



KIDS
DISCOVER

Ancient Egypt

**A Palace
of Mud
A Highway
of Water
A Hall
of Two Truths**

**HELPING
HOOVES**

**Freshen
Your Face with
Animal Fat**

**WOMEN
RULE!**

The Gift of the Nile

What's the first word that comes to mind when you hear "ancient Egypt"? Mummies? Pyramids? Pharaohs? Mummies, pyramids, and pharaohs were all important parts of life in ancient Egypt. But there is much more to know about this long-lasting civilization. Come visit the ancient Egyptians where their civilization began—on the banks of the Nile River.



➤ **CANALS CARRIED** water from the Nile to the fields. Farmers used a simple machine called a *shaduf* to raise the water from the river to fill the canals. It had a pole with a clay weight on one end and a water bucket on

the other end. The shaduf is still used by farmers in Egypt today.



WAY BACK WHEN

PREDYNASTIC EGYPT c. 6520–3000 B.C.

c. 4500 B.C.
First semi-permanent villages in Egypt



c. 3500 B.C.
◀ Earliest writing develops in Mesopotamia



THE EARLIEST KNOWN settlements in Egypt were farming villages established over five thousand years ago along the banks of the Nile. Each year, the

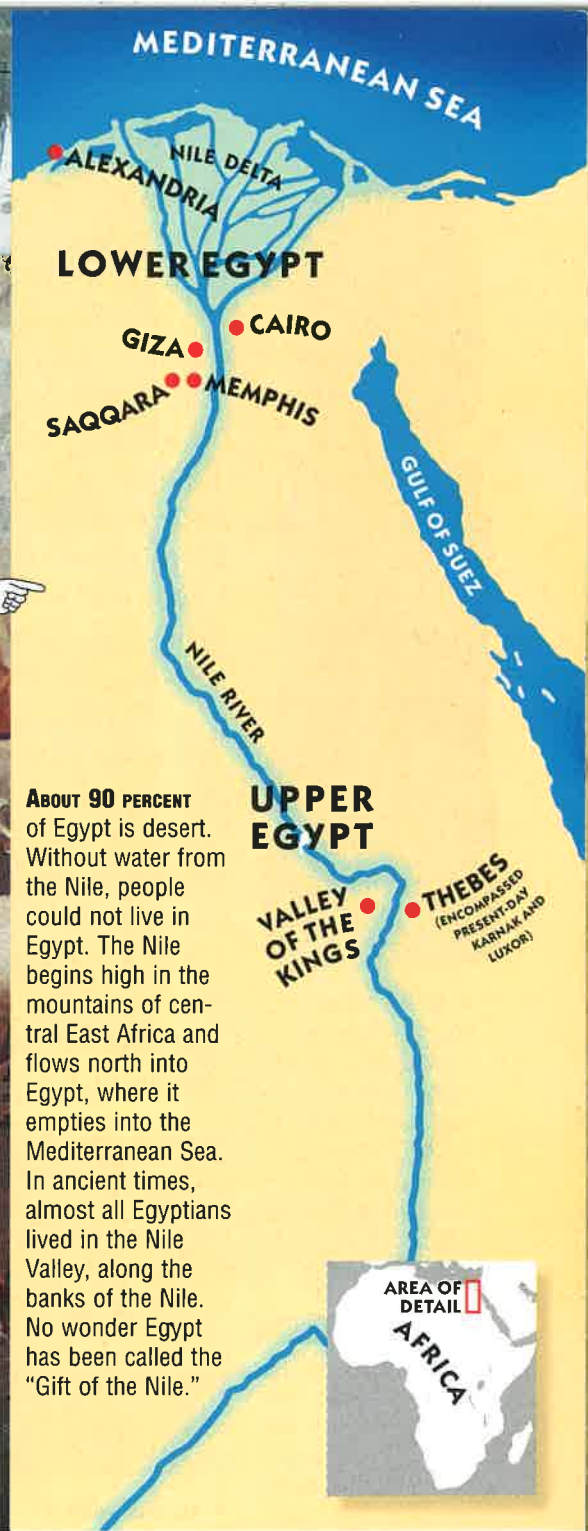
Nile overflowed, depositing thick, black mud over the countryside. The fertile soil of this 10-mile-wide, 600-mile-long Nile Valley was ideal for growing

barley, wheat, flax, vegetables, and fruit. These farmers are sowing seeds after the floodwaters receded. Animals' hooves push the seeds into the ground.

CHECK IT OUT!

Why is Lower Egypt north of Upper Egypt?

