

# Egyptian Duck Flasks of Blue Anhydrite

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**O**BJECTS OF DAILY USE are designed primarily for their functional aspect. A jar, for example, must hold its contents, and a mirror must reflect the image of the user. In ancient Egypt, however, many everyday articles were made of such beautiful materials and designed in such imaginative forms that their utilitarian purposes seem almost secondary. This craftsmanship and sense of design reflect the mastery of the ancient artisans who excelled at combining functional, decorative, and symbolic qualities in the objects they created.

Among the best examples of such objects are the highly decorative articles associated with personal hygiene and cosmetics, which were important to both men and women.<sup>1</sup> The handle of a mirror, for instance, may take the form of a handmaiden (Figure 1); a spoon may be shaped like a naked girl pulled through water by a gazelle (Figure 2); and a turtle's back may serve as a grinding surface for paint to be applied around its owner's eyes (Figure 3). Among the most charming ancient Egyptian cosmetic articles are zoomorphic vessels for perfumes, oils, and eye makeup.

As early as 3200 B.C., before Egypt was first unified under a single ruler, its artisans carved small zoomorphic pots for eye paint (Figure 4).<sup>2</sup> There is even evidence that such objects were sometimes used as state gifts. For example, King Pepi I (ca. 2289–2255 B.C.) and two of his sons, who ruled after him in succession near the end of the Old Kingdom, commissioned cosmetic flasks in the form of female monkeys cuddling their babies (Figure 5) as gifts to commemorate royal jubilees, or other celebrations.<sup>3</sup> These flasks were presented to favored individuals, which anticipates a similar practice by the last czars of Russia who, at Easter, presented extravagant eggs fashioned by Fabergé, the court jeweler. Almost three thousand years after Pepi I's reign, during the Late Period, containers in the shapes of animals (Figure 6) continued to be made for the use of both royal and nonroyal individuals. Many of these delightful vessels (Figure 7) are on exhibition in the galleries of Egyptian art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Blue-anhydrite duck flasks epitomize the combination of utility and charm that characterizes these containers (cat. nos. 1–15; Figures 8, 31–45).<sup>4</sup> The duck flasks not only are

functional but also exhibit—through the choice of a highly appealing stone, anhydrite, and the ingenious adaptation of the body of a plucked duck<sup>5</sup> for a vessel—a vivid, imaginative quality. They also manifest the ancient Egyptian artisan's sensitivity to the animals in his environment, as well as his skill at capturing their essence. The finest flask (cat. no. 1; Figure 8) and four other examples (cat. nos. 9–12; Figures 39–42) are in the Metropolitan Museum. Together they constitute the most important group of these rare objects.

The following discussion examines several fundamental questions about the duck flasks that have not been resolved, including when and for what anhydrite was used, their dates, and their relationship to the production of anhydrite objects as a whole. The role of the form, a plucked fowl, is also analyzed in relation to its use as either a cosmetic container or a food offering. In addition, the possible meaning of the form, not only during the owner's lifetime but also in the Hereafter, will be considered. A comparison of the four different stylistic types of duck flasks (Appendix 1) and a catalogue of all known examples (Appendix 2) are presented after the discussion, followed by a Technical Report of organic residues present in some of them by Richard Newman.

## THE MATERIAL — ANHYDRITE — AND THE DATE OF ITS USE

Anhydrite is the name of the distinctive mineral<sup>6</sup> from which the duck vessels are carved. In older publications it was often called “blue marble,” and although it has long since been properly identified, occasionally the misnomer is still used. W. M. Flinders Petrie held the opinion that the mineral was imported from north of the Mediterranean,<sup>7</sup> but it is now believed to have been quarried somewhere in the Eastern Desert, even though the site is not known. Anhydrite is harder than alabaster, frequently has an attractive lustrous sheen, and varies in color from white to rose to blue. The ancient Egyptians evidently preferred blue, which they used in two special ways. First, with few exceptions, objects carved from this stone are cosmetic containers: eye-paint pots, ointment jars, and flasks for such liquids as oils and perfumes.

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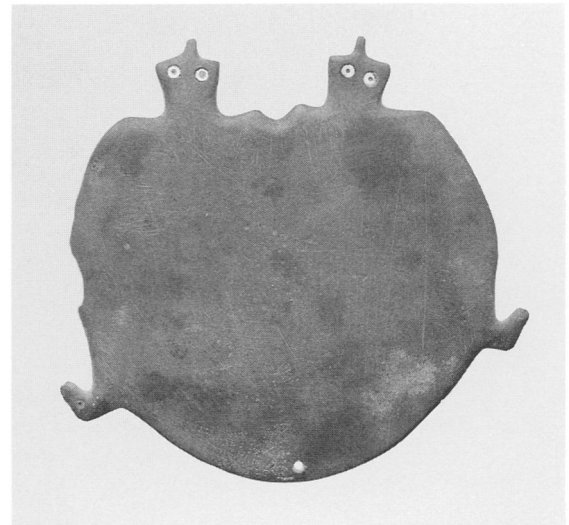


Figure 3. Cosmetic palette in the shape of a double turtle. Predynastic Period, Naqada II, ca. 3600–3400 B.C. Siltstone, H. 15.3 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1910, 10.176.78

Figure 1. Mirror with the handle in the form of a young, naked woman. New Kingdom, Dynasty 18, ca. 1450 B.C. Bronze, H. 25.8 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Fletcher Fund and The Guide Foundation, Inc. Gift, 1966, 66.99.25

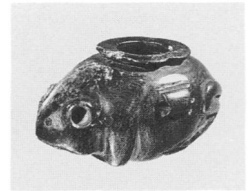


Figure 4. Eye-paint pot in the form of a frog. Predynastic Period, Late Naqada II–Naqada III, ca. 3600–3200 B.C. Serpentine, L. 3.8 cm. The Brooklyn Museum of Art, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 37.648E (photo: The Brooklyn Museum of Art)



Figure 2. Spoon in the form of a girl pulled through the water by a gazelle. New Kingdom, Dynasty 18, ca. 1390–1350 B.C. Alabaster and siltstone, L. 22.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1926, 26.2.47

Most of these containers are carved in simple, undecorated shapes (Figure 9) that are not restricted to anhydrite but also occur in a variety of other stones. However, a few anhydrite vessels were carved in unusual forms (Figure 10) or decorated with monkeys in bold relief (Figure 11) or

with monkeys virtually in the round (Figure 12). The most striking examples have elaborate shapes, such as the baboon (Figure 13) and the fish (Figure 14) in the Metropolitan Museum, and the flasks in the form of plucked ducks (cat. nos. 1–15; Figures 8, 31–45). This is the



Figure 5. Vessel in the form of a mother monkey and her baby. Old Kingdom, Dynasty 6, reign of Pepi I, ca. 2289–2255 B.C. Calcite, H. 13.7 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, Fletcher Fund, and Lila Acheson Wallace, Russell and Judy Carson, William Kelly Simpson and Vaughn Foundation Gifts, in honor of Henry George Fischer, 1992, 1992.338

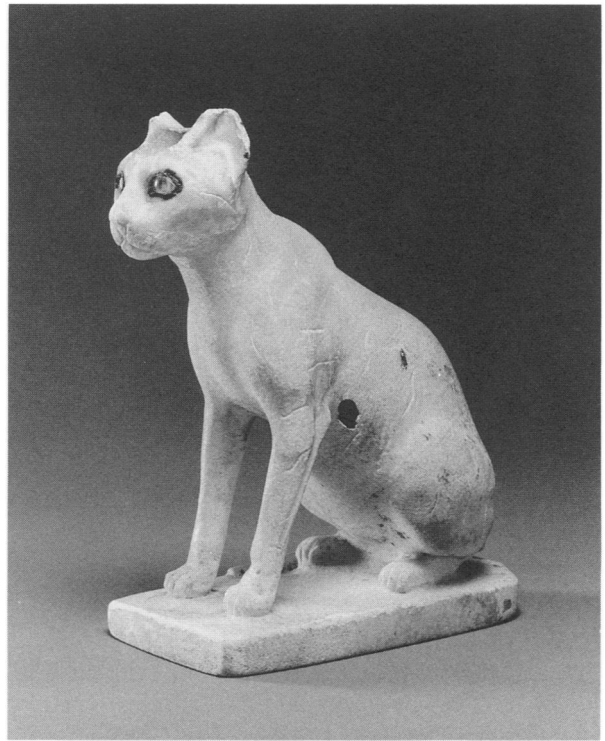


Figure 7. Jar in the form of a wildcat. Middle Kingdom, early Dynasty 12, ca. 1990–1900 B.C. Calcite, with bronze and rock crystal, H. 14 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 1990, 1990.59.1

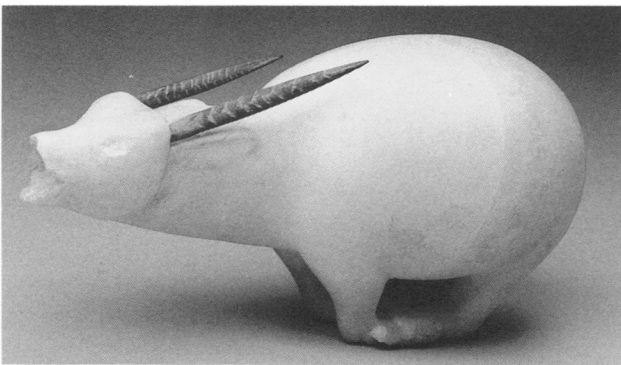


Figure 6. Vessel in the form of a bound oryx. From Meroe, Sudan, West Cemetery, Tomb Beg. W. 609, Late Period, Dynasty 25, ca. 700 B.C. Calcite, L. 17.3 cm. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 24.879 (photo: The Museum of Fine Arts)

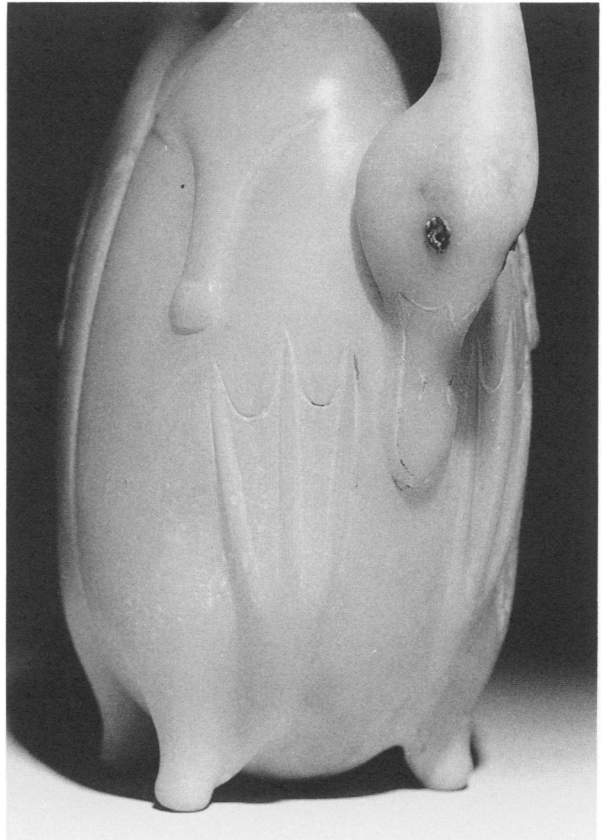


Figure 8. Flask in the form of a pair of plucked ducklings, detail (Type A, cat. no. 1). Said to be from Mond's excavations behind the Ramesseum at Thebes. Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, with inlaid eyes, H. 17.4 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Edward S. Harkness, 1927, 27.9.1



Figure 9. (left to right): Anhydrite cosmetic containers. 89.2.507, 13.180.9, 10.130.1271, 89.2.508, 33.1.36, 04.18.48, 04.18.49. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Joseph W. Drexel, 1889 (89.2.507, 508); Gift of Egypt Exploration Fund, 1904 (04.18.48, 49); Gift of Helen Miller Gould, 1910 (10.130.1271); Rogers Fund, 1913 (13.180.9); Rogers Fund, 1933 (33.1.36)



Figure 10 (left to right): Bag-shaped jar. Said to be from Girgeh, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, H. 12.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1910, 10.176.48. Lentoid flask. Said to be from Girgeh, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, H. 9.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1910, 10.176.53. Amphora-shaped flask. Said to be from Girgeh, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, H. 14.8 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1911, 11.150.29



Figure 11 (left to right): Bowl and eye-paint pots decorated with monkeys in relief. Middle Kingdom, late Dynasty 13 to Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1650–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, H. 5.6 cm, 4.12 cm, 6.8 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund and the Guide Foundation, Inc., Gift, 1966 (66.99.16); Bequest of Theodore M. Davis, 1930 (30.8.139); Rogers Fund, 1907 (07.228.93)

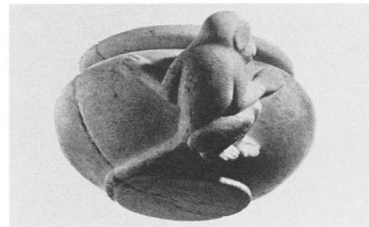
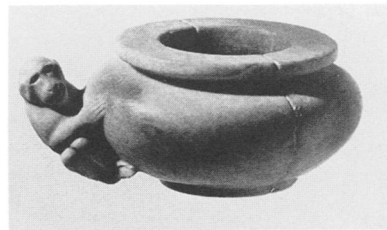


Figure 12. Bowl with clinging monkey. Said to be from Lisht, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, W. 9.5 cm. Formerly in the Norbert Schimmel Collection, Jerusalem, Israel Museum 91.71.241 (photo: Otto Nelson)

second special feature associated with anhydrite vessels; whereas undecorated cosmetic containers were produced during the Middle Kingdom in a variety of materials, including anhydrite, the elaborate forms were carved almost exclusively in blue anhydrite.

Dating anhydrite objects is problematic. Excavated examples are poorly documented,<sup>8</sup> and consequently, in the light of more recent evidence, dates assigned by excavators and scholars seventy to one hundred years ago are in need of reevaluation and revision. This process reveals that these objects, including duck flasks, were produced during a relatively limited time span. However, the dating of the duck flasks, which involves several additional factors, will be discussed below.

What is usually cited as the earliest datable anhydrite object, the base and feet from a statuette of a woman (Figure 15), was excavated at Deir el-Bahri in the tomb of the steward Henenu, an official who served the Dynasty 11 king Mentuhotep II Nebhepetra (ca. 2061–2010 B.C.).<sup>9</sup> This burial also contained some later material, so the date of the base with feet is uncertain.



