

Hesire's Flashlight

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by Bill McNulty



Fig.1 Hesire wearing his flashlight

Egyptian Pyramid interiors and tomb chambers are dark places. During construction of Egyptian Pyramids and tombs a source of light was needed so workers could see into the darkness. When Egyptian tombs and pyramids were opened in the late 1800s and early 1900s it was observed that their ceilings did not contain soot residue you'd expect if torches were used for illumination during their construction. So what was the source of light the Ancient Egyptians used during construction of tombs and pyramids?

Current theory states crude mirrors or oil lamps were used to illuminate Ancient Egyptian tombs and pyramids during their construction. Egyptologists have theorized that sunlight was bounced off copper mirrors to see into Egyptian tombs and chambers that can extend hundreds of feet into limestone and sandstone. These mythical Egyptian mirrors have never been found. Also, the light from these mythical mirrors would have been blocked by workers moving thru the corridors.



Fig.2 Sesh and Owl hieroglyphics found in the Tomb of Rekhmire

Another theory of Egyptian tomb illumination states oil lamps with natron(sodium carbonate) added to the oil prevented soot release from the burning oil. It has been suggested that the length of the lamp wick determined the workers work period. This may explain why no soot buildup has been found on the roofs of tomb and pyramid chambers. But, a more likely explanation of Ancient Egyptian illumination is a light source which has been lost to history.

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