

# 6

## Egypt and Sudan: Old Kingdom to Late Period

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### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the archaeological material held by the Pitt Rivers Museum (PRM) from Egypt and Sudan that dates from the beginning of the Old Kingdom (Fourth Dynasty, from *c.* 2575 BCE) to the end of the Late Period (i.e. to Alexander the Great's conquest of Egypt, 332 BCE). These collections have been largely unstudied, therefore quantifying their extent is particularly difficult. However, we can estimate that the Museum holds *c.* 12,413 archaeological objects from Egypt and Sudan (some of which were historically recorded on the PRM database as from Nubia)<sup>1</sup> that date from this timeframe. This material includes, in addition to objects from Egypt, some 785 database records for artefacts excavated in sites in Nubia under the direction of under the direction of Frances Llewellyn Griffith, the first Professor of Egyptology at the University of Oxford (e.g. Griffith 1921).

In a sense, the PRM's Dynastic Egyptian and Sudanese collections can be characterized overall as 'small finds': from funerary objects like shabtis to the excavated artefacts of daily life – such as flint tools, sandals and textiles – which are often illustrative of particular technologies. Little in the collection fits traditional definitions of Egyptian art, such as statuary or relief sculpture. While 'art objects' were highly prized by institutions such as the British Museum and the Ashmolean Museum, they stood outside Pitt-Rivers' original aims for the collection and the character of its subsequent development. A possible exception is a small fragment of raised relief from an Old Kingdom non-royal tomb bearing a depiction of an archer (1926.14.6).<sup>2</sup>

Thus the character of the PRM's collections of Egyptian material is distinctive, being focused on understanding everyday technologies and material culture in ancient Egypt and on comparison with artefacts from other regions and periods. In contrast, for example, with early displays in the British Museum, which depicted an ancient Egypt that stood apart from, and in opposition to, the development of Western culture (Moser 2006; Riggs 2010: 1137–8), the typological focus of the PRM integrated Egyptian archaeological objects in a broader cross-cultural and multi-period perspective (cf. Riggs 2010: 1142).

<sup>1</sup> Nubia is the stretch of the Nile Valley upstream from the first cataract to the confluence of the Atbara and the Nile. Thus the designation includes sites in modern Egypt and modern north Sudan.

<sup>2</sup> Donated by Cecil Mallaby Firth in 1926, it was probably acquired when he was Inspector of Antiquities at Saqqara between 1913 and 1931.

In this chapter I survey the objects and assemblages of Dynastic Egypt and Sudan, emphasizing the strengths of the excavated material. An overview of this tranche of the Egyptian and Sudanese archaeological collection (6.2) is followed by accounts of the PRM founding collection that was assembled by Pitt-Rivers himself (6.3), and the subsequent development of the collection (6.4), with particular reference to the collecting activities of Henry Acland (6.4.2) and Winifred Blackman as case-studies (6.4.3). I then survey the excavated assemblages within the collection (6.5.1), offering accounts of the material from Petrie's excavations at Lahun (also termed Kahun) and Gurob, 1889–1890 (6.5.2), as well as the Nubian and Sudanese assemblages from Faras, Sanam and Jebel Moya (6.5.3), before drawing general conclusions about the significance and potential of the collections (6.6).

## 6.2 Overview

The PRM collections include a range of objects from Egypt that are datable across the Fourth-Thirtieth Dynasties through either excavated context or typology. In addition material is present from sites across Nubia and Sudan, although some of this material is of later date (see Chapter 8).<sup>3</sup> Material from periods of Egyptian occupation in Nubia is dated to the period divisions given in *Table 6.1*. The indigenous Nubian state, the kingdom of Kush (now widely termed the Kerma Culture), becomes prominent in Egyptian sources during the Middle Kingdom. The later Kushite Period is traditionally divided into two main phases. The Napatan phase, named after the dynasty associated with the region of Napata immediately downstream from the fourth cataract, encompassed the 9th to 4th centuries BCE. This phase includes the Nubian Dynasty of Egypt (Twenty-fifth Dynasty), which conquered and controlled Egypt for almost 100 years.

The PRM founding collection includes at least 118 objects from Egypt (none from Sudan) dating between the beginning of the Old Kingdom and the end of the Roman Period (see Chapter 7). This was a very small proportion of Pitt Rivers' ethnographic and archaeological collection. It is not clear when Pitt-Rivers began to collect Egyptian material, although 49 ancient Egyptian artefacts are recorded on the database as being among the first group of objects delivered to Bethnal Green in 1874 (0.5 % of his whole collection). Pitt-Rivers' inclusion of Egyptian material is unsurprising in light of intense contemporary interest in ancient Egypt, as well as his aim to map social evolution through material culture.

After the foundation of the PRM in 1884, the number of Dynastic Egyptian objects expanded considerably. The development of the collection, paralleled in many Western museums, was driven by two main factors: the desire of travellers in Egypt to acquire Egyptian antiquities, and the opportunity for museums and private individuals to collect finds through sponsorship of British-run excavations. The majority of Dynastic items acquired by the PRM from collectors consists of small-scale, portable objects which were readily and cheaply available both in Egypt and through dealers in Europe and are thus now ubiquitous in museum collections, such as shabtis, amulets, scarabs, and bronze statuettes. Such object-types are also in keeping with the character of those in the PRM founding collection.

While a number of notable individual artefacts were acquired through collectors, the excavated material constitutes the particular strength of the collection. A map of the archaeological sites mentioned in this chapter is provided in *Figure 6.1*. The development of these excavated assemblages received its most significant impetus

<sup>3</sup> Exact numbers are difficult to quantify because little work has yet been done on Griffith's large donations from his work in Nubia.

World Archaeology at the Pitt Rivers Museum: A Characterization  
 edited by Dan Hicks and Alice Stevenson, Archaeopress 2013, pages 90-114

Phase	Description	cal. BCE
Dynasties 4–8	Old Kingdom	c.2575–2150
Dynasties 9–11	First Intermediate Period	c.2125–1975
Dynasties 11–13	Middle Kingdom	c.1975–1640
Dynasties 13–17	Second Intermediate Period	c.1630–1520
Dynasties 18–20	New Kingdom	c.1539–1075
Dynasties 21–25	Third Intermediate Period	c.1075–715
Dynasties 25–30	Late Period	c.715–332

Table 6.1 Chronology of  
 Dynastic Egypt.

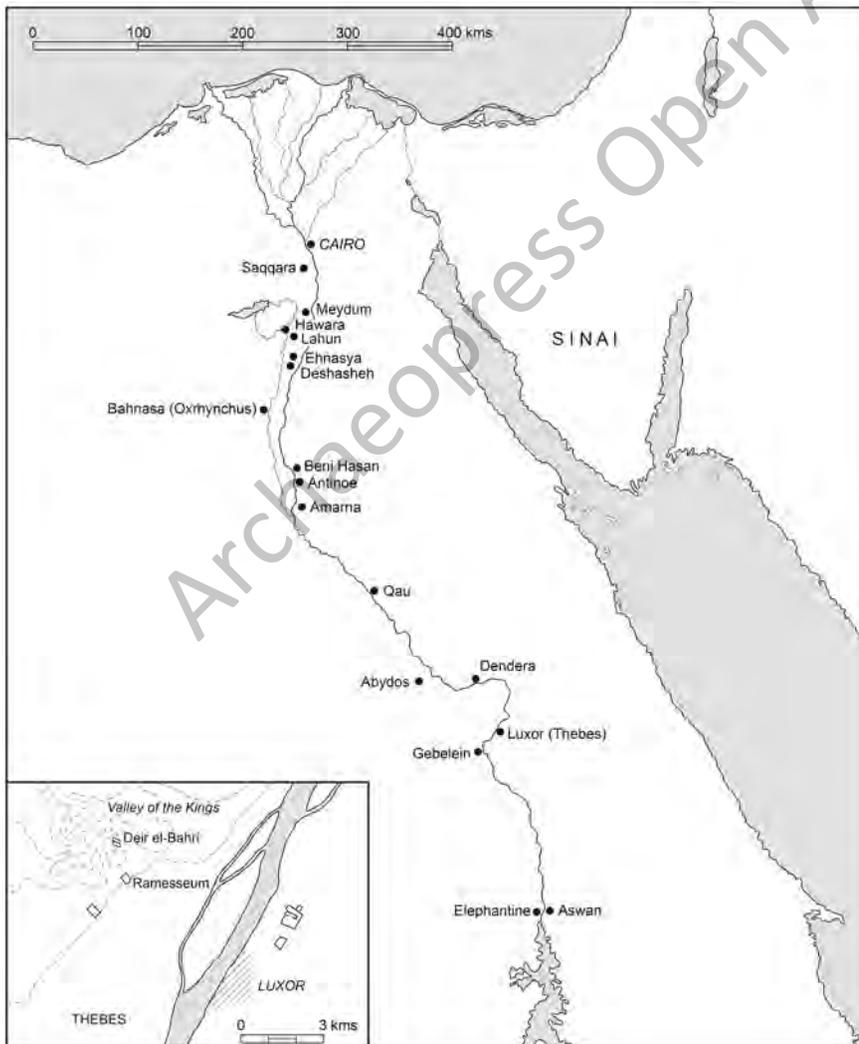


Figure 6.1 Map of  
 Egypt showing the main  
 archaeological sites referred  
 to in Chapters 6 and 7.

