


<p><b>Carter Number</b> 351</p>
<p><b>Museum and Accession Number (if available)</b> Egyptian Museum, Cairo: JE62030</p>
<p><b>Name of Object</b> The names given to the object are both many and varied but the following examples give an adequate summary:</p> <p>Faldstool (Carter: <a href="#">351</a>); elaborate throne (Fox 1951: pl. 60); ceremonial folding-chair (Porter and Moss 1964: 577); ceremonial chair (el-Shahawy et al. 2005: 243); inlaid ebony throne (Eaton-Krauss 2008: 75); priesterthron (Beinlich and Saleh 1989: 172); the ‘so-called “Ecclesiastical Throne”’ (Reeves 1990: 186); ritual chair (Hawass and Vannini 2010: 258).</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SG</p>
<p><b>Location in Tomb</b> Found in the southeast corner of the annexe, lying backrest uppermost, with other objects both on top and beneath (Eaton-Krauss 2008: 75; Carter: <a href="#">351</a>). Carter described the faldstool as being ‘thrown topsy-turvy’ in the corner of the chamber. It was perhaps deposited there when the tomb was first robbed in antiquity (Reeves 1990: 95-7).</p> <p style="text-align: right;">LM</p>
<p><b>Measurements</b> Maximum dimensions: H. 102 x W. 70 x D. 44cm</p> <p>Height of seat above floor: H. 45cm (min.) - 60cm (max.)</p> <p>Backrest: W. 50 cm.</p> <p>Height of backrest above seat: H. 58 cm.</p> <p>Foot bars: L. 70 cm. (Carter: <a href="#">351</a>); Eaton-Krauss 2008: 75).</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SG</p>
<p><b>Translation</b> <b>Top Cartouche</b></p> <p></p> <p><i>3nh-Itn-hq3-3ht.w-h'y-m-3ht-Itn</i></p> <p>Life of Aten, ruler of the two horizons, jubilant in Akhetaten</p>



*mr.n=f-m-R<sup>c</sup>.t-ii-m-Itn*

He who is beloved by Re, who comes from Aten

### Left/Right Cartouches



*Nb-hpr.w-R<sup>c</sup>*

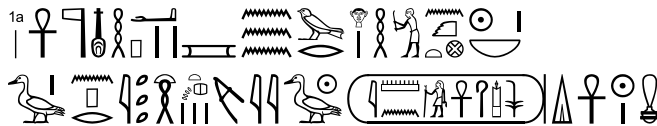
Nebkheperure



*Twt-nc-h-Itn*

Tutankhaten

### Front Text



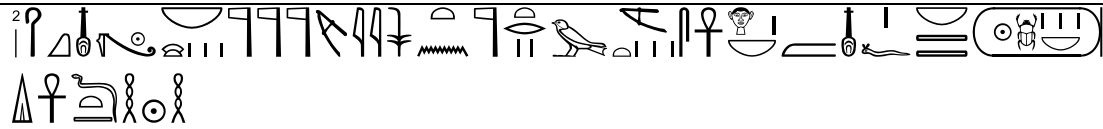
*nc ntr nfr H<sup>c</sup>py wr hr hwi n Km.t r<sup>c</sup> nb s3 Npr w3h it.w mr.y s3 R<sup>c</sup> Twt-nc-h-Imn hq3  
Twnw Sm<sup>c</sup>.w di nc mi R<sup>c</sup>*

May the good god live so that the great Nile flows in Egypt every day, son of Neper, yielder of the harvest, beloved son of Re Tutankhamun<sup>a</sup> ruler of the Southern-Heliopolis (Thebes), given life like Re.



