

of seven horizontal lines which fill the right side and one short vertical column in front of the man's legs.
 Publication: Fischer, *Inscriptions*, no. 5, pp. 24-26 and pl. viii.

(1) An offering which the king gives and Anubis, who is upon his mountain and in the place of embalming, the lord of the necropolis. Buried be the Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Chief Scribe of boat crews, (3) Judge, Chief Scribe, Ni-hebsed-Pepi in his tomb which is in the good Western Desert. (5) She has taken his hand, he has joined land, he has crossed the firmament. May the Western Desert give her hands to him in peace, in peace before the great god. (7) An offering which the king gives and Anubis, so that funerary offerings be given to the Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, honored by Osiris, Ni-hebsed-Pepi. *Above the woman's head*: His wife, his beloved, the Royal Ornament, Priestess of Hathor, Sepi.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WENI

From Abydos
 Cairo Museum No. 1435
 Sixth Dynasty

The inscription is carved on a monolithic slab of limestone which formed one wall of the single-room tomb-chapel. The structure may have been a cenotaph rather than a tomb. The text consists of fifty-one vertical columns of finely carved hieroglyphs, preceded by one horizontal line which contains a prayer for offerings. Since some scholars include the first line in their numbering while others omit it, I have given double numbers. The stone has suffered considerable damage, resulting in a number of lacunae.

Weni's exceptionally long career spanned the reigns of Teti, Pepi I, and Mernere.

Publication: Mariette, *Abydos*, II, pls. 44-45. P. Tresson, *L'inscription d'Ouni*, Bibliothèque d'étude, 8 (Cairo, 1919). Borchardt, *Denkmäler*, I, 118 ff. and pls. 29-30. Sethe, *Urkunden*, I, 98-110.

Translation: BAR, I, §§ 292-294, 306-315, 319-324. M. Stracmans, *Bruxelles Annuaire*, III (1935), 509-544. J. A. Wilson in *ANET*, pp. 227-228 (excerpts).

Additional references may be found in the works of Tresson and Borchardt.

(1/2) [The Count, Governor of Upper Egypt, Chamberlain, Warden of Nekhen, Mayor of Nekheb, Sole Companion, honored by Osiris Foremost-of-the-Westerners, Weni [says]: [I was] a fillet-wearing [youth] under the majesty of King Teti, my office being that of custodian of the storehouse, when I became inspector of [tenants] of the palace ----- [When I had become] overseer of

the robing-room under the majesty of King Pepi, his majesty gave me the rank of companion and inspector of priests of his pyramidtown.

While my office was that of ---- his majesty made me senior warden of Nekhen, his heart being filled with me beyond any other servant of his. I heard cases alone with the chief judge and vizier, concerning all kinds of secrets. [I acted] in the name of the king for the royal harem and for the six great houses, because his majesty's heart was filled with me beyond any official of his, any noble of his, any servant of his.

(5/6) When I begged of the majesty of my lord that there be brought for me a sarcophagus of white stone from Tura, his majesty had a royal seal-bearer cross over with a company of sailors under his command, to bring me this sarcophagus from Tura. It came with him in a great barge of the court, together with its lid, a doorway, lintel, two doorjambs and a libation-table. Never before had the like been done for any servant—but I was excellent in his majesty's heart; I was rooted in his majesty's heart; his majesty's heart was filled with me.

While I was senior warden of Nekhen, his majesty made me a sole companion and overseer of the 'royal tenants'.¹ I replaced four overseers of 'royal tenants' who were there. I acted for his majesty's praise in guarding, escorting the king, and attending.² I acted throughout (10/11) so that his majesty praised me for it exceedingly.

When there was a secret charge in the royal harem against Queen Weret-yamtes, his majesty made me go in to hear (it) alone. No chief judge and vizier, no official was there, only I alone; because I was worthy, because I was rooted in his majesty's heart; because his majesty had filled his heart with me. Only I put (it) in writing together with one other senior warden of Nekhen, while my rank was (only) that of overseer of 'royal tenants'. Never before had one like me heard a secret of the king's harem; but his majesty made me hear it, because I was worthy in his majesty's heart beyond any official of his, beyond any noble of his, beyond any servant of his.

When his majesty took action against the Asiatic Sand-dwellers, his majesty made an army of many tens of thousands from all of Upper Egypt: from Yebu in the south to Medenyt in the north; from Lower Egypt: from all of the Two-Sides-of-the-House³ (15/16) and from Sedjer and Khen-sedjru; and from Irtjet-Nubians, Medja-Nubians, Yam-Nubians, Wawat-Nubians, Kaau-Nubians; and from Tjemeh-land.

