

Truro: Royal Cornwall Museum

What is now the Royal Cornwall Museum (RCM, so named since 1990) is owned by the Royal Institution of Cornwall (RIC), whose lineage goes back to the foundation, in 1818, of the Cornwall Literary and Philosophical Institution. A meeting on 5 February 1818 proposed that such a body be formed, with officers elected on 2 March. The opening lecture was delivered at Truro Town Hall on 13 October, and in 1821 royal patronage led to the adoption of its current name.

In 1919 the library, museum and art gallery moved to the current River Street site, under the name of the County Museum & Art Gallery, previously having been the 'Museum of the Royal Institution of Cornwall'. The building, designed by Philip Sambell, had been completed in 1846 and opened as the Truro Savings bank the following year. Subsequently, it became Henderson's Mining School. The museum was extended by the acquisition of the adjacent Truro Baptist Chapel, built in 1848 and also designed by Philip Sambell, the two buildings being joined by a new foyer in 1998.

The Egyptian collection is fairly small, and has since 1994 been displayed in its own gallery at the rear of the first floor. Its history is similar to that of many local museums, being the fruit of donations from various Cornish residents, plus some excavated material deriving from John Garstang's work at Beni Hasan. The extant mummy and coffins (TRU.3-4) in the RCM date to its earliest years, arriving in 1837. A further mummy and coffin were donated in 1869 (TRU.5), but it is unclear whether it ever arrived, or if it did, what was its ultimate fate.

TRU.1 Fragment of cartonnage mummy-case of unknown person

Owner: No data.

Number: 1994.7.1

Dimensions:

Width. 27 cm

Depth. 21 cm

Material: Cartonnage

Description: Fragment of polychrome cartonnage, comprising part of the front of the left leg-area of a mummy-case of Type C1. On the right margin is a winged goddess with her wings outstretched; although she wears the insignia of Nephthys on her head, the garbled label-text in front of her face refers to Isis.

In front of the goddess is a *wadjet*-eye and a *bennu*-bird atop a West-sign. Standing before this is a *sem*-priest and an offering table, above which are three hawk-headed and two dog-headed Souls of Pe, beyond which the remainder of the scene is broken away.

Mode of acquisition: Given by Alan G. Moor, of Truro, 31 January 1994.



Fig. TRU.1.1.

Provenance: Presumably Thebes-West (see *Remarks*).

Modern history: An old label belonging with the piece bears the number 'V.86', gives a detailed description, and bears the date 'August 1852'. The donor stated that they had been 'given Julian Pearmain (first husband of the donor's mother), who died in 1903, when in Egypt with Flinders Petrie sometime in the 1890s.'

Given the evidence of the label, the latter seems most unlikely; it seems more likely that the piece was purchased in the UK, perhaps as a result of enthusiasm generated by a meeting with Petrie in Egypt.

Associated material: TRU.2.

Dating: Mid-ninth century BC (see *Remarks*).

Remarks: The Type C1 cartonnage is typical of Western Thebes, and appears to be current throughout the Twenty-second Dynasty, but with most examples seem to date to the earlier part of the period.¹ The present fragment, which is rather more elaborate than the very earliest dated examples, during the reign of Osorkon I, should thus probably be placed somewhere in the middle of the ninth century BC.

Bibliography: None.

¹ Taylor 2003: 105-106.

TRU.2 Fragment of cartonnage of unknown person

Owner: No data.

Number: 1994.7.2

Dimensions:

Width. 21 cm

Depth. 21.5 cm

Material: Cartonnage.

Description: Fragment of polychrome cartonnage, comprising part of the front of the right-torso of a mummy-case of Type C1. On the right there are the remains of what is probably a seated figure of Osiris. Behind him are successively Nephthys, Imseti and Hapy, all with label-texts. Behind them is the hawk of Re-Harakhty, atop a West-sign.

Mode of acquisition: As TRU.1.

Provenance: As TRU.1.

Modern history: As TRU.1.



Fig .2.1

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Associated material: TRU.1.


Dating: First half of eighth century BC (see *Remarks*).