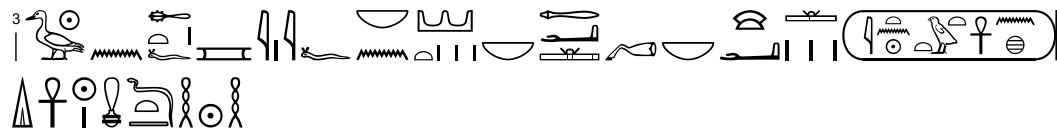
*nc ntr nfr shm hq3.w Hr nbw n nsw.w ti.t R<sup>c</sup> n s:hpr.n=f r hq3 šnn n itn di.n=f rsi mi  
mht.t ir c<sup>n</sup>n nht m im=sn nb t3.wy Nb-hpr.w-R<sup>c</sup> di nc mi R<sup>c</sup>*

May the good god live, controller of rulers, Golden Horus of Kings, image of Re who he created in order to rule what is encircled by the sun, to whom is given the south as the north, to whom is given might over them, Lord of the Two Lands Nebkheperure, given life like Re.



*hq3 nfr ti.t R<sup>c</sup> nb h<sup>c</sup>.w mr.y ntr.w nsw ntr.wy wr mr.w.t s:nh hr nb m nfr=f nb t3.wy  
Nb-hpr.w-R<sup>c</sup> di nh d.t nhh*

Good ruler, image of Re, Lord of Appearances, beloved of the gods, divine king of two gods, great of love, who makes everyone live through his perfection, Lord of the Two Lands Nebkheperure, given life forever and eternally.



*s3 R<sup>c</sup> n ht=f mr.y=f nb n h3s.wt nb(.wt) 3 hps nb h<sup>c</sup>.w Twt-nh-Itn di nh mi R<sup>c</sup> d.t nhh*

Son of Re of his body, his beloved, one who is great of strength, Lord of every foreign land, Lord of Appearances, Tutankhaten, given life like Re forever and eternally.



*nsw-bi.t hq3 pd.wt 9 nht hps nb n h3s.wt nb(.wt) nb t3.wy Nb-hpr.w-R<sup>c</sup> di nh mi R<sup>c</sup> d.t  
nhh*

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, ruler of the 9 bows, one who is great of strength, Lord of foreign lands, Lord of the two lands, Nebkheperure, given life like Re forever and eternally.



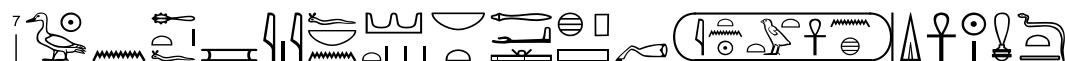
*s3 R<sup>c</sup> n ht=f mr.y=f nht hps nb h<sup>c</sup>.w Twt-nh-Itn di nh dd w3s mi R<sup>c</sup> d.t*

Son of Re of his body, his beloved, one who is great of strength, Lord of Appearances, Tutankhaten, given life, stability and dominion like Re forever.



*nsw-bi.t hq3 nfr mnh shr.w mk Km.t nb t3.wy Nb-hpr.w-R<sup>c</sup> di nh mi R<sup>c</sup> d.t*

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, good ruler, excellent counsel, protector of Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, Nebkheperure, given life like Re forever.



*s3 R<sup>c</sup> n ht=f mr.y=f nb n h3s.wt nb.(w)t 3 hpš Twt-<sup>c</sup>nh-Itn di <sup>c</sup>nh mi R<sup>c</sup> d.t*

Son of Re of his body, his beloved, Lord of all foreign lands, one who is great of strength, Tutankhaten, given life like Re forever.



*hq3 nfr s3 Imn mr.n=f r nsw nb ti.t R<sup>c</sup> rš.t t3.wy nfr hr bnr.t mr nsw-bi.t Nb-hpr.w-R<sup>c</sup> di <sup>c</sup>nh mi R<sup>c</sup> d.t nhh*

Good ruler, son of Amun who he loves more than any other King, image of Re, perfect face of the two lands, sweet of love, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Nebkheperure, given life like Re forever and eternally.



*<sup>c</sup>nh ntr nfr ir mnw r d3 ph.ty=f m nht ir=f nb m sni r dw.w wr.w h3s.wt m tpi k3.wt=f nb hpš Nb-hpr.w-R<sup>c</sup> di <sup>c</sup>nh mi R<sup>c</sup>*

May the good god live, (he who) creates monuments to the limits of his strength and power, he creates all (monuments) in likeness of the great mountains of foreign lands, commander of his armies, Lord of strength, Nebkheperure, given life like Re.