(answer on back cover)



ABOUT 90 PERCENT of Egypt is desert. Without water from the Nile, people could not live in Egypt. The Nile begins high in the mountains of central East Africa and flows north into Egypt, where it empties into the Mediterranean Sea. In ancient times, almost all Egyptians lived in the Nile Valley, along the banks of the Nile. No wonder Egypt has been called the "Gift of the Nile."

◀ **THE NILE GAVE** Egyptians gifts besides crops. People fished in it for food, and they made paper, sandals, and other items from the

papyrus reeds growing along the riverbank. Wooden boats carried passengers and products up and down the Nile and on to ports in the

eastern Mediterranean. In exchange for grain, gold, and papyrus sheets, Egyptians took home items such as incense, ivory, and horses.



◀ **ALL HOUSES,** including the royal palace, were made of mud brick. The farmers' flat-roofed houses usually had one large room and a

courtyard for animals and storage. The roof served as a place to relax. The houses' thick walls and small windows kept out the heat.

OLD KINGDOM c. 2675–2130 B.C.

c. 3100 B.C.

◀ Earliest hieroglyphic writing in Egypt. Egypt unified as a single kingdom



c. 2650 B.C.

◀ First stone pyramid built, at Saqqara, Egypt



c. 2585–2560 B.C.

◀ Great Pyramid built at Giza, Egypt

c. 2500–2000 B.C.

► Mohenjo Daro and Indus River cultures in India and Pakistan





▲ **AMONG ANCIENT** Egyptian queens, Hatshepsut, wife of King Thutmose II, stands out. She actually served as pharaoh, too, becoming a powerful ruler in her own right and building one of Egypt's most spectacular temples, at Thebes.

Mighty Pharaoh

Over time, Egypt's villages formed larger kingdoms. By around 3100 B.C., Egypt was united into a single, powerful kingdom. The reign of King Menes began the first Egyptian dynasty (a series of rulers all from the same family). Throughout its history, Egypt had more than 30 dynasties. Sometime between 1554 and 1304 B.C., Egyptians began to call their king "pharaoh," from words that mean "great house." In the beginning, Egyptians thought of their rulers as living gods. Later, they saw them as the link between the gods and the people of Egypt.



▲ **ALL LAND BELONGED** to the pharaoh or to the gods' temples. Farmers who worked the land owed a portion of their crops to the

king. When the land flooded, farmers worked for the king, building temples, pyramids, and palaces.

► **ALMOST EVERY** year for two decades during the 1400s B.C., King Thutmose III, stepson of Queen Hatshepsut, led his army into Asia. A brilliant general and gifted leader, he brought Palestine and Syria, as well as the African kingdoms of Kush and Nubia, under Egyptian control, providing Egypt with sources of slaves, copper, gold, ivory, and ebony.



▲ **ANOTHER** important ruler was Akhenaten. During his reign, he required Egyptians to worship only the sun god Aten. His wife, Queen Nefertiti, helped him achieve this goal. At right is Nefertiti adoring the rays of Aten.



FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD

c. 2130–1980 B.C.
Central government in Egypt collapses

MIDDLE KINGDOM

c. 1980–1630 B.C.
High point of Egyptian literature



c. 1800–1750 B.C.
◀ Law code of king Hammurabi of Babylon

SECOND INTERMEDIATE PERIOD NEW KINGDOM c. 1539–1075 B.C.

c. 1630–1523 B.C.
Asian nomads called Hyksos rule northern Egypt

c. 1478–1458 B.C.
► Reign of Egyptian female pharaoh Hatshepsut





➤ **TOWARD THE** end of the New Kingdom, Egypt began to decline. Weak rulers had trouble remaining in control. Egypt broke into small states and lost its territories abroad. Its weakness attracted invaders, and by 1070 B.C., Egypt was ruled by foreigners. Alexander the Great added Egypt to the Greek empire in 332 B.C.



CHECK IT OUT!

One of Egypt's most famous rulers is Cleopatra. When did she rule?

(answer on back cover)

c. 1458 B.C.
Thutmose III extends Egypt's empire to its greatest extent



c. 1332–1322 B.C.
◀ Reign of Tutankhamen, Egypt



c. 1279–1213 B.C.
◀ Reign of Egypt's Ramses II, builder of more temples than any other pharaoh



c. 1150–550 B.C.
◀ Olmec civilization on Gulf Coast of Mexico

Daily Life

For the poor, life was hard, and the average life span was 36. For the royal family and the nobles, life was much less work and much more play.



▼ **WEALTHY** homes usually had chairs like this one.

