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## STELA OF SISOPDUYENHAB AND HIS RELATIVES

THERE is now on exhibition in the Upper Hall of the Coxe Egyptian wing an interesting stela of limestone which served as a tombstone for one Sisopduyenhhab, a royal priest of the 12th dynasty, 2000-1788 B. C. Some of the duties of a man bearing this title seem from other inscriptions to have to do with the care of the body of the king, perhaps bather and physician. The stela was found by Professor Petrie at Abydos in 1902 and was acquired by this Museum from the Egypt Exploration Fund.

THE Stela of Sisopduyenhhab is particularly interesting because it is free standing and is inscribed on four sides and the top, which is quite unusual, as most Egyptian stelae are not made to stand alone and are generally inscribed on one side only. It is in an excellent state of preservation but it must have been far more beautiful in its original state, as traces of green paint indicate that the figures and hieroglyphs were filled in with that substance.

The front is carved to represent a false door, the name archaeologists have given to the niche on the side of a tomb representing the opening through which offerings were introduced by the living on behalf of the dead. At the top is a cavetto cornice with decorative elements probably derived from palm fronds. The seven horizontal lines of inscription tell us the king has given an offering to Osiris, Chief of the Westerners (a name for the Kingdom of the Dead), and Lord of Abydos, for the soul of the Royal Priest, Sisopduyenhhab, born of Sitserefka, his mother. The offering consisted of bread, beer, oxen, and geese. The inscription then gives the name of Sisopduyenhhab's father, Neferakhu, of his daughter Sitserefka and of Ankhthifi, son of Sitsnefru. We may conjecture that Ankhthifi was the sculptor of this stela. Small figures representing Neferakhu, and his mother and daughter, both of the name Sitserefka, are carved after their respective names.

Below this we have the figure of the deceased himself, seated upon a lion legged chair wearing the typical, very scanty costume of the

period consisting of a short linen kilt and a bead collar. The wig shows strands of hair and the ear is uncovered. He holds in his left hand a folded cloth, often seen in the hands of statues and of relief figures of this period; it was probably used as a handkerchief. It is the hieroglyph which represents phonetically the letter s in our alphabet. His right hand is stretched towards an offering table well loaded with a trussed goose, various vegetables and loaves of bread; underneath the table is an unguent pot and two wine jars. These represent the offering destined to supply sustenance for the deceased in the hereafter.

Below this is another seated man holding a long staff in his left hand and an obscure object in his right, which may, however, be a handkerchief as above. The inscription shows us that this figure represents a lector-priest by the name of Sehetepyebresenb, born of Horemhat and that he made the stela for the deceased. On many Egyptian stelae we have given the name of the person who was responsible for the memorial to the deceased and it is generally a close relative, such as a brother, sister, father or mother. In this case, however, we are not told what relation, if any, he bears to the deceased.

The inscription on the right side reads "In honour with Anubis, lord of the cemetery, the lector priest, Sehetepyebresenb, possessor of worthiness." The term "possessor of worthiness" is a common phrase used on funerary stelae as an epithet of the deceased.

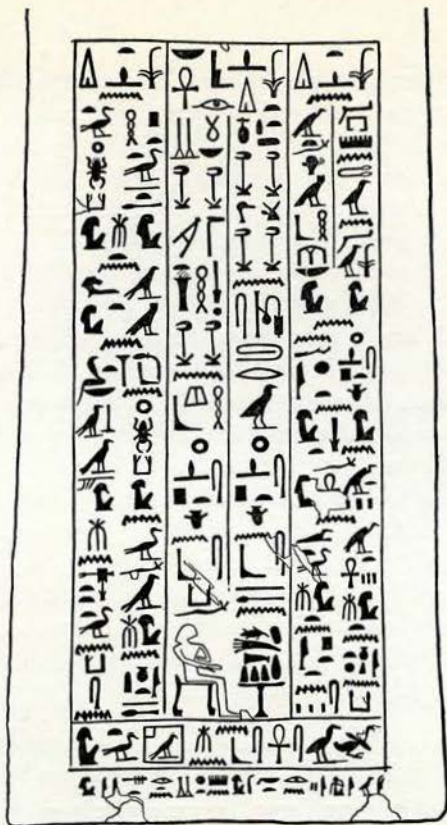
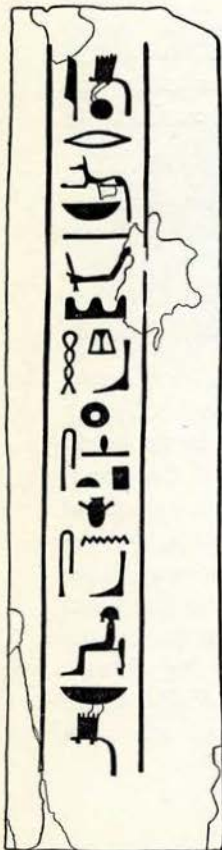
The inscription on the left side reads "In honour with Ptah, the scribe and copyist, Sehetepyebresenb justified". The title "scribe and copyist" is really part of the many functions of a lector priest. The term "justified" is the commonest epithet used after the names of deceased persons on stelae and refers to the fact that the person in question has gone through the judgment of Osiris and has not been found wanting.

