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## STELA LONDON, BRITISH MUSEUM EA 851

ABSTRACT: Publication of the Middle Kingdom stela London, British Museum EA 851, including comments on the style, titles, iconography, paleography, and dating criteria.

KEY-WORDS: London, BM EA 851; stela; Middle Kingdom; offering formula; titles

Dimensions: Height 29.5 cms. Width 22 cms. Depth 4.5 cms.

Material: limestone

Shape: rectangular, roundtoped

Method: incised

Colouring: traces, on flesh of man and woman, as well as on dress of woman, red-ochre.

Background: Donated by Sir Augustus Wollaston Franks in 1861.

The rounded upper part of this stela contains two wdjet-eyes.<sup>1</sup> Beneath them is the offering formula for Osiris in one row of text. The three registers underneath show the scribe of the district *nḥti* with his family members.

On the left side of the upper register, *nḥti* is seated on a ground in front of an offering table. Below the table are two jars. He wears a plain collar, a simple kilt and a short bagwig,<sup>2</sup> which leaves the

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<sup>1</sup> See R. Hözl, *Die Giebelfelddekoration von Stelen des Mittleren Reiches*, Wien 1990, 88.

<sup>2</sup> Men's bagwigs, with exposed ears, occur most frequently during the late Middle Kingdom. Cf. R. E. Freed, *Representation and Style of Dated Private Stelae of Dynasty XII*, Master's thesis, New York University, 1976, 59; R. J. Leprohon, A Late Middle Kingdom Stela in a Private Collection, in: *Studies in Honor of William Kelly Simpson*, vol. II, Boston 1996, 528.

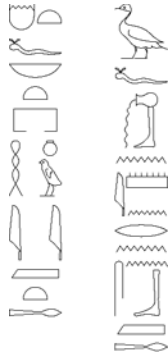
ear exposed. *nḥti* extends one hand towards the offerings, while the other holds a napkin at chest height.

On the right, facing *nḥti*, are two sitting figures of his wife and son. The son have a short bagwig, he wears collar, and kilt with belt marked. The woman wears long wig, collar, and tight-fitting long dress with two chest straps. Two vertical lines of incised inscription serve as captions for the depicted persons.



*ḥtp-di-nswt wsir nb ḥḥ dt n k3 n sš w nḥti m3<sup>c</sup>-ḥrw*

A boon which the king gives and Osiris, the Lord of Life, and Ruler of Eternity, for the ka of the scribe of the district,<sup>a</sup> *nḥti*,<sup>b</sup> true of voice.



*ḥmt.f nbt pr ḥnwy m3<sup>c</sup>t-ḥrw*

His wife, mistress of the house, *ḥnwy*,<sup>c</sup> true of voice.

*s3.f w<sup>c</sup>b n imn rn-snb m3<sup>c</sup>-ḥrw*

His son, the pure priest of Amon,<sup>d</sup> *rn-snb*,<sup>e</sup> true of voice

The next register shows three kneeling figures, facing right, in squares separated by the captions.



*s3-imn m3<sup>c</sup>-ḥrw ms.n sn-pw s3-imn,<sup>f</sup> true of voice, born of *sn-pw*<sup>g</sup>*

*s3t.f nbt-pr nb-n-t*

His daughter, mistress of the house *nb-n-t*, true of voice

*s3.f sš w s3-ḥnsw m3<sup>c</sup>-ḥrw*

His son, the scribe of the district *s3-ḥnsw*,<sup>h</sup> true of voice

The appearance and arrangement of figures incised in the lowest are identical.

	<i>s3t.f nbt pr nbw-i m3c-t-hrw</i>
	His daughter, mistress of the house, <i>nbw-i</i> , true of voice
	<i>s3t.f nbt pr rn-snb m3c-t-hrw</i>
	His daughter, mistress of the house, <i>rn-snb</i> , true of voice
	<i>rhty i mw? m3c-hrw ms.n nbw</i>

Comments:

a) On *sš w*, see W. Ward, *Index of Egyptian Administrative and Religious Titles of the Middle Kingdom*, Beirut 1982, no. 1367; H. G. Fischer, *Egyptian Titles of the Middle Kingdom. A Supplement to Wm. Ward's INDEX*, New York 1985<sup>2</sup>, 74 [1367]

b) E. Ranke, *Die altägyptischen Personennamen*, 2 Bde, Gluckstadt 1935—1952, I 212/1.

c) Ranke, *PN I*, 242/13. The designation *nbt pr* (mistress of the house), in this case evidently relates to the expression for ‘marriage’ itself.

d) On *w<sup>c</sup>b n imn*, see Ward, *Index of Egyptian Administrative and Religious Titles of the Middle Kingdom*, no. 641; S. Quirke, *Titles and Bureaux of Egypt 1850—1700 BC*, GHP Egyptology 1, London 2004, 124.

e) Ranke, *PN I*, 222/26.

f) Ranke, *PN I*, 280/22.

g) Ranke, *PN I*, 308/17.

h) Ranke, *PN I*, 284/3

i) On *rhty* see Ward, *Index of Egyptian Administrative and Religious Titles of the Middle Kingdom*, no. 858; Fischer, *Egyptian Titles of the Middle Kingdom*<sup>2</sup>, 59 [858]

The date of this stela is broadly Late Middle Kingdom to Second Intermediate Period, but one can perhaps be more precise. The use of the twin titles for Osiris, ‘lord of life, ruler of eternity’, is at-



Fig. 1 London, BM EA 851  
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tested no earlier than the Thirteenth Dynasty.<sup>3</sup> The spelling of the *hṯp di nsw* formula is, again, attested from the later Middle Kingdom onwards.<sup>4</sup> Later still is the design of the two wedjat-eyes at the top of the stela, a motif of the middle to late Thirteenth Dynasty.<sup>5</sup>

Therefore, from this evidence it seems likely that the scribe of the district *nḥti* had his stela made during the Late Middle Kingdom or Second Intermediate Period, at any time from the later Thirteenth into the Seventeenth Dynasty.

Данијела Сџефановић

#### СТЕЛА БРИТАНСКИ МУЗЕЈ ЕА 851

##### Резиме

У раду је публикована стела Лондон, БМ ЕА 851. Даровна формула (распоред елемената, епиграфске карактеристике) и иконографски елементи указују на то да споменик припада периоду позног Средњег царства или Другог међупериода. На стели су именовани чланови породице Нахтија, писара дистрикта.

<sup>3</sup> J. Spiegel, *Die Gotter von Abydos*, Wiesbaden 1973, 174.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. P. Vernus, in S. Quirke (ed.), *Middle Kingdom Studies*, New Malden 1991, 143–52, esp. 148

<sup>5</sup> R. Holzl, *Die Giebelfelddekoration von Stelen des Mittleren Reichs*, Vienna 1990.