▲ **AT NIGHT**, Egyptians rested their heads on a cushion placed in the curve of a wooden headrest. Scorpions and snakes couldn't easily crawl onto the sleeper's head.



A NOBLE FAMILY LIVED in a large house that had a pool and garden. The house had several bedrooms and stairways leading to the roof. Egyptian homes had little furniture.

IN THEIR LEISURE time, wealthier Egyptians enjoyed relaxing by their garden pools, taking boating trips, and hunting desert game.



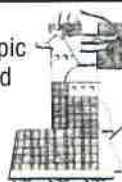
THIRD INTERMEDIATE PERIOD

c. 1075–664 B.C.
Egypt divided into smaller states



8TH CENTURY B.C.
◀ Homer writes the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in Greek

776 B.C.
First Olympic Games held in Greece



c. 671 B.C.
◀ Assyrians conquer Egypt

LATE PERIOD 664–332 B.C.

c. 604–562 B.C.
► Nebuchadnezzar II builds ziggurat of Babylon (Tower of Babel)



FOOD & DRINK



THE FARMER'S GRAIN WAS turned into bread and beer. Bread, often made from barley, was the staple of the Egyptian diet. Meals might also include onions, garlic, leeks, beans, lentils, figs, dates, melons, and apricots. The poor rarely ate beef, but on special occasions they added protein to their diet with geese, ducks, and fish caught with nets, hook and line, or fish traps. The rich attended lavish banquets where they dined on beef, mutton, and water birds, as well as vegetables and exotic fruits. Only the rich drank wine, made from grapes grown in the Nile Delta or in the western desert oases. Both the rich and poor drank beer made from barley.



From head to toe, Egyptians liked to look good, and they knew how to do it.

FOR THE MOUTH AND cheeks, Egyptian women used lip paint and rouge made from red ocher and henna.



BOTH MEN AND women wore eye makeup, usually black or green. Eye paint was made by grinding up such minerals as galeena or malachite and mixing them with water.

WELL-TO-DO MEN AND women sometimes wore wigs made of human hair and also sheep's wool. Beeswax held the wig in place.

WEALTHY MEN AND women wore earrings, necklaces, bracelets, rings, armbands, and anklets.

WOMEN WORE close-fitting sheath dresses or pleated linen dresses, usually white.

CREAMS AND LOTIONS made from animal or vegetable fat not only made the skin look better but also protected it from hot, dry weather.

OFTEN MEN WENT shirtless. Sometimes they wore long, collarless tunics.

MEN WORE PLEATED skirts, sort of like kilts.

MOST PEOPLE WENT barefoot or wore sandals made of leather, papyrus, or other reeds.