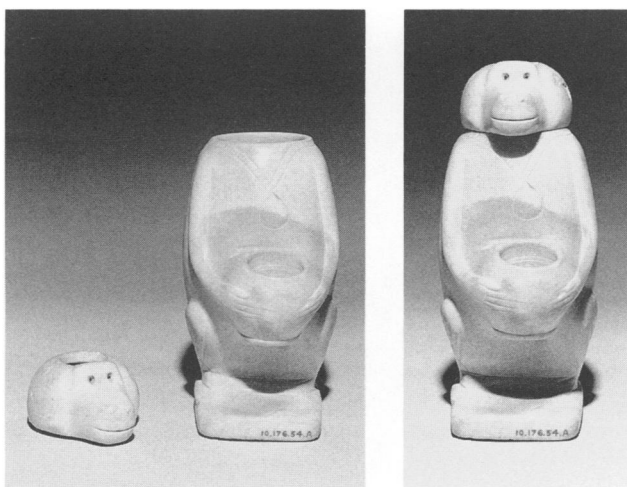


Figure 13. Baboon flask with a removable head. Said to be from Girgeh, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, H. 12.9 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1910, 10.176.54

Only two anhydrite objects are dated by inscription. One fragment, probably from a beaker (Figure 16), bears the name of Senwosret I (ca. 1971–1926 B.C.)<sup>10</sup> and confirms the use of the stone for vessels at least as early as the beginning of Dynasty 12. Another vessel (Figure 17), found at Dendera, bears the name of King Khaneferre IV Sobekhotep, the twenty-fifth ruler of Dynasty 13 (ca. 1711–1704 B.C.).<sup>11</sup>

The use of anhydrite as recently as the Second Intermediate Period (ca. 1640–1532 B.C.) is demonstrated by cosmetic containers carved in specific shapes characteristic of that time.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the production of objects carved from blue anhydrite is confined, with two exceptions,<sup>13</sup> to a period that extends from the early Middle Kingdom to Dynasty 17, just over four hundred years, a remarkably short interval in the three-thousand-year history of pharaonic Egypt.

Anhydrite objects are so rare and the period of their production so limited that the ancient source of the material must have been small, and evidently virtually exhausted by Dynasty 18 (ca. 1550–1307 B.C.).

#### ANHYDRITE DUCK FLASKS

Several features are common to all of the anhydrite duck flasks. Each is carved in the form of a plucked duckling (with short, undeveloped wings rounded at the wrists), or a duck, or a pair of ducks or ducklings arranged back-to-back. The neck of each duck curves forward over its breast, where its bill rests. The legs, which end in splayed webbed feet, and the featherless wings (sometimes

cropped at the elbow joints), are pressed against the body. In two instances (cat. nos. 6, 12; Figures 36, 42), feathers have been left decoratively covering the neck and head of the plucked bird, anticipating by thousands of years a practice still common today among European poulterers when they display game birds in their shops.<sup>14</sup> Each duck has, or had, inlaid eyes. Recessed into the duck heads, the inlays that are preserved consist either of a porous material surrounded by a copper rim or of a black disk.

With two exceptions (cat. nos. 13, 14; Figures 43, 44), the preserved spouts are narrow, with rounded rims. The flasklike contour and the narrow neck suggest that these vessels contained liquids (perhaps a body oil or a perfume), not a solid, which would have been difficult to



Figure 14. Tilapia-fish flask. Said to be from Girgeh, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, L. 19.6 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1910, 10.176.52

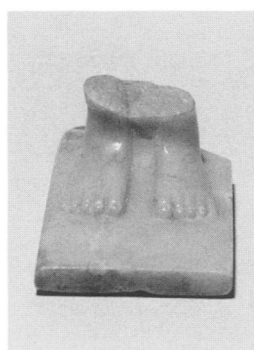


Figure 15. Feet from a statuette of a woman. From Deir el-Bahri, Theban Tomb no. 313 (MMA tomb no. 510), Middle Kingdom, Dynasty 12, ca. 1929–1787 B.C. Anhydrite, H. 3 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1926, 26.3.220

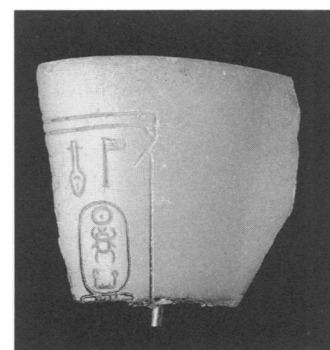


Figure 16. Beaker fragment inscribed for Senwosret I. Middle Kingdom, Dynasty 12, reign of Senwosret I, ca. 1971–1926 B.C. Anhydrite, H. 3.89 cm. London, British Museum, acquired from Rev. John William Loftie, 1890, 24118 (photo: courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum)

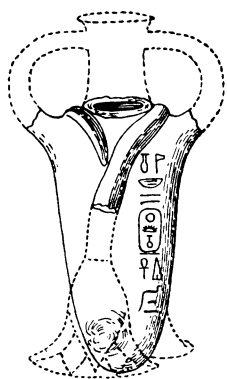


Figure 17a. Amphora-shaped flask inscribed for Sobekhotep IV. From Dendera, Middle Kingdom, Dynasty 13, reign of Sobekhotep IV, ca. 1711–1704 B.C. Anhydrite, H. 10 cm. Cairo, JE 39567 (after Weigall, *ASAE* 9 [1908] p. 107, fig. 2)

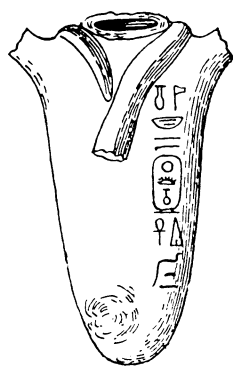


Figure 17b. Sobekhotep IV amphora-shaped flask without reconstruction



Figure 19. Flask in the form of a plucked duckling. New Kingdom, Dynasty 18, ca. 1550–1450 B.C. Calcite, L. 20.5 cm. Private collection

extract through such a small opening. The analyses performed by Richard Newman, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (see Technical Report), have confirmed this idea. His findings indicate that the vessel originally held oils or fats. Three different materials were found in the four duck vessels that were tested. Further, Newman's analyses of the organic residues in a total of sixteen blue-anhydrite vessels carved in a variety of shapes show that there is no correlation between the shape of a vessel and its contents.<sup>15</sup>

Abrasions, a sure sign of actual use, are often visible on at least one surface, usually the bird's back. They show not only that the flasks were used in the course of daily life but also that they rested on their backs during routine use, and thus were not set upright in a stand.<sup>16</sup> To retain their



Figure 18a, b. Flask in the form of a plucked duckling with hind toe. New Kingdom, Dynasty 18, ca. 1550–1450 B.C. Calcite, L. 22 cm. Paris, Louvre, E 11175bis (photo: Christian Larrieu, Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités Égyptiennes)

liquid contents, they therefore must have been equipped with a removable stopper, perhaps strips of tightly rolled linen,<sup>17</sup> or a small ball of string wrapped in linen.<sup>18</sup> When the provenance of a duck is known, it is most often Northern Upper Egypt, specifically the area encompassing Girgeh, Abydos, and Thebes, where they have been found in burials.

#### THE USE AND SYMBOLIC MEANING OF THE DUCK FLASKS

The ancient Egyptians produced a variety of zoomorphic vessels (for example, Figures 4–7). However, except for rare examples (stylistically datable to early Dynasty 18) carved in calcite (Figures 18, 19),<sup>19</sup> presumably after the anhydrite source was exhausted, flasks in the form of plucked ducks<sup>20</sup> were always carved in anhydrite. These are also the only stone flasks that depict prepared food.

Representations of plucked and trussed ducks are common in relief and in painting. They are often found among food staples depicted on the walls of tombs, where they symbolize provisions for the deceased in the Hereafter (Figure 20).<sup>21</sup> As representations of food, the anhydrite duck flasks would thus be expected to contain something edible or drinkable.<sup>22</sup> However, no other

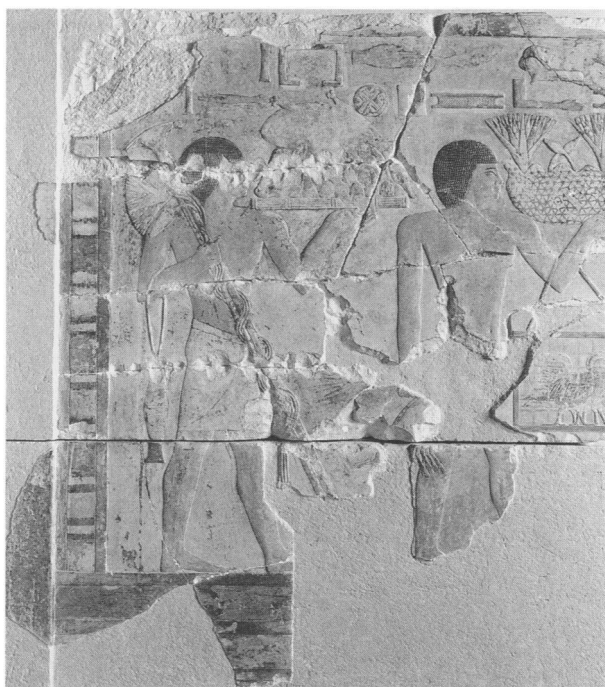


Figure 20. Courtier bringing offerings to King Senwosret I. From the king's mortuary temple at Lisht, Middle Kingdom, Dynasty 12, reign of Senwosret I, ca. 1971–1926 B.C. Limestone, H. 139.7 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1909, og.18o.13a, b

container carved in anhydrite represents food, and no anhydrite container can be associated with anything but cosmetics, which raises an enigma. How can the interpretation of the ducks as food be reconciled with their interpretation as cosmetic containers?

Perhaps part of the answer lies in their symbolic meaning. Although traces of wear show that the flasks were used in daily life, those with known findspots were included with burial goods, which indicates that their use extended symbolically after the death of the owner. Thus, their role in the funerary context would have been twofold: the ducks symbolically provided food for the inner body and, at the same time, soothing oil or perfume for the outer body.

#### DATING THE ANHYDRITE DUCK FLASKS

While difficulties involved in dating anhydrite objects in general have already been defined, the process of dating the duck flasks is also complex and involves a range of factors. None of these flasks is inscribed, so dates can be arrived at only through analysis of indirect evidence, and inference. For example, ancient objects can sometimes be dated by the context in which they were found. If an undisturbed grave contains inscribed articles that are

datable, or objects that are similar to dated pieces, a date for the entire contents of the burial may be inferred.

Yet this approach is not straightforward for the duck flasks, because details of only one context in which a duck was found are available (cat. no. 5; Figure 35). It was excavated from an undisturbed burial datable to Dynasty 17 (ca. 1635–1550 B.C.), but some scholars have suggested that this flask is an heirloom, implying it was carved a generation or more before the date of the burial. This possibility is sometimes raised when an object does not seem to fit, for whatever reason, the date of its context. Dynasty 17 was the final phase of the Second Intermediate Period, which was a transitional time, characterized by conflict and unrest, that culminated in the expulsion of the Hyksos rulers and the reunification of the Egyptian State at the beginning of Dynasty 18. Because the conditions at that time have been mistakenly viewed as incompatible with the production of sophisticated works of art, the contemporaneity of the excavated duck with its Dynasty 17 context has been questioned. However, a closer look at works of art preserved from Dynasty 17 clearly shows that this material is the prelude to the art of Dynasty 18.<sup>23</sup>

Under the circumstances, the most promising approach to dating the duck flasks entails a study of comparative material, particularly other elaborate blue-anhydrite objects that are not duck flasks. The premise is that if one among a group of objects linked by style, context, or other factors can be dated, then that date may be extended to the entire group. This is the method used in the following endeavor to date these flasks.

With few exceptions the use of anhydrite is restricted to less than five hundred years, from Dynasty 11 at the earliest to Dynasty 17. The chronological position of anhydrite duck flasks within this time is more difficult to define. Dates variously assigned to them range from mid-Dynasty 12 to Dynasty 17, which, if correct, means that these flasks were produced for well over three centuries. Yet, the thirteen complete duck flasks are remarkably similar in both concept and form (see the discussion of stylistic types [Appendix 1], and the catalogue of duck vessels [Appendix 2], at the end of this article). Not only would the consistency they exhibit as a group have been difficult to sustain for hundreds of years, but such a long time span would also have been inconsistent with the typical development of ancient Egyptian applied arts, whose forms and styles changed rapidly in accordance with prevailing fashions. Thus, the popularity of duck flasks was probably brief, and therefore the time within which they were carved was certainly not longer than a generation or two.

Clues to the date of the flasks may be discovered by considering other blue-anhydrite vessels, some of which are decorated in bold relief (for example, Figures 11, 12, 24, and 25), including one (Figure 17) inscribed for a Dynasty 13 king, Sobekhotep IV (ca. 1711–1704 B.C.).<sup>24</sup> This amphora-shaped vessel is decorated with long, cordlike ridges

worked in bold relief, which trail over its shoulders and body. A pair of handles extended upward to a spout that is now lost.<sup>25</sup> Arthur Weigall, who recorded the piece, suggested the thick ridges were lotus stems, and he reconstructed the flask with wide lotus blossoms at the base, which would have supported it in an upright position. However, his assumption that this vessel stood vertically is not necessarily correct. Many of the ducks show traces of wear on their backs from being picked up and put down many times, indicating that the flasks rested on their sides.

Weigall's sketch of the vessel inscribed for Sobekhotep IV shows that at the point where the "stems" are broken off, they must have arched away from the body of the flask, like the necks of the ducks, and then recurved to the point Weigall calls "a broken knob at the bottom of the vase on either side."<sup>26</sup> The round "knobs" indicate that whatever rejoined the vessel at this point was considerably narrower than a lotus blossom. Lotus buds (or something entirely different) may have been carved at the "knobs." For example, the "stems" may represent cobras, whose heads and hoods rose from the knobs.<sup>27</sup>

This flask is significant because it is the only anhydrite vessel carved in an elaborate form that has a fixed date. It demonstrates that by the reign of Sobekhotep IV, in the last half of Dynasty 13, anhydrite vessels with elaborate plastic decoration were being carved; thus, this example may represent the origin of the genre from which the duck flasks evolved.<sup>28</sup>

Shortly after the turn of the last century, the Metropolitan Museum acquired a large and exceptional group of blue-anhydrite vessels (Figure 21), including three of the duck flasks discussed in this article (cat. nos. 9–11; Figures 39–41), all purportedly from a Middle Kingdom cemetery at Girgeh, north of Abydos. This group comprises other vessels with elaborate forms, including a bottle in the shape of a baboon (Figure 13), a fish flask (Figure 14), a monkey group with bodies hollowed as containers (Figure 22), a pair of monkeys (one with a removable head) holding a bottle between them (Figure 23), and several bottles and flasks, some of which imitate pottery forms (Figure 10).