from the field activities of W. M. Flinders Petrie, from which the Museum holds *c.* 1,158 archaeological artefacts, mostly donated by Petrie himself. Petrie and Pitt-Rivers met in Egypt in 1881 (Bowden 1991: 92–3). Although Petrie had a policy of distributing his finds to smaller museums in Britain, this personal connection may have initially helped secure the PRM's position among the beneficiaries. The selection of object-types, especially when compared to those given to other museums from the same excavations, seems deliberate, supporting the development of the collection's distinctive character and specialisms (Stevenson 2010).

The PRM received material from major British excavations in Egypt throughout the early 20th century, via the Egypt Exploration Fund (EEF, later the Society – EES) and Petrie's British School of Archaeology in Egypt (BSAE), as well as Oxford University expeditions to sites in Nubia. The typological and technological focus of the PRM resonated with Petrie's interests in the material culture and technologies of daily life: for example, his final journal note for the 1889 seasons at the sites of Lahun and Gurob, material from which is richly represented in the PRM, records his pleasure at the insights that such work had offered into 'the hitherto undefined history of domestic and personal objects'.<sup>4</sup>

### 6.3 Ancient Egypt and the Founding Collection

None of the Egyptian objects in the PRM founding collection have a clear archaeological provenance, and most were acquired through dealers, auction houses, and other collectors. Further research into Pitt-Rivers' interest in Egyptian material and patterns of acquisition is desirable, although there seems now little possibility of tracing the origins in Egypt of the majority of items. An exception is a funerary cone (1884.140.963) belonging to an Eighteenth Dynasty official whose tomb has recently been rediscovered in Qurna on the Theban West Bank (Theban Tomb C.3: Bavay 2010: especially p. 37). Funerary cones from this tomb are held in a number of other museum collections, including the British Museum (EA 9653; acquired through Giovanni Anastasi in 1839), which may allow networks of distribution in the 19th century to be mapped.<sup>5</sup>

The PRM founding collection is dominated by objects that are very much in keeping with the character of the contemporary interest and market in Egyptian antiquities. It includes 22 faience, wood and ceramic shabtis (e.g. 1884.57.6–12, 1884.58.73, 1884.140.128; e.g. *Figure 6.2*), 5 scarabs (e.g. 1884.140.439–443), a stone canopic jar with an unidentified substance inside (1884.57.17) and 5 canopic jar-lids (e.g. 1884.57.13–16, 1884.67.28), which were all incorporated into Pitt-Rivers' 'Treatment of the Dead' series, according to the PRM accession registers. A mummified cat (1884.57.5, *Figure 6.3*), a fragment of a small wooden face (1884.67.19, see Ertman 2010), at least 8 amulets representing a range of deities (1884.58.51, 1884.58.65, 1884.58.66, 1884.58.74–78), 4 painted wooden statues characteristic of burials from the first millennium BCE (1884.58.63–64, 1884.67.24, 1884.68.126), and 19 bronze statues of deities and priests,<sup>6</sup> also all dating from the first millennium BCE, formed part of the either the 'Idols and Religious Emblems' series or the 'Human Form in Barbaric and Civilised Art'. Thus the most 'ordinary and typical specimens' (Lane Fox

<sup>4</sup> Petrie W. M. F., 'Journal' MSS 1889–1890, p. 38. Griffith Institute archive, University of Oxford.

<sup>5</sup> Thanks are due to Kento Zenihiro for identification and discussion.

<sup>6</sup> 1884.58.47, 1884.58.59–60, 1884.58.62, 1884.58.67, 1884.58.69–72, 1884.58.79, 1884.67.16, 1884.67.25–27, 1884.67.30, 1884.67.33, 1884.67.71, 1884.68.106, 1884.68.109. The Late Period bronze of a kneeling priest (1884.67.71) was included in Barbara Mendoza's (2008: 198, number 226 with plate 96) study of bronze statues of priests.



Figure 6.2 (left) Ancient Egyptian faience sabbti from the Pitt Rivers Museum founding collection (PRM Accession Number 1884.57.11). Steb figurines were often inscribed with a spell that would ensure that they would carry out manual labour on behalf of the deceased in the afterlife.

Figure 6.3 (Right) Ancient Egyptian mummified cat from the Pitt Rivers Museum founding collection (PRM Accession Number 1884.57.5). Animal mummies were particularly a feature of religious practice from Late Period Egypt (c. 715–332 BCE) through to Roman times when millions were manufactured for sale as votive offerings.

[Pitt-Rivers] 1875: 294) of Egyptian material culture then available on the antiquities market were incorporated into Pitt-Rivers' classificatory displays.

Two small round-topped limestone stelae of late New Kingdom date (c. 1200–1075 BCE) are also typical of the inscribed Egyptian objects that were desirable to Victorian collectors. One shows the deputy of the custodian of the treasury of the great house, royal messenger to all foreign lands, Neferrenpet, kneeling in adoration before a seated figure of Osiris (1884.98.2; *Figure 6.4*). The register below shows standing figures of a man and three women, some of whom are identified as his kin. The second stela also depicts the owner in the upper register, the scribe of the temple of Ptah, Seba, kneeling in adoration before Osiris, Isis, and Hathor (1884.98.3; *Figure 6.5*). The register below depicts eight kneeling figures, including Seba's father Mose, craftsman in the place of truth, and possibly his wife and daughters. An offering formula to Osiris, Horendotes, Isis, and Ptah-Sokar for Seba and his father is inscribed in four lines below. Both stelae, which are unpublished, are of prosopographic interest and will be the subject of a more detailed study (Frood in prep.).

A smaller number of objects relate more clearly to typologies of the 'everyday'. These include a bronze arrow-head supposedly from Tell el-Yahudiyeh (1884.119.390), 2 wooden headrests (1884.3.22–23) and 5 bronze mirrors (1884.70.15–18;

Figure 6.4 (left)  
Round-topped limestone  
stela (PRM Accession  
Number 1884.98.2)  
of late New Kingdom  
date (c. 1200–1075  
BCE), showing the royal  
messenger to all foreign  
lands, Neferrenpet,  
kneeling in adoration  
before Osiris. A  
woman who may be his  
grandmother is included  
among the four standing  
figures in the register  
below (third from the left).



Figure 6.5 (right)  
Round-topped limestone  
stela (PRM Accession  
Number 1884.98.3)  
of late New Kingdom date  
(c. 1200–1075 BCE),  
depicting the owner in  
the upper register, the  
scribe of the temple of  
Ptah, Seba, kneeling in  
adoration before Osiris,  
Isis, and Hathor. In  
the lower register, Seba's  
father Mose, craftsman  
in the place of truth, is  
shown as the first male  
figure after three women,  
two of whom are on a  
noticeably larger scale;  
these women are probably  
Seba's wife and daughters.



1884.119.611). The Middle Kingdom rowing boat model (1884.81.10: Length 1.12m, Figure 6.6), purchased from the dealers Rollin and Feuarent in 1879 is the most 'monumental', in scale and complexity, of the Egyptian archaeological objects that Pitt-Rivers collected.