431-404 B.C.
Sparta defeats Athens in Peloponnesian War



331 B.C.
Alexander the Great conquers Egypt



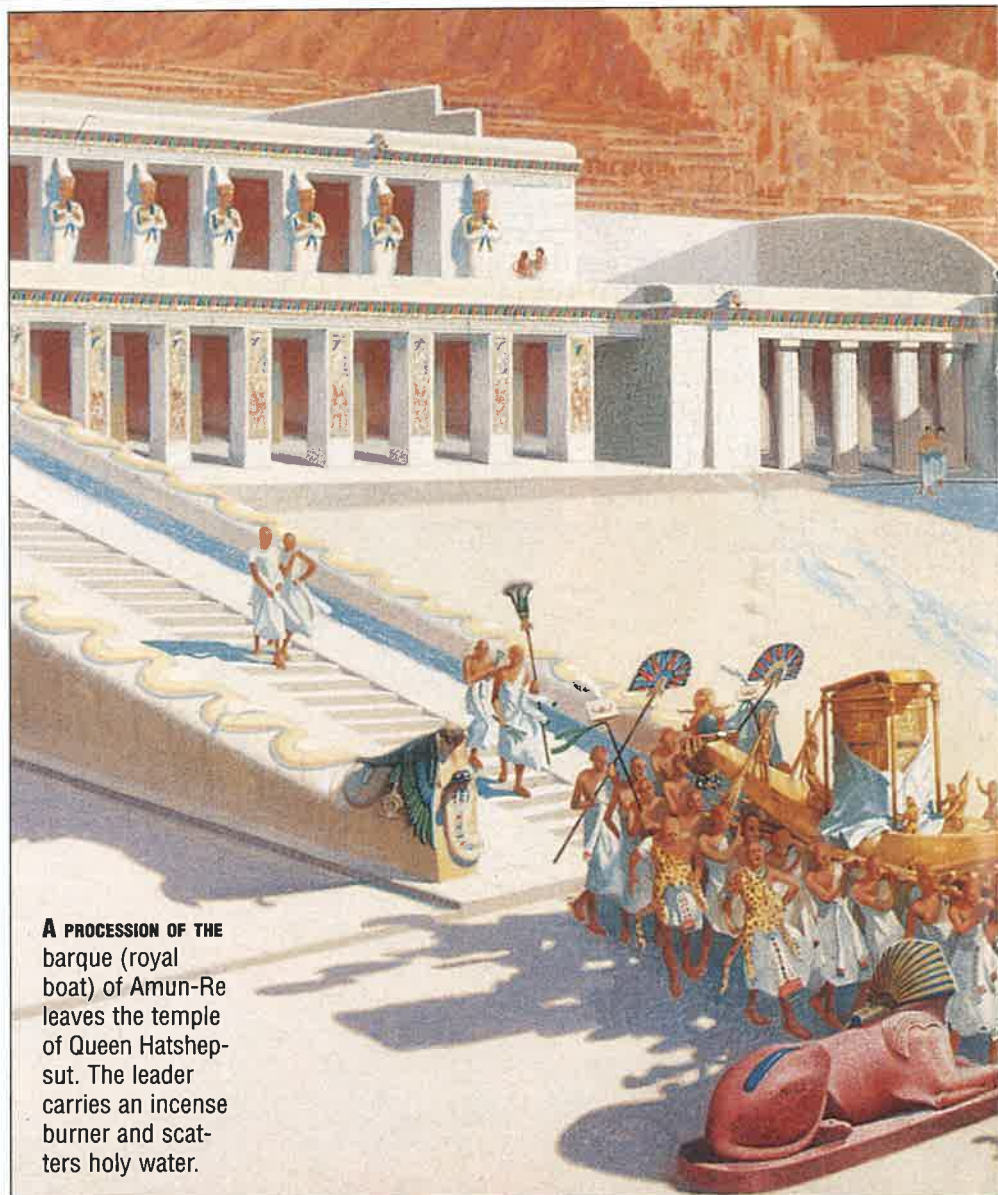
c. 210 B.C.
Chinese emperor Qin Shiuangdi buried with "terracotta army"



31 B.C.
Defeat of Antony and Cleopatra; Egypt becomes part of Roman empire

Gods, Priests, and Temples

The ancient Egyptians worshiped dozens of gods and goddesses. Each had different powers. Many were symbolized by animals or humans with animal heads. To worship certain gods, the Egyptians built temples that held a golden statue of the god locked in a special room. Egyptians believed the gods' spirits lived in these temples.



A PROCESSION OF THE barque (royal boat) of Amun-Re leaves the temple of Queen Hatshepsut. The leader carries an incense burner and scatters holy water.



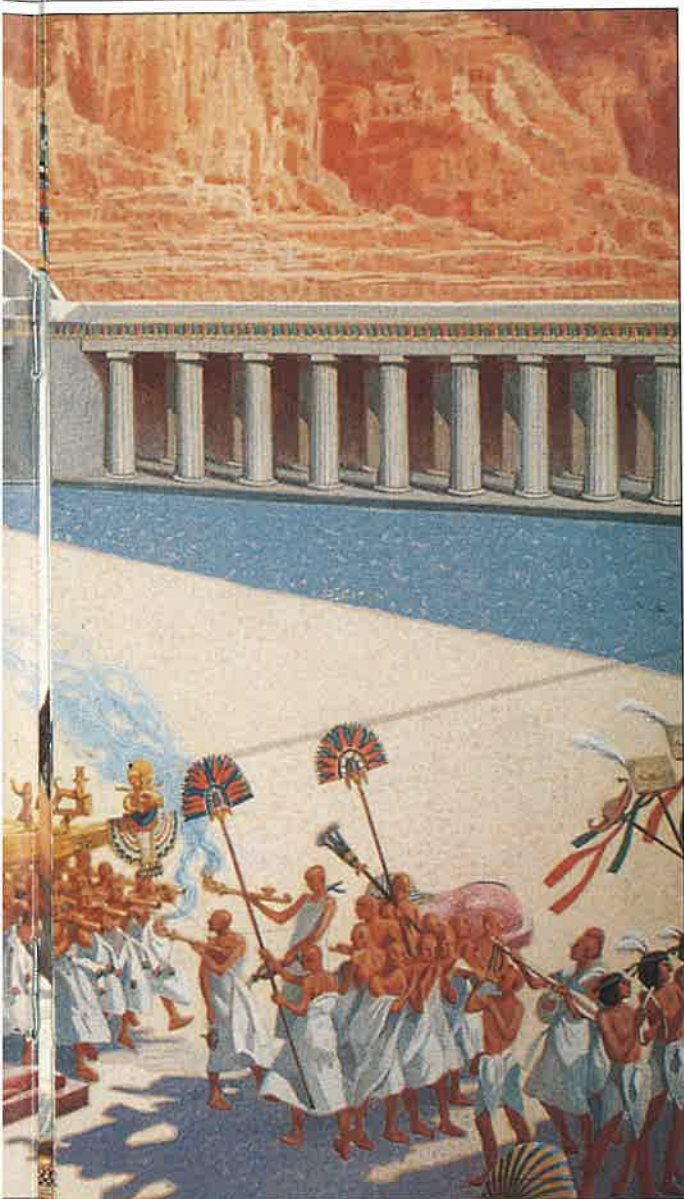
◀ IN MEMPHIS AND other Egyptian cities, residents worshiped both their own local god and the major gods. Ptah, at left, was the creator god of Memphis and the patron of craftsmen.