Two of these vessels suggest that the group was made sometime between Dynasty 13 and Dynasty 17. The amphora-shaped bottle (Figure 10, right) is a type produced from Dynasty 13<sup>29</sup> through the Second Intermediate Period and, in a slightly slimmer form, well into Dynasty 18.<sup>30</sup> A second vessel in the Girgeh group, a bag-shaped flask with an everted rim (Figure 10, left), imitates a pottery vessel shape in use from the late Middle Kingdom through the Second Intermediate Period.<sup>31</sup> Together, the two vessels support a late Middle Kingdom to Second Intermediate Period date for the Girgeh group and its three duck vessels (cat. nos. 9–11; Figures 39–41); classified as Type C in the stylistic types in Appendix 1; and also, by analogy, for a fourth stylistically related double-duckling flask found at Abydos (cat. no. 12; Figure 42).

To this point, the range of dates originally suggested



Figure 21. Group of anhydrite vessels. Said to be from Girgeh. Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (left to right): Rogers Fund, 1910 (10.176.53, 10.176.52), 1912 (12.182.76), 1910 (10.176.51, 48, 49, 50), 1911 (11.150.29), 1910 (10.176.46, 47, 54), 1912 (12.182.77)



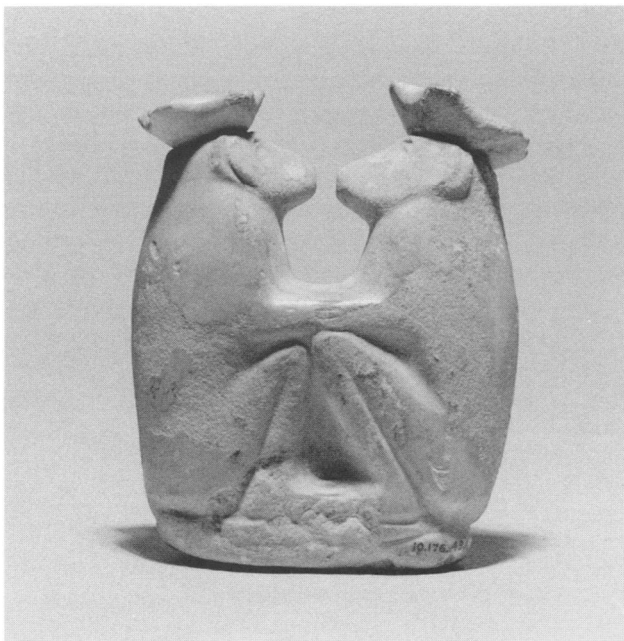


Figure 22. Pair of monkeys as a double flask. Said to be from Girgeh, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, H. 11 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1910, 10.176.49



Figure 23. Pair of monkeys holding a jar between them. The body of the monkey at the right is hollowed and the head is removable. Said to be from Girgeh, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, H. 9.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1912, 12.132.77

for the anhydrite duck flasks (mid-Dynasty 12–Dynasty 17) has been narrowed by about 150 years (Dynasty 13–Dynasty 17), but because they could hardly have been produced with such uniformity for the equivalent of over five ancient Egyptian generations, this interval is still too long. The evidence that narrows the time span further is complex but seems persuasive.

As stated, only one duck flask—Abydos, Tomb X. 52 (cat. no. 5; Figure 35)—was discovered in an undisturbed burial. It was found by T. Eric Peet during the 1911–12 excavating season at Abydos<sup>32</sup> in a burial he dated to the Second Intermediate Period. Robert Merrillees and Barry Kemp,<sup>33</sup> and Janine Bourriau<sup>34</sup> have studied this tomb independently and arrived at similar dates of the Hyksos Period to early Dynasty 18 and Dynasty 17, respectively. Again, however, they too caution that the flask may be an heirloom. If this were confirmed, the flask would not be contemporaneous with the burial where it was found and could actually have been made considerably earlier. While the possibility of an heirloom cannot be ruled out, it does not seem likely, as will be demonstrated.

Other elaborate anhydrite vessels that help to narrow the date for the duck flasks include two bowls decorated with monkeys. On one of the bowls, the monkeys are worked in bold relief (Figure 25), while on the other, a monkey is worked virtually in the round (Figure 12). These bowls are related not only in the way blue anhydrite was used but also by stylistic aspects that support their contemporaneity.

The strongest incentive for including these elaborate monkey dishes within the process of dating the duck flasks is provided by a bowl in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (Figure 24).<sup>35</sup> The outer walls of the bowl are decorated with a boldly sculpted monkey, together with a pair of ducks (represented as living) with their wings spread around the sides of the bowl. As in the duck flasks, their necks were originally worked free from the bowl. Because this bowl combines both elements, namely monkeys in bold relief and ducks with necks worked free from their bodies, it proves that the types of decoration used for the duck flasks and the elaborate monkey vessels are contemporaneous.

Another elaborate anhydrite bowl decorated with monkeys in bold relief (Figure 25)<sup>36</sup> was found by W. M. Flinders Petrie in an intact burial of a woman at Qurna.<sup>37</sup> On the basis of its contents, Petrie proposed a Dynasty 17 date for the burial.<sup>38</sup> In his assessment Cyril Aldred noted the richness of the tomb, which led him to suggest that it was the burial of a member of the ruling family who died toward the end of Dynasty 17.<sup>39</sup> Janine Bourriau's subsequent analysis of the pottery and the coffin has confirmed this date for the burial.<sup>40</sup> Again, some scholars caution that the monkey bowl may be an heirloom, although no specific reasons are given.<sup>41</sup>

In 1980 Barry Kemp and Robert Merrillees published the E. L. B. Terrace Group.<sup>42</sup> These objects, said to have been found at Lisht, include not only a fragmentary duck

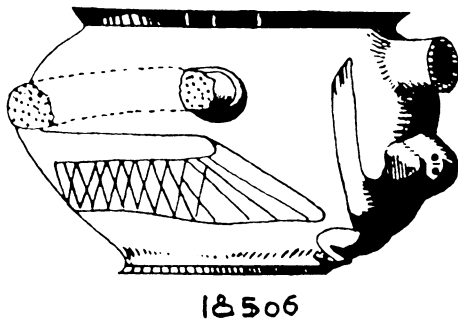


Figure 24. Bowl with monkey and ducks. From Thebes, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, H. 5 cm, Diam. 6.7 cm. Cairo, Egyptian Museum, CG 18506 (after von Bissing, *Steingefässe* [1907] pl. VIII)



Figure 25. Bowl with monkeys from Qurna. Excavated by Petrie at Kurneh, 1909. From Thebes, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, Diam. 12 cm. Edinburgh, Royal Museum of Scotland 1909.527.33 (photo: Bernard V. Bothmer, through the courtesy of the Trustees of the National Museums of Scotland)

flask (cat. no. 7; Figure 37) but also the most elaborate known monkey bowl (Figure 12).<sup>43</sup> Kemp and Merrillees state that although there is no proof that all the objects derive from a single burial, the group is “strongly homogeneous.”<sup>44</sup> If these objects are from a single find and contemporary with one another, as Kemp and Merrillees suggest, one of them, a female fertility figurine carved in limestone (Figure 26),<sup>45</sup> provides an approximate date for the group, which includes the fragmentary duck flask. The woman’s distinctive hair style is found on a number of other fertility figurines<sup>46</sup> and on statuettes of women that are generally datable to Dynasty 17.<sup>47</sup> Although none of the figurines can be dated later than Dynasty 17, a variation of the coiffure is worn by serving girls whose figures are incorporated in the design of Dynasty 18 cosmetic articles,<sup>48</sup> and it even occurs in early New Kingdom tomb paintings,<sup>49</sup> which underscores the proximity of the figurines to Dynasty 18.

A Dynasty 17 date is also supported by the sculptural style of the woman’s face; her sharp clear features and large, wide eyes are related more closely to the sculptural style of the New Kingdom than to that of the Middle Kingdom, which is characterized by a fuller, more rounded style. Furthermore, a Dynasty 17 date for the Terrace Group, including the fragmentary duck flask (cat. no. 7; Figure 37) and the elaborate monkey bowl (Figure 12), would coincide with the date of the burial associated with the duck flask at Abydos (cat. no. 5; Figure 35), and also with the elaborate monkey dish at Qurna (Figure 25).

## CONCLUSIONS

The foregoing discussion of anhydrite duck flasks and various related objects assesses a range of factors. Considered in isolation, no single factor is conclusive; but together they manifest stylistic and chronological patterns that clarify questions concerning the material (anhydrite), the form of the flasks (a plucked duck), and their date.

The documented use of anhydrite is restricted to a period extending from Dynasty 12 to Dynasty 17 (ca. 1971–1550 B.C.), and because this interval is so short, the ancient source must have been small. The fashion for blue-anhydrite duck flasks was certainly even more limited. The recognition of four stylistic types (see Appendix 1)—closely related through the unusual concept of a duck’s body adapted to a flask—suggests that the number of artisans who carved them was small; also, and more significantly, it suggests that all the ducks were created over a relatively short period of time, not longer than a generation or two.

Areas of wear on the undersides of the flasks indicate that they were used in daily life. Although the form, a plucked duck, might suggest they contained food, this is inconsistent



Figure 26a, b. Fertility figurine. Said to be from Lisht, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Painted limestone, H. 8.2 cm. Formerly in the Norbert Schimmel Collection, Jerusalem, Israel Museum 91.71.229 (photo: Otto Nelson)

with the use of other anhydrite vessels, which was confined to cosmetics. Evidently, the form was symbolic, and in a funerary context the flask served a double purpose. As a representation of a duck, it symbolically provided sustenance for its owner in the Hereafter, and as a container, it provided oil or perfume.

Although only one duck (cat. no. 5; Figure 35) was found in a closed context, which is datable to Dynasty 17, three bowls provide further evidence for the elaborate use of anhydrite at that time. The first (Figure 24), combining a monkey with a pair of ducks with necks worked free from the vessel body, demonstrates that these two motifs were contemporaneous. Because monkeys and ducks occur at the same time, a second elaborate anhydrite bowl with monkeys (Figure 25) from an undisturbed Dynasty 17 burial at Qurna must be contemporary with the duck flask found in a closed context, providing further evidence for the elaborate use of anhydrite during Dynasty 17.

Additional support for this date for elaborate anhydrite vessels comes from a third anhydrite bowl with a monkey worked virtually in the round (Figure 12), and a fragmentary duck flask (cat. no. 7; Figure 37), both from the Terrace Group. Provided that these objects are from a single find and contemporaneous, one of the objects, a fertility figurine (Figure 26) datable to Dynasty 17, provides a date for the group.

That four of the five elaborate anhydrite vessels (two bowls with monkeys and two duck flasks) were found in contexts datable to Dynasty 17 can hardly be coinciden-

tal, and thus the likelihood that all are heirlooms is remote. The two duck flasks and two of the monkey bowls should therefore be accepted as contemporaneous with their Dynasty 17 contexts. Because the form and concept of these examples are so consistent with the rest of the duck flasks, all of them must have been made approximately at the same time.

The late Second Intermediate Period date proposed for the duck flasks and the elaborate bowls with monkeys worked on their sides immediately precedes the New Kingdom. Thus, the plausibility of the proposed date is further strengthened because it coincides with a marked rise in the popularity of cosmetics and luxury goods that occurred during Dynasty 18, the first dynasty of the New Kingdom.<sup>50</sup>

The duck motif, either plucked or as a living fowl, was not used during the Old and Middle Kingdoms, and the monkey appears infrequently. These were two of the most recurrent themes during Dynasty 18, however, not only for cosmetic articles—where they decorate vessels (Figures 27,<sup>51</sup> 28), boxes, and dishes (Figure 29)<sup>52</sup> created for the application and storage of cosmetics—but also for jewelry, utensils, furniture, and ritual implements.<sup>53</sup>

Dated to the late Second Intermediate Period instead of Dynasty 12 or 13, the duck flasks and the monkey bowls anticipate these motifs, and are evidence of the sophistication and high level of workmanship that reemerged in Egypt during Dynasty 17 after a period of general decline in the arts following Dynasty 12. The duck flasks and monkey bowls are early examples of a thematic development that began during the late Second Intermediate Period and continued and expanded during Dynasty 18. This continuity would not exist if the elaborate anhydrite cosmetic vessels, including the duck flasks, were dated significantly earlier.

## Appendix 1: Stylistic Types

The thirteen preserved anhydrite duck vessels represent adult birds, ducklings, and two of indeterminate age because the wings are cropped and no other distinguishing features are present. Along with two fragments, they may be organized into four types on the basis of stylistic similarities. At least one major feature, or combination of features, distinguishes each type from the others. The ducks of three of the four types (A, C, and D) are so homogeneous that all examples within each type can be attributed to a single artisan or workshop. Type B exhibits features of A and/or C, which demonstrates the continuity between A and C despite their stylistic differences. In the discussion, the various distinguishing features of each type are indicated in cursive to facilitate identification.