His majesty sent me at the head of this army, there being counts, royal seal-bearers, sole companions of the palace, chieftains and mayors of towns of Upper and Lower Egypt, companions, scout-leaders,⁴ chief priests of Upper and Lower Egypt, and chief district officials at the head of the troops of Upper and Lower Egypt, from the villages and towns that they governed and from the Nubians of those foreign lands. I was the one who commanded them—while my rank was that of overseer of 'royal tenants'⁷—because of my rectitude, so that no one attacked his fellow, (20/21) so that no one seized a loaf or sandals from a traveler, so that no one took a cloth from any town, so that no one took a goat from anyone.

I led them from Northern Isle 'and' Gate of Iyhotep 'in' the district of Horus-lord-of-truth⁵ while being in this rank. ----- I determined the number of these troops. It had never been determined by any servant.⁶

This army returned in safety,

It had ravaged the Sand-dwellers' land.

This army returned in safety,

It had flattened the sand-dwellers' land.

This army returned in safety,

It had sacked its strongholds.

This army returned in safety,

It had cut down its figs, its vines.

This army returned in safety,

It had thrown fire in all its [mansions].

This army returned in safety,

It had slain its troops by many ten-thousands.

This army returned in safety,

[It had carried] off many [troops] as captives.

His majesty praised me for it beyond anything. His majesty sent me to lead this army five times, to attack the land of the Sand-dwellers as often as they rebelled, with these troops. I acted so that his majesty praised me [for it beyond anything].

Told there were 'marauders' among these foreigners at the nose of Gazelle's-head,⁷ I crossed (30/31) in ships with these troops. I made a landing in the back of the height of the mountain range, to the north of the land of the Sand-dwellers, while half of this army was on the road. I came and caught them all and slew every marauder among them.

Weni Becomes Governor of Upper Egypt

When I was chamberlain of the palace and sandal-bearer, King Mernere, my lord who lives forever, made me Count and Governor of Upper Egypt, from Yebu in the south to Medenyt in the north, because I was worthy in his majesty's heart, because I was rooted in his majesty's heart, because his majesty's heart was filled with me. When I was chamberlain and sandal-bearer, his majesty praised me for the watch and guard duty which I did at court, more than any official of his, more than any noble of his, (35/36) more than any servant of his. Never before had this office been held by any servant.⁸

I governed Upper Egypt for him in peace, so that no one attacked his fellow. I did every task. I counted everything that is countable for the residence in this Upper Egypt two times, and every service that is countable for the residence in this Upper Egypt two times.⁹ I did a perfect job in this Upper Egypt. Never before had the like been done in this Upper Egypt. I acted throughout so that his majesty praised me for it.

His majesty sent me to Ithhat to bring the sarcophagus "chest of the living" together with its lid, and the costly august pyramidion for the pyramid "Mernere-appears-in-splendor," my mistress.¹⁰ His majesty sent me to Yebu to bring a granite false-door and its libation stone and granite lintels, (40/41) and to bring granite portals and libation stones for the upper chamber of the pyramid "Mernere-appears-in-splendor," my mistress. I traveled north with (them) to the pyramid "Mernere-appears-in-splendor" in six barges and three tow-boats of eight ribs in a single expedition. Never had Yebu and Ithhat been done¹¹ in a single expedition under any king. Thus everything his majesty commanded was done entirely as his majesty commanded.

His majesty sent me to Hatnub to bring a great altar of alabaster of Hatnub. I brought this altar down for him in seventeen days. After it was quarried at Hatnub, I had it go downstream in this barge I had built for it, a barge of acacia wood of sixty cubits in length and thirty cubits in width. Assembled in seventeen days, in the third month of summer, when there was no (45/46) water on the sandbanks, it landed at the pyramid "Mernere-appears-in-splendor" in safety. It came about through me entirely in accordance with the ordinance commanded by my lord.

His majesty sent me to dig five canals in Upper Egypt, and to build three barges and four tow-boats of acacia wood of Wawat.

Then the foreign chiefs¹² of Irtjet, Wawat, Yam, and Medja cut the timber for them. I did it all in one year. Floated, they were loaded with very large granite blocks for the pyramid "Mernere-appears-in-splendor." Indeed I made a "saving" for the palace with all these five canals. As King Mernere who lives forever is august, exalted, and mighty more than any god, so everything came about in accordance with the ordinance commanded by his *ka*.

I was one beloved of his father, praised by his mother, (50/51) gracious to his brothers. The count, true governor of Upper Egypt, honored by Osiris, Weni.