◀ ALMOST NO ONE, except the pharaoh and high priests and priestesses, was allowed inside the temple. Priests washed, clothed, and fed the statues of the gods. Here, Nefertiti presents an offering. Ordinary Egyptians saw these divine statues only during religious festivals, when priests carried the statues around the town.



▲ AS EGYPT'S DIVINE ruler, the pharaoh was expected to keep good relations between his people and the other gods. Rulers did so partly through their mas-

sive building projects, such as the temples at Karnak (above) and Luxor, which were begun by Amenhotep III, who ruled Egypt for 37 years.

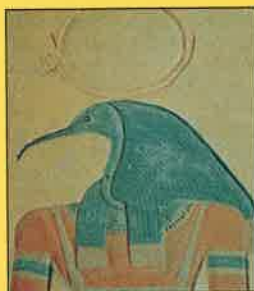


► **A PRIESTESS LIKE** this one shook a sacred rattle called a sistrum to appease the gods. Priests and priestesses also read prayers or sang hymns during ceremonies, scattering holy water and lighting incense for the rituals in front of the statues of the god.



GODS GALORE

MANY EGYPTIAN GODS HAD more than one form and several jobs. For example, Osiris was the lord of the dead as well as of crops and fertility.



▲ **THE MOON GOD**
Thoth was shown as an ibis, as a man with an ibis head, or even as a baboon. Scribes worshiped Thoth because he was also the god of writing, wisdom, and numbers.



▲ **OSIRIS, GOD OF** the dead and the afterlife, carried the crook and flail to show he was king of the underworld. He was also a god of fertility.



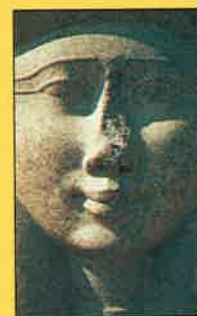
◀ **THE SUN GOD,** Egypt's most important deity, took many forms. At dawn, he would be Khepri, the scarab beetle, rolling the sun disk into the sky. As Horakhty, he would be a hawk soaring in the sky at mid-day. As Amun-Re (left), he was protector of the pharaoh on military campaigns.



▲ **A "WADJET EYE"** represents the eye of Horus, the falcon-headed sky god. The eye protected against illness.



▲ **TAWERET PRO-** tected women during childbirth, stopping evil creatures from attacking the baby or mother. A pregnant woman wore charms shaped like Taweret.