Figure 27. Kohl jar inscribed for Queen Hatshepsut with monkey as a handle. New Kingdom, Dynasty 18, 1492–1479 B.C. Black serpentinite, H. 5.5 cm. Cairo, Egyptian Museum CG 18486 (photo: Christine Lilyquist)



Figure 28. High-necked jar with duck as a handle. New Kingdom, Dynasty 18, ca. 1550–1400 B.C. Calcite. Present whereabouts not known; formerly London, University College, Petrie Museum (drawing after W. M. Flinders Petrie, *Stone and Metal Vases* [London, 1937] pl. xxxiv)

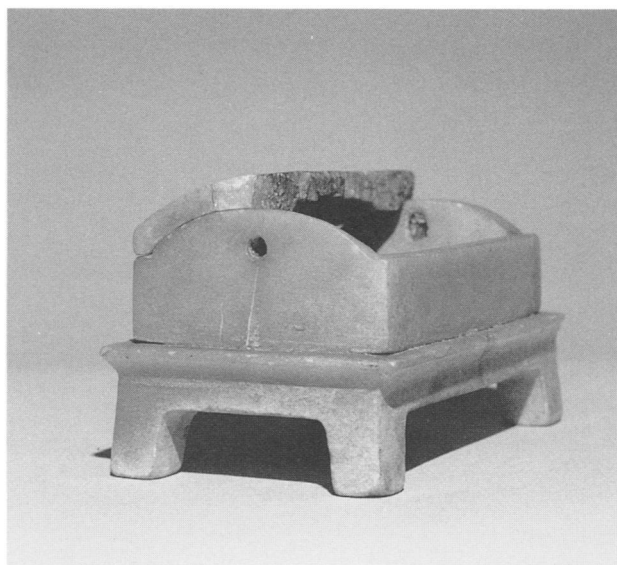


Figure 30. Shrine-shaped box on a corniced table with splayed legs. From an area of plundered tombs behind the Ramesseum, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17?, ca. 1635?–?1550 B.C. Anhydrite, H. 6.9 cm. London, British Museum 65267, bequeathed by Sir Robert Ludwig Mond in 1939 (photo: Biri Fay, courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum)

*Type A. The head is sharply undercut to the base of the beak, the eye is rimmed in copper, and the eye socket is shown as a depression.*

Type A comprises three ducks (cat. nos. 1–3; Figures 8, 31–33). These are the most elegant and naturalistically worked and exhibit the finest modeling of the body. The treatment of the legs, the arched neck, and the graceful sculpting of the webbed feet are distinctive. The head is large in proportion to the body, and the *eye sockets* are

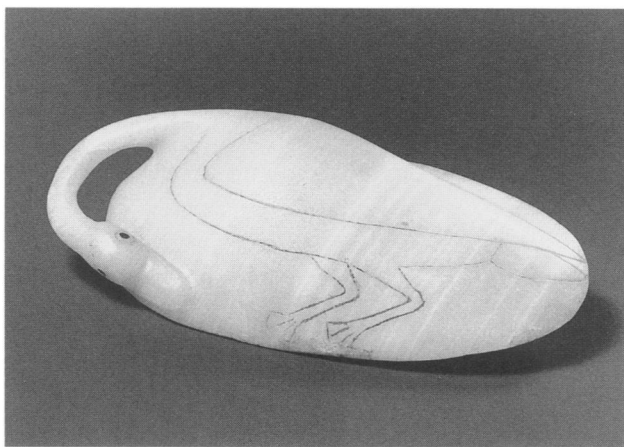


Figure 29. Clam-shaped duck dish with inlaid eye. New Kingdom, Dynasty 18, ca. 1550–1400 B.C. Calcite, L. 15.1 cm. The Brooklyn Museum of Art, Museum Collection Fund, 11.665 (photo: The Brooklyn Museum of Art)

marked as longitudinal depressions, with the *copper-rimmed eyes* inlaid in the center. The beak pressed against the breast is distinctly outlined, and the nostril holes are marked. The most characteristic feature shared by Type A ducks is the *sharp undercutting of the stone beneath the head, which flattens the underside and separates the head from the body.*

Each wing has two long parallel grooves. Two of the birds are depicted with the undeveloped, rounded wings of ducklings (cat. nos. 2, 3), not the longer folded wings of adults. The wings of the two birds forming the third flask (cat. no. 1) are cropped, but the indication of a milk tooth shows that these are also ducklings. All three Type A ducks are the work of one workshop, probably one artisan.

*Type B. The eye socket may be shown as a groove, the hind toe and the vent may be indicated.*

Although several features are unique to Type B, it is best described as transitional between Types A and C, because all Type B ducks share one or more features with A or C, or both.

Representing ducks or ducklings, four intact examples (cat. nos. 4–7; Figures 34–37) and a fragment (cat. no. 8; Figure 38) are included in Type B. All are slightly more stylized than Type A ducks and not as finely modeled. The head may be full and rounded (cat. nos. 4, 5, and 8; Figures 34, 35, and 38), or treated as an extension of the neck (cat. no. 6; Figure 36). The *eye sockets* of two Type B



ducks (cat. nos. 4–5) are, in contrast to Type A, *grooves rather than depressions*. The eye sockets of two others (cat. nos. 6, 8) are, like C and D, not indicated at all. The neck is worked free from the body. The wings are either rounded (duckling) or folded at the wrist (adult bird), and may be marked by a single groove, a pair, or none. The *vent may be indicated*. The toes of the webbed feet are rendered as thick ridges, and the *hind toe is included* on three ducks (cat. nos. 4–6; Figures 34–36). It is not possible to determine whether cat. no. 7 (Figure 37) also has a hind toe.

The bird in Strasbourg (cat. no. 4; Figure 34), a duckling, has thick short feet, which relate it to Type C. However, two of its features are found on Type A ducks—the full, well-shaped head undercut to the base of the beak, and the short wings rounded at the wrist, which indicate the bird is a fledgling. The *eye socket rendered as a groove*, and the indication of the *hind toes* and the *vent* are unique to Type B.

Although wings folded at the wrists indicate that the Abydos, Tomb X. 52 (cat. no. 5; Figure 35), example represents an adult bird, it shares many features with the Strasbourg duckling, including the same rendering of the *eye socket*, *hind toe*, and *vent*, which are features unique to Type B ducks; a slightly undercut head and a short foot (only one is preserved) with thick toes that relate both to Type C; and the same prominent elbow and knee joints, and a full, well-modeled head, which are features both birds share with Type A ducks. The similarities between them are so strong that the Abydos and Strasbourg flasks were undoubtedly carved by the same artisan.

The indication of the short *hind toe* occurs on a third Type B example, Durham H. 2259 (cat. no. 6; Figure 36). This duck, like Type C birds, has small eyes and no indication of an eye socket. The top and sides of the bill are recessed here, as on most Type C ducks. The juncture where the feathered neck meets the plucked body is indicated, a detail that also occurs on one Type C duck (cat. no. 12; Figure 42). The wide neck is characteristic of Type A, but the unmodeled head is unique to this piece. The folded wing is marked by a single groove, a feature also found on a second Type B duck (cat. no. 7; Figure 37).

Although the discussion of features shared by Types A, B, and C may seem to blur their distinctions, a closer look reveals a continuity among the three types. Type B ducks are distinguished by the presence of a *hind toe* on three examples (cat. nos. 4–6; Figures 34–36), and the eye shown as a groove and the indication of the vent on two examples (cat. nos. 4–5; Figures 34, 35). A and B are related because two Type B ducks (cat. nos. 4–5; Figures 34, 35), both surely by one artisan, are so similar to the Type A ducks that all may have been carved by the same individual, or by someone working closely with him. As has been shown, other features relate three Type B ducks (cat. nos. 4, 6, and 7; Figures 34, 36, and 37) to Type C. Also, the Strasbourg duckling, one of the two Type B birds by the same artisan (or workshop)

who carved the Type A ducks, was found at Girgeh; and three of the four Type C ducks were also said to have been found at Girgeh. Finally, a milk tooth is indicated on two Type A ducks (cat. nos. 1, 2; Figures 31, 32) and on one Type B duck (cat. no. 5; Figure 35).

These shared features not only support the original point that Type B is transitional between Types A and C, but also demonstrate the continuity among all three types.

*Type C. The head is small in proportion to the body. The eyes are small, the eye sockets are not indicated. The beak is long and narrow, and its surface may be recessed at the side of the head. The neck is narrow. The neck may be turned to one side and/or worked only in bold relief on the vessel wall, not free from the body.*

All four Type C ducks are in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. nos. 9–12; Figures 39–42). In contrast to Types A and B, these birds are simplified and stylized. On two ducks (cat. nos. 10, 12; Figures 40, 42) the *heads and necks are carved in high relief on the sides of the vessel, not free from the body*, a feature unique to Type C. It may be combined with a second stylistic variation found only on Type C ducks, in which the *necks twist to the sides* around the body (cat. nos. 11, 12; Figures 41, 42).

The *beak is recessed* at the sides of the heads on three examples (cat. nos. 9–10, 12; Figures 39–40, and 42). The surface of the fourth example (cat. no. 11; Figure 41) is so deteriorated that it is not possible to determine whether it was treated in a similar manner. On the double duck (cat. no. 12; Figure 42) the junctures where the feathered necks meet the plucked bodies are indicated, a feature it shares with a Type B duck (cat. no. 6; Figure 36). The rounded undeveloped wings of (cat. no. 11; Figure 41) indicate that this is a duckling, like five other Type A, B, and D examples (cat. nos. 2–4, 13, and 14; Figures 32–34, 43, and 44).

The provenance of three Type C ducks (cat. nos. 9–11; Figures 39–41) is said to be a cemetery at Girgeh, the site of the single largest find of anhydrite vessels, which further underscores the homogeneity of Type C. The fourth Type C duck (cat. no. 12; Figure 42) comes from Abydos, less than thirty kilometers south of Girgeh. Presumably, all Type C ducks were made at Girgeh in the same workshop, perhaps by the same artisan.

*Type D. These are the largest ducks, and have elliptical bodies. The head is large and rounded, and the neck is arched far from the body, with only the beak tip pressed against the breast. The mouth of the vessel is surrounded by a sharp rim.*

Type D comprises two ducks (cat. nos. 13, 14; Figures 43, 44) and a fragment (cat. no. 15; Figure 45). Although they are the *largest* of all the duck flasks, they lack the grace and aesthetic balance of Types A, B, and C. The *head is unrealistically rounded* and the *neck arches boldly from the*

*ellipse-shaped body. The beak is depicted as if it bends where it touches the breast. The wings and feet are large and clumsily spread across the expanse of the body. In contrast to the other three types, Type D ducks lack a spout; instead, a sharp rim surrounds the mouth. The rounded, undeveloped wings indicate these birds are ducklings.*

All Type D examples are presumably the work of a single craftsman who evidently was not as talented as the artisans who carved the Type A, B, and C ducks. The two complete flasks (cat. nos. 13, 14; Figures 43, 44) were originally in the collection of Robert de Rustafjaell, and may therefore have been found together.

## SUMMARY

Subtle differences between Types A and B—whether, for example, the eyes are set in depressions or grooves or lack any indication of sockets; and the presence or absence of undercutting beneath the ducks' heads—may reflect gradual development of one artisan's technique as he produced a series of similar objects over time, or the reciprocal influence between two or more artisans working together. More obvious stylistic differences, like those between Type A, C, and D ducks reflect (as suggested in the dating discussion) an artisan's or a workshop's individual interpretation of the subject.

The fundamental continuity of this subject—a duck-shaped flask carved in anhydrite—is evident both in the consistency of the overall form, and in the stylistic details that are shared between and among types. Such continuity is particularly well demonstrated by the Type B ducks that link Types A and C, not only stylistically, but also by common provenance.

## Appendix 2: Catalogue of Duck Vessels

\* = Personally examined

### \*1. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 27.9.1 (Figures 8, 31)

Type A

Anhydrite

Measurements: H. 17.4 cm, W. 15.3 cm, D. 8.7 cm, W. of mouth 3.5–3.7 cm

PROVENANCE: Purchased in Luxor.<sup>54</sup> Said to be from a tomb between Sheikh 'Abd el-Qurna and the Ramesseum, Thebes, perhaps Sir Robert Mond's concession<sup>55</sup>

A flask in the form of a pair of ducklings pressed back-to-back. Their necks arch far from the bodies and bend abruptly. Large, well-formed heads are undercut sharply to the bases of the beaks resting on the birds' breasts. All four inlaid eyes are preserved and set in long depressions. The copper rims of the inlays are very corroded. The beaks are outlined, and the nostrils are shown as short depressions. The milk teeth at the ends of both beaks identify these birds as fledglings. The joints of the wings cropped at the elbows are indicated. Webbed feet are long and the toes narrow. The interior of the integral spout is smoothed. One side of the vessel is encrusted and the surface is deteriorated. This is not only the finest of the duck flasks but also the most unusual because it is the only one designed to stand upright on the elongated knee joints.

A shrine-shaped anhydrite box on a small corniced table with splayed legs in the British Museum (Figure 30)<sup>56</sup> is possibly associated with this double-duck flask. It was recovered by Sir Robert Mond from an area of plundered tombs behind the Ramesseum, in Thebes. According to Mond's report, the area was in use from at least Dynasty 11 through the Late Period. This double-duck flask is also recorded as originally from the same area.

Only half of the box lid is preserved. Dried glue along the break edge and a pair of holes drilled through the lid near the break indicate that the box was repaired in antiquity by tying leather, cord, or wire through a second pair of holes on the lid portion, now lost. Traces of an inter-columnar line beside the edge of the break indicate that the box was decorated or inscribed.

Although proof is lacking, and the only evidence consists of their common material and reports that they were found in the same area, it is nevertheless tempting to associate the double-duck flask with the box because each is such a distinctive piece.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Terrace, p. 61, BI, 6, pl. XXIII, fig. 24; Arnold, p. 28, no. 27.

**\*2. Private collection (Figure 32)**

Type A

Anhydrite

Measurements: H. 6.8 cm, W. 6 cm, L. 11.4 cm

PROVENANCE: Not known

A flask in the form of a duckling with the head undercut to the base of the beak.<sup>57</sup> The well-formed head is large, and the eyes are set in long depressions. The left copper eye rim and inlay are lost; the right rim is preserved, but corroded. These rims discolored the surrounding area of the head to green. The beak, which includes a fledgling's milk tooth, is outlined, and the nostrils are indicated. The undeveloped wings curve at the wrists, are marked by a pair of grooves, and have prominent elbow joints. The webbed feet are long with narrow toes, similar to the double-duck flask (cat. no. 1; Figures 8, 31), and the knee joints are prominent. The spout was made separately and fits snugly in the prepared recess. Abrasions on the underside, to the right and left of the spine, are distinct signs of use.

This duck flask is so similar to the Metropolitan Museum's double-duck flask that they can be attributed to the same artisan. Although this example is considerably smaller than the one in the Museum, it is as finely carved.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Sotheby's, London, *Ancient Jewellery, Dark Ages, Egyptian, Greek, Etruscan and Roman Antiquities, South Italian Greek Pottery Vases, Ancient Glass, Middle Eastern Antiquities and Art Reference Books also Mosaics*, December 11, 1989, pp. 38–39, lot 65, ill.

**\*3. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 65.1749 (Figure 33)**

Type A

Anhydrite

Measurements: H. 7 cm, W. 5.86 cm, L. 15 cm

PROVENANCE: Gift of Horace Mayer

A flask in the form of a duckling,<sup>58</sup> with a sharply undercut head. The original surface on the head is preserved, but the upper surface of the body, which is somewhat longer than the first two flasks of this type, is deteriorated. Abrasions are visible on the underside (where the original surface is intact), especially to the right and left of the spine, which are the surfaces on which the flask normally rested when not being held.

