

Egypt receives ancient stolen limestone relief

December 20 2016

Egypt's embassy in London received a limestone relief that had been stolen from Queen Hatshepsut's temple in Luxor, the Ministry of Antiquities said.

Shaaban Abdel Gawad, general supervisor of the ministry's antiquities repatriation department, in a statement said that the ministry repatriated the relief in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the British Museum after proving its possession. The recovery of the relief is "very important" especially since it will help in restoration work currently being carried out by a Polish archaeological mission, he said.

The relief, which is carved in limestone and engraved with hieroglyphic symbols, was stolen from the temple in 1975 and smuggled out of the country, he said. It was put on show in an auction hall in Spain and a British antiquities dealer bought it, the statement said.

Last year, U.S. officials returned dozens of illegally smuggled artifacts to Egypt, including a Greco-Roman style Egyptian sarcophagus.

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