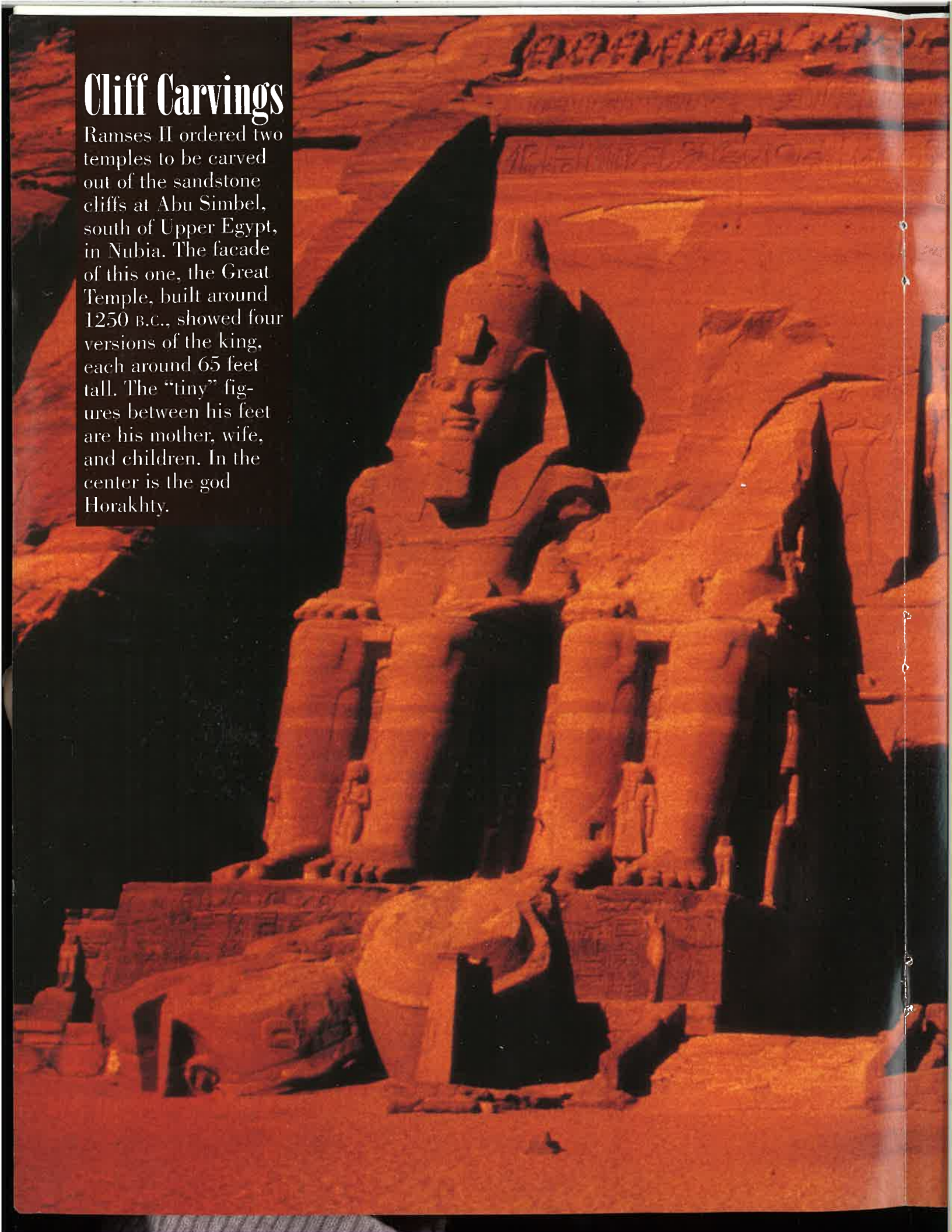
▲ **HATHOR WAS THE** goddess of love and beauty. She was also associated with music and dancing.