The well-formed head is large and wide, with the eyes inlaid into long depressions at its side. Both copper-rimmed inlays are preserved in the eye recesses. The undeveloped wings, curving at the wrists, are detailed with double grooves and an added narrow line along the inner edges. The beak is outlined and the nostrils are marked. The webs between the toes are detailed with a

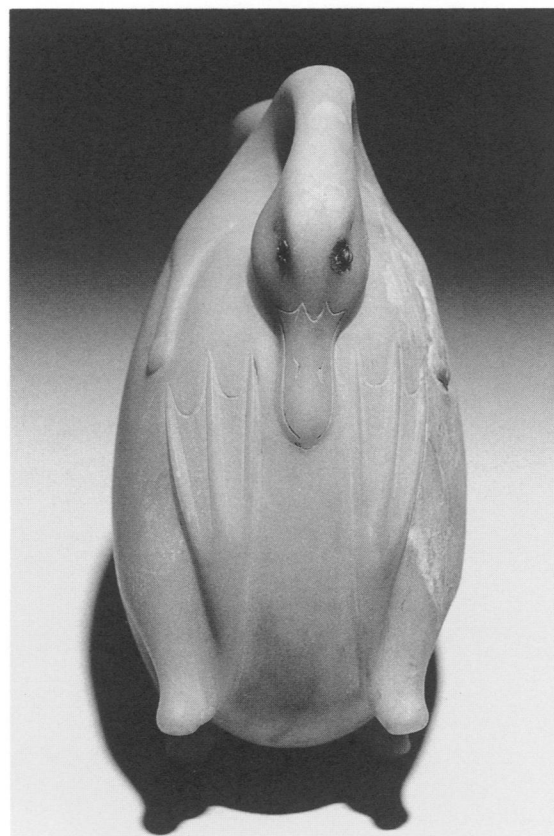
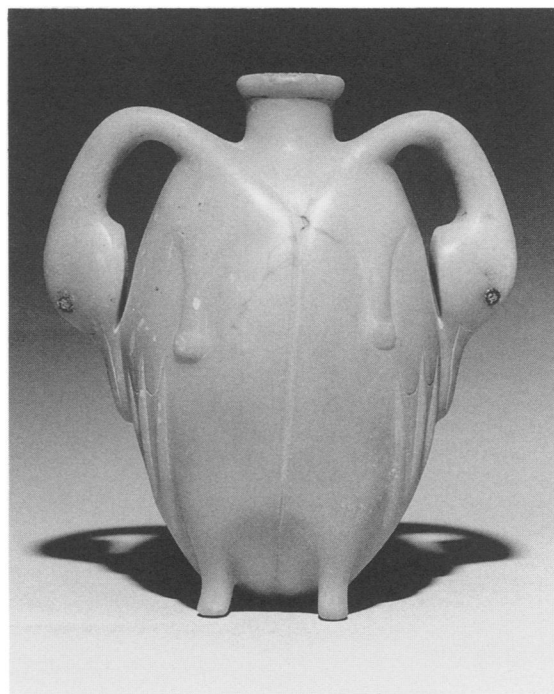


Figure 31a, b. Flask in the form of a pair of plucked ducklings (Type A, cat. no. 1). Said to be from Mond's excavations behind the Ramesseum at Thebes, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, with inlaid eyes, H. 17 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Edward S. Harkness, 1927, 27.9.1

second line, and the toe joints are marked by short lateral lines. The spout is integral with the body. A pair of grooves to either side of the spout form a V on the underside (back) of the bird.

The undercutting of the duckling's head to the base of the beak, the beak detailing, and the eyes set in depressions are features shared with cat. nos. 1, 2 (Figures 31, 32). These features are diagnostic of Type A, as is the superior carving. The curved wrists of the immature wings also occur on cat. no. 2. All three ducks were presumably carved by the same artisan.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Terrace, p. 61, BI, 1, pl. XXI, figs. 21, 22.

#### 4. Strasbourg, Institut d'Égyptologie 1078 (Figure 34)

Type B

Anhydrite

Measurements: H. 9 cm, W. 7.8 cm, L. 14 cm

PROVENANCE: Girgeh

This flask is in the form of a duckling, with a wide head undercut to the base of the beak and undeveloped wings rounded at the wrists. Black eye disks are inlaid into grooves at the sides of the head. The beak is outlined, the nostrils are marked, and the vent is indicated. The feet have thick toes, and the hind toe is indicated. The duck's right side is damaged and heavily encrusted, and a section is missing at the base of the neck; the spout is lost.

Although this duck exhibits features diagnostic for Type B (short feet with thick toes, a hind toe, eyes set in distinct grooves, and a vent), it is also stylistically related to Type A (the undercutting of the head). Even though

not as finely carved as Type A examples, it is either from the same workshop or was carved by an artisan familiar with that style.

This duckling is recorded as coming from Girgeh; it therefore links Type C with Types A and B (already linked on the basis of strong stylistic parallels), because three of the four Type C ducks are also said to have been found at Girgeh.

The similarity of the Strasbourg duck to Abydos Tomb X. 52 (cat. no. 5; Figure 35), including the unusual indication of their vents, suggests both were carved by the same artisan.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Jacques Parlebas, *Antiquités Égyptiennes*, exh. cat. (Strasbourg, 1973) p. 51, cat. no. 235, ill. in color on back cover; *La Femme dans l'Égypte Ancienne*, exh. cat., Institut d'Égyptologie de Strasbourg, Musée d'Histoire de Mulhouse, Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle de Colmar (Colmar, 1994) p. 20, cat. no. 21 (where the provenance is given as Thebes).

#### 5. Abydos, Burial X. 52 (Figure 35)

Type B

Anhydrite

Measurements: H. 7.3 cm, W. 6.9 cm, L. 12.5 cm

PROVENANCE: Abydos, Burial X. 52; formerly in the collection of the Art Institute of Chicago (11.451)

A flask in the form of a duckling with a large, wide head that is slightly undercut. The nostrils are marked and rimmed, and the beak is outlined. A fledgling's milk tooth is indicated, a feature that contradicts the long wings,



Figure 32a, b. Flask in the form of a duckling (Type A, cat. no. 2). Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, with inlaid eyes, L. 11.4 cm. Private collection (photo: Jürgen Liepe)





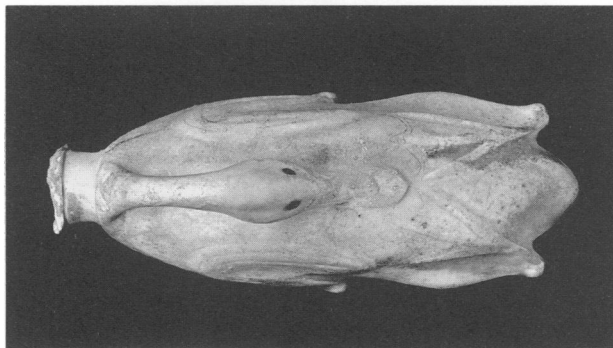
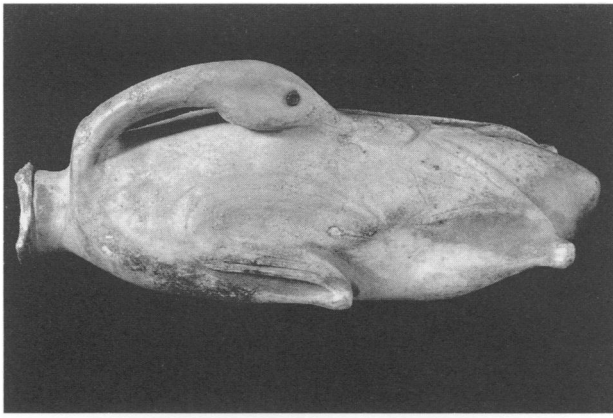


Figure 33. Flask in the form of a duckling (Type A, cat. no. 3). Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, with inlaid eyes, L. 15 cm. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of Horace Mayer, 65.1749 (photo: Museum of Fine Arts)

which are aspects of a more mature bird. The black eye disks are set in shallow grooves at the sides of the head. The wings fold at the wrist and are marked by a pair of grooves. The preserved foot is short with thick toes, whose joints are modeled, and the hind toe is shown.

This duck flask is the only one found in a closed context. It was excavated by T. Eric Peet in an undisturbed burial at Abydos, dated by Bourriau<sup>59</sup> to Dynasty 17 and by Kemp and Merrillees<sup>60</sup> to Dynasty 17 to early Dynasty 18. Although its head is only slightly undercut and the feet are somewhat clumsy, this object is stylistically related to Type A duck flasks and is presumably from the same workshop. Its similarity to the Strasbourg duck, including the unusual depiction of the vent, indicates that both were carved by the same artisan.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Peet, *Cemeteries of Abydos II* (1914) p. 61, X. 52, pl. XIII, fig. 14; Thomas George Allen, *A Handbook of the Egyptian Collection of the Art Institute of Chicago* (Chicago, 1923)

pp. 94–95; Hermann, “Das Motiv der Ente,” p. 92, pl. VIIIa; Terrace, p. 61, BI, 2 and 3, pl. XXII, fig. 23 (Terrace did not realize that his 2 and 3 were the same vessel); Kemp and Merrillees, p. 168; Bourriau, p. 141; Aston, pp. 141–142.

#### \*6. Durham, Oriental Museum, H. 2259 (Figure 36)

Type B

Anhydrite

Measurements: H. 6.7 cm, W. 7.5 cm, L. 11.8 cm, Diam. of opening 1.74 cm

**PROVENANCE:** Formerly in the collection of Sir Charles Hardinge

A flask in the shape of a duck.<sup>61</sup> The head is summarily shaped, and the small eyes were inlaid into the sides of the head with no indication of sockets. Traces of black are preserved in the eye recesses, but no actual part of the inlay is preserved. The top of the beak is recessed. A V-shaped recess at the point where the neck joins the body depicts the feathers on the neck of the duck; this detail occurs on one other example, cat. no. 12 (Figure 42).

The wings are folded at the wrist and marked by a single deep groove. The toes are thick; the hind toe is indicated. The underside is rubbed and abraded, and there is no obvious residue on the interior. A crack runs through the neck along a vein in the stone. Grooves are visible on the interior vessel walls.

A dark plum-red discoloration at several places on the underside may be from a polished wood stand that its former owner, Sir Charles Hardinge, used to display Chinese jades, and, presumably, this piece as well. The spout, separately made, is missing.

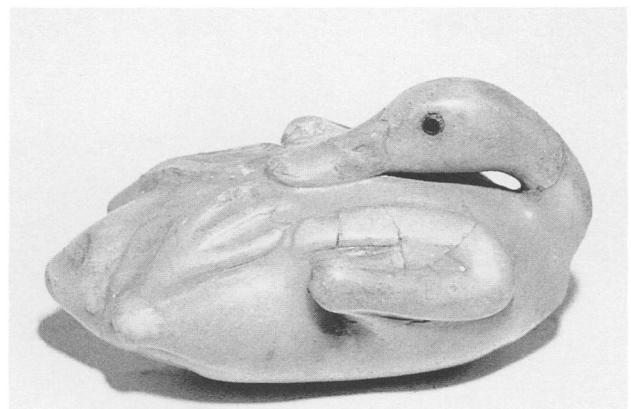


Figure 34. Flask in the form of a duckling (Type B, cat. no. 4). From Girgeh, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, with inlaid eyes, L. 14 cm. Strasbourg, IES 1078 (photo: Bernard V. Bothmer)

The lack of an eye depression and the recessing of the top of the beak relate this duck flask most closely to Type C.

John Ruffle wrote an interesting anecdote about this flask: "The piece has no Egyptian provenance, but has a curious recent history. It came to the Museum in 1960 as part of a large collection of Chinese (!) jades and other hardstone carvings. This collection was formed by Sir Charles Hardinge, who was a petrologist by training, and who formed his collection for its petrological interest rather than its aesthetic value. He purchased this particular piece from a dealer in London on July 4, 1934, for the handsome sum of £4!" Hardinge gave his collection to the museum in 1960.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Bourriau, p. 141, no. 143, ill.

### 7. E. L. B. Terrace Group VII (Figure 37)

Type B

Anhydrite

Measurement: L. 6.7 cm

PROVENANCE: Lisht

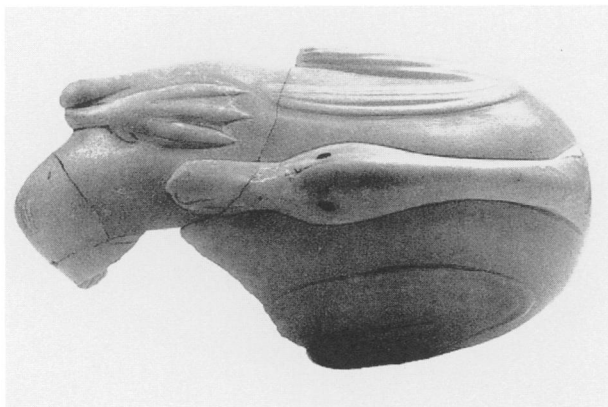
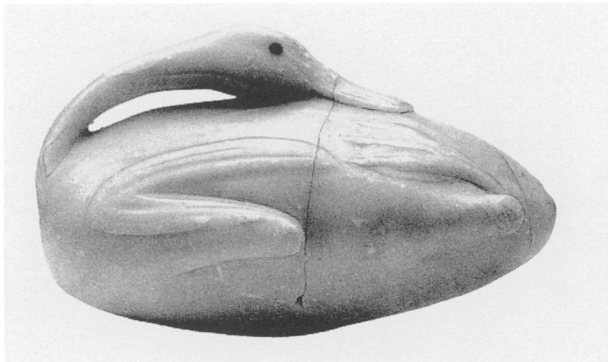


Figure 35a, b. Flask in the form of a duckling (Type B, cat. no. 5). From Abydos, Burial X. 52, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, with inlaid eyes, L. 9.2 cm. Art Institute of Chicago (photo: Bernard V. Bothmer)

A fragmentary duck flask, with the wing folded at the wrist and marked by a single groove. Although the head and neck of the bird are broken away, traces along the break indicate that its neck was worked free of the body. The toes are thick.

The E. L. B. Terrace Group consists of a number of objects, including this duck flask, said to come from a tomb at Lisht. Barry Kemp and Robert Merrillees were able to record the group, but only after some pieces had been dispersed. Despite the incomplete information about the find, and the lack of proof that the group derives from a single tomb, Kemp and Merrillees noted in their publication of the material that the group was "strongly homogeneous."<sup>62</sup> Provided the objects in the group are contemporary with one another, a date in Dynasty 17 can be suggested for this flask as well as the group on the basis of one of the objects—a female fertility figurine (Figure 26) wearing a wig type that is typical of Dynasty 17.<sup>63</sup> This would also permit a date to be assigned to a second elaborate anhydrite vessel in the group, an elaborate bowl with a monkey clinging to its side in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem (Figure 12).

The head from a duck vessel found at Lisht, which was formerly in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 8; Figure 38), may belong to this flask.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Kemp and Merrillees, p. 165, VII, pl. 25a.

### 8. Ex-New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Figure 38)

Type B

Anhydrite

Measurements not recorded

PROVENANCE: From The Metropolitan Museum of Art excavations at Lisht (found in debris); present location not known

A head of a duck from a flask, with eyes inlaid into the side of the head without a groove or depression.