Pitt-Rivers' Thomas Cook tour of Egypt in February and March 1881 was an opportunity for collecting as well as archaeological work (Bowden 1991: 90–2). Only one Dynastic object, a fragment of anthropoid mummy cartonnage (1884.67.23), datable to the Third Intermediate Period (c. 1075–715 BCE), is explicitly noted in the PRM records as acquired by Pitt-Rivers in this year, and therefore probably during this tour. His interest in collecting is expressed in his desire for a throw-stick, of which he had heard rumours while in Luxor and which he later received with 'surprise and satisfaction' from its purchaser, Dr Pinkerton, in 1883 (Pitt-Rivers 1883: 454).<sup>7</sup> However, this object was probably sought because of his particular interest in this class of object. As observed by Alison Petch (2006: 264), this example indicates the extent to which Pitt-Rivers' first collection was the product of 'fate and happenstance', rather than strict scientific method.

## 6.4 Other Collectors

### 6.4.1 The Expansion of the Collection after 1884

The general character of later donations from collectors and travellers can be gleaned from the more than 120 Dynastic Egyptian objects (1921.93.399–508) acquired by

<sup>7</sup> Although originally part of the PRM collection, records indicate that the Egyptian 'boomerang' was returned to Pitt-Rivers in order for him to write his 1883 article 'On the Egyptian boomerang and its affinities'; it was probably then retained in his own museum in Farnham. His copies of three throwsticks which are in the British Museum are in the Pitt Rivers Museum (1884.25.30–32). These were used in his experiments in throwing the sticks, described in detail in his article and attesting to an area of archaeological science in which he was an innovator (Bowden 1991: 158, also 90; Gosden and Larson 2007: 137–8).



Charles F. Wood in the 1860s and 1870s, and given to the PRM by his wife Edith in 1921.<sup>8</sup> The Wood donation includes shabtis, scarabs, beads, bronze statuettes of deities, a large number of faience amulets, a small ceramic face said to be from Amarna (1921.93.475), and a face from a wooden coffin, which according to the PRM's accession book was 'found by Mr Wood's cook, Feb. 1876' during travel in Egypt (1921.93.476). Some of the individual objects and object-groups within such donations are distinctive, such as the fine heart scarab (1952.5.80) brought from Egypt by Captain Peter Rainer in 1836 and given by his great grandson in 1952 (other examples are discussed below).<sup>9</sup> The relationships between particular collectors, their donations and the PRM contributes to histories of travelling and collecting in Egypt in the 19th century, a rapidly developing area of research.<sup>10</sup> The study of such relationships would also throw light on the historical development of the PRM archaeological collections, and the position of Egyptian material within it.

Occasionally, donations were clearly aimed at complementing and developing particular areas. A canopic jar<sup>11</sup> (1908.64.5.1–2) and a mummified crocodile (1908.64.5–6), purchased by the PRM from an auction house in 1908, added to burgeoning numbers of funerary objects and mummified animals (e.g. *Figure 6.3*); the latter group perhaps reflects the PRM's close physical and intellectual relationship with the Oxford University Museum of Natural History (OUMNH).<sup>12</sup> This relationship is also apparent in the small number of mummified human remains transferred to the PRM from the Comparative Anatomy Department of the OUMNH in the late 19th century, including a head from the collection of Thomas Joseph Pettigrew (1887.33.30), a surgeon and antiquarian with a particular interest in mummification. Other mummified human remains in the PRM include the body of the Twenty-fifth

*Figure 6.6 Ancient Egyptian (Middle Kingdom) boat model from the Pitt Rivers Museum founding collection (PRM Accession Number 1884.81.10), probably collected as part of General Pitt-Rivers' interest in the development of navigation technologies. Such models were placed in tombs.*

<sup>8</sup> Compare Pitt-Rivers' comments that travellers' collections, 'not having been scientifically collected, cannot be scientifically arranged' (Lane Fox 1875: 294).

<sup>9</sup> This scarab is being prepared for publication by Antonio Morales. Also included in Captain Rainer's collection was a mummified crocodile (1952.5.81), a bronze statuette of Osiris (1953.11.1), as well as a mummified ibis wing (1952.6.82) and blue glass ring (1952.5.83) both said to be from the 'tombs of the kings at Thebes'.

<sup>10</sup> E.g. <http://www.astene.org.uk/>

<sup>11</sup> Complementing the canopic jar (with remains) in Pitt-Rivers' founding collection (1884.57.17).

<sup>12</sup> There are 27 mummified animals in the collection in total: nine cats, three kittens, two crocodiles, two dogs, one fish, four hawks, one kite, five whole ibis birds and one ibis wing.

Figure 6.7 Detail of the outer surface of the lid of the inner coffin of Irterau (c. 700–670 BCE), an ancient Egyptian coffin set presented by the Prince of Wales to the University of Oxford in 1869 and later transferred to the Pitt Rivers Museum (PRM Accession Number 1887.1.481.3). The set was found with some others belonging to members of Irterau's family, which are now in different museums across Britain. The detail shows the goddess Nut kneeling with outstretched vulture wings, a gesture of protection.



Dynasty woman Irterau (discussed below), two other heads (1887.33.2–3), as well as hands and feet (1919.29.40–41, 1920.39.10). Many of the human and animal remains were x-rayed in the Radcliffe Infirmary in 1987.

In 1896 Petrie facilitated the purchase of a number of bows and arrows from the Italian consular agent, Arminius Butros, on behalf of Henry Balfour, then Curator of the PRM, who had a research interest in such material (1896.2.1.1–12; 1896.2.2.1–16; Balfour 1897; cf. McLeod 1962: 15 n.26).<sup>15</sup> A self-bow from the Egyptian collection of Henry Rider Haggard (1907.10.1), the writer of popular adventure novels, was also presented by Charles James Longman in 1907 as part of a larger group of bows and arrows. Ten of the arrows purchased by Balfour through Petrie (1896.2.1.1–4, 1896.2.2.1–6) are among the few Egyptian objects in the collection that have been subject to scientific analysis, in this case to identify wood type (Western and McLeod 1995).

The Twenty-fifth Dynasty coffin assemblage of the lady of the house Irterau, brought to England by the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) at the end of his tour of Egypt in 1869 (1887.1.481.2–5; Adams 1990; Elias 1993: 136 n. 135; Nail 2000; Porter and Moss 1973: 672–4), is notable in terms of its prominence and popularity in the current displays, as well as its curious biography. The coffin was donated to the OUMNH on 4 August 1869, and transferred to the PRM in 1886 (Figure 6.7). It was one of a group of approximately 30 coffins that were ‘found’ as part of a deliberately staged archaeological spectacle for the Prince in Qurna. The circumstances of the gift generated a media stir in the 1960s when it was characterized as a ‘hoax’, and the

<sup>15</sup> Balfour (1897: 211) described the discovery of the group as follows: ‘A tomb of the XXVI Dynasty was excavated at Thebes in Egypt, under the direction, I understand, of Mr. Butros, the Italian Consul. Amongst other things he found a bow, or rather two pieces of one, of the usual ancient Egyptian shape ... Shortly after the finding of this bow one of the men, who had been employed by Mr. Butros in his excavations, produced a second bow with several arrows, which he said were found in the same tomb as the other bow and arrows. Both bows with their arrows came into the hands of a friend of Mr. Petrie’s, and through the latter’s kind mediation I was able to purchase them.’

authenticity of some of the coffins and bodies was questioned.<sup>14</sup> Reconstructions of the group indicate that many of the coffins, including Irterau's, belong to several generations of the family of Amenhai, and probably came from a family tomb in the Ramesseum area of the Theban necropolis (Georg Möller's 'Grabbungsstelle H': Aston 2009: 252–3; Elias 1993: 135–44; Jansen-Winkel 2009: 555–6). The name of Irterau's mother, Nesamenopet, and her mother's mother<sup>15</sup> are included on the coffin. Her husband, Amenhotep, was a son of Amenhai and owner of another of the prince's coffins, now in Edinburgh; both Amenhotep and Irterau are named on the coffin of their son Pakapu, now in Cambridge. David Aston (2009: 253) dates the group, on the basis of style, to c. 710–650 BCE, with Irterau's coffin dating to c. 700–670 BCE. Irterau's coffin group contributes to reconstructions of burial assemblages, with related implications for issues of chronology and social networks in the Late Period (Aston 2009). It and the other Prince of Wales coffins are also an interesting case-study for the history of collecting and changing popular perceptions of Egyptian antiquities.