Remarks: The fragment seems to belong to a Type C1 mummy-case, but a different one from TRU.1, being of a rather different style. On the basis of the form of the ‘unguent cone’ on Hapy’s head, it would appear to be datable, at the earliest, to the second half of the ninth century.² Indeed, the workmanship and composition is far more akin to that seen on Type B4 coffins of Twenty-fifth Dynasty date than most cartonnages, suggesting that the fragment should be placed late in the sequence, somewhere in the earlier part of the eighth century.

Bibliography: None.

TRU.3 Outer Coffin of Isettayefnakhte

Owner: : Isettayefnakhte

Titles: : *Waab*-Priest of Amun, Craftsman of the Estate of Amun.

Father: : *Waab*-Priest of Amun, Craftsman of the Estate of Amun Hor.³

Mother: : Lady of the House, Tashesh.

Number: 1837.23.3

Dimensions:

Length.	216.5 cm
Width.	77.2 cm
Depth.	33.9 cm
Height of face.	24.5 cm

Material: Wood, gesso. paint.

Description: Anthropoid coffin, composed of numerous pieces of wood, gessoed with a pink plaster and painted in polychrome.

Lid: The face is painted red, formerly equipped with a beard (replaced by a modern version), and

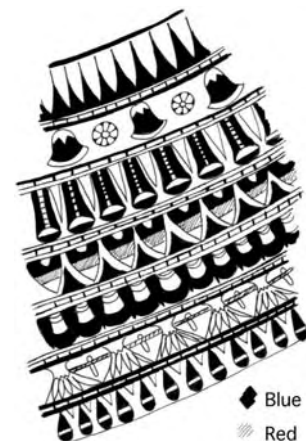


Fig. TRU.3.1: lid: detail of collar.

² Taylor 2003: 101.

³ Probably the owner of Leiden coffins M40-41 (Leemans 1840: 177) and mummy AMM3 (Raven and Taconis 2005: 120–123); his father in turn was also called Isettayefnakhte.

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surrounded by a blue and yellow striped tripartite wig. Above a polychrome fillet, the top of the head bears an ☐-sign, flanked by two squatting dog-headed deities. Below the broad collar (see figure) are five registers of decoration:

- I. A winged sun-disk flanked by texts.
- II. The deceased (unlabelled) adoring: Re-Horakhty; Osiris; Isis; Nephthys; Hapy; Imseti; Qebhsenuel (dog-headed); and Duamutef (hawk-headed). Each figure is separated by a label-text.
- III. The standing mummy attended by a kneeling Anubis and Nephthys, flanked by columns of text.
- IV. Six deities in shrines: Anubis-Imywet; Ptah; [...]; Imseti; Duamutef; and [...], separated by label-texts.
- V. Re-Harakhty seated in a boat, with the deceased in front of him and a dog-headed deity behind him. The vignette is flanked with text.

The upper surface of the feet is dominated by a recumbent solar hawk atop a palace-façade, flanked by columns of text. The underside of the feet bears no trace of any decoration; likewise the interior of the lid is wholly unadorned and left as bare wood by the makers.

Trough: The exterior sides are divided into sections by triple groups of text-columns. From the foot end they contain the following squatting divine figures, holding knives; those on the right-hand side face towards the foot of the coffin; those on the left towards the head.

- Right I. Human-headed (probably Imseti: the adjacent texts are not label-texts).
- Right II. Ape-headed (probably Hapy).
- Right III. Hawk-headed (probably Duamutef).
- Right IV. Dog-headed (probably Qebhsenuel).
- Right V. Snake-headed.
- Right VI. Crocodile-headed.
- Left I. Hawk-headed.
- Left II. Double-snake-headed.
- Left III. Hawk-headed.
- Left IV. Lion-headed.
- Left V. ☐-sign-headed.



Fig. TRU.3.2: head-end.