The fragmentary vessel in the E. L. B. Terrace Group (cat. no. 7; Figure 37) is the only duck vessel besides this one known to come from Lisht. It is possible that this head belongs to the Terrace duck flask.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Terrace, p. 61, BI, 10, pl. XIX, fig. 16.

### \*9. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 10.176.51 (Figure 39)

Type C

Anhydrite

Measurements: H. 5.4 cm, W. 9.5 cm, L. 10.4 cm

PROVENANCE: Said to be from Girgeh

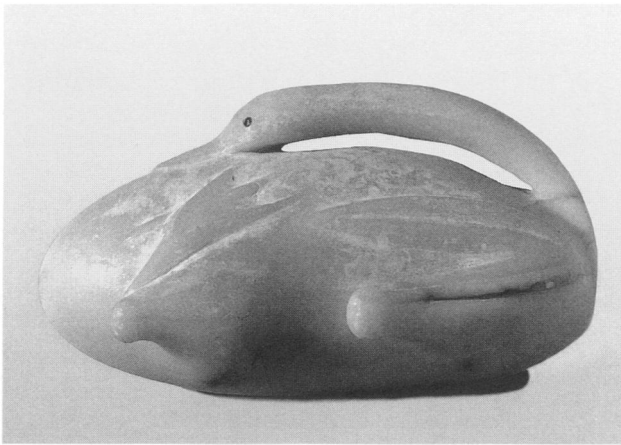


Figure 36. Flask in the form of a duck (Type B, cat. no. 6). Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, with inlaid eyes, L. 6.7 cm. Durham, Oriental Museum, H. 2259 (photo: Oriental Museum)

A flask in the form of two ducks arranged back-to-back. The necks are worked free from the body. The heads are long, and the beaks are long and narrow. The tops of the beaks are recessed. The eyes are small, and the copper eye rims and parts of the inlays are preserved. The wings are cropped at the elbows. The spout is lost, and most of the surface of the vessel is deteriorated.

This flask is distinctly stylized. The ducks' beaks are large in proportion to the heads, and are recessed at their sides.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Terrace, p. 61, BI, 8, pl. xxiv, fig. 28.

**\*10. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 10.176.50 (Figure 40)**

Type C

Anhydrite

Measurements: H. 6.9 cm, W. 7.8 cm, L. 14.7 cm

PROVENANCE: Said to be from Girgeh

A duck with an exceptionally long body, its neck is not carved free from the body. The head is long and small in proportion to the body. The beak is long and narrow and recessed at its sides. The eyes are small and were inlaid (one is preserved), but the eye sockets are not indicated. The wings are folded at the wrist. The rim of the spout is broken away.

The original surface is preserved on the back only. A round hole at the tail end of the flask must have been due to an inadvertent action that occurred during the hollowing process, and it was probably fitted with a plug.

This flask shows all characteristics of Type C, including a neck integral with the body (a feature unique to Type C).

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Terrace, p. 61, BI, 5, pl. xxiv, fig. 26.

**\*11. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 12.182.76 (Figure 41)**

Type C

Anhydrite

Measurements: H. 4 cm, W. 6.1 cm, L. 10 cm

PROVENANCE: Said to be from Girgeh

A flask in the form of a duckling, with its neck worked free from the body and curved to the side. The neck was broken in two places and reattached. The head is small and the beak is long. The small copper-rimmed eyes are inlaid into the head with no indication of the eye sockets. The body is plump, and the wings are slightly rounded at the wrist, indicating that the bird is a fledgling. The spout was made separately and fitted into a recess. The stone is discolored and appears to have lost its original surface.

This is the only vessel that has its head turned to the side and its neck worked free from the body. It is also the only Type C piece with the undeveloped wings of a duckling.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Terrace, p. 61, BI, 4, pl. xxiv, fig. 25.

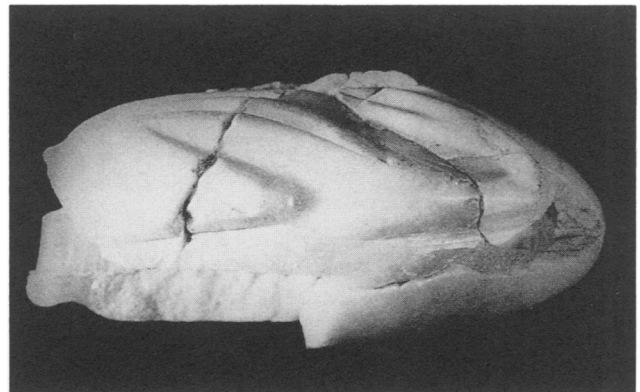


Figure 37. Fragmentary duck flask (Type B, cat. no. 7). From Lisht, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, with inlaid eyes, L. 6.7 cm. E. L. B. Terrace Group VII (photo: after Kemp and Merrillees, *Second Millennium Egypt*, pl. 25a)

**\*12. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 24.2.25 (Figure 42)**

Type C

Anhydrite

Measurements: H. 5.4 cm, W. 8.8 cm, L. 12.2 cm

PROVENANCE: Excavated by John Garstang at Abydos, 1907;<sup>64</sup> formerly in the collection of the Reverend William MacGregor<sup>65</sup>

A double-duckling flask with the heads and necks of the birds curved to the side. The necks are not worked free

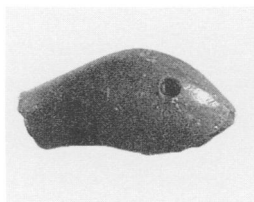


Figure 38. Head from a duck flask (Type B, cat. no. 8). From Lisht, Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, with inlaid eyes. Ex-The Metropolitan Museum of Art (photo: after Terrace, *JARCE* 5 [1966] pl. XIX, fig. 16)

from the body and are shown feathered, in contrast to the plucked body, like cat. no. 6 (Figure 36).<sup>66</sup> The heads and beaks are long and narrow, and the sides of the beaks are recessed. The milk tooth is present on both beaks. The preserved eye inlays are small and rimmed in copper. The places where the vessel rested show evidence of wear.

Although this duck comes from Abydos, its similarity to the three other Type C examples that were found at Girgeh indicates a common workshop for all four pieces.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge, London, *Catalogue of The MacGregor Collection of Egyptian Antiquities*, June 26–July 3, 1922, p. 135, lot 1018, pl. xxvi; Terrace, p. 61, BI, 7, pl. xxiv, fig. 27.

**\*13. Saint Petersburg, Hermitage, 5520 (Figure 43)**

Type D

Anhydrite

Measurements: H. 11.5 cm, W. 15 cm, L. 20 cm

**PROVENANCE:** Formerly in the collection of Robert de Rustafjaell<sup>67</sup>

This is the largest anhydrite duck flask.<sup>68</sup> The ellipse-shaped body and the round head arching far from the body with only the tip of the beak touching the breast are both diagnostic for Type D. The eyes are inlaid. The wings are rounded at the wrist, indicating that the bird is a fledgling. The opening is surrounded by a sharp rim, which is found only on Type D flasks. A portion of the rim is broken away, and the head and neck of the duckling were broken away and reattached.

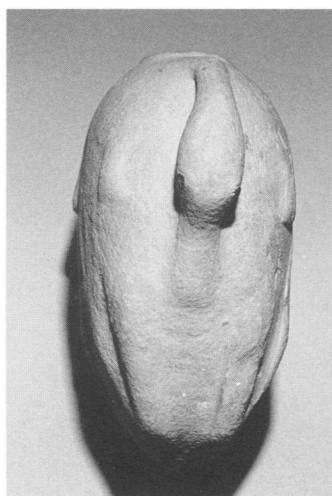


Figure 39a, b, c, d. Flask in the form of two ducks (Type C, cat. no. 9). Said to come from Girgeh, late Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, with inlaid eyes, L. 10.4 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1910, 10.176.51





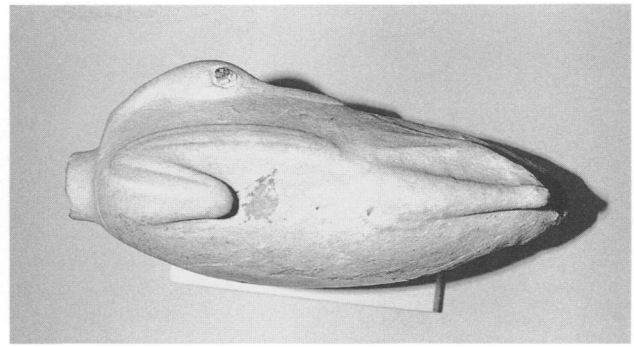
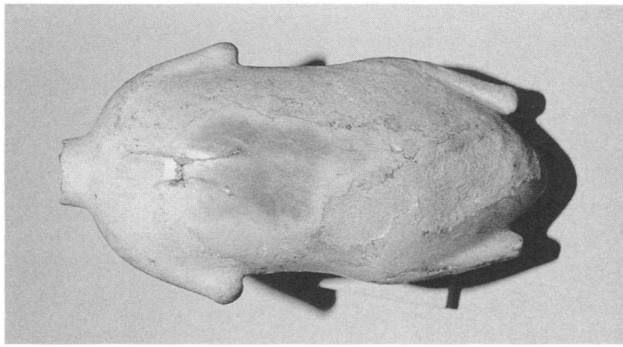


Figure 40a, b. Flask in the form of a duck with a long body (Type C, cat. no. 10). Said to come from Girgeh, late Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, with one inlaid eye, L. 14.7 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1910, 10.176.50

This and the following flask are virtually identical.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge, London, *Catalogue of the Remaining Part of the Valuable Collection of Egyptian Antiquities Formed by Robert de Rustafjaell, Esq.*, January 20, 1913, and four following days, p. 9, lot 103, pl. xiv; Kunsthau Zürich, *Aus den Schatzkammern Eurasiens: Meisterwerke antiker Kunst*, exh. cat. (Zurich, 1993) pp. 316–317, cat. no. 162, with bibliography, ill. (the catalogue's authors were unaware of the Rustafjaell provenance).

#### 14. Ex-Joseph Brummer Collection (Figure 44)

Type D

Anhydrite

Measurement: L. 19.1 cm

**PROVENANCE:** Formerly in the collections of Robert de Rustafjaell, Robert Woods Bliss (1937), and Joseph Brummer; present location not known

The second duckling flask from the Rustafjaell collection. Like the Saint Petersburg piece, this one is exceptionally large, with a round head and the neck arching far from the body. Only the tip of the beak touches the body.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge, London, *Collection Robert de Rustafjaell*, January 20, 1913, p. 9, lot 102, pl. xiv; Parke-Bernet Galleries Inc., New York, *The Notable Art Collection Belonging to the Estate of the Late Joseph Brummer*, Part I, April 20–23, 1949, p. 9, lot 41, ill.; the provenance given there is N. Rustafjaell, London, 1913, and Robert Woods Bliss, Paris, 1937.

#### \*15. London, British Museum 59243 (Figure 45)

Type D

Anhydrite

Measurements: H. 1.8 cm, W. 1.45 cm, L. 4.27 cm

**PROVENANCE:** Purchased in 1929. Probably part of the collection of Rev. William MacGregor

Duck head and part of neck. The eyes were inlaid. Like cat. nos. 13 and 14, the neck arches boldly, and the head is rounded. The break at the beak shows that only its tip touched the body, a further diagnostic feature of Type D.

This fragment may be the piece from the MacGregor collection that was sold in London at Sotheby's in 1922. The description in the catalogue reads, "also a Handle from another bowl, in the same stone, in the form of a swan's or goose's head and neck."<sup>69</sup>

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Terrace, p. 61, Bl. 9. Probably the piece listed in Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge, London, *Catalogue of The MacGregor Collection of Egyptian Antiquities*, June 26–July 3, 1922, p. 135, as part of lot 1017.

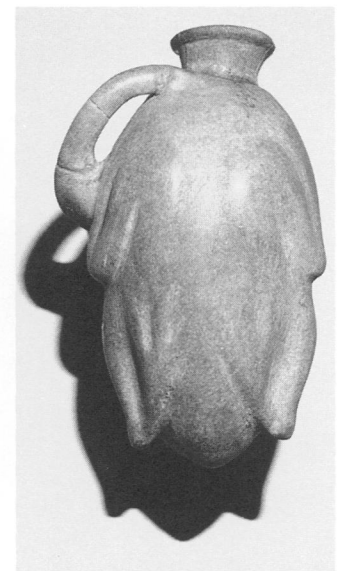
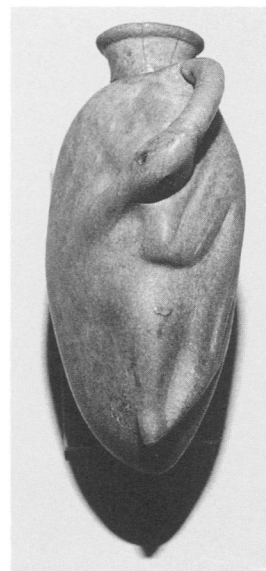


Figure 41a, b. Flask in the form of a duckling with the head and neck turned to the side (Type C, cat. no. 11). Said to come from Girgeh, late Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, with inlaid eyes, L. 10 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1912, 12.182.76

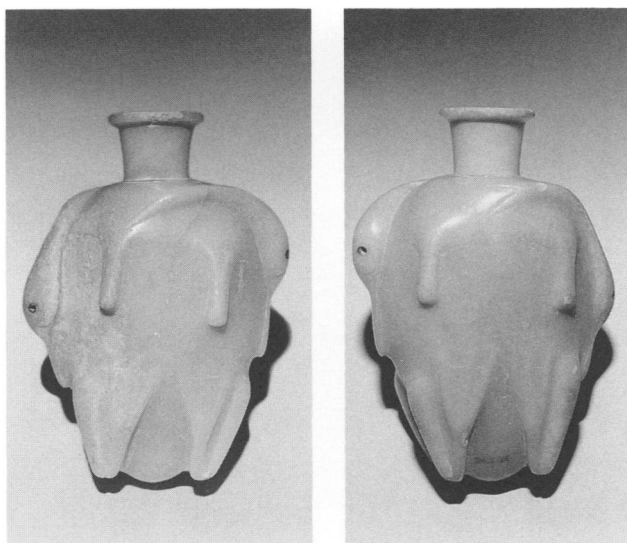


Figure 42. Double-duckling flask with the heads and necks turned to the side (Type C, cat. no. 12). From Abydos, late Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, with partially preserved eye inlays, L. 12.2 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1924, 24.2.25

#### ABBREVIATIONS

Arnold—Dorothea Arnold, *An Egyptian Bestiary*, MMAB, Spring 1995

ASAE—*Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte*

Aston—Barbara G. Aston, *Ancient Egyptian Stone Vessels: Materials and Forms*, *Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Altägyptens*, Band 5 (Heidelberg, 1994)

Bourriau—Janine Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals: Egyptian Art in the Middle Kingdom*, exhibition organized by the Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge, 1988)

CG—*Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire*

JARCE—*Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*

Kemp and Merrillees—Barry J. Kemp and Robert S. Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery in Second Millennium Egypt*, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut. Abteilung Kairo, Sonderschrift 7 (Mainz, 1980)

MDAIK—*Mitteilungen des deutschen Archäologischen Instituts*, Abteilung Kairo

Terrace—Edward L. B. Terrace, “Blue Marble” Plastic Vessels and Other Figures, *JARCE* 5 (1966) pp. 57–62, and pls. XIV–XXVIII.