Another well-known individual object is the 'Oxford Bowl' (1887.27.1; *Figure 5.1*). This small (95mm in diameter) slipped bowl or cup bears three lines of a hieratic 'letter to the dead' around the exterior rim, and a drawing of a coffin on the exterior of the base. The bowl was donated to the PRM in 1887 by James Leigh Strachan-Davidson (later Master of Balliol College, Oxford), having been obtained from a dealer in Luxor sometime between 1886 and 1887 (Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 26–7, plate 9; Gestermann 2006: doc. g). The text is spoken by Tetia son of Neni, and concerns his family's inheritance from an individual called Meniupu (reading uncertain) who seems to have been an outsider or fugitive taken in by the family. A. H. Gardiner and Kurt Sethe, in their edition of a group of letters to the dead, assigned the Oxford Bowl to the late Second Intermediate Period or early New Kingdom (c. 1650–1490 BCE) on the basis of the paleography and names. More recently Martin Bommas (1999: 56–7, 59) has dated the form of the vessel to the Middle Kingdom (c. 1975–1640 BCE), thus suggesting that it was kept and reused in antiquity. The Oxford Bowl is often treated as an outlier in the small corpus of known letters to the dead because of its phraseology, such as the apparent lack of a request (e.g. Donnat 2002: 211, n. 2). However, new work on the letters developed from the Oxford Bowl in particular, is reassessing definitions and boundaries of the 'genre', as well as the materiality and iconicity of the texts.<sup>16</sup>

#### 6.4.2 *The Acland Collection*

The largest group of inscribed Egyptian objects in the PRM came from a collection held by the Acland family. Two members of the family donated to the OUMNH and the PRM, but the Egyptian material probably came from the collections of Henry Wentworth Acland, who was Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford between 1858 and 1894 and one of the people instrumental in ensuring the founding of the PRM in Oxford (Larson 2008). The PRM received some objects directly from the family in 1901, after both Pitt-Rivers' and Henry Acland's deaths in 1900, and others in a transfer of material from the OUMNH in 1937. This latter group (1937.56.43–112)

<sup>14</sup> E.g. '95 year hoax on museums exposed, say scientists', *Sunday Telegraph*, January 10 1965, 1 and 7.

<sup>15</sup> The reading of the grandmother's name is problematic. 'Ta-iu' in the first part of the name is clear, but a reading for the final signs remains uncertain, even though they are clearly written. The names Taiu[hotep?] or Taiu[khaty?] were suggested by Arthur Weigall and Helen Whitehouse respectively, and are included in the Museum Related Document Files connected with this group. My thanks to Mark Smith for discussion.

<sup>16</sup> Angela McDonald, 'Writing as a weapon in Egyptian letters to the dead', Third British Egyptology Congress, British Museum, London, 12 September 2010. To be published.

consists mainly of scarabs and amulets, as well as a painter's palette (1937.56.88), most of which are assigned 'provenances' in Upper Egypt, including Aswan, Esna, and Thebes. These provenances were probably given by the dealers or other individuals through whom objects were acquired. Although Henry Acland travelled to Egypt in February and March 1886, he did not go further south than Cairo. The only reference to his acquisition of antiquities in the letters to his children written from Egypt is a comment made in Port Said, noting that he had 'a little old Egyptian Cat in bronze from Bubastis',<sup>17</sup> which does not seem to be in the PRM collection.

The 1901 group includes a number of mummified animals, such as two ibises (one now destroyed) supposedly 'excavated' by one J.D. Cox at Memphis (1901.30.1, 1901.31.1). A letter in the PRM Related Document Files (RDF) concerning the 1901 donation from Acland's son and addressed to a 'Professor', quotes an 1889 letter to Acland from Evelyn Baring (First Earl of Cromer) describing his acquisition of animal mummies for Acland via Sir Francis Grenfell, including: 'a mummified cat which is not beautiful to look at but is undoubtedly genuine and is of the time of Ramses II';<sup>18</sup> both Baring and Grenfell were serving in Egypt at the time. Other letters and materials in the Acland Family archive, now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, as well as family papers held in other UK institutions, may allow the networks through which Acland was collecting to be traced, and the biographies of the objects to be untangled.

The inscribed material was also included in the 1901 donation and consists of 2 mud-bricks stamped with cartouches (now destroyed), 2 painted coffin fragments (1901.31.2–3), and 2 small limestone stelae (1901.31.6–7). One of the coffin fragments (1901.31.2) bears part of a mortuary text as well as the name of the owner, the lady of the house Muthetepti, as well as her father Iufaa, a priest in the temple of Amun at Karnak, and her mother, Nestanebetasheru. Muthetepti (ii), who died *c.* 680 BCE, was also the owner of a stela now in Vienna (Wien 5070) (Munro 1973: 194) and a shabti box now in Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva (MAH D 341) (Chappaz 1984: 156–9; and see Jansen-Winkel 2009: 418, number 145), while material belonging to her sons is scattered across a number of museums (Aston 2009: 206). The acquisition history of some of these objects, including the fragment in the PRM, indicates that the Theban tomb of this family was probably being plundered in the mid-late 19th century.<sup>19</sup>

The two small painted limestone stelae (1901.31.6–7), both of which are on display, are said to come from Abydos and are to be published by Andrés Diego Espinel. He dates one (1901.31.7) to the Second Intermediate Period–early Eighteenth Dynasty (*c.* 1640–1450 BCE) on the basis of style, content, and parallels. Seven columns of an offering formula addressed to Osiris on behalf of the owner and his kin, fill the lunette; the reading of the owner's name is uncertain.<sup>20</sup> The register below shows him seated before a laden offering table and being embraced by the female figure seated behind him, perhaps his wife or mother. Her name, the reading of which is problematic, seems to be inscribed beneath her seat, next to a mirror. The name of the owner's mother is inscribed above the offering table. The second stela (1901.31.6) is datable to the Late Period (*c.* 715–332 BCE), although Espinel's study will refine this. The scene shows the owner standing with arms raised in adoration before a standing effigy-form figure of Re-Horakhty. An offering stand between them holds a lotus bloom and nemset vase that is pouring a libation to the god.

<sup>17</sup> MSS. Acland Family Archive, letters 1886, Bodleian Library, Oxford.

<sup>18</sup> This cat which is considered 'worthy of your acceptance' seems not to be in Acland's PRM group, but 'a mummified bird of the time of Tsammekitus (?)' could refer to 1901.31.1.1 or 1901.31.1.2.

<sup>19</sup> I am grateful to Cynthia Sheikholeslami, who is preparing a more detailed study of the piece, for discussion and references. The second coffin fragment in Acland's group (1901.31.3) is a foot-board of the 'yellow type' painted on both sides with figures of goddesses, including Nephthys.

<sup>20</sup> Alternatives include Titi (Espinel) and Gemeni (suggested by Jaromir Malek).

Two lines of text below request a perfect burial for Tedu, son of Petosiris; no titles are given. These stelae and the coffin fragment all have implications for the reconstructions of workshops and/or social networks in their respective periods.

#### 6.4.3 Winifred Blackman's Wellcome Collection

Although largely modern, the collection of amulets, charms and other objects gathered by the anthropologist Winifred Blackman during her ethnographic fieldwork in Egypt in the 1920s and 1930s also form an important part of the PRM archaeological collections. In light of her interest in ancient Egyptian survivals, it is appropriate to foreground her material here. The bulk of this collection, which numbers in the thousands, was loaned to the PRM from the Wellcome Trust in the 1980s, but has never been properly catalogued or studied. Some 65 objects were donated directly to the PRM from Blackman herself in 1933; these are the only parts of her collection currently recorded on the database. The collection also includes a number of faience imitations of ancient amulets, such as scarabs, plant forms, and a figure of Isis nursing.

Blackman was one of very few women who studied anthropology at Oxford in the early 20th century and, until recently, one of only a small number of anthropologists to work with rural communities in Egypt. From 1913 to around 1920 she also volunteered at the PRM, as recorded in the Museum's annual reports, cataloguing musical instruments, fire-making equipment, mirrors, combs, rosaries, amulets and charms. When she initially applied to Henry Wellcome for financial support for her research in return for collections, he expressed concern about a possible conflict of interest with the PRM (Larson 2009: 213–14). Blackman was minimally supported by Wellcome from 1927 to 1933, and, although the financial constraints he imposed limited her to the acquisition of inexpensive medical and magico-medical items (Larson 2009: 214–17), she gathered substantial numbers. The collection is now distributed between Oxford (the PRM), Liverpool (Garstang Museum) and London (the Science Museum and the British Museum) (Stevenson forthcoming).