*<sup>c</sup>nh nfr ntr ir hb.w mi it=f Hr t3 tw nsw.wy nn <sup>c</sup>n m hd.t h<sup>c</sup> m dšr.t s3 R<sup>c</sup> Twt-<sup>c</sup>nh-Itn hq3 Twnw-Šm<sup>c</sup>.w dj <sup>c</sup>nh (mi) R<sup>c</sup> d.t nhh*

May the good god live, (he who) makes feasts like his father, Horus of the land, beautiful in the White Crown, glorious in the Red Crown, son of Re, Tutankhaten, ruler of the Southern-Heliopolis, given life (like) Re forever and eternally.

### Back Right Text




*<sup>c</sup>nh hq3 nht hpš mr.yty nb.t-Mw.t nb.t-W3d.t it(i) hd.t wts dšr.t hq3 nfr mnh*

May the strong and powerful ruler live, he who is loved by the Lady Mut and the Lady Wadjet, who takes the White Crown and who wears the Red Crown, good ruler, excellent

<sup>1b</sup> 

*shr.w mk Km.t nb t3.wy ḥq3 m3ꜥ.t s:ḥtp ntr.w nsw-bi.t ʿ3 ph.ty*

of plans, who protects Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, true ruler who causes the gods to be content, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, great in strength,

<sup>1c</sup> 

*Nb-ḥpr.w-Rꜥ s3 Rꜥ n ht=f mr.y=f nb n ḥ3s.wt nb.(w)t Twt-ḥnh-Itn di ḥnh mi Rꜥ d.t nḥḥ*

Nebkheperure, son of Re of his body, his beloved, Lord of all foreign lands, Tutankhaten, given life like Re forever and eternally.

### Back Left Text

<sup>1a</sup> 

*ḥnh ḥq3 nḥt ḥpš mr.yty nb.t-Mw.t nb.t-W3d.t it(i) ḥd.t wts dšr.t ḥq3 nfr mnḥ*

May the strong and powerful ruler live, he who is loved by the Lady Mut and the Lady Wadjet, who takes the White Crown and who wears the Red Crown, good ruler, excellent

<sup>1b</sup> 

*shr.w mk Km.t nb t3.wy ḥq3 m3ꜥ.t s:ḥtp ntr.w nsw-bi.t nb ph.ty*

of plans, who protects Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, true ruler who causes the gods to be content, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of strength,

<sup>1c</sup> 

*Nb-ḥpr.w-Rꜥ s3 rꜥ n ht=f mr.y=f nb n ḥ3s.wt nb.(w)t Twt-ḥnh-Itn di ḥnh mi Rꜥ d.t nḥḥ*

Nebkheperure, son of Re of his body, his beloved, Lord of all foreign lands, Tutankhaten, given life like Re forever and eternally.

### Back Middle Text

<sup>1a</sup> 

*ḥnh ḥq3 nḥt ḥpš mr.yty nb.t-Mw.t nb.t-W3d.t it(i) ḥd.t wts dšr.t*

May the strong and powerful ruler live, who is loved by the Lady Mut and the Lady Wadjet, who takes the White Crown and who wears the Red Crown.



*hq3 nfr mnḥ shr.w mk Km.t nb t3.wy hq3 m3<sup>c</sup>.t s:htp ntr.w nsw-bi.t*

Good ruler, excellent of plans, who protects Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, true ruler who causes the gods to be content, King of Upper and Lower Egypt



*Nb-hpr.w-R<sup>c</sup> s3 R<sup>c</sup> n ht=f mr.y=f nb h<sup>c</sup>.w Twt-<sup>c</sup>nh-Itn mi R<sup>c</sup> d.t*

Nebkheperure, son of Re of his body, his beloved, Lord of Appearances, Tutankhaten, (given life) like Re forever.

LM

### Grammatical notes

<sup>a</sup> Following the opening Amun is the figure of a man leaning on a stick where one would normally expect to find the quail chick and double 't' of *twt*. The human figure could be read as Gardiner sign A21 which may have been used for A20; but I think most likely it is replacing A22 – man with stick and *3bw* sceptre – and thus may still be read *twt* – (Gardiner 1957: 444).