ZÄS—*Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank Dorothea Arnold, Lila Acheson Wallace Curator in Charge, Department of Egyptian Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, for suggesting this article and discussing various aspects of it with me, and Marsha Hill, Curator, for her assistance at various stages during my work and for providing numerous details. I thank Richard Newman, Research Scientist, Department of Objects Conservation and Scientific Research, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, whose analyses of organic residue taken from a broad sampling of blue-anhydrite containers in the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts (Technical Report) have added immense interest and valuable information toward our understanding of the ancient use of these objects. I am also grateful to Janine Bourriau, the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, Cambridge University, England, for sharing her knowledge of Middle Kingdom material with me; to L. Joseph Stecher, Los Angeles, for editorial comments; to Georg Meurer for

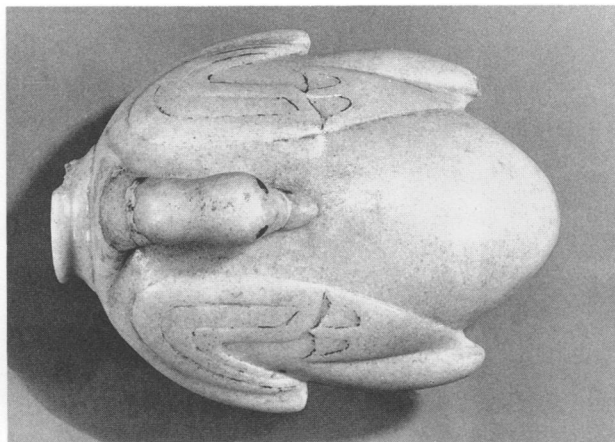
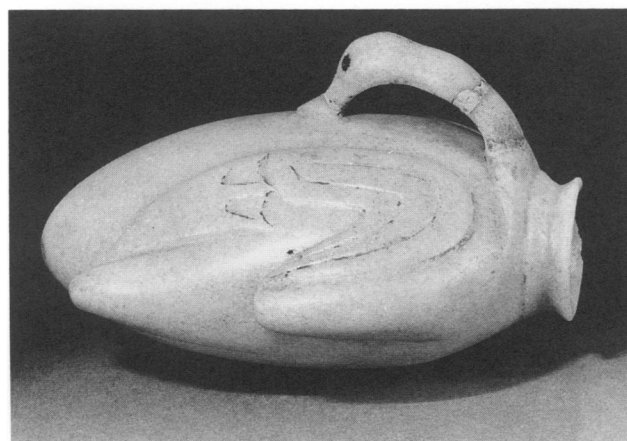


Figure 43a, b. Large duckling flask (Type D, cat. no. 13). Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, with inlaid eyes, L. 20 cm. Saint Petersburg, Hermitage, 5520 (photo: Hermitage)

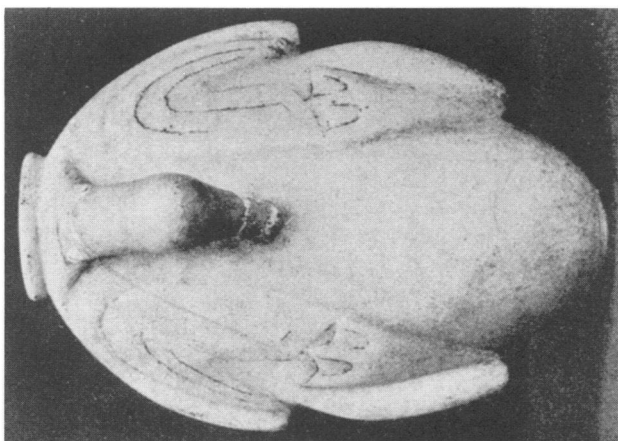


Figure 44. Large duckling flask (Type D, cat. no. 14). Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, with inlaid eyes, L. 19.1 cm. Ex-Joseph Brummer Collection (photo: after Parke-Bernet Galleries Inc., New York, *The Notable Art Collection Belonging to the Estate of the Late Joseph Brummer*, Part I, April 20–23, 1949, p. 9, lot 41)

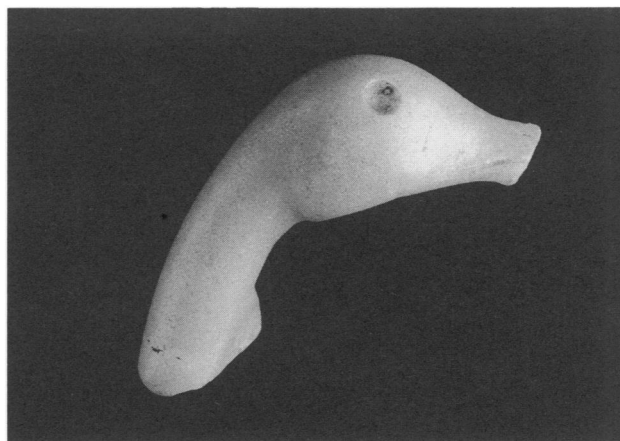


Figure 45. Head and neck from a duck flask (Type D, cat. no. 15). Second Intermediate Period, Dynasty 17, ca. 1635–1550 B.C. Anhydrite, eyes originally inlaid, L. 4.27 cm. London, British Museum 59243 (photo: courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum)

assistance in Berlin; and to Diane Bergman (Wilbour Librarian) and Mary Gow (Assistant Librarian) of the Brooklyn Museum of Art, who made the Wilbour Library facilities available to me.

## NOTES

1. The cosmetic arts in ancient Egypt are discussed by Rita E. Freed in Edward Brovarski, Susan K. Doll, Rita E. Freed et al., *Egypt's Golden Age: The Art of Living in the New Kingdom 1558–1085 B.C.*, exh. cat., Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Boston, 1982) pp. 199–200.

2. Some objects generally classified as toilet articles may have served an additional or even a primary function as ritual implements. For the most recent discussion, see Arielle P. Kozloff in Arielle P. Kozloff and Betsy M. Bryan, *Egypt's Dazzling Sun: Amenhotep III and His World* (Cleveland, 1992) pp. 331–341. Numerous examples are illustrated in Jean Capart, *Primitive Art in Egypt* (London, 1905) figs. 75–78; Aston, p. 98.

3. Henry George Fischer, "Another Pithemorphic Vessel of the Sixth Dynasty," *JARCE* 30 (1993) pp. 1–9, discusses sixteen vessels in the form of monkeys. Three vessels bear cartouches of King Pepi I, Dynasty 6 (two mention the king's first jubilee). Other monkey vessels are inscribed with the names of his sons, one for Merenre, and five for Pepi II. To these may be added an uninscribed monkey vessel, without a baby, Munich, ÄS 1601, and a fragment with a baby only, Berlin 14404; Sylvia Schoske et al., *Schönheit–Abglanz der Göttlichkeit: Kosmetik im alten Ägypten*, Schriften aus der Ägyptischen Sammlung 5 (Munich, 1990) pp. 92–93, nos. 50 and 49, respectively.

4. Edward Terrace was the first to discuss anhydrite duck flasks as part of an article on anhydrite plastic vessels; *JARCE* 5 (1966) pp. 57–63, pls. xiv–xxvii.

To Terrace's list of duck vessels may be added: Private Collection (cat. no. 2); Strasbourg 1078 (cat. no. 4); Durham H. 2259 (cat. no. 6); E. L. B. Terrace (cat. no. 7); Saint Petersburg 5520 (cat. no. 13); Ex-Brummer Collection (cat. no. 14).

To Terrace's section termed "Others," listing blue-anhydrite vessels in forms other than monkeys or ducks, add: Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum (E.54.1937), a vessel embraced by a pair of vultures sharing shen signs in their talons, Bourriau, pp. 140–141, no. 142; Berlin 11554, a squat pot with cobras rising on opposite sides, their bodies encircling the base to create a ring, blue anhydrite, H. 2.5 cm; Schoske et al., *Schönheit*, pp. 106–107, no. 70; and a similar example, British Museum 12753, less finely worked, with the hoods of the cobras only, blue anhydrite, H. 4.12 cm, said to come from Thebes, unpublished.

5. The birds are usually identified as trussed ducks, but there is no visible sign of trussing.

6. Calcium sulfate  $\text{CaSO}_4$  in its anhydrous form; Alfred Lucas, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries* (London, 1989) rev. and enlarged by J. R. Harris, p. 413; Thierry De Putter and Christina Karlhausen, *Les Pierres utilisées dans la sculpture et l'architecture de l'Égypte pharaonique*, Connaissance de l'Égypte Ancienne 4 (Brussels, 1992) pp. 49–50; and Chris Pellant, *Steine und Minerale* (Ravensburg, 1994) p. 111. The composition, use, and date of anhydrite are discussed by Aston, pp. 51–53 (2.2.10). See also Kemp and Merrillees, p. 168; and Bourriau, p. 140.

7. Lucas, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries*, p. 413.

8. Bourriau, pp. 142–143, discusses this problem.

9. MMA acc. no. 26.3.220, from Deir el-Bahri, Theban Tomb no. 313 (MMA tomb no. 510), blue anhydrite, H. 3 cm, W. 4.5 cm, D. 7 cm; Bertha Porter and Rosalind Moss, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings*, I: *The Theban Necropolis*, Part I, *Private Tombs*, 2nd rev. ed. (Oxford, 1960) pp. 388–389, TT 313; Terrace, *JARCE* 5 (1966) pp. 58 and 62, D. 1, pl. xxvii. For Henenu and his tomb, see James P. Allen, "Some Theban Officials of the Early Middle Kingdom," *Studies in Honor of William*

Kelly Simpson I (Boston, 1996) pp. 10–12. I thank Marsha Hill, Curator, Department of Egyptian Art, MMA, for providing information on this object.

10. London, British Museum 24118, blue anhydrite, H. 3.98 cm, W. 4.29 cm, thickness 1.2 cm, purchased from Rev. William John Lottie, 1890; W. M. Flinders Petrie, *Diospolis Parva, the Cemeteries of Abadiyeh and Hu, 1898–99*, The Egypt Exploration Society, Excavation Memoir 20 (London, 1901) p. 42, mentioned in text; Henri Gauthier, *Le Livre des Rois d'Égypte, Recueil de Titres et Protocoles Royaux, Noms Propres de Rois, Reines, Princes, Princesses et Parents de Rois, Tome II, de la XIIIe à la Fin de la XVIIIe Dynastie*, Mémoires publiés par les Membres de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire 18 (Cairo, 1912) p. 33, no. VIII; Terrace, *JARCE* 5 (1966) p. 58 (2).

W. Vivian Davies, Keeper, Department of Egyptian Antiquities, the British Museum, kindly permitted me to examine the blue-anhydrite objects in that collection. I thank Richard Parkinson, Curator, for providing details of those objects and the members of the department for their assistance.

11. Cairo JE 39567, blue anhydrite, H. 10 cm, from Dendera; Arthur E. P. B. Weigall, "Upper Egyptian Notes," *ASAE* 9 (1908) p. 107, no. 5, fig. 2; Aston, p. 52. I thank Christine Lilyquist, Lila Acheson Wallace Research Curator in Egyptology, MMA, for providing the Cairo Museum accession number.

12. Aston, p. 52.

13. The exceptions to this chronological distribution are a gold-trimmed vessel in the MMA (Figure 18) that belonged to a minor wife of Tuthmosis III (ca. 1479–1425 B.C.), New York, MMA 26.8.35a,b; Christine Lilyquist, *Egyptian Stone Vessels: Khian through Tuthmosis IV* (New York, 1995) p. 51, Q. ill.; and the head (H. 8.1 cm) and feet from a royal shawabti found in the tomb of Ramesses II (ca. 1279–1213 B.C.), Christian Leblanc, "Trois campagnes de fouille dans la tombe de Ramsès II. KV. 7—Vallée des rois—1993/1994/1995," *Memnonia, Bulletin édité par l'association pour la sauvegarde du Ramesseum* 7 (Paris-Giza, 1996) pp. 196–197, pls. L, LI b.

Two other pieces have been called anhydrite but are actually blue chalcedony: a bull-headed amulet datable to the Predynastic Period (ca. 3200–2960 B.C.), in Brussels, MRAH E 2335; De Putter and Karlshausen, *Les Pierres*, p. 50, pl. 4c; and an ethereal statuette that represents a daughter of Akhenaten (ca. 1349–1336 B.C.), in Berlin, 17951; Werner Kaiser et al., *Ägyptisches Museum Berlin* (Berlin, 1967) p. 68, no. 750, ill. I thank Dietrich Wildung, Director, Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, for discussing the Berlin piece with me, and for suggesting that it and the Brussels amulet might be of chalcedony. For his publication of a small blue-chalcedony triad depicting Ramesses II and two deities in Marseilles, see Dietrich Wildung, "Ramses, die grosse Sonne Ägyptens," *ZÄS* 99 (1973) pp. 33–41, pl. IV.

14. This detail is similarly treated on Dynasty 18 dishes in the form of ducks; see, for example, Arnold, p. 28, no. 26.

15. I thank Richard Newman, Research Scientist, Department of Objects Conservation and Scientific Research, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, for agreeing to undertake this project, and Susanna Gânsicke, Associate Conservator, for coordinating various details.

16. The single exception is the double-duck vessel (cat. no. 1; Figures 8, 31), which stands on the ankle joints.

17. Two cosmetic jars from the Dynasty 17 tomb of Queen Mentuhotep (ca. 1615 B.C.) at Dra Abu el-Naga are closed in this manner; Schoske et al., *Schönheit*, pp. 78–79, no. 32.

18. Janine D. Bourriau in Brovarski et al., *Egypt's Golden Age*, p. 103, no. 85, discusses a Dynasty 18 pottery vase with narrow neck that is sealed this way.