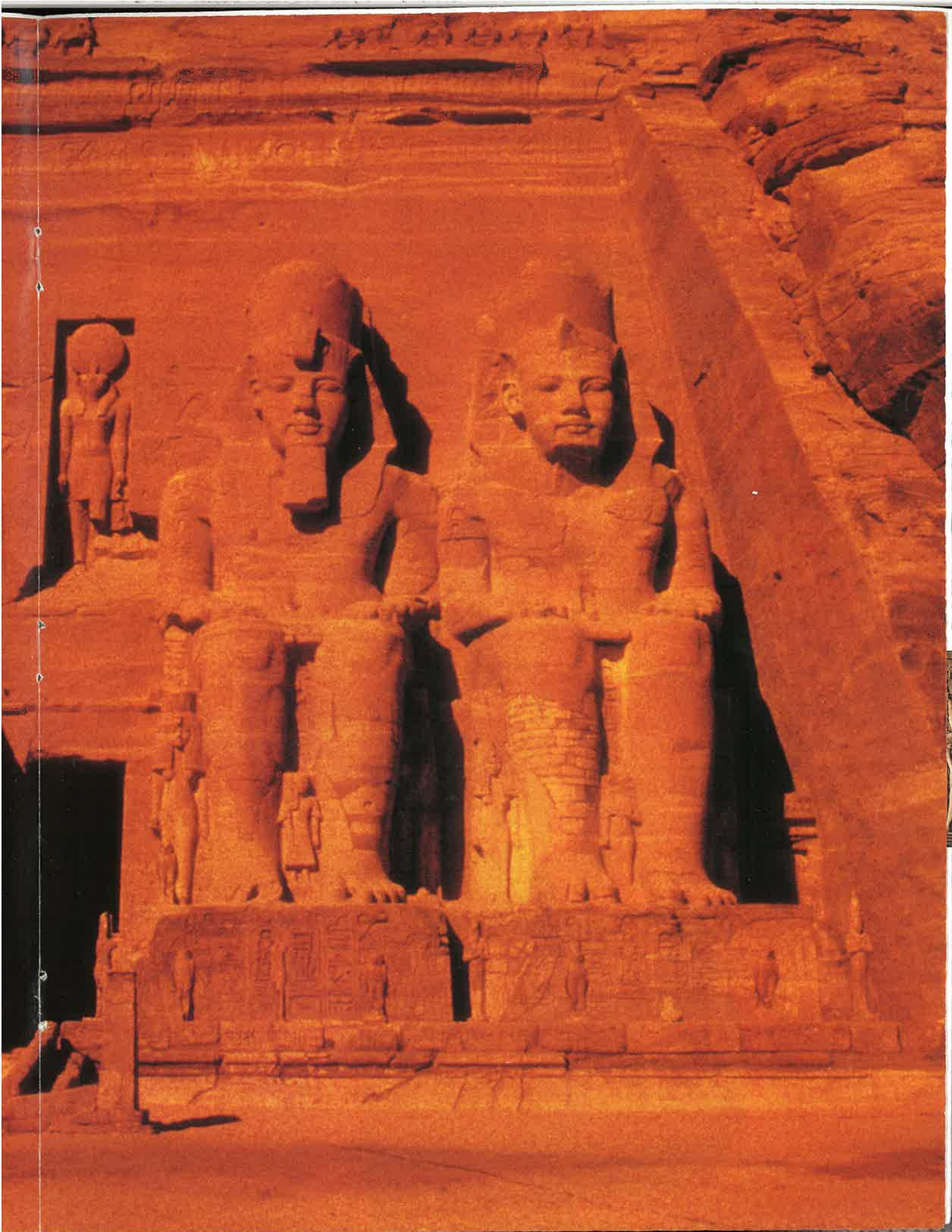


◀ **BES, A DWARF,** protected newborn babies and families. He danced with a tambourine to amuse other gods or to ward off evil spirits.

Cliff Carvings

Ramses II ordered two temples to be carved out of the sandstone cliffs at Abu Simbel, south of Upper Egypt, in Nubia. The facade of this one, the Great Temple, built around 1250 B.C., showed four versions of the king, each around 65 feet tall. The “tiny” figures between his feet are his mother, wife, and children. In the center is the god Horakhty.







◀ IN ANCIENT

Egypt, few people could read or write, so they hired scribes to perform those tasks. The best scribes found jobs working for the pharaoh in the royal government.

► EGYPTIANS LEFT

detailed medical texts on long scrolls of papyrus. These scrolls describe women's health care, childbirth, treatment of injuries, and diagnosis and treatment of diseases. They tell how to make medicines and how the Egyptians believed the heart and other organs worked. At right, for a sick princess, the royal physician consults his medical papyrus before mixing a remedy from the ingredients on the table.

