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A Note on the Identification of the ‘Bankes Tomb’ as TT 64¹

By *Daniele Salvoldi*²

In 2013, STEFANIE HARDEKOPF convincingly argued for the identification of the so-called ‘BANKES Tomb’ with TT 64³, a once-beautifully decorated chapel cut for Heqareshu and Heqarneheh during the reign of Thutmose IV. A large part of the tomb decoration, on mud plaster, had been removed by WILLIAM JOHN BANKES in 1819 and is now housed at his former estate of Kingston Lacy, Dorset. HARDEKOPF bases her identification on the description of the tomb made by four different early sources (BELZONI, FINATI, IRBY and MANGLES, STRATON)⁴ and the analysis of the frieze decoration of two of the four extant fragments. Only one thing that could have confirmed the identification was then missing: a cartouche of Thutmose IV either on the Kingston Lacy fragments or on related documents from the BANKES archive. In a note to FINATI’S *Narrative*, which he himself edited, BANKES is in fact very explicit about the fact that the king’s name was recurrent in the tomb and directly links it to the Abydos Kings’ List, a discovery he was very proud of having made.

Looking into the unpublished and uncatalogued part of the BANKES manuscripts for clues on objects in his collection, the missing link was eventually found. One small manuscript housed at the Dorset History Centre (Box 8C/83, Folder 4), written in BANKES’ dense, almost illegible handwriting, includes the discussion of several miscellaneous topics, such as commentary on passages from Pliny, Strabo, Plutarch, and Herodotus, copies of Greek inscriptions from Nubia, plans of buildings, and other unrelated notes. At page [26] there is a copy of two vertical cartouches of Thutmose IV, followed by the signs for *nb* and inscribed in a rough square, all drafted by BANKES in pencil and painted in grey-blue and red watercolour (Image 1). The caption, also penned

¹ MDAIK 75 (2019), pp. 279-81.

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³ S. HARDEKOPF, *Is the ‘Bankes Tomb’ Really Lost?*, in: MDAIK 69, 2013, pp. 79-89. See this article for all the relevant bibliography.

⁴ G. BELZONI, *Narrative of the Operations and Recent Discoveries within the Pyramids, Temples, Tombs and Excavations in Egypt and Nubia* (London 1820), p. 230; W. J. BANKES (Ed), *Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Giovanni Finati 2* (London 1830), pp. 342-43; J. STRATON, *Account of the Sepulchral Caverns of Egypt*, in: *The Edinburgh Philosophical Journal* 3, 1820, p. 347; C. L. IRBY/J. MANGLES, *Travels in Egypt and Nubia, Syria and Asia Minor, during the Years 1817 and 1818* (London 1823), pp. 143-146.

by BANKES, but this time in ink, says: “Thebes. Names suspended round the neck of the hunter which I cut from the wall of the tomb at Thebes whence I got the musicians”. Next to the cartouche, another note, in pencil, seems to have been added later and this too is in BANKES’ handwriting: “According to Felix Thothmos 4”. This must be a reference to ORLANDO FELIX’S work on Pharaonic dynasties⁵. Here, on plate VI, the cartouches of the king are correctly identified as those of Thutmose IV. This pencil note, added around ten years after the original copy of the cartouche, proves that BANKES kept an interest in his Egyptian collection for longer than it was believed. It is likely that, since both Felix’s and FINATI’S works were published in the same year 1830, BANKES could not include mention of the reading of the cartouche of the king as identified by Felix in his own footnotes to FINATI’S *Narrative*.

The reference to the hunter is also interesting. It means that there was a fifth panel detached from the same tomb; this has not survived or at least it is not in Kingston Lacy with the others. There is no mention of it in any of the descriptions of the tomb made before BANKES mutilated it and we would know nothing more of it hadn’t BANKES commissioned a copy of it (Image 2). The pencil drawing, possibly made by Alessandro Ricci in 1819, is preserved within the Egyptian Folders at the Dorset History Centre under the reference number II.A.12 and was recently published by the author without knowledge of its provenance⁶. The caption, in BANKES’ hands, only says: “Thebes. Grottoes Gournou”. Another short text next to the man’s body seems a note on the colour and it reads: “[...] red”. The drawing, without scale, shows a man in kilt proceeding towards the left, barefoot, with a short wig, large round earrings, a necklace and bracelets on his wrists and forearms. With his right hand, bent up and forward, he is holding up a small dorcas gazelle and the long leash of another female adult dorcas gazelle, which is walking before him in the same direction. The left arm, stretched along the body, holds a bow and a hare by its long ears. Hanging from the neck is another long necklace with a square pendant; no detail of it is shown, but it must have contained the two cartouches of the king as copied in the other manuscript.

Since we do not have any description of this scene before it was detached from the wall and we do not know its measures, it is very difficult to place it within a reconstruction of TT 64. Hunting

⁵ O. FELIX, *Note sopra le dinastie de’ Faraoni con geroglifici preceduti dal loro alfabeto e raccolti in Egitto nel 1828* (Firenze 1830), pl. VI.

⁶ D. SALVOLDI, *From Siena to Nubia. Travels of Alessandro Ricci in Egypt and Sudan, 1817-1822* (Cairo-New York 2019), pp. 86, 329.

scenes, including the deceased carrying game, are quite common in Theban tombs, and appear invariably in the transverse hall or in the corridor, sometimes in inner chambers. While the majority of them dates to the reign of Thutmose III, none of them seems to date to the reign of Thutmose IV and therefore our example would be a *unicum*⁷.

To sum up, BANKES had detached several fragments from a single Theban tomb; while we only know the ones currently in Kingston Lacy and depicting the famous dancers and musicians, one of them, whose location is now unknown, portrayed one of the tomb owners returning from a successful hunt and displayed a necklace with the cartouche of Thutmose IV. At this point, the identification of the tomb with TT 64 is beyond reasonable doubt.

Keywords: Theban Necropolis, TT 64, Bankes Tomb, Egyptology Archives, Thutmose IV

Abstract

In 2013, Stefanie Hardekopf argued for the identification of the ‘Bankes Tomb’ with TT 64. Her arguments were convincing, but they lacked the ultimate proof, i.e. the presence of a cartouche of Thutmose IV in archival documents from the Bankes papers referring to the tomb. This short note provides further data, publishing a previously unstudied manuscript indeed holding a copy of the cartouches of Thutmose IV hanging from the neck of a hunter said to belong to the same tomb as the other fragments cut by Bankes. The hunter scene has also been identified among the drawings in the Bankes papers and is published here.

⁷ PM I¹, p. 469.



Image 1. Notes by Banks about the cartouches hanging from the hunter, Dorset History Centre, Dorchester, D/BKL Box 8C/83, Folder 4 (Photo D. Salvoldi, © The National Trust)



Image 2. Hunter holding game and a bow, Dorset History Centre, Dorchester, D/BKL, Egyptian Drawings, II.A.12 (Photo D. Salvoldi, © The National Trust)