19. Paris, Louvre, E 11175bis; purchased, calcite, L. 22 cm, W. 11 cm, Diam. of spout 4.1 cm; Christiane Ziegler et al., *Museen der Welt: Der Louvre: die Ägyptische Sammlung* (Munich, 1992) p. 40, at the left in a group photograph. I thank Georg Meurer for bringing this object to my attention. Other examples include an alabaster flask in the form of a duck body from Beni Hasan, Tomb 684; see John Garstang, *The Burial Customs of Ancient Egypt As Illustrated by Tombs of the Middle Kingdom* (London, 1907) p. 118, fig. 111, who suggests it is early Dynasty 18 on the basis of the pottery found with it. See also Robert S. Merrillees, *The Cypriote Bronze Age Pottery Found in Egypt, Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology* 18 (Lund, 1968) pp. 107–108; a bag-shaped alabaster vessel with a duck-headed handle, found at Sedment, in locus 1300, a group of objects datable to various periods, W. M. Flinders Petrie and Guy Brunton, *Sedment I*, British School of Archaeology in Egypt and Egyptian Research Account 34 (London, 1924) p. 18, pls. XL, middle row left, XLI, no. 12. For Sedment locus 1300, see also Bourriau, p. 112, no. 98.

20. In contrast, vessels shaped as living birds are preserved from the Predynastic and Early Dynastic periods (ca. 3200–2800 B.C.); for example, Ali Abdel-Rahman Hassanain El-Khouli, *Egyptian Stone Vessels: Predynastic Period to Dynasty III, Typology and Analysis*, 3 vols. (Mainz, 1978) p. 738, pl. 139, N. A Tell el-Yahudiya jug in the shape of a live duck is datable to the Hyksos Period; Manfred Bietak et al., *Pharaonen und Fremde: Dynastien im Dunkel*, exh. cat., Historische Museum der Stadt Wien (Vienna, 1994) p. 231, no. 281 (New York, MMA 23.3.40).

21. By the New Kingdom, dishes in the form of food offerings occur frequently; they include plucked ducks, as well as ibex and oryx bound for slaughter; William H. Peck in Brovarski et al., *Egypt's Golden Age*, pp. 212–215, nos. 254–258.

22. Food-storage containers in the shape of fowl are documented from the Old Kingdom onward; for example, limestone food cases in the shape of plucked fowl from Dynasty 6 (ca. 2323–2150 B.C.), William C. Hayes, *The Scepter of Egypt: A Background for the Study of the Egyptian Antiquities in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Part I: From the Earliest Times to the End of the Middle Kingdom* (New York, 1953) p. 119, fig. 73, MMA 37.6.2a,b and 37.6.5a,b; a lid for a duck-shaped container from a queen's burial beneath the pyramid of Amenemhat III (Dynasty 12, 1844–1797 B.C.) at Dahshur, Dieter Arnold, "Dahschur. Dritter Grabungsbericht," *MDAIK* 36 (1980) pl. 15. Related to these containers are model food offerings in the shape of plucked fowl, for example, a calcite duck discussed by Bourriau, p. 102, no. 87 (Edinburgh 1911.338).

23. For example, the statue of King Sebekemsaf I (ca. 1632–1618 B.C.) redated from Dynasty 13 to Dynasty 17 by W. Vivian Davies, *A Royal Statue Reattributed*, British Museum Occasional Papers 28 (London, 1981) pp. 1–56; and fine gold and electrum jewelry included in the burial of a woman at Qurna, W. M. Flinders Petrie, *Qurneh*, British School of Archaeology in Egypt and Egyptian Research Account 15 (London, 1909) pp. 6–10, pls. xxii–xxix, and also discussed by Cyril Aldred, *Jewels of the Pharaohs, Egyptian Jewelry of the Dynastic Period* (New York, 1971) pp. 197–198, no. 48.

24. Weigall, "Upper Egyptian Notes," *ASAE* 9 (1908) p. 107, no. 5, fig. 2.

25. For a similarly shaped blue-anhydrite vessel with handles, see John Garstang, *El Arâbah: A Cemetery of the Middle Kingdom; Survey of*

the Old Kingdom Temenos; *Graffiti from the Temple of Sety*, British School of Archaeology and Egyptian Research Account 6 (London, 1901) p. 7, pl. ix, Tomb 281, a disturbed burial.

26. Weigall, "Upper Egyptian Notes," p. 107.

27. Cobras were used in two instances to decorate eye-paint pots; see note 4.

28. For the development of stone-vessel shapes, consult Dorothea Arnold in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* II, Wolfgang Helck and Wolfhart Westendorf, eds. (Wiesbaden, 1977) cols. 483–501.

29. The vessel inscribed for Sobekhotep IV of Dynasty 13 Cairo JE 39567, is similar in shape, see note 11, and Figure 17.

30. See Brovarski et al., *Egypt's Golden Age*, pp. 106 (91), 131–132 (126), 148–149 (150), for Dynasty 18 examples.

31. For the date of drop-shaped flasks, including other anhydrite examples, see Bourriau, p. 144, no. 150, and Lilyquist, *Stone Vessels*, pp. 61 and 14, figs. 149 and 11, respectively.

32. Abydos, T. E. Peet Tomb X. 52; T. Eric Peet, *The Cemeteries of Abydos*, Part II, 1911–12, The Egypt Exploration Fund, Excavation Memoir 34 (London, 1914) p. 61 (X. 52), pl. XIII, 14.

33. Kemp and Merrillees, p. 168.

34. Bourriau, p. 141. See also Aston, pp. 141–142.

35. Cairo CG 18506, from Thebes, blue anhydrite, H. 5 cm, Diam. of opening 6.7 cm; Terrace, *JARCE* 5 (1966) p. 62, BII, 2, pl. xxv, fig. 32; Friedrich W. von Bissing, *Steingefässe*, nos. 18065–18793, CG 15 (Vienna, 1907) pp. 102–103, pl. VIII.

36. Edinburgh, RSM 1909.527.33, blue anhydrite, H. 4 cm, Diam. 12 cm; Terrace, *JARCE* 5 (1966) p. 59, AI, 9, pl. XVIII, figs. 11–12.

Two pieces closely related to the Edinburgh monkey bowl are: MMA 30.8.139, blue anhydrite, H. 4 cm, Diam. 8.5 cm; Terrace, *JARCE* 5 (1966) p. 59, AI, 5, pl. xvi, fig. 7 (Figure 11); and Cairo Museum, JE 46403, blue anhydrite, Diam. 11 cm, from Abydos, Tomb E 237; Garstang, *El Arâbah*, pp. 7–8, pl. ix; Terrace, *JARCE* 5 (1966) p. 59, AI, 7, pl. xvii, figs. 9, 10. On the basis of style, both pieces must be contemporaneous and most likely by the same artisan.

37. Petrie, *Qurneh*, p. 7, pls. xxii.9, xxv.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

39. Aldred, *Jewels of the Pharaohs*, pp. 197–198, no. 48.

40. Janine Bourriau in *Studien zur altägyptischen Keramik*, Dorothea Arnold, ed., Deutsches Archäologisches Institut. Abteilung Kairo, Sonderschrift 9 (Mainz, 1981) pp. 34–37, places it not later than the reign of Kamose (1555–1550 B.C.).

41. Aston, p. 52.

42. The E. L. B. Terrace group consists of 22 objects, predominantly faience figurines and model offerings said to be from a tomb at Lisht. They were recorded and photographed in the early 1970s and published by Kemp and Merrillees, pp. 165–166, pls. 23–26.

43. Now in Jerusalem, Israel Museum no. 91.71.241, H. 3.5 cm, W. 9.5 cm; Joan R. Mertens et al., "Ancient Art: Gifts from The Norbert Schimmel Collection," *MMAB* 49, 4 (1992) p. 63; Kemp and Merrillees, *Second Millennium Egypt*, p. 165, xvi; Jürgen Settgast and Ulrich Gehrig, *Von Troja bis Amarna: The Norbert Schimmel Collection*, New York (Mainz, 1978) no. 203; Terrace, *JARCE* 5 (1966) p. 59, AI, 1.

44. Kemp and Merrillees, p. 165.

45. Now in Jerusalem, Israel Museum no. 91.71.229; Mertens et al.,

"Ancient Art," *MMAB* 49, 4 (1992) p. 63; and Settgast and Gehrig, *Von Troja bis Amarna*, no. 199.

46. The coiffure is flat on the top, broad at the sides, and patterned as if tightly crimped. The back of the head is shaved except for two thick locks that lie against the shoulders, with a third lock at the back of the head. Geraldine Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor* (Oxford, 1993) pp. 198–234, esp. pp. 199 and 211, discusses fertility figurines and classifies those wearing this hairstyle under her Type 1, d.

47. See, for example, Henry George Fischer, "The Mark of a Second Hand on Ancient Egyptian Antiquities," *MMJ* 9 (1974) p. 13, a female statuette excavated at Thebes, and Elisabeth Delange, *Musée du Louvre: Catalogue des statues égyptiennes du Moyen Empire, 2060–1560 avant J.-C.* (Paris, 1987) pp. 190–191, a limestone statuette (Paris, Louvre E 22454) inscribed for a nonroyal woman that is stylistically closely related. It may be derived from a similar hairstyle worn by terracotta figurines of the Hyksos Period.

48. J. Vandier d'Abbadie, *Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités Égyptiennes: Catalogue des Objets de toilette égyptiens* (Paris, 1972) pp. 102–103, no. 395, 166–167, no. 750.

49. Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, pp. 199, 211.

50. Janine D. Bourriau in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* V, Helck and Westendorf, eds. (1984) col. 365.

51. Cairo CG 18486, black serpentinite, H. 5.5 cm, W. at top 4 cm, inscribed for the "god's wife, great royal wife, Hatshepsut"; Lilyquist, *Egyptian Stone Vessels*, p. 50, cat. no. J, fig. 135. An exceptionally fine example is the shallow dish with a monkey as its handle in the Kofler collection; see William H. Peck in Brovarski et al., *Egypt's Golden Age*, p. 212, no. 253. Although a Late Period date for this piece has been suggested, cosmetic articles with monkeys are typical of Dynasty 18 and do not occur in this manner in the Late Period. The leash around the waist is a feature introduced during Dynasty 18, whereas in the Middle Kingdom, a collar is worn around the neck.

An anhydrite monkey holding a kohl tube, a cosmetic-vessel type characteristic of early Dynasty 18, adds support to this premise; Sotheby's, New York, *Antiquities*, Dec. 17, 1997, lot 39; H. 5.4 cm. The monkey's body is also hollowed.

52. For Dynasty 18 ivory and wood dishes and spoons in the shape of plucked ducks, see Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue des Objets de toilette égyptiens*, pp. 31–33, cat. nos. 74–77; Arnold, p. 28, no. 26. I thank James Romano, Curator, Department of Egyptian, Classical, and Middle Eastern Art, The Brooklyn Museum of Art, for assistance obtaining photographs and statistics of objects in the museum collection.

53. See Alfred Hermann, "Das Motiv der Ente mit zurückgewendetem Kopfe im ägyptischen Kunstgewerbe," *ZÄS* 68 (1932) p. 92, for a discussion of the duck motif.

54. The provenance details are based on a note in Herbert E. Winlock's handwriting that accompanied the duck flask. Herbert E. Winlock (1884–1950), an American Egyptologist, excavated for the MMA between 1906 and 1931, was appointed curator in 1929, and director of the MMA in 1932; Dawson and Uphill, *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, The Egypt Exploration Society Special Publication 19, 3rd rev. ed., M. L. Bierbrier, ed. (London, 1995) pp. 448–449. I thank Marsha Hill for looking into this for me.

55. Sir Robert Ludwig Mond (1867–1938) was a British chemist and excavator. From 1902 to 1925 he worked clearing and recording Theban tombs, and also discovered a number of new ones;



Dawson and Uphill, *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, 3rd rev. ed., Bierbrier, ed. (1995), pp. 291–292.

56. London, British Museum 65267, found in an area of plundered tombs behind the Ramesseum; anhydrite, H. 6.9 cm, W. 7.2 cm, L. 11.48 cm, bequeathed by Sir Robert Ludwig Mond in 1939; Schemuel Yeivin, “The Mond Excavation at Luxor, Excavations behind the Ramesseum,” University of Liverpool, *Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology Issued by the Institute of Archaeology*, J. P. Droop and T. E. Peet, eds. (London, 1926) XIII, p. 6, no. 4, pl. XI, fig. 5. Richard Parkinson is to be thanked for bringing this reference to my attention.

57. I thank the owners for permitting me to examine this flask and for permission to publish it.

58. Rita Freed, Curator, Department of Ancient Egyptian, Nubian, and Near Eastern Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, to whom I am grateful for permission to publish this flask, kindly permitted me to examine it. I thank Peter Lacovara, Assistant Curator, for facilitating examination of the duck and arranging for the analysis of its contents.

59. Bourriau, p. 141.

60. Kemp and Merrillees, p. 168.

61. John Ruffle, Keeper, Oriental Museum, Durham, kindly provided information about the duck vessel and permission to publish it. I thank him for permitting me to examine the piece.

62. Kemp and Merrillees, p. 165.

63. See notes 46, 47.

64. Steven Snape, University of Liverpool, identified a photograph of a duck flask from Garstang’s excavation (Abydos photo negative no. A580) as this piece.

65. Rev. William MacGregor (1848–1937) was a British collector whose fine collection of Egyptian antiquities was sold in 1922; Dawson and Uphill, *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, pp. 267–268.

66. This detail is often found on New Kingdom cosmetic articles; see, for example, Arnold, p. 28, no. 26, a pair of ivory cosmetic containers in the form of mallards.

67. Robert de Rustafjaell (ca. 1876–1943): “British-American collector and author; . . . lived for some time in Egypt as a geologist and mining engineer and formed a collection of Egyptian antiquities, mainly studying predynastic sites. . . . his collections were dispersed in three sales at Sothebys in 1906, 1913, and 1915”; Dawson and Uphill, *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, p. 368.

68. Andray Bolshakov, Keeper, Hermitage, kindly examined this duck flask for me and provided its statistics. I thank him for arranging for photographing the duck and for permission to publish it.

69. The other piece mentioned in the lot is an elaborate blue-anhydrite bowl decorated with ducks, their wings embracing the sides, which is on loan from the Guennol Collection to the Brooklyn Museum. The piece was found at Esna in a rock cut tomb (153E). The two deposits in the tomb were undisturbed. Other stone cosmetic vessels found with the duck bowl are characteristic of the Second Intermediate Period; John Garstang, “Excavations at Hierakonpolis, at Esna, and in Nubia,” *ASAE* 8 (1907) p. 142; Dorothy Downes, *The Excavations at Esna 1905–1906* (Warminster, 1974) pp. 4–7, fig. 7a, b, and p. 99.