SG

### Notes on the content of the texts

The royal, symbolic, and mythological aspects of the material and the design of the chair itself is reflected in the textual inscriptions upon it.

The text begins: 'May the good god live so that the great Nile flows in Egypt every day, son of Neper, yielder of the harvest, beloved son of Re Tutankhamun ruler of the Southern-Heliopolis (Thebes), given life like Re.'

Immediately the idea of the king as controller of the universe is apparent – at least that universe as experienced by the population of Egypt. It is proclaimed that the principal requirements of life, water and grain, are predicated on the life of the king.

**The *dj nh* exhortation:** occurring immediately after the king's throne name in many lines of the text. There has been some variance in the interpretation of this abbreviated and somewhat formulaic expression. For example, in relation to the translation of the same formula in the Kamose stela, Habachi (1972: 44-5) translates *dj nh* as 'given life' whereas Smith and Smith (1976: 64) preferred 'who gives life.'

Lesko (2004: 240) prefers 'given life' while Gardiner translates the formula *dj nh dd w3s mj r<sup>c</sup> d.t* '[may he be] granted life, stability and wealth like Re eternally' (1957: 71), thus recognizing the 'wish' element of such expressions. *dj nh* seems to be making use of the passive past participle to refer back to the antecedent noun, here the king. The notion that a wish aspect should be inferred is also indicated by the frequent appearance of an additional verbal element to the phrase in monumental inscriptions portraying the various activities of the king before the *ntr.w* where he, the king, is said to perform this or that activity: *ir=f dj nh*, that he may achieve/make given life (Allen 2000: 336-7). See for example the scene inscribed for Horemheb on the south face of

the north portal in the colonnade hall at Luxor Temple in which the king offers incense to Amun-Re (Epigraphic Survey 1998: 18 and pl. 161) and related scenes. Thus it seems that, in each case, the king should be seen as the recipient rather than the giver of life.

In the text of the faldstool I believe the phrase may, however, be interpreted with some certainty in that it appears to balance the occasional opening wish or exhortation in a line of text: ‘May the good god live.’ Thus, after the cartouche, the echoing sentiment ‘May [the king] be given life.’ This is sometimes the extent of the wish, although it is often augmented by the expression that the nature of such life be like that of Re, and eternal. The identification of the king, usually in the opening expression of his titulary, as the Son of Re, is therefore given literary balance in the closing phrase with the wish that his life be similarly prolonged.

Much of the remaining text appears to relate to the reasons why the king should so be given life in that he is the one who maintains *ma‘at*: the perfection of the ordered universe at the moment of creation; and the manner in which he does so as the strong, the powerful, the mighty sound of plans etc.

SG

### Object description

The chair resembles the form of a folding stool but is of rigid construction with the addition of a curved and inclined backrest. The frame is constructed from wood, the seat is supported by cross-legs carved of ebony and separated by a gilded stretcher. The lower parts of the cross-legs are carved in the form of ducks’ heads, the markings of which are inlaid with ivory; the eyes are manufactured of transparent glass, the pupils of ebony and set in gold frames. The lower cross-bars are held between the beaks of the birds. The central supporting vertical bar to the rear is carved in the form of a *sm<sup>c</sup>* symbol.

The back panel is slightly curved and constructed with alternate ebony and ivory panels. It is elaborately decorated: to the front with friezes of rosettes, chevrons, and *šnw*-rings with an upper rail decorated with uraei surmounted by sun disks using a variety of materials being partially covered in gold and inlaid with faience and glass fashioned to resemble semi-precious stones including turquoise and lapis-lazuli. The rear is divided into two panels of gilded gesso with images of crooked wings surmounted with *nfr* signs and *wḏ3(t)*-eye symbols; the claws holding *šnw*-rings surmounted with hieroglyphic signs of the *ḥnh* flanked by *w3s*-sceptres. Carter (Carter: [351](#)) identifies the wings as representative of the Nekhbet vulture, however no specific deity is identified. It therefore seems likely that the left and right wings shown in opposing panels may be interpreted as symbolizing Nekhbet and Wadjet: the tutelary female deities of Upper and Lower Egypt respectively, both of whom are frequently depicted in the form of a vulture in New Kingdom royal decorative art in which they offer protection to the king (Wilkinson 2003: 214, 227). Above and below the wings are borders of coiled patterns and rectangular designs redolent of the ‘palace-facade’ motif – again presenting associations with kingship. The decoration, both front and rear, also includes lines of text – as discussed in greater detail in the relevant section above – arranged both vertically and horizontally.