Contemporary Egyptological and popular interest was piqued by her research on the relationships of modern object types and social practices with their ancient counterparts, traced through representations and archaeological finds.<sup>21</sup> She published a number of studies in this area alone and together with her brother, Aylward M. Blackman, who was Professor of Egyptology at the University of Liverpool between 1934 and 1938 (e.g. Blackman 1922; 1925; Blackman and Blackman 1935). It may have been partly her brother's studies in Egyptology that originally inclined Blackman towards Egypt as her research area; her first fieldwork season in Egypt in 1920 was conducted as a member of Aylward's team at Meir (Ikram 2000: vi). Aylward also donated some 33 objects from Egypt to the PRM, only 11 of which are archaeological (1914.9.1–2, 1914.9.6, 1916.9.1–3, 1916.9.4.1–5). These included a group from Meir (1916.9.1–4), which was probably acquired during his seasons there in 1912–1914. It is tempting to think that these donations were influenced by his sister who was working at the PRM at the time. The Meir donation comprises four textiles, two of which are long, fringed sashes in a heavy fabric (1916.9.2–3; c.2.60m x 0.36m; 2.70m x 0.46m excl. fringes), and a coffin peg bearing an unusual variant of a mitre (or: joint) inscription (1914.9.1: see Grallert 2007 for this object type).<sup>22</sup>

The re-publication of Winifred Blackman's ground-breaking 1927 monograph, *The Fellahin of Upper Egypt*, in 2000 has revived awareness of and interest in the

<sup>21</sup> The PRM manuscript archive includes two articles, one perhaps an unpublished draft, by Charlotte Haldane, a well-known author and journalist, who wrote the pieces in the 1920s when she was managing editor of the Science News Service (see also Ikram 2000: x).

<sup>22</sup> The peg is to be published by Andrés Diego Espinel; my thanks to him for discussion.

significance of her work for the development of anthropology and Egyptology (Blackman 2000[1927]). Salima Ikram's introduction to the reprint (2000: vii) announces work to publish some of her notebooks and manuscripts, now held in the archives of the School of Archaeology, Classics and Egyptology, University of Liverpool. Study of her collections, including those in the PRM, will be vital to developing our understanding of her research and its significance.

## 6.5 Excavated Assemblages

### 6.5.1 Overview of Excavated Assemblages

Petrie's seasons in the Fayum areas of Lahun and Gurob in 1889–1890 contributed the first assemblage of archaeologically excavated material to the PRM; comprising some 263 objects, this is also the largest single assemblage of provenanced dynastic Egyptian objects in the collection and is discussed in more detail below. Most of this material came from the town-site at Lahun (second millennium BCE), thus representing a significant shift in the character of the Egyptian material in the PRM, from funerary and religious objects to the everyday and the domestic. Petrie continued to donate small groups of objects from many of his excavations to the PRM. Although much of this material has close comparanda in other museums which were given finds from his work, comparison of his distribution lists indicate that the PRM often received smaller selections of objects which were seemingly tailored to reflect the PRM's focus on 'ordinary specimens' and technological development, some arriving almost as 'sets' from particular sites. The diversity of later excavated groups seems to reflect decisions relating to distributions taken by the EEF and (later) EES committees, such as those for Abydos and Deir el-Bahri. The small size of the groups overall may also reflect the determination of Arthur Evans, Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum from 1884–1908, to consolidate and strengthen his museum's archaeological collections; the Ashmolean Museum actively supported British excavations in Egypt and Sudan throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and received substantial donations through this sponsorship.<sup>23</sup>

Recognition of the PRM's specialism in stone tools is perceptible in some of the assemblages from excavation, which include numerous worked flints donated from various dynastic contexts. For example, the Museum holds 10 flints found in Mastaba 8 at Meidum, donated by Petrie's sponsor Jesse Haworth in 1891 (1891.34.1–10), as well as individual finds such as a flint 'hoe blade' from Petrie's 1897 season at Dendara (1898.37.3), a flake from Coptos (1898.37.4), and a flint knife from Petrie and James E. Quibell's 1896 excavations in the area of the Ramesseum on the Theban West Bank (1896.53.2.1–2). The largest group is represented by the 36 stone tools from Petrie's 1904–1905 seasons at quarry sites in Sinai (1905.47.1–36). Metal tools and weapons were also included in groups from sites such as Dendara (1898.37.7–11), Qau (1923.43.55–62, 1924.35.2–3), the Ramesseum (West Bank, Thebes) (1896.53.1), and Abydos (1901.40.122–135, 1901.42.115.2–8, 1902.31.44, 1902.31.46–47, 1909.26.12, 1909.27.6–8).

Organic materials are a particular strength of the excavated assemblages, especially wood, textiles, basketry, cordage, and leather, as illustrated by the Lahun material

<sup>23</sup> An illustrative example are the five tools donated to the Museum by the EES from Charles Leonard Woolley's 1921–22 season at Amarna (see the Amarna Small Finds Database: [http://www.amarnaproject.com/pages/recent\\_projects/material\\_culture/small\\_finds/database.shtml](http://www.amarnaproject.com/pages/recent_projects/material_culture/small_finds/database.shtml)).

The small, homogenous nature of this group can be compared with the substantial Amarna donations to the Ashmolean Museum, which form such a significant part of its Egyptian collection (Whitehouse 2009: xix, 76–82).

(discussed in 6.5.2 below). Examples include the fragments of textiles found during Petrie's 1890–1891 excavations of Fourth Dynasty *mastabas* at Meidum, including the Mastaba of Ranefer (Mastaba 9, 1890.33.1) and Mastaba 17 (1890.33.4. 1–5). Textiles were also part of distributions of items from Abydos, such as the undated 'red' linen from the tomb of Djer (see Chapter 5 above), and Lahun (see 6.5.2 below and Chapter 8). Petrie's donation to the PRM from his 1898 excavation of Old Kingdom tombs at Deshashah consisted of 4 or 5 baskets as well as matting and cordage (1897.49.16–25), perhaps to complement the examples of such material donated from his earlier seasons at Lahun.<sup>24</sup> More basketry and cordage was donated by the EEF from Edouard Naville and H. R. Hall's excavation seasons in the Eleventh Dynasty temple at Deir el-Bahri (1904.35.79, 1904.35.79 (now destroyed), 1904.35.113, 1904.35.115.2), assumed by the excavators to have belonged to workers involved in quarrying stone from the temple at the end of the New Kingdom (Naville 1907: 16). A woven fibre sandal and sandal fragment are also given a New Kingdom date and may come from the same context (1904.35.114.1–2). An odd related object from Petrie and Quibell's Ramesseum excavations is a circular frame to which are bound numerous sharpened sticks (1897.49.2). It was donated by Petrie in October 1897 and is described on the accompanying label as: 'a pit-fall trap for catching gazelles etc. For placing on the ground and concealing with sand etc. XIX–XXII dynasty'; I know of no ancient parallels, but identical objects are still used in the Western Desert and Sahara (Le Quellec *et al.* 2005: 128–9 with refs., figs. 323–6).

Leatherwork is a particularly important group (leather footwear from Lahun is discussed in 6.5.2 below). A number of pieces of coloured and decoratively stitched leather (1921.31.1.1–13), said to have been acquired in Amarna in 1892, were originally part of the substantial collection of Egyptian antiquities belonging to Lord Amherst of Hackney and sold at Sotheby's in 1921. The fragments seem to be examples of the layered and stitched green and red leather known from the collection of Amarna leatherwork in the Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, Berlin (Veldmeijer and Endenburg 2007; Veldmeijer 2010a). The largest piece bears a complex stitched pattern of multiple spirals. A particularly unusual object is a small leather flask (up to 140 mm in height), perhaps dateable to the late New Kingdom or Third Intermediate Period, found during excavations in the Ramesseum and again donated by Petrie (1897.49.1, *Figure 6.8*); Quibell (1898: 13) noted its discovery at the end of his discussion of finds from excavations of Third Intermediate Period tombs, but it may not be associated with these. It is of the lenticular form conventionally referred to as a pilgrim flask, with a neck in the same material; one handle for suspension survives at the neck and there are traces of its pair. The body is decorated with circular incised lines. The only discussion of the bottle known to me is a short description by Balfour (1934: 11, plate facing p. 18) in his study of techniques of skin-working in Nigeria. He considered that it was made of membrane, 'subcutaneous adipose tissue from a freshly-flensed hide', which had been layered over a core of investment material, probably clay. Ceramic and faience imitations of leather flasks are well-attested (e.g. Bourriau 1981: 76, catalogue number 144), as are water skins (van Driel-Murray 2000: 309), but actual leather bottles are rare. One potential parallel may be a gourd-shaped vessel found by John Garstang in tomb 183 at Beni Hasan that he identified as leather (Ashmolean Museum AN1896-1908 E.2289: Garstang 1907: 130, figure 128b). The Ancient Egyptian Leatherwork Project (Veldmeijer 2010a; 2010b: 12–13) is

<sup>24</sup> In the distribution list for Deshashah, a note, probably added by Petrie, seems to indicate that the baskets and rope were reassigned to the PRM from a group originally destined for the Liverpool Museum. This Liverpool group also included two statues and a coffin. Distributions to other museums from Deshashah included statues, coffins, headrests and beads.

