GREEK AND ROMAN GALLERY

CASE 13
1
The head of a bearded old man
The exaggerated frown, snub nose and downturned mouth show that this represents a theatrical mask of a bearded old man who holds a shepherd’s crook. He is probably Silenus, a companion of Dionysos, the same character who appears in the centre of the Pashley sarcophagus on display in the middle of the gallery. This fragment may also have come from a coffin (*sarcophagus*), but was reused in ancient times when it was carved with a later scene of Pan, the goat-legged god, visiting an altar.

Made in Italy about AD 1–100
Marble
Lewis Collection, lent by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Loan Ant.103.91

2
Head of the Gorgon
The gorgon, Medusa, was a monster from myth whose disembodied head turned anyone who looked at it to stone. In Greek art she appears on vases and temple decoration as a hideous head, often fanged, with snakes instead of hair.

In the Roman period she becomes a beautiful woman, recognisable by the snakes, often part of her hair, which are knotted under her chin. She appears frequently on Roman funerary monuments, and this example was probably cut off a coffin in the eighteenth century.

Made in Attica, Greece, about AD 100–200
Marble (Pentelic)
Given by J. Disney, GR.43.1850

3
Head of the sun god Helios
This head of a young man wearing the crown of the sun god is from the front corner of the lid of a marble coffin similar to the ‘Pashley sarcophagus’ on display in the middle of this gallery.

Made in Greece about AD 250–350. Probably found in Italy
Marble (Proconnesian)
Given by J. Disney, GR.48.1850

4
Head of a warrior
The hand which violently pulls the hair of this head, and the expression of pain on the face, suggest that this was part of a battle scene. The piece was only very roughly worked on the back and was probably cut out of a deep relief.

Made in Greece about 300–100 BC

Marble (Pentelic)
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.97.1937

5
Head of an Amazon
In Greek myth the Amazons were a nation of warrior women who fought against the Greeks. The battles between Greeks and Amazons (amazonomachies) were a popular subject for sculptural decoration on coffins and buildings in both the Greek and Roman worlds. This head belongs to a female warrior who was lying on her side, after being struck down in battle. The right side of the head is only roughly carved and was not intended to be visible in the original composition.

Made in Greece about AD 150–250

Marble
GR.95c.1906

6
Bearded male head
This head is from a small relief, perhaps a coffin decoration. The luxuriant beard and wild hair suggest that this may not be a human, but rather a god, giant or centaur from a mythological scene.

Made in Attica, Greece, about AD 100–200

Marble (Pentelic)
Gravestone of Tiberius Claudius Threptus

This inscription commemorating a thirteen year-old boy was set up by his parents, who were public slaves. It is not as elaborate as the grave monuments paid for by freed slaves displayed between the columns in the centre of the gallery. Nevertheless, an engraved marble slab would still have been expensive. The lettering on Roman inscriptions would originally have been picked out with red paint, as it is now. However, the colour on this inscription is not ancient, but has been repainted during its collection history.

Made in Italy about AD 1–100
Marble
Given by J. Disney, GR.80.1850

Lid of an Etruscan funerary urn

Made in Volterra, Etruria, Italy, about 250-100 BC. Found in Volterra
Tufa
Given by J. Disney, GR.49a.1850

Disc with a satyr approaching an altar

This two-sided disc (oscillum) once hung from the ceiling between the columns of a public building. It is decorated with two followers of the wine-god Dionysos. On the side displayed, a naked, bearded satyr with pointed ears and a horse’s tail, wearing an animal skin cloak and carrying a winnowing fan, approaches a rock altar. The other side shows a Silenus-figure. At some point after it was found, whether by a dealer or by a collector, the disc was sawn in half vertically, so that each side could be displayed individually. After it came to the Museum the two sides were re-joined.
Made in Italy about AD 50–150. Found in Italy
Marble (Luna)
Given by J. Disney, GR.39 and 40. 1850

Headless statuette of Asklepios

The god of medicine stands beside a stack of book containers. His characteristic staff entwined with a snake is now missing, but the area beside his right foot has been re-cut to disguise the point where the staff would once have touched the ground.