On the top we have two more persons mentioned. The inscription reads: "An offering which the king gives for the house official and scribe Sihathor, born of Menkhet, (and) for Memi, born of Mutankhu".

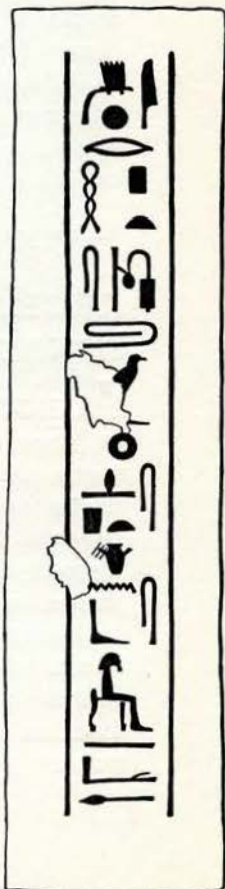
On the back is a very interesting arrangement of symmetrically arranged hieroglyphs. The carver of a stela is given a certain inscription and he must use his ingenuity to get it all in the space at his command, showing at the end a symmetrical arrangement without sac-



Below:  
Right side of  
the Stela.



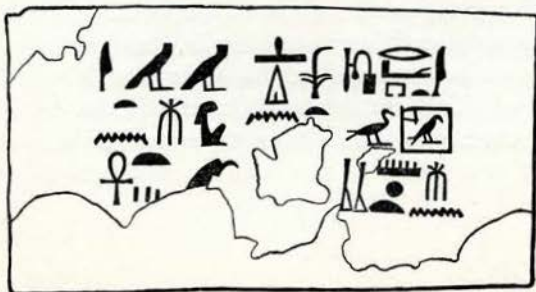
Below:  
Left side of  
the Stela.



The Stela of Sisopduyenhab  
and his relatives.

Above: Reverse side.

Below: Top of the Stela.



rificing rules of grammar or spelling. The carver of this stela did a good job. At the top of the right and left hand columns is the usual formula, "an offering which the king gives". Following this is the preposition "for". There follows a list of names and titles of deceased persons and their relatives and at the end "for their souls". It means in effect that the offering should be given for the souls of the departed ones mentioned. The middle two columns are headed by the formula "an offering which the king gives to Osiris, lord of the living". Then follows first the left hand, then the right hand column "(namely) a thousand of alabaster and clothing, a thousand of incense and unguent, for the lector priest, Sehetepyebresenb; a thousand of bread and beer, a thousand of oxen and geese, for the scribe and copyist, Sehetepyebresenb, justified, (and) for his soul".

Underneath this we have another portrait of Sehetepyebresenb, who seems to play a much more prominent part on this stela than the person for whom he had had it made.

At the bottom of this side the two lines of horizontally written inscriptions mention an overseer, Sankhsenb and a servant Iy. The latter was evidently a trusted and faithful servant whom it was thought fit to include on the tombstone of the family.

P. M.

The maximum measurements of this stela are: height 0.51 m.; width 0.255 m.; thickness 0.125 m.

## ARCHAEOLOGY IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

ALTHOUGH few of us think that archaeology, like charity, can begin at home, digging in Pennsylvania has gone on spasmodically for years. At present, co-ordination of archaeological work in the state under the direction of Donald A. Cadzow, Archaeologist to the Pennsylvania Historical Commission, is determining the problems presented there by the various and successive waves of prehistoric Indian occupation, and the progress that has so far been made in solving those problems. Pennsylvania archaeology is important not only for what it can tell us of Indians within the state, but for its bearing on the archaeology of the Northeastern United States. While the objects found in this area, stone and bone tools and ornaments, shell beads, pottery pipes and vessels, are neither spectacular nor of any par-