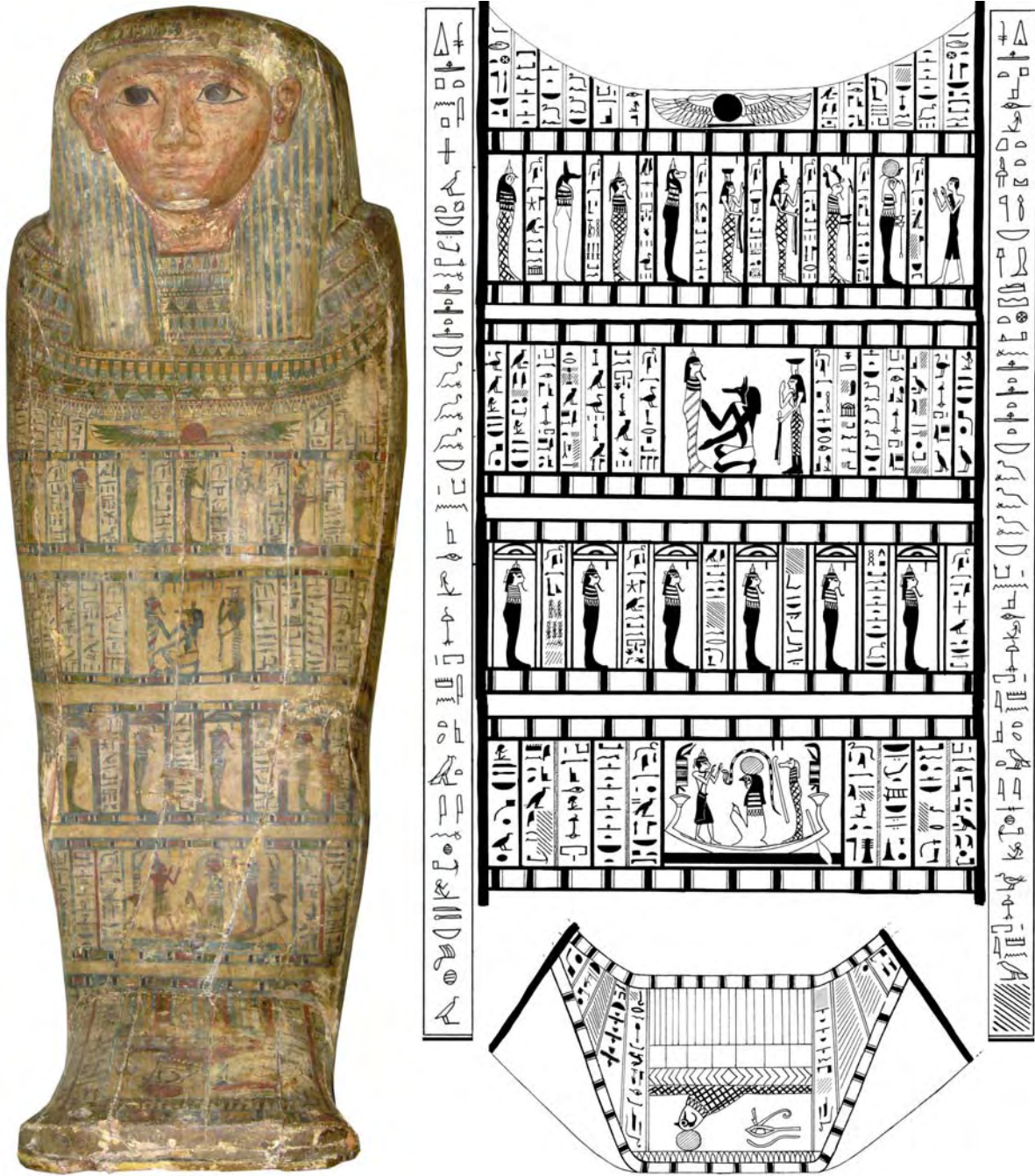


Fig. TRU.3.3

- Left VI. Dog-headed.
- Left VII. Snake-headed.

The area around the head is badly damaged, and no traces survive of the decorative scheme between Right VI and Left VII.

The interior of the trough has its side-walls adorned with large figures of Isis (right) and Nephthys (left), with a vulture at the head-end, its wings spreading down to the shoulders. At the foot is a Q-sign, with a M-sign superimposed, and a C-sign above the group.



Fig. TRU.3.4:
trough: side.