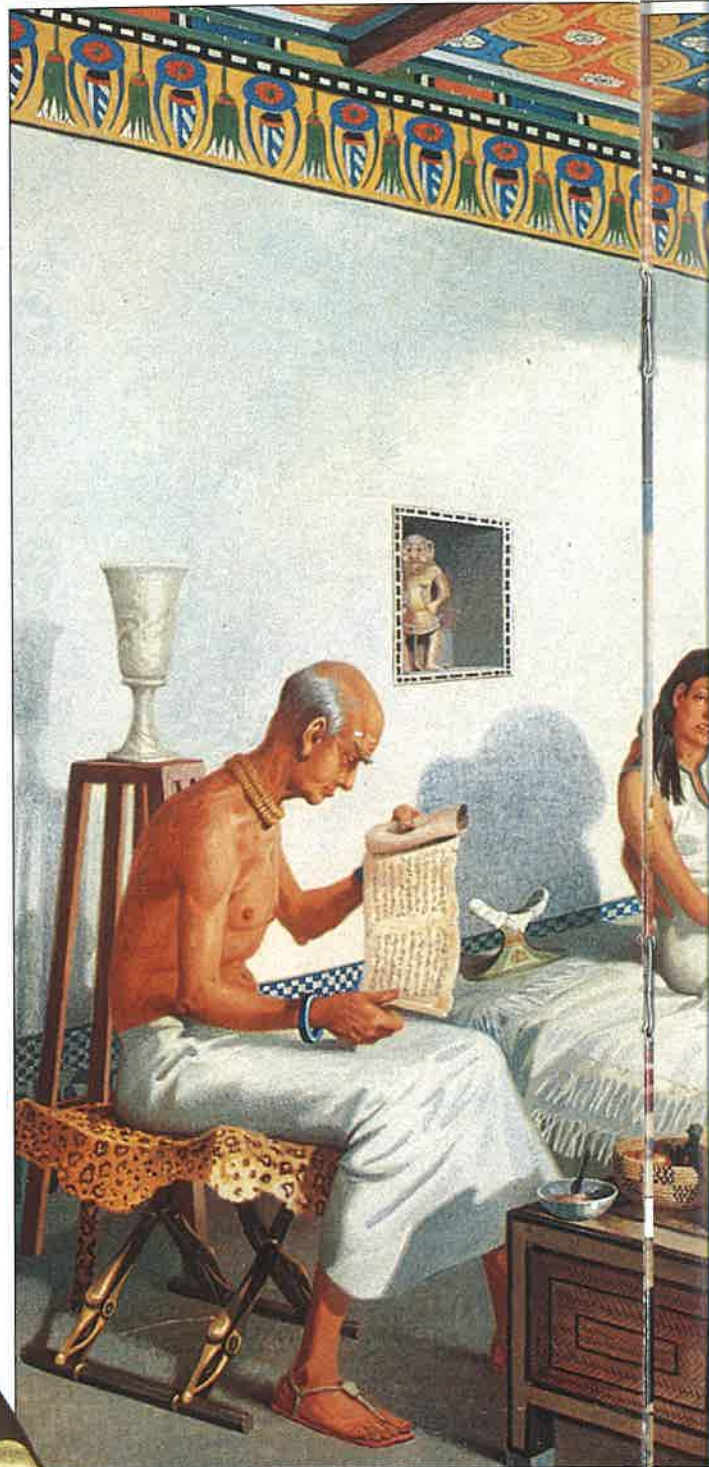
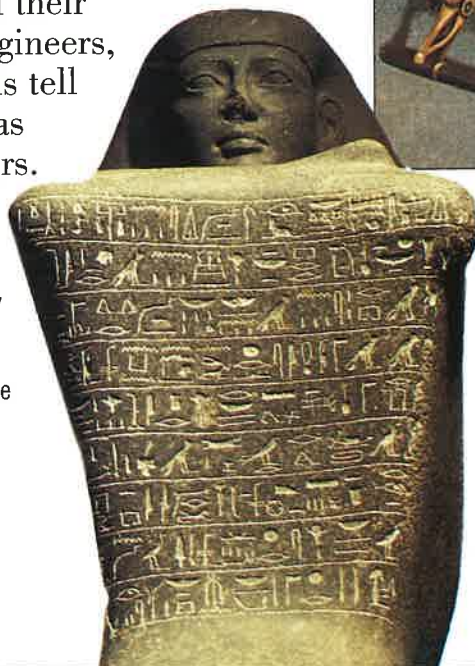
Leaving Their Mark

We know them best for pyramids and pharaohs, but the ancient Egyptians left many other achievements to mystify and amaze us. They invented the form of picture-writing known as hieroglyphs, as well as papyrus, a paperlike writing material. Their temples and pyramids give proof of their skills as architects and engineers, and ancient papyrus scrolls tell of their accomplishments as writers, doctors, and healers.

► OVER SEVEN

hundred different signs make up the Egyptian picture-writing known as hieroglyphs. In hieroglyphs, picture symbols represent ideas and sounds. Scribes

were expert in writing hieroglyphs, which were used mainly for religious inscriptions on temples and stone monuments and to record the deeds of royalty.





◀ **IN HIEROGLYPHS**, the names of the royal family have an oval-shaped frame called a cartouche around them. The symbol here is for Pharaoh Hyksos Menepthah.



▲ **THE INVENTION OF** papyrus, made from a reed plant, was a significant advance for civilization. The light-

weight writing material could be easily carried and stored. Scribes wrote on papyrus with brushes made from reeds.

▼ **THE ROSETTA**

Stone, discovered in 1799, made it possible to translate hieroglyphs after thousands of years. The same text was inscribed in three forms (from top): hieroglyphs; cursive demotic (used in business); and Greek.



▲ **THIS TEMPLE WALL** at Kom Ombo shows almost 40 different medical instruments, including scales for weighing medicines, hooks for holding open wounds, and curettes for scraping away infected tissue.



◀ **HIEROGLYPHS CAN** be written from left to right, right to left, or top to bottom. For business contracts, letters, and scientific texts, a simpler, cursive form of hieroglyphs called hieratic was used.