The seat consists of a red leather under layer, the corners in the form of imitation limbs of hide being used to secure the seat to the legs of the chair frame (Carter: [351](#)). The upper surface of the seat is constructed from irregular shapes of ivory stained in

light and dark shades in imitation of the patterning of some animal skin of indeterminate nature. Around the edges of the seat the colours perhaps suggest the pie-bald hide of cattle whereas the central panel is more reminiscent of the pelt of a leopard or cheetah. The margins of the seat are decorated ox-eyes with gold bosses in their centres (Carter: [351](#); Fox 1951: pl. 60; Eaton-Krauss 2008: 76-7 and pls. XX II-XXVIII).

SG

### **Notes on the object type**

From the section above, 'Name of Object,' it is clear that the chair in question has been called many things, each suggesting a particular purpose has been inferred which may have some bearing as to how this particular object is to be perceived. However, many of these interpretations appear somewhat arbitrary, and often misleading.

Firstly it should be emphasized that the notion that the faldstool had some sacerdotal or ecclesiastical function, as implied by some of the terminology applied to it in modern scholarship, was an idea likely generated by Carter in his description of the character of the faldstool as 'appropriate only to a "Chair of State," ...in point of fact, it would appear to have been the king's ecclesiastical throne when presiding as the highest spiritual authority' (Carter 1933: 111). This seems to have been pure speculation, and for which there is no supporting evidence whatsoever. Ideas which suggest some distinction between secular and sacerdotal functions of an ancient Egyptian king are anachronistic and serve only to mislead (Hornung 2001: 192; Gregory 2013: 27-8). Nonetheless, pseudo-religious terminology appears to have become embedded in more recent discussions of ancient Egyptian royal art and iconography, as is clearly the case with regard to the object in question. Similarly, there is no evidence to suggest that the faldstool had any specific purpose in any ceremony or ritual and therefore even the term 'throne' – usually applied to a ceremonial chair for use by one such as a sovereign or bishop – becomes questionable.

The only surviving context for the faldstool is that it was found in a royal tomb and is one of a number of elaborately decorated chairs within the burial assemblage and, while the cross-legged design and shape of the seat resemble the general appearance of a folding stool, as pointed out by Carter himself it is in fact rigid and has a back (Carter: [351](#)) – a folding stool that does not fold! Therefore the object here discussed is rather unique in form in that no similar object is otherwise known from ancient Egypt (Eaton-Kraus 2008: 89). As such, there is little which may be said with certainty with regard to the circumstances in which it may have been used – other than the generic function of the form as an object of furniture upon which one may be seated: albeit an elaborately decorated example of the form. Nonetheless, some general comments can be made.

The context of the object as part of a royal burial assemblage certainly allows the inference that it was 'royal' in nature. Further, that the object appears to be a representation of something it is not adds an element of interest; albeit one open to interpretation and inviting speculation. However, it does suggest that the concept of the folding stool was itself of some significance from the royal perspective – thus the faldstool was, in some way, symbolic; and the texts and decorative motifs applied in the decoration of the piece reinforce the notion of royal symbolism.

Martin (2011: 257-9) makes brief reference to the symbolic interpretation of thrones



by C. Loeben who attributes a special or even mystical significance to royal chairs. However, mystical is perhaps the wrong word as it implies a purpose which transcends human understanding. I would prefer mythological: the chair symbolizing concepts very much within the sphere of human comprehension which were nonetheless founded in myth. The chair, like monumental architecture and the artistic repertoire used in its decoration, serves to reify mythology underlying the ideology of the state which presents the king as the embodiment of cosmic forces which create and sustain the ordered universe (Gregory 2013: 27-30); and, from this perspective, the faldstool may be viewed as a statement of royal legitimacy and authority – a notion adequately supported by the texts inscribed upon it. Other aspects of the chair which sustain this construal will be presented here.