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Fig. TRU.3.6

The floor of the trough is divided into three sections. The upper one is dominated by a female figure, named as Nut above her head, but with attributes of Hathor and emerging from a tree. She holds ewers which pour water into the hands of a pair of *bas* that stand either side of her feet. The

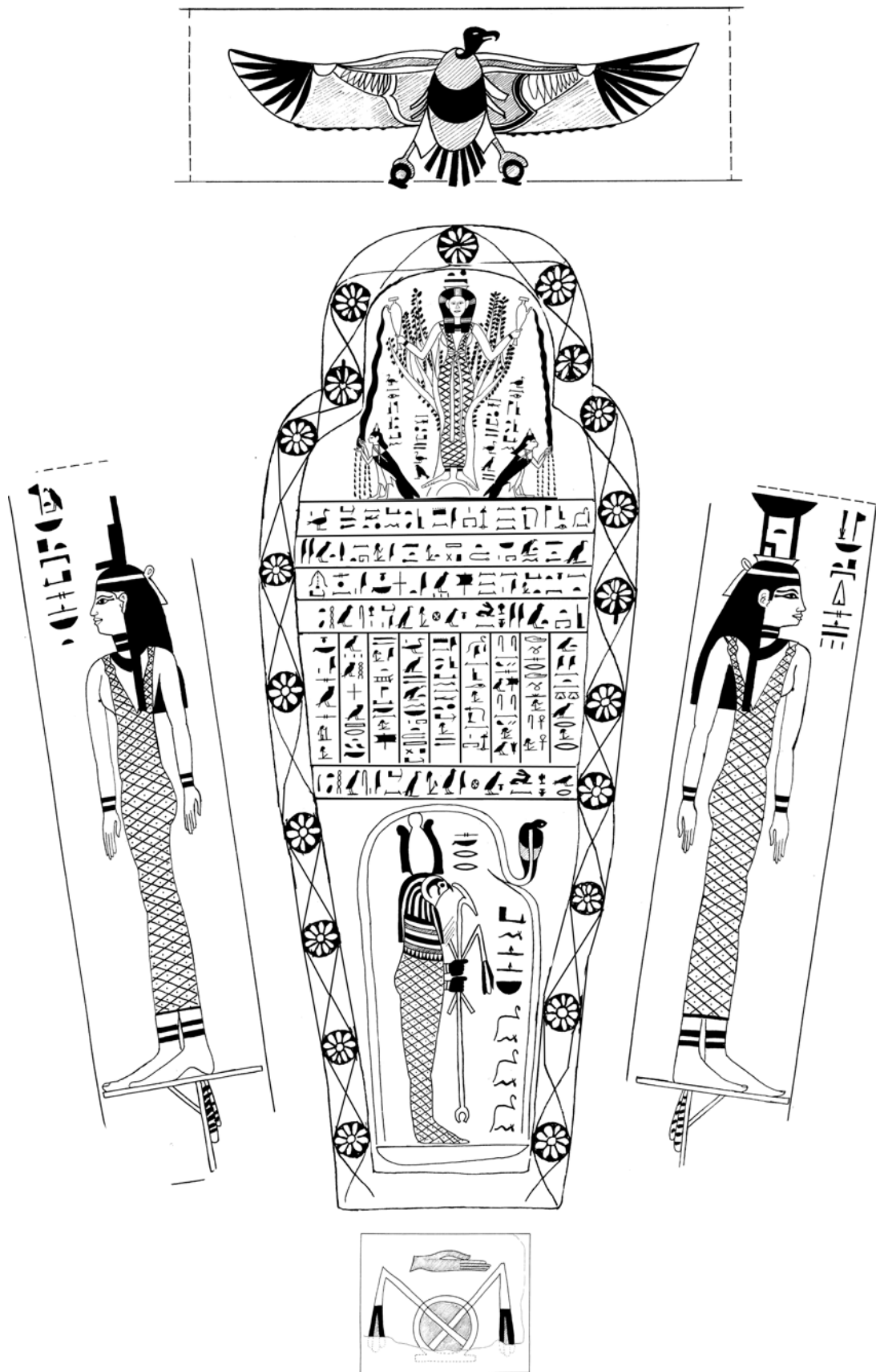



Fig. TRU.3.6: trough: interior

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middle section contains four rows of text, nine columns of text, and then a single line. Below this is a figure of Ptah-Sokar-Osiris, standing on a -sign and surrounded by the body of a cobra. The edges of the trough are painted red and adorned with a series of rosettes, joined by ligatures.