*Figure 6.8 Leather pilgrim flask found during Petrie's excavations at the Ramesseum on the west bank of Thebes (modern Luxor) (PRM Accession Number 1897.49.1), possibly dateable to the late New Kingdom or early Third Intermediate Period.*



significantly transforming the understanding of Egyptian leatherworking, and it is hoped that the PRM samples will be included in this or similar work.

While individual objects or classes of material can offer insights into typology, dating and manufacture, the integration of excavated assemblages with excavation reports and museum records can allow the reconstruction of contexts, opening up a range of analytical and interpretive possibilities. Many of the small finds from the first excavation seasons directed by Guy

Brunton in the cemeteries at Qau from 1922–1923 (donated by Petrie on behalf of the BSAE in September 1923) are assigned tomb numbers in the records, thus allowing tomb contexts to be reconstructed through the registers included in the publications. For example, copper axe fragments, an incised scarab and a carnelian bead (1924.35.2, 1924.35.4–5) were excavated from tomb 1749, dateable to the early Middle Kingdom (Brunton 1928: plates 66 and 75; Seidlmayer 1990: 137, 395). This has considerable potential not only for refined dating, but also for examining social questions relating to, for example, temporal and spatial distributions and social variability, as exemplified by Stephan Seidlmayer's work on the site (1987; 1990; 6.5.3 below; cf. Chapter 5). The Qau donation also includes 10 pieces of worked bone and ivory (1923.43.43–52) from the large late New Kingdom bone deposit that filled a Second Dynasty tomb (number 562: Brunton 1930: 18–20). This deposit, which included fossilized bones now in the collections of the Natural History Museum in London (Mayor 2000: 178), has yet to be fully published or analyzed, although it has been variously interpreted as the dump from a bone-working workshop or as a votive deposit to the local god Nemty (Welvaert 2002).<sup>25</sup>

The 12 baboon figurines, baboon-shaped stones, and oddly shaped natural or partly worked stones found together in 'chamber M64' at the Osiris temple at Abydos (1903.22.5–16) are a particularly striking votive deposit, perhaps partly comparable to that from Qau. Petrie excavated M64, as well as two other comparable deposits, M69 and the double group M65/89, in the western area of the Osiris temple (Petrie 1903: 26–27, plate ix). The deposits also included human and animal figurines in faience and ivory, as well as faience model boats, shrines, vessels and plant forms, many of which are now distributed across museums in the UK and USA. The curatorial focus at the PRM upon stone tools and flints may account for the high numbers of these strange stone artefacts donated to the Museum in comparison with the object-types given to other museums (see Bussmann 2010: 610–13). Petrie dated all

<sup>25</sup> Cf. <http://www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/qau/tombs/562background.html>

of these objects to the First Dynasty, but Barry Kemp's (1968: 153) reassessment of the stratigraphy indicated an early Eighteenth Dynasty date for the deposition of M64 and M65/89 (M69 is probably much earlier: cf. Bussmann 2010: 95). Richard Bussmann's (2010) reconstruction and analysis of votive deposits like that of M64 is central to his reassessment of the development of local temples from the Early Dynastic Period to the beginning of the Middle Kingdom.<sup>26</sup>

Work on the role of votive objects and practices within personal religion was stimulated by Geraldine Pinch's monograph (1993), *Votive Offerings to Hathor*. Her study included PRM objects donated from the EEF excavations in the Eleventh Dynasty temple at Deir el-Bahri, used as a temple of Hathor in the New Kingdom, and the Hathor temple at Faras (6.5.3 below). An unusual intact necklace, strung on leather (1904.35.87; Pinch 1993: 267–268, 292, plate 57d; *Figure 6.9*) and a small wooden stela of a rare type (1904.35.107; Pinch 1993: 256, plate 56B) are among the more distinctive objects in the group. Bussmann's research on votives exemplifies current reassessments of both royal and non-royal interventions in and transformations of sacred space which further analysis of small finds from temple sites may help clarify.

### 6.5.2 Petrie's Excavations at Lahun and Gurob, 1889–1890

The largest proportion of provenanced material in the PRM comes from Petrie's two 1889–1890 seasons in Gurob and Lahun (the area was also called 'Illahun' in the records). The collection comprises some 263 objects. Of these 115 were donated by Petrie in October 1889. A further 20 were given by him in 1890, along with 121 from one of his sponsors, H. Martyn Kennard. The PRM was one of a select group of UK museums to receive objects from the distribution of finds from the two seasons (Quirke 2005: 137), although the number of objects is small in comparison with those held by the Ashmolean Museum (exact number unknown), the Manchester Museum (c. 800 objects) and the Petrie Museum, UCL (c. 2,900 objects). The inclusion of the PRM among these recipients indicates that the Museum was perceived to be a particularly appropriate place for this material. Its collection can be understood as a representative sample of major object categories attested from the site, many of which have comparanda in these other museums.

Most of the objects were excavated during Petrie's work in the late Middle Kingdom town at Lahun, as indicated by his descriptions of finds (Petrie 1890; 1891) and comparable objects held in London and Manchester. This may be confirmed by entries in the PRM register which characterize some objects (e.g. 1889.27.1–51) as 'specimens from his [Petrie's] excavations at Illahun, Egypt 1889 viz. XII Dynasty Kahun' (Kahun was the term Petrie used for the town proper, now normally referred to as Lahun: Quirke 2005: 1). His dating of most of the objects from the town to the Middle Kingdom is problematic and more comparative analysis of object types is needed for chronological control; the PRM collection would be a perfect sample for such work. A number of the PRM's objects almost certainly date to the New Kingdom and later occupations or intrusive burials. Some may also originate in Petrie's contemporaneous excavations at the town of Gurob or its nearby cemeteries, some 15 miles from Lahun. A few are registered more generally as from 'the Illahun dist[ri]ct in 1890' and Greco-Roman funerary objects included in this donation are

<sup>26</sup> Other votives from Abydos include dried grapes and New Kingdom and later votive beads and model tools from the Early Dynastic tombs of Ka and Djer in Umm el-Qaab (Petrie 1902; see Chapter 5). A 'Middle Kingdom' limestone figurine of a potter, an unfinished limestone bust of a king, a model brick with the name of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty king Apries from his foundation deposit, a bronze door socket, and two pigment samples were also among the objects donated in 1902 from Petrie's work in the Osiris temple.

Figure 6.9 New Kingdom Egyptian necklace of 2 scarabs, a leaf-like form, and 2 stylised amuletic figures of Taweret, a goddess associated with childbirth, strung together with the original leather stringing. Excavated by the EEF at Deir el-Babri (PRM Accession Number 1904.35.87).



recorded as being from Gurob in the records (see Chapter 7). Examples of these later objects are discussed below.

Despite the dating issues with some of the material, the town-site of Lahun is one of the richest sources of information for social practices and ‘daily life’ in the late Middle Kingdom. Findspots of most of the objects from Petrie’s seasons were not recorded (see the comments of Quirke 2005: 40–1), thus limiting the extent to which the material culture of the houses can be reconstructed. The work of Kasia Szpakowska (2008) represents a carefully considered attempt to do so. ‘Virtual Kahun’, a joint online project between the Petrie and Manchester museums to bring together and recontextualize their Lahun material,<sup>27</sup> although currently inactive, demonstrates the potential for museum-based projects to further reintegrate museum collections and stimulate research. Specialist analysis of object types and their materials and manufacture have been undertaken for some Lahun objects, especially those in the Petrie Museum (Cartwright *et al.* 1998; chapters by Newton, Gilmore and McDowell in David 1986); the PRM group extends the range. Here I give a descriptive overview of the Lahun and Gurob objects as a stimulus to new analyses as well as reconstructions of contexts and use.