The seat is ornamented with panels of ivory stained to give the appearance of animal hide. Thus the king sat upon beasts to demonstrate his power and control over living natural forces: a motif not dissimilar to that of the ‘beat-master’ motif found in the Naqada Period art decorating Tomb 100 at Hierakonpolis (Case and Payne 1962: 13). It has been suggested that the pie-bald pattern depicted around the edges of the seat is that of ox- or goat-hide (Carter: 351); interpretations which allow some symbolic reference to Amun. The ram is associated with the form of Amun in the underworld and is again represented in three dimensional art such as the cryosphinx. The ox suggests the regenerative concept of Amun-Re-kamutef – bull of his mother – the principle representation of the demiurge as progenitor of kingship as reflected in the principle festivals of Thebes in the New Kingdom: the Festival of the Valley and the Opet Festival.

Associations between Amun and an ox are particularly strong in the Theban cosmogony as portrayed in the Leiden Papyrus in that, in the process of creation, Amun is said to be manifest in the form of a bull (Smith 2002: 51). As the son of Amun, the king too had bovid association. For example, Horemheb appears as ‘Horus, strong bull ready of plans’ (Gardiner 1953: 15); Seti I, ‘Horus, strong bull appearing in Thebes who causes the two lands to live;’ Ramesses II, ‘Horus, strong bull beloved of Ma‘at;’ Ramesses III, ‘Horus, strong bull great of kingship.’ In fact, during the Ramesside Period, the ‘Horus-strong bull’ component within the royal titulary became ubiquitous (Beckerath 1984: 234-51). Thus, while the Horus name of Tutankhamun is absent from the inscribed texts of the chair, materials used in the manufacture of the faldstool may be said to have such connotation.

While the edge colours of the seat perhaps suggest the hide of cattle the central panel, as suggested above, is more reminiscent of the pelt of a leopard or cheetah. Other similar chairs, such as those in the tomb of Nebamun and Ipuky from the reign of Amenhotep III and that for Ramesses III portrayed at Medinet Habu, show additional features of striped tails and claws suggesting pelts of the large spotted cats were meant (Eaton-Krauss 2008: 87-88). Here once again kingship symbolism is apparent as, while the leopard-skin robe has often been interpreted as having some priestly connotation, recent study gives clear indication that the leopard or panther skin was symbolic of royal authority and, in the world of human experience, was a garment restricted to the king and those acting on his behalf (Gregory 2013: 32-3). However, other interpretations could be made.

To some degree the chair could be said to be a three-dimensional equivalent to some offering scenes of the type seen in the temple at Beit el-Wali where tribute is

presented to Ramesses II - as may be viewed in the plaster replica of the scene exhibited in Room 65 at the British Museum. The chair is constructed of some of the raw materials there presented: exotic animal skins, ebony, ivory, gold, and inlaid with polychrome glass imitating semi-precious stones such as lapis-lazuli, turquoise etc. Thus the faldstool represents an assemblage of prestige goods; with the added value of fine craftsmanship in the creation of the completed chair. In this respect the faldstool alone, without the assignation of further ritual or ceremonial purpose, stands alone as a symbol of high status and, named for the king, demonstrates his control over those natural, animal, and human elements of creation represented. Here it may be argued that the difficulty in defining the particular hide represented was intentional in that the seat covering is a visual metaphor symbolic of animals – perhaps exotic animals – in general.

To summarise, the ‘faldstool’ is a unique item the precise purpose of which may be difficult to ascertain with certainty. The multi-layered symbolic aspects are consistent with a function related to art in the monumental landscape; a sphere in which all serves to reify and present the ideology of kingship and, as such, the chair might be seen as itself having some degree of royal agency. The piece may have stood in a hall to lend authority to one acting on the king’s behalf – or was perhaps no more than something upon which a king may rest: a chair, albeit a finely crafted one.

SG

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**Authors**

Steven Gregory [SG]

Luke McGarrity [LM]

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