Mode of acquisition: Presented to Royal Institution of Cornwall by Jedediah Stephens Tucker (1800-1860), of Trematon Castle, near Saltash, in 1837/8.⁴

Provenance: Acquired in Egypt by Peter Lee, British Consul in Alexandria (1783-1866),⁵ and sent to the UK by him, being acquired by Tucker in 1819.⁶

Modern history: The coffin appears to have been on display for many years in the RCM without any kind of protection. It was also at some stage in the nineteenth century, equipped with hinges to join the trough and the lid, and a heavy base-stand attached by iron brackets. The coffin was only housed in a case from the 1990 onwards, with a proper display case provided as part of the 1994 re-display of the Egyptian collection.

At some point before 1919, the lid and various elements of the decoration were drawn by Lady Ingeborg Alfhild Molesworth-St Aubyn (née Muller) (c.1869-1928), second wife (m. 1902) of Sir St Aubyn Hender Molesworth-St Aubyn, 12th Bt (1833-1913), of Pencarrow near St Mabyn in Cornwall. These were included, along with other drawings by her of coffins in the United Kingdom and Europe, in Valdemar Schmidt's *Levende og døde i det gamle Ægypten* (1919). One presumes that the link was Schmidt and Lady Molesworth-St Aubyn's shared Danish nationality, although the latter had been brought up in Cornwall. She lectured on Egyptology around the local area, and Norman Nail (1917-2000), who was for many years Honorary Consultant in Egyptian, Greek and Roman Antiquities at the RCM, recalled seeing her speak while a boy.

Nail was responsible, in 1985, for initiating the restoration of the outer coffin by Peter Stanton, a local antiques dealer and restorer, carried out as a gift to the RCM. This included the coating of the lid with picture varnish. The lid was conserved, including the removal of the varnish, during 2008-10, after which work was begun on the trough.

Associated material: Inner coffin 1837.23.2 and mummy 1837.23.1.⁷

Dating: Seventh century BC (see *Remarks*).

⁴ For the donor, cf. Gray 1970: 132 n.4; he was the biographer of Sir John Jervis, 1st Earl of St Vincent; Tucker's family home was a house, built in 1726, in the grounds of the ruinous Norman castle.

⁵ Dawson, Uphill and Bierbrier 1995: 241-2.

⁶ Gray's belief that Schmidt 1919: 185, 188[1024-7] erroneously states that they came from the bequest of Ingeborg, Lady Molesworth St Aubyn is based on Gray's incorrect reading of the Danish: Lady Molesworth St Aubyn is actually being acknowledged as the artist of the line-drawings of the coffins! See further just below.

⁷ Gray 1970; it was unwrapped at Trematon in 1828.

Remarks: The coffin broadly confirms to standard Twenty-fifth/sixth Dynasty norms for outer coffins, with the lid divided into a series of registers. However, contrary to the usual alternation of figurative and textual registers,⁸ each register here has pictorial elements. In addition, rather than a conventional judgement scene in Register II we find simply the deceased adoring the principal funerary deities, Most significantly, however, the depiction of the mummy on its bier which is a very typical motif at this period is replaced here (in Register III) by a depiction of a standing mummy attended by Anubis and Nephthys. This is extremely unusual, and it is difficult to point to any parallels other than the inner coffin of the same set (TRU.4)!

The decoration of the interior of the trough is also not usual – although the presence of Ptah-Sokar-Osiris is unremarkable – as is the presence of Isis and Nephthys flanking him from the side-walls – his placement in the lowest of a series of registers is uncommon. The best parallel for this location and also the presence a tree-bound and libating Nut in the upper register would seem to be Tübingen 150a (Taditjaina). However, even in this case the goddess is shown in profile, rather than full-face, and there is no block of text separating her from the god.⁹ On the other hand, the adornment of the sides of the trough with deities separated by blocks of text fits in with expected patterns,¹⁰ although their ‘follow-the leader’ orientation around the whole trough is curious. The significance of these various unusual features is unclear; for further discussion see under TRU.4.

Date-wise, the form of the ‘unguent-cone’ on the heads of the various figures is the of the type typical of the seventh to sixth centuries,¹¹ while the general impression presented by the set, whatever its various peculiarities would seem consistent with a date in the first part of that date range.

Bibliography: Schmidt 1919: 185 [1024 1025[, 188[1027]; Gray 1970.

TRU.4 Inner Coffin of Isettayefnakhte

Owner: As TRU.3

Number: 1837.23.2

Dimensions:

Length.	190 cm
Width.	58 cm
Depth (lid).	33.5 cm
Depth (trough):	15 cm
Height of face.	18 cm

Material: Wood; gesso; paint.

