

# **AMARNA REPORTS II**

BARRY J. KEMP  
EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY

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The Egyptian city of (Tell) el-Amarna was built by King Akhenaten around 1350 B.C. as a new capital and as the showpiece for his new cult of the life-giving powers of the sun, the Aten. Following his death the city was rapidly deserted, after an occupation of between about fifteen to twenty years. This short-lived history makes the site immensely important for archaeological studies. In 1979 the Egypt Exploration Society resumed its programme of excavation and survey at Amarna, interrupted since 1936. The current excavations have been concentrated at an isolated settlement in the desert behind the main city, the Workmen's Village. At the same time a project of archaeological mapping for the whole city has been undertaken. This is the second volume of interim reports on excavations and survey, and on various research projects, including the systematic cataloguing of four thousand textile fragments from the excavations, and the initiation of a study of the ancient botanical remains. Whilst the results contribute to our knowledge of the nature and history of Amarna specifically, they also illustrate the behaviour of one human community, isolated in space and time, as manifested through archaeology.

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**AMARNA REPORTS II**

by

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## CONTENTS

Preface	vii
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### REPORTS ON 1984 FIELDWORK

Chapter 1	Chapel 561/450 (The "Main Chapel") [Ann Bomann]	1
Chapter 2	Painted plaster from the Main Chapel [Barbara Garfi]	18
Chapter 3	Chapels 570 and 571 and adjacent ground [Linda Hulin]	29
Chapter 4	Chapel group 528-531 [B. Kemp]	39
Chapter 5	The Amarna Survey: the survey of the city [Salvatore Garfi]	51

### TECHNICAL REPORTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Chapter 6	The hieratic labels, 1979-82 by M.A. Leahy	65
Chapter 7	The hieroglyphic wall plaster from Chapel 561 by G. Robins	110
Chapter 8	Pottery fabrics and ware groups at el-Amarna by Paul T. Nicholson and Pamela Rose	133
Chapter 9	Preliminary report on the botanical remains by Jane M. Renfrew	175
Chapter 10	Preliminary report on the textiles by Gillian M. Eastwood	191



