

**Block Statue of Sennefer
The British Museum**

From western Thebes, Egypt
18th Dynasty, around 1450 BC

'Overseer of sealbearers' in the reign of Thutmose III



Block statues were most commonly placed in temples - this one may have come from the mortuary temple of Sennefer's king, Thutmose III (1479-1425 BC). Sennefer was also the owner of Theban Tomb 99, and he features on a number of monuments of Thutmose's reign. The 'overseer of sealbearers' in Thebes in the New Kingdom (about 1550-1070 BC) was the senior official concerned with financial matters.

As an important person with considerable resources, Sennefer was able to employ highly skilled craftsmen to carve this beautiful block statue, one of the finest examples of its kind. No personal details other than the face and hands have been sculpted, and this concentrates our attention on the figure's serene face, which is superbly carved and polished.

The large blank surfaces of the block statue offered maximum space for texts, and this statue has three separate inscriptions. The front part is mostly filled with an elaborate prayer for funerary offerings for Sennefer. The second part, beginning on the robe over his knees and extending onto the base, is a speech by Sennefer requesting that he be well provided for after his death. Finally, in columns on either side of his feet, an inscription records the names of Sennefer's father and mother.

I.E.S. Edwards (ed.), *Hieroglyphic texts from Egypt-8*, Part 8 (London, British Museum, 1939)

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