



Painted Coffin panel - 1550-1295BCE

13.257

Notes from Glasgow Museum Navigator.

This painted coffin panel shows the temple singer Djedmut praising the god Ptah-Sokar-Osiris with a prayer to provide her with bread, beer, oxen, fowl, incense and clothing that she might need in the afterlife. Temple singers were priestesses who played an important role in religious ceremonies. The painted side of this panel was inside Djedmut's coffin, meaning that only the gods and Djedmut herself were able to see it. There are traces of an original painted inscription on the other side of this panel but unfortunately this is now illegible.

Djedmut may have had at least two coffins – one inside the other – as her name appears on coffin parts that are now in museums in La Rochelle, France, and Padua and the Vatican in Italy.

It is difficult to be certain of the route this particular fragment took from Egypt to the Burrell Collection until the early 20th century. It was sold from the collection of Robert de Rustafjaell by 1906 along with another section probably from the same coffin. This was purchased by Vernon Wethered, an artist and collector, who lent the coffin panel to an exhibition of Egyptian antiquities at Burlington House in London in 1921. The panel then appears again when it is purchased for the Burrell Collection from a dealer in London in 1954.

Provenance: Robert de Rustafjaell by 1906, Sotheby's, London 19 December 1906; Vernon Wethered by 1921: Spink & Son, London; from where purchased by Sir William Burrell in 25 January 1954.

My notes

13.257

Info from old Burrell display

Panel from a Coffin Egyptian, Thebes, 22nd Dynasty. c 943-715 CB. Wood, gesso & paint. The chanteress of Amun, Djed-mut, before the god Ptah-Sokar-Osiris. She is wearing a perfume cone on her head.

Info from Yahoo - The ancient Egyptians rubbed perfumed oil on themselves Egyptians both poor and high-born carried perfume with them from birth until after their death. Many Egyptians put perfumes in their tombs to accompany them for use in the afterlife. Also, perfumes were used during the embalming process and took 40 to 70 days to complete. Powdered myrrh, cassia and other perfumes were used in the embalming process.

Info from Time Traveller Kids - Archaeologists have never actually found a cone, nor anything like a mould that could have been used to make them, although they knew that the Egyptians certainly used to wear

perfumed oils. There is no direct evidence to suggest that these were made of perfumed wax, oils or fat, it was just an idea that someone had and no-one else could come up with a better one.

Info overheard at BM – The dome or cone shape on the head signifies that the person is wearing perfume – they do not wear a cone on their head.

Recent studies have suggested that the cones were used as symbols in the tomb paintings rather than being real objects.

Contributor: Wilma Robinson - March - April 2021.