⁸ Taylor 2003: 117.

⁹ Brunner-Traut and Brunner 1981: 221-230, pl. 115-117.

¹⁰ Cf. Taylor 2003: 118 – parallels include Tübingen 150a. However, in the decoration of its lid, this is wholly dissimilar from TRU.3.

¹¹ Taylor 2003: 101.





Fig. TRU.4.1.

Description: Anthropoid bivalve-type coffin.

Lid. The deceased is depicted wearing a yellow and blue/green tripartite wig, and has a red-pained face, with its beard missing. Below this is a polychrome collar. Below this, the lid is divided into eight registers on a blue/green ground, all except the first composed of yellow figures, detailed in red. There are no texts whatsoever, apart attenuated groups in Registers VI and VIII.

I. Pectoral figure of Nut in yellow/red, with polychrome wings, flanked by winged uraei in yellow/red.


II. Double scene.



Left-hand half: Osiris, seated wearing White crown, with Thoth and Isis before him. Behind Isis is a kiosk surmounted by a -feather (or a severely debased West-sign?), a dog-headed deity, a -shrine and another kiosk/feather combination.



Right-hand half: Osiris, seated wearing Red crown, with Horus and Nephthys before him. Behind Nephthys is a West-sign, a kiosk/feather combination and an East-sign.

III. Judgement scene and, beyond this, the deceased and his wife(?) presented by Thoth to Osiris, Re-Horakhty(?), Isis, Nephthys and the Four Sons of Horus.

IV. The mummy, in a closed sledge with the *ba* fluttering over it, is dragged by four men, and followed by a male figure wearing double-plumes, holding a writing-palette(?), plus four women. All five latter figures have an offering-table in front of them.

V. Osiris-djed flanked on the left by: Nephthys, a dog-headed deity, a kiosk/feather combination, a pillar-shaped element, a ram-headed deity, a -shrine and another kiosk/feather combination. On its right are Isis, Nephthys, a ram-headed deity holding crossed snakes, a female deity with an avian(?) head and a human-headed deity.

VI. Abydos-fetish, flanked on the left by: a winged goddess, a male deity holding crossed snakes, a dog-headed deity and -shrine. On its right are: a ram-headed deity before an offering-table, a goddess, a kiosk/feather combination and a -shrine.

VII. Standing mummy with Anubis kneeling and a goddess standing before it. Behind the latter are a dog-headed deity, a kiosk/feather combination, a -shrine, a hawk-headed deity and another kiosk/feather combination. Behind the mummy are a goddess, an ape-headed deity, a kiosk/feather combination, a -shrine, an indeterminate (human?)-headed deity and another kiosk/feather combination.

VIII. Bark of Re-Harakhty, with the deceased in front of, but facing away from, the god. Behind the bark are two adoring baboons and a kiosk/feather combination; in front are three baboons.



Fig. TRU.4.2: top of head

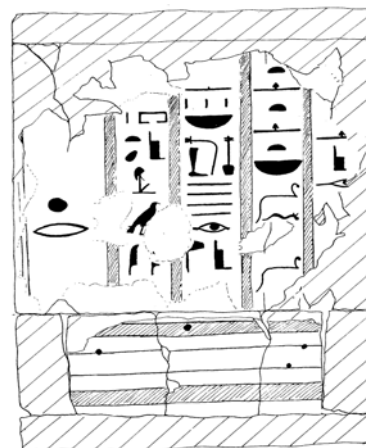


Fig. TRU.4.3: foot-end.



Fig. TRU.4.4: lid - interior.



Fig. TRU.4.5: trough - exterior.

Modern history: As TRU.3, but without 1980s restoration.

Associated material: Outer coffin 1837.23.3 and mummy 1837.23.1.

Dating: Seventh century BC.

Remarks: While the decorations of the trough and interior of the lid fit well within the typical designs of Twenty-fifth/sixth Dynasty inner coffins,¹² the surface of the lid is most unusual. Most striking is its blue/green dominant colour, with yellow/red figures. This is a feature more common in non-Theban pieces – for example the Twenty-second Dynasty cartonnage Alexandria 1846.¹³ However,

¹² Taylor 2003: 115–116.