NOTES

1. On this rather obscure title consult Junker, *Giza*, VI, 15-19, Helck, *Beamtentitel*, pp. 107-109, 115 f., and the additional evidence of the *Abusir Papyri*, where *hnty-š* and *hm-ntr* are paired.

2. Three ceremonial functions; the second is literally "making the king's way." On this ceremony see B. Grdseloff, *ASAE*, 51 (1951), 131.

3. The term "Two-Sides-of-the-House" refers to the Delta; Sedjer and Khen-sedjru are unknown.

4. The title *imi-r 'w* has been much discussed and variously rendered: "caravan-leader," (Faulkner, *Dict.*, p. 39); "overseer of dragomans," (Gardiner, *Egypt*, pp. 96, 99); "overseer of mercenaries," (H. Goedicke, *JEA*, 46 (1960), 62, and *idem*, *JEA*, 52 (1966), 173; "chief interpreter" (Fischer, *Inscriptions*, p. 29).

5. Three unknown geographical terms; it is not clear whether Weni is leading "from" or "to" these places. It is also not clear just where these campaigns against the "Asiatic Sand-dwellers" took place. In *Rivista degli studi orientali*, 38 (1963), 187-197, Goedicke has proposed to locate the campaigns in the eastern Delta rather than in Sinai and Palestine.

6. For this passage I have adopted the rendering of Edel, *Altäg. Gr.*, § 992. An alternate interpretation is that of Wilson in *ANET*, p. 228; see also G. Kadish, *JEA*, 52 (1966), 24 ff.

7. The location of "Gazelle's-head" is unknown. Weni's successful strategy consisted in ferrying half his army by boat and landing it in the enemy's rear, while the other half, traveling overland, made a frontal attack.

8. The office of Governor of Upper Egypt had been introduced in the Fifth Dynasty. Apparently Weni means that the office had never been held by a commoner.

9. "Countable" means "taxable." It is not clear what is meant by having counted everything twice; in *JEA*, 31 (1945), 15, Gardiner surmised that Weni "squeezed out of the unfortunate inhabitants of Upper Egypt twice as much in the way of taxes and work as his predecessors." But other and more charitable interpretations are possible, for instance that he was in office long enough to be responsible for tax-collecting on two successive occasions.

10. Each royal pyramid had its own name and could be referred to in personal terms as a divinity.

11. To "do" a distant place is an Egyptian idiom comparable with our "doing" a foreign country.

12. *Hkꜣw hꜣswt*, "rulers of foreign countries," the term from which the name *Hyksos*, used by Manetho to denote the Asiatic invaders of Egypt, was derived.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF HARKHUF

Assuan

Sixth Dynasty

This most famous of the autobiographies of Old Kingdom officials is carved in fifty-eight lines on the facade of the tomb. Cut in a soft, flaking stone, the inscription is now in very poor condition. Harkhuf served kings Mernere and Pepi II and, like Weni before him, he became governor of Upper Egypt. In this capacity he led four expeditions to Nubia. His account of these expeditions is the most important source for Egypt's relations with Nubia at this time. To the account of his expeditions Harkhuf added the text of a letter he received from the boy-king Neferkare Pepi II in which the latter vividly and touchingly expresses his eagerness to see the dancing pygmy whom Harkhuf was bringing back with him.

The narration of his career is preceded by the standardized elements of tomb-autobiography—the prayers for offerings and for a good burial, and the catalog of virtues.

Publication: E. Schiaparelli, *Una tomba egiziana inedita* (Memorie della Accademia dei Lincei, ser. 4, Vol. 10/1) (Rome, 1893). Sethe, *Urkunden*, I, 120-131.

Translation: BAR I, §§ 325-336, 350-354.

Study and partial translation: E. Edel in *Ägyptologische Studien*, pp. 51-

75.

Comments: J. Yoyotte, *BIFAO*, 52 (1953), 173-178; D. M. Dixon, *JEA*, 44 (1958), 40-55; E. Edel, *ZÄS*, 85 (1960), 18-23.

Above the Entrance

(eight lines)

(1) An offering which the king gives and Anubis, he who is upon his mountain, before the god's shrine, in the place of embalming, the lord of the necropolis: May he be buried in the necropolis in the western desert, in great old age as one honored by the great god. ----- The Count, Governor of Upper Egypt, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Lector-priest, Chief of scouts, honored by Ptah-Sokar, Harkhuf.

An offering which the king gives and Osiris, lord of Busiris: May he journey in peace on the holy ways of the West, journeying on them as one honored. May he ascend to the god, lord of heaven, as one honored by [the god, lord of heaven]. The Count, Chamberlain,