Organic materials dominate the PRM’s Lahun assemblage, with wooden objects comprising the majority. These include door-bolts of a range of types, some with traces of red paint or mud/stucco as a possible support for paint (1889.27.7–8; Petrie 1890: 24; 1891: 11); two dovetail cramps (1890.26.19–20); a small painted throwstick (1890.26.17: up to 280mm in length); furniture fittings (e.g. 1890.26.25–26, 1890.26.36–41; cf. Killen 1994b, museum catalogue at rear);<sup>28</sup> and a large number of pieces of uncertain identification, including five said to be tipcat toys (1889.27.4; Petrie 1890: 30; cf. Szpakowska 2008: 54). A significant number of objects of wood and other materials are related to cordage and textile production and repair, including spindle whorls (e.g.

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.museum.manchester.ac.uk/collection/ancientegypt/virtualekahun/>

<sup>28</sup> Geoffrey Killen does not use the Museum’s accession numbers in his catalogue, but Museum curators have managed to equate his descriptions with the Museum records.

1889.27.1; 1889.27.10; 1890.26.22.1–2; 1890.26.23; 1890.26.104),<sup>29</sup> a ‘broken loom gauge’ (1890.26.16), copper needles (1889.27.40–1), ‘bodkins’ (1889.27.3; 1890.26.21), stone and mud objects identified as loom-weights (e.g. 1889.27.25–26),<sup>30</sup> and two balls, stuffed, covered and stitched with leather, perhaps used to finish cloth (1889.27.45, 1890.26.20: Petrie 1890: 28; Szpakowska 2008: 83).

Cordage proper is also a significant group (e.g. 1890.26.61, 1890.26.63–64, 1890.26.66–76), ranging from netting, some of which is beautifully intact, to small balls and samples of string and rope much of which is knotted and occasionally tufted in various ways (cf. Cartwright *et al.* 1998; Petrie 1890: 28). The largely well-preserved baskets or pieces of basketry are a related category; some are assigned to the Middle Kingdom (1890.26.77–81) although at least one is said to be Third Intermediate Period (Killen 1994a: 10 figure 3: probably 1889.27.72; and cf. the discussion of the Greco-Roman baskets in Chapter 7). Specialist analysis of these, as well as the fine examples of matting (1890.26.82–85), would refine dating, as well as contributing to work on technique and use.

The corpus also includes smaller numbers of flint and metal tools, knives and fish-hooks, bone tools, and some ceramic vessels, stands and sherds (e.g. 1889.27.27–33, 1889.27.35–38). A small piece of metal (1890.26.91) is labelled as ‘slag from copper works’, but such material is rare at Lahun (Gilmore 1986: 216) and this may be the remains of a decomposed worked object. The collection also includes two quite finely carved, but uninscribed, limestone offering tables (1889.27.15–16). A limestone pillar (490mm in height) with a hollow depression on top of the capital, perhaps for domestic food offerings, oil or incense, is a further example of an object type well attested in the town and its cemetery (1889.27.14: Petrie 1890: 26; Szpakowska 2008: 135).

Three leather or leather and fibre items of footwear are supposedly of Middle Kingdom date (1889.27.43, 1889.27.44, 1890.26.59; cf. Chapter 7 below). One (1890.26.59) is described in the PRM’s records as the ‘remains of shoe of thin leather stitched with thong with a thin leather sole’, this may be one of the leather shoes described by Petrie (1890: 28) with ‘the leather sandal strap between the toes, and joining to the sides of the heel, to retain the sole on the foot; the upper leather being stitched on merely as a covering’ (cf. Veldmeijer 2009: 4–5, 2010b: 187). Specialist examination of this material will no doubt clarify the dating as well as aspects of typology, manufacture and wear (Veldmeijer 2010b: 11–15).

A full-length linen bag tunic (1890.26.98; up to 1.17m in width, up to 1.35m in length), almost certainly from a later burial in the town, is the largest and arguably most striking of the Lahun artefacts. It was acquired as part of the Kennard donation and was recorded in the accession register as being ‘from the same excavations of Mr Petrie XVIII Dynasty Illahun – complete woven shirt or blouse’. A small sketch of the tunic was included in its packing (*Figure 6.10*). Petrie reported the discovery of a burial with ‘three or four perfect shirts neatly folded up in packets, and wrapped in between the bandages’ of the mummy in his ‘journal’ of the seasons at Lahun, now in the Griffith Institute, Oxford.<sup>31</sup> He dated the tomb to the Twentieth Dynasty from the style of the uninscribed but painted ‘coffin bust’; no inscribed material was recorded in association. He also included a sketch of the style of shirt in his notes. The location of the tomb is unclear, but could perhaps be reconstructed through close analysis of his notes and plans; the discovery was made in the week of the 28th of November to the 5th of

<sup>29</sup> Conical stone and wood whorls (1889.27.10, 1889.27.23) may be New Kingdom (Kemp and Vogelsang-Eastwood 2001: 266). 1889.27.64 is identified as such and may be from Gurob.

<sup>30</sup> The problem of distinguishing loom-weights from net-sinkers is discussed in Kemp and Vogelsang-Eastwood (2001: 393).

<sup>31</sup> Petrie ‘Journal’, Griffith Institute, University of Oxford, MSS 1889–1890: 29.

Figure 6.10 Schematic sketch of a large, possibly New Kingdom bag tunic excavated during W. M. Flinders Petrie's 1889–1890 seasons at Lahun and Gurob, Egypt. The sketch is currently held with the tunic (PRM Accession Number 1890.26.98). The tunic may have been found folded up with two or three other shirts wrapped in the bandages of a mummy.



December 1889 during which time Petrie recorded that he was working in the northern part of the western sector of the town reoccupied in the Eighteenth Dynasty. It seems likely that the PRM tunic is one of these 'perfect shirts.' The location of the other tunics or the coffin fragment is not known to me. Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood (1993: 134) notes that Petrie donated a bag tunic to the Staatliche Museum in Berlin (10966), but museum records indicate that it came from his 1890 Gurob excavations, from which other textiles were recovered (e.g. Hall 1980).

The tunic is well preserved. The rolled and whipped hem of the neck opening has come away from the fabric body in places but its v-shape is clear. The most damaged areas are the arm-holes with fraying tears and some detached hemming. The opening of one arm-hole seems largely intact, c. 330mm in length, but the other has split the fabric some way down the length of the side-seam; the side-seam of the other side is largely intact. The bottom of the garment has a decorative knotted fringe. There are no other signs of decoration on the area of the fabric I examined. Alongside the possibility of tracing the other tunics and material from the tomb to more securely date and contextualize the group, this is a significant addition to the corpus of known bag tunics (cf. Vogelsang-Eastwood 1993: 130–44) and, like the other textiles in the collection, should be studied by a specialist.

Other objects assigned a New Kingdom date in the records include stone and lead 'sinkers' (1889.27.58–61), a stone whetstone (1889.27.65), 4 so-called 'netting bones' (1889.27.63, 1890.26.94–96), a small wooden wedge-shaped comb (1890.26.93), a bow-drill (1889.27.52), 'loom gauge' (1890.26.97), and winnowing scoop (1889.27.53). These may be from later occupation at Lahun, but it is also possible that they come from excavations at Gurob; comparable material is noted by Petrie in his discussion of his finds from the settlement there (e.g. Petrie 1890: 34–5; cf. Thomas 1981: 8–10). The same can be said for the funerary material from New Kingdom and the first millennium BCE, which includes a ceramic coffin lid (1889.27.66) of a New Kingdom type with naturally modelled face, crossed hands, and no painted decoration (cf. other examples from Gurob in Cotelle-Michel 2004: 140, 238, catalogue II-B2-11). A quite finely modelled white-painted wooden coffin lid with long tripartite wig and crossed

hands, assigned to the Third Intermediate Period (1890.25.1), along with two highly modelled wooden funerary masks (1890.25.2–3) are also registered as coming from the ‘Illahun dist[ri]ct’.