¹³ Ikram and Dodson 1998: 185, fig. 213.



Fig. TRU.4.6: trough - interior.

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a handful of Theban parallels exist, including Belfast 1911.500 (Khonsuira) and 1911.501 (Tjesmutperet),¹⁴ the former being sufficiently similar to TRU.4 for Taylor to suggest that the two might have been made in the same workshop.¹⁵

A further feature of the lid of TRU.4 is that it entirely lacks even label-texts, and like the outer coffin's lid, has some unusual decorative elements. It repeats the latter's mummy/Anubis/Nephthys combination, and adds a depiction of the mummy being dragged in a sledge. While common on tomb-chapel walls of the New Kingdom, the latter is not part of the usual Twenty-fifth/sixth Dynasty coffin-maker's repertoire.

All these features suggest a workshop whose output was limited: indeed, one wonders whether the owner of the coffin-set, a craftsman himself, may have been directly involved in their manufacture?

Bibliography: Schmidt 1919: 188[1026]; Gray 1970; Taylor 2001: 175; Taylor 2003: 115, n.189.

TRU.5. Coffin of Unknown person.

Owner: Not known

Number: 1869.2

Dimensions: Not known.

Description: Presumably anthropoid coffin

Mode of acquisition: Given by Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, in the summer of 1869.

Provenance: See EXE.8.

Modern history: On 3 August 1869, the Council of the RIC resolved that '[t]he thanks of the Institution be presented to H. R. H. the Prince of Wales for his donation of a mummy and coffin, together with an explanation of the hieroglyphics by Mr Birch'; on the 9th, it further resolved that '[a] case be ordered for the mummy presented by H. R. H. the Prince of Wales under the superintendence of Mr Barham, Mr Andrew and Dr Jago'. There survive no further records of the coffin or the mummy, and it is unknown whether they ever displayed and if so what was their ultimate fate.

Associated material: Mummy 1869.1; see also EXE.8.

Dating: Other coffins from the same group date to the late Twenty-fifth Dynasty.

Bibliography: Nail 2000: 67–69.

¹⁴ Taylor 2001: 174–175, pl. 55.1.

¹⁵ Taylor 2001: 175.

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TRU.6. Face of coffin of unknown person

Owner: Not known.

Number: 1904.16.33

Dimensions:

Height of face. 28 cm

Material: Wood.

Description: Face from an anthropoid coffin; brow of wig and divine beard carved from same piece of wood as face.

Mode of acquisition: Given by John Garstang in 1904.

Provenance: Formally given as Beni Hasan, but almost certainly from the area of Istabl Antar.

Associated material: Part of large group of Third Intermediate/Late Period burials.

Dating: Late Period, on style.

Bibliography: Cf. Garstang 1907: 200-207.



Fig. TRU.6.1

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Sources of images

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Fig. TRU.1.1	Aidan Dodson
Fig. TRU.2.1	Aidan Dodson
Fig. TRU.3.1	Jason Semmens.
Fig. TRU.3.2 (top)	Montage, Royal Cornwall Museum/Aidan Dodson
Fig. TRU.3.2 (bottom)	Jason Semmens
Fig. TRU.3.3 (left)	Royal Cornwall Museum
Fig. TRU.3.3 (right)	Jason Semmens
Fig. TRU.3.4 (top)	Aidan Dodson
Fig. TRU.3.4 (bottom)	Jason Semmens
Fig. TRU.3.5 (centre)	Royal Cornwall Museum
Fig. TRU.3.5 (left & right)	Aidan Dodson
Fig. TRU.3.6	Jason Semmens
Fig. TRU.4.1 (left)	Royal Cornwall Museum
Fig. TRU.4.1 (right)	Jason Semmens
Fig. TRU.4.2	Jason Semmens
Fig. TRU.4.3	Jason Semmens
Fig. TRU.4.4 (left)	Aidan Dodson
Fig. TRU.4.4 (right)	Jason Semmens
Fig. TRU.4.5 (left)	Aidan Dodson
Fig. TRU.4.5 (right)	Jason Semmens
Fig. TRU.4.6 (left)	Aidan Dodson
Fig. TRU.4.6 (right)	Jason Semmens
Fig. TRU.6.1	Aidan Dodson