



The Petrie Museum's "firsts"

The collection is full of 'firsts':

- One of the earliest pieces of linen from Egypt (about 5000 BC);
- The earliest example of metal from Egypt, the first worked iron beads;
- The earliest 'cylinder seal' in Egypt (about 3500 BC);
- The oldest wills on papyrus paper, the oldest gynaecological papyrus and the only veterinary papyrus from ancient Egypt;
- The largest architectural drawing, showing a shrine (about 1300 BC).
- Costume is another strength of the collection. In addition to the 'oldest dress' there is a unique beadnet dress of a dancer from the Pyramid Age, about 2400 BC, two long sleeved robes of the same date; a suit of armour from the palace of Memphis (awaiting reconstruction), as well as socks and sandals from the Roman period.

Highlights

The collection contains outstanding works of art from Akhenaten's city at Amarna: colourful tiles, carvings and frescoes, and from many other important Egyptian and Nubian settlements and burial sites. The museum houses the world's largest collection of Roman period mummy portraits (first to second centuries AD).

More than these highlights, though, the collection is uniquely important because so much of it comes from documented excavations. The large typological series of objects (amulets, faience, objects of daily use, tools and weapons, weights and measures, stone vessels, jewellery) provide a unique insight into how people have lived and died in the Nile Valley.