

= Abuwtiyuw =

The Egyptian dog Abuwtiyuw , ( IPA : ? @-@ bwit @-@ ?ew ) also transcribed as Abutiu ( died before 2280 BC ) , was one of the earliest documented domestic animals whose name is known . He is believed to have been a royal guard dog who lived in the Sixth Dynasty ( 2345 ? 2181 BC ) , and received an elaborate ceremonial burial in the Giza Necropolis at the behest of a pharaoh whose name is unknown .

An inscribed stone listing the gifts donated by the pharaoh for Abuwtiyuw 's funeral was discovered by Egyptologist George A. Reisner in October 1935 . It was apparently part of the spoil material incorporated into the structure of a Sixth Dynasty mastaba ( pharaonic @-@ era tomb ) after the demolition of the funerary chapel belonging to Abuwtiyuw 's owner , where the stone likely had originally been installed . The white limestone tablet measures 54 @.@ 2 x 28 @.@ 2 x 23 @.@ 2 cm ( 21 @.@ 3 x 11 @.@ 1 x 9 @.@ 1 in ) . The inscription is composed of ten vertical rows of hieroglyphs , separated by vertical lines .

Abuwtiyuw appears to have been a sighthound , a lightly built hunting dog similar to a greyhound , with erect ears and a curly tail . The tomb in which his tablet was discovered is in Cemetery G 2100 in Giza West Field , close to the western side of the Great Pyramid of Giza ( Pyramid of Khufu / Kheops ) .

= = Background = =

Herodotus documents that in ancient Persia dogs were protected animals , held in the highest esteem during their lifetime . According to the ancient Greeks , dogs in ancient Egypt were treated with the same respect as they were in Persia , and were commonly mummified after death before being buried in family tombs . The ancient Egyptians and others of the Near East believed that dogs were spiritual beings , similar to humans , and they were " often associated with particular deities and the powers they wield " . A number of the early dynastic royal burial grounds contain the graves of dogs , along with women and servants of the royal household . Ashkelon cemetery in the South District of Israel is perhaps the best @-@ documented dog cemetery in the ancient world , but dog mummies have been unearthed en masse in sites across Egypt including Rhoda in Upper Egypt , Thebes , Abydos , and near Maghagha .

The ancient Egyptians mummified many animal species , from cats and gazelles to crocodiles , baboons , and birds . Typically , many animal species were consumed as meat after death , but it is highly unlikely that dogs would have been eaten . Radiographs of exhumed dogs in the ancient world have revealed that the mummification process involved wrapping the embalmed bones together with bandages and placing them within a wooden statue of Anubis , the jackal @-@ headed deity associated with mummification and the afterlife in ancient Egyptian religion .

= = Discovery = =

The only source from which Abuwtiyuw is known is a stone inscription tablet that may have come from the funerary chapel of the dog 's owner . The tablet was apparently among spolia used to build another grave in approximately 2280 BC , a sixth @-@ Dynasty mastaba , after the chapel 's demolition . It was discovered on 13 October 1935 by Egyptologist George A. Reisner during a joint Harvard University @-@ Boston Museum of Fine Arts expedition , and removed from the site four days later .

The find was recorded by the main expedition photographer , Mohammedani Ibrahim , who took more than 9 @,@ 321 large @-@ format glass @-@ plate images on Reisner 's expeditions . The tablet is now held by the Egyptian Museum in Cairo ( inventory number JE 67573 ) .

Neither the dog 's grave nor mummy have been recovered . The tomb in which the tablet was unearthed is in Cemetery G 2100 in Giza West Field , close to the western side of the Great Pyramid of Giza ( Pyramid of Khufu / Kheops ) . The white limestone tablet measures 54 @.@ 2 x 28 @.@ 2 x 23 @.@ 2 cm ( 21 @.@ 3 x 11 @.@ 1 x 9 @.@ 1 in ) and is inscribed with ten vertical

rows of hieroglyphs , separated from each other by vertical lines . Part of a leash is visible on the upper @-@ right corner , suggesting that the tablet displayed an image of Abuwtiyuw with his owner .

The text of the inscription translated by Reisner describes the gifts offered by the pharaoh in tribute at Abuwtiyuw 's funeral :

The dog which was the guard of His Majesty , Abuwtiyuw is his name . His Majesty ordered that he be buried ( ceremonially ) , that he be given a coffin from the royal treasury , fine linen in great quantity , ( and ) incense . His Majesty ( also ) gave perfumed ointment , and ( ordered ) that a tomb be built for him by the gangs of masons . His Majesty did this for him in order that he ( the dog ) might be Honoured ( before the great god , Anubis ) .

= = Interpretation = =

Although it was common to bury dogs in ancient Egypt , the funeral of Abuwtiyuw was unusually elaborate , an honour normally reserved for upper @-@ class humans . The pharaoh 's gifts suggest that the corpse was mummified , as was commonly done with humans at the time , in the belief that the Ka of the dead would enter into its afterlife through the ceremonial burial .

Although no images of Abuwtiyuw have been found , the text characterizes him as ?sm ( Tesem ) , a lightly built hunting dog similar to a greyhound , with erect ears and a curly tail . The Tesem dog features in predynastic depictions , making it one of the oldest known breeds of dog , and images of it are common throughout Ancient Egyptian history . According to Reisner , the name " Abuwtiyuw " is not fully translatable , but he surmised that bw ( " bu " ) is an onomatopoeic representation of a dog 's bark , as this component often is found in Ancient Egyptian dog names . Edward C. Martin Jr. claims that the name , or its variant transliteration of Abutiw , means " With Pointed Ears " , which would fit the description of the Tesem .