This was a piece which Disney himself acquired (most of his collection was inherited) and it presents an interesting contrast to the figure of Apollo (12), which he also collected. While the Apollo was fully restored, Asklepios was only slightly repaired around the base and legs, and was never given a head or right arm. Disney admired the fragmentary state of this figure.

Probably made in Italy about AD 100–200
Marble
Given by J. Disney, GR.1.1850

Relief of a man wearing a cloak

This fragment showing a man wearing a cloak and sandals is probably part of a votive relief. He would have been one of a group of people approaching a god in worship. A similar fragmentary example (GR.15.1865) is on display with the votive reliefs elsewhere in the gallery.

The brownish colour of the marble is the ancient patina on the surface. The features of the face have been re-cut in modern times to look like portraits assumed in the eighteenth century to represent Brutus, the assassin of Julius Caesar. In this way, an unknown Greek was given the face of a famous Roman.

Probably made in Attica, Greece, 350–300 BC
Marble (Pentelic)
Given by J. Disney, GR.38.185
Is this Apollo?

Only the torso of this statuette is ancient. The arms, legs, head and quiver of arrows were added in Rome in 1793 by the British artist John Flaxman (1755-1826), and the Italian sculptor Antonio D’Este (1754-1837). These additions turned the ancient torso of an unknown man into a statuette of the god Apollo. Far from seeing these additions as detracting from the ancient piece, Flaxman was proud of his work. Disney and other experts of the time knew which parts were modern and praised their quality. But at the same time they debated which ancient Apollo-type the statuette originally represented, even though it was precisely because of Flaxman and D’Este’s modern work that the piece was identified as Apollo at all.

Made in Attica about AD 50. Probably found in Italy and restored in Rome in 1793
Marble (ancient part Pentelic, restoration Carrara)
Disney collection, GR.2.1885

Head of a sphinx
Made in Greece about 100 BC. Probably from Italy
Marble (Pentelic)
Given by J. Disney, GR.18.1850

Head of a sphinx
Made in Italy about 100 BC
Marble
Ricketts and Shannon Collection, GR.96.1937

Seated Fortuna, personification of luck
The re-cut head of an ancient goddess was combined with the seated body of another ancient woman to form this statuette. The object in the
woman’s left hand, originally much larger and possibly a cornucopia, was also re-cut in the shape of a sceptre.

These ‘restorations’ were supervised by Vescovalli, an art dealer in Rome. Interestingly, only a short while before Vescovalli worked on this statuette, he restored three statues of fauns for his own collection using only plaster of Paris, an innovative practice at the time which was praised in the *London Literary Gazette and Journal of Belles Lettres, Arts, Sciences, etc.* (1824).

Made in Italy about AD 50–200. Found in the Villa of Quintilius Varrus near Tivoli, Italy

Marble (Luna)

Given by J. Disney, GR.5.1850

16

Medallion showing the Emperor Nero

Made in Italy about AD 1450-1600, bought in Venice about 1752

Marble (Carrara)

Given by J. Disney, GR.63.1850

17

Pan in a grotto

The countryside god pours a wine offering to a small herm that stands at the entrance to a cave (represented by a rocky arch). Pan and the herm are both symbolically associated with boundaries, a point which is emphasised by the location of the scene, at a cave entrance. This piece was carved in the Roman imperial period when Greek sculpture was extremely popular, and in style and subject it is reminiscent of Greek sculpture of about 350–300 BC.

This is a votive relief which originally had a tang protruding from the base, but the tang was removed after excavation for easier display. For a complete example see GR.16.1865 on the wall of votives in this gallery.

Made in Attica, Greece, about AD 50–150

Marble (Pentelic)

Given by J. Disney, GR.36.1850
Headless female herm

Herms were designed to face in two directions at once (the back of this figure is identical to the front). A male version, also owned by Disney, is on a plinth in the window of this gallery. Unlike the male versions, female herms acted as supports, for low rails, for example.

There are several male herms in the Disney collection, but ancient female herms were rarely available in the eighteenth century, and were little collected. Disney himself acquired this piece, rather than inheriting it as he did so much of the collection. It shows his personal interest in collecting unusual pieces.

Probably made in Italy about AD 50–150. Found at Cumae by the British politician Henry Tufnell

Marble

Given by J. Disney, GR.7.1850