Two joined fragments of a faience marsh bowl depicting a male figure wearing a pleated garment, facing right, and seated on a lion-footed, high-backed chair (2003.128.1) are almost certainly from Gurob. Petrie’s journal entry for the same week as the shirt discovery reports a number of faience vases and bowls found at Gurob, including one with ‘part of a seated figure’.<sup>32</sup> The scene probably depicts an offering, which indicates a late New Kingdom date (Milward in Brovarski *et al.* 1982: 141). A bowl in the Eton Myers collection, dated to the Nineteenth Dynasty, which shows a seated woman, facing left, before an offering stand bearing a large vessel (no provenance: Spurr *et al.* 1999: 28–9, number 31) is a more complete parallel. Two small wooden cylindrical lids (1890.25.16–17: 50mm in diameter), to be published by Andrés Diego Espinel, might also be from Gurob. They bear identical short hieratic texts on their upper surfaces which read: ‘the high priest of Amun to pharaoh I.p.h.’. Espinel suggests a New Kingdom date from the paleography and considers that they may be lids for containers of objects or messages for the king (pers. comm. 2010). A context for such lids may be suggested by Petrie’s journal note that he found a papyrus of Amenhotep III at Lahun rolled in cloth and inside ‘a rough pottery tube broken, alas!, in the finding’.<sup>33</sup>

Only a small number of the Lahun and Gurob objects in the PRM have undergone detailed analysis or are included in either the study of object groups from the site or object typologies. An example is Geoffrey Killen’s (1994a: 13, figures 15–16, plates 5–8) detailed description of the large wooden box with lid (1889.27.9.1–2), which focuses on construction techniques. Since few, if any, of the objects have undergone conservation treatment, they seem perfectly placed for material-based scientific analyses, alongside their wider potential for inclusion in new analytical and interpretive work on the site.

### 6.5.3 *The Nubian and Sudanese Assemblages from Faras, Sanam and Jebel Moya*

Artefacts from the archaeological expeditions sent by Oxford University to Faras and Sanam in modern Upper Egypt and Sudan, directed and largely funded by Francis Llewellyn Griffith, represent one of the richest opportunities to integrate museum collections with expedition archives in the reconstruction and analysis of sites. The records from both excavations, which were published by Griffith in summary, are now in the Griffith Institute, Oxford (see Malek and Magee 1994). Although the finds are scattered across a number of museums, a large proportion are in the Ashmolean Museum and PRM, with the latter having over 526 records of objects from Faras and Sanam.<sup>34</sup> Angelika Lohwasser’s (2010) monograph on the Kushite cemetery at Sanam provides a model for the initial stages of such analytical work.<sup>35</sup>

The first two seasons of the Oxford Expedition to Nubia (OEN) from 1910–1911 and 1911–1912 were at Faras, an area about 25 miles north of the second cataract on the modern border between Egypt and Sudan, flooded by Lake Nasser in 1964. During the course of his work there, Griffith, assisted by Blackman and Woolley, found material ranging from the palaeolithic through to medieval period Christian

<sup>32</sup> Petrie ‘Journal’, MSS 1889–1890, 31.

<sup>33</sup> Petrie ‘Journal’, MSS 1889–1890, 29.

<sup>34</sup> The total number of objects these records refer to is complicated by the fact that 160 records are for beads and the number of beads on each record has not been enumerated.

<sup>35</sup> Her 2010 monograph is an English summary of the full publication of her work on Sanam, announced there as forthcoming.

occupations. The objects that Griffith sold to the PRM were largely excavated in a New Kingdom temple to Hathor which lay on the north side of an outcrop of rock near the eastern channel of the Nile, and in the Meroitic cemetery to the north-east of the 'Great Kom' (for his map of the area, see Griffith 1921: plate 1). A smaller number of ceramic vessels and items of adornment are recorded as coming from different tombs in the New Kingdom C-group cemetery. Most of the Faras material was accessioned by the PRM in 1912, although some were found unentered and were catalogued in 1945.

The Hathor temple, dedicated to a local form of the goddess as lady of Ibshek, was probably founded in the Second Intermediate Period and then rebuilt and expanded over the course of the New Kingdom (Pinch 1993: 28–37). A large number of faience beads, scarabs, and amulets of various types found in the temple were among the 1912 PRM acquisition and were analyzed by Pinch (1993) in her study of votives from Hathor temples (1904.35.72–117). Although the findspots of individual objects or groups were not recorded in detail, Pinch (1993: 37–40) offers a general reconstruction of the context and date-range of the votives. Other PRM objects also recorded as coming from the Hathor temple include a fragment of a decorated ivory comb (1912.89.40), and a bronze 'cutting out' knife (1912.89.47), as well as corroded iron arrow-heads, rings, lead and bars, although some of these may have been excavated from the Meroitic cemetery.

Some 800 Faras objects in the PRM were found in this cemetery, including a large number of metal tools, weapons, ornaments and vessels (identified as bronze and iron in the records), ceramic vessels, stone tools, kohl tubes, as well as various beads and other items of adornment. The field records of the Faras excavations in the Griffith Institute, which include a catalogue of the cemetery finds, will allow reconstruction of individual graves. Khider Eisa's (1999: 18–20) overview of Faras indicates that he considers it characteristic of non-royal Meroitic cemeteries in Lower Nubia, but this period of occupation at the site has not been the focus of detailed study. An iron blade (1912.89.50) and flat bar (1912.89.30) are recorded as coming from houses in the associated settlement.

In 1912 Griffith moved the work of the OEN from Faras to Sanam, a large cemetery and settlement site some 25 km south of the fourth cataract. Over 6,000 objects were given to the PRM by Griffith in 1921, eight years after his work there ceased in 1913. Griffith had hoped to return to the site after the First World War so perhaps retained the material to facilitate full publication. However, the concession was given to Reisner after the war and Griffith published summaries of his work there from 1921–23. Most of the PRM objects were excavated from the cemetery between November 1912 and March 1913 during which time he uncovered approximately 1,550 graves (Lohwasser 2010: 11–12). Although evidence strongly suggests that the cemetery was founded in the New Kingdom, most of the burials date to *c.* 800–600 BCE with reuse of some graves in the Meroitic Period (Lohwasser 2010: 91–6, with figure 43), making Sanam the largest excavated non-royal necropolis of the Napatan Period (Lohwasser 2010: 17). The PRM's collection is dominated by items of adornment including large numbers of amulets, as well as seven ceramic vessels and three iron 'lance-heads'. Records held in the PRM Related Document Files (RDF) describe where each object was found and its immediate context, as well as giving a physical description. Lohwasser's (2010) detailed re-examination of Griffith's records emphasizes the significance of Sanam for social histories of the Napatan period; she was unable to fully integrate the museum collections into this stage of her research but notes (Lohwasser 2010: 17) the importance of such work for full reconstructions and analyses of the tombs and their wider contexts.

A smaller number of objects (c.276) were donated from Wellcome's excavations (c.1909–1914) at Jebel Moya, a large area of cemeteries and settlements located in the plain between the Blue and White Niles, some 250 km south of Khartoum (see Chapter 8). Rudolf Gerharz's (1994) reassessment of the Jebel Moya material divides it into three broad phases: I: c. 4500 BCE; II: c. 3000–800 BCE ('classic Jebel Moya culture'); III: c. 800–300 BCE. cursory consideration of the PRM material indicates that the majority probably dates to phase II, although some imported items, such as copper wire and faience and carnelian beads, probably come from his phase III when the Jebel Moya groups were in contact with the Napatan and Meroitic empires further north. A new project on material from the area has been announced (Brass 2009); the potential to combine museum collections with documentation should be an important aspect of this work.

### 6.6 Summary: Potential and Future Research

A range of 'social histories in material form' (Gosden and Larson 2007: 3) are offered by the Egyptian objects in the PRM, yet little detailed work has been undertaken on any of the Dynastic material, in part because it is overshadowed by the much larger collection in the Ashmolean Museum. Individual objects have been included in typological studies (e.g. Mendoza 2008) and the inscribed material is currently being edited and published by a number of scholars. However, the distinctive character of the PRM collection and its apparently carefully selected and tailored groups of both collected and excavated objects create opportunities for wide-ranging context-driven studies of both single artefacts and assemblages, especially through the integration and comparative analysis of the museum objects with other relevant collections and excavation records. The largely untreated organic material is a particular strength and an area of potential development, especially through scientific analysis. The latter may also be true for the metals.

The biographies of particular objects or object groups also open windows onto changing perceptions of Egyptian material culture in the minds of collectors, travellers, archaeologists, and institutions, both within and outside Oxford, especially in light of current interest in mapping the development of Egyptology as an area of study.

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<sup>36</sup> See: <http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/topbib.html>

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