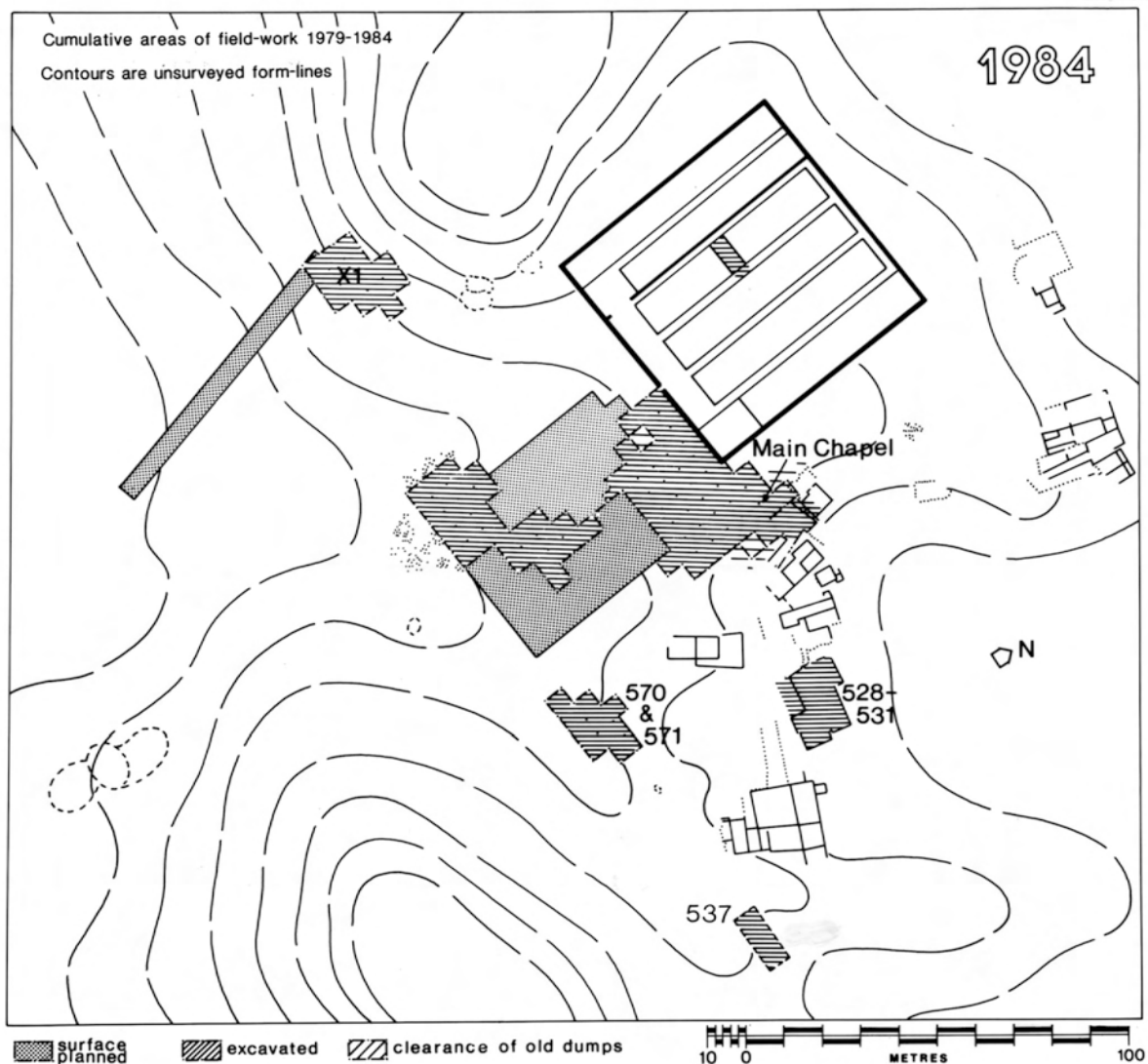


Figure 0.1. Map of the Workmen's Village, showing cumulative fieldwork carried out between 1979 and 1984.



## PREFACE

*Amarna Reports* I brought readers up to date with the progress of the current fieldwork at Amarna to the end of the 1983 season. This second volume of reports covers work completed in 1984, although the technical reports draw on material from previous years. The 1984 season was a relatively short one - from February 28th to April 17th at the site. No fresh and previously unexcavated parts were begun: the work was primarily concentrated on the two chapel areas started last year. The results were most satisfactory, but since they essentially enlarge upon points made in the introductory first chapter of *ARI* ("Patterns of activity at the Workmen's Village") little needs to be added as to the background of the work.

Much more has now been found of the painted decoration of the Main Chapel, which can now be more clearly seen as a miniature temple in its own temenos. The wall relationships on north and east also help to bind some of the chapels excavated in 1921 into the same "late" phase of activity at the Village. A burial from an even later period found beside the north wall of the Chapel casts some light on conditions at Amarna in subsequent centuries. At the other main site of excavation, Chapels 570 and 571, the discovery of a nearby rock-tomb provides a neat piece of evidence corroborating the suggestion that the chapels were associated with tombs to only a secondary degree, and thus played a role in the life of the Village independent of the funerary cult. Of greater general importance for reconstructing how the villagers utilised the ground around their village is the discovery beneath and outside Chapels 570 and 571 of an area where plants were cultivated. It is not yet clear how extensive this was - further work is planned for the next season - but it adds a most satisfactory dimension to the picture of the industrious way in which the villagers tried to settle into the inhospitable landscape which had been allocated to them. The inauguration in 1984 of a project to study the ancient botany of the site, reported on in Chapter 9, is an important step towards making the most of this discovery. It also points to an aspect of the work which has hitherto not been very satisfactory: namely the lack of proper definition in dealing with "rubbish" or "midden" strata. Normally they have a high botanical content which has the potential to tell us something as to their origin, but expert identification is essential for this. In a short time it has already revealed that much of the great volume of refuse that fills the quarries in front of the village derives more from animal-keeping than from cleaning human dwellings (as we had previously supposed) and this in turn reinforces the aspect of self-sufficiency in the village's life.

In addition to breaking fresh ground at these sites a further team of workmen was employed to re-clear more of the chapels excavated in 1921. Last year this work was confined to Chapels 523 and 522 (*ARI*: 25-27). The season began with the completion of 522. The work team was then moved to the site of the next chapel to the north, no. 521. It rapidly emerged, however, that after 1921 robbers had attacked it, perhaps hoping to find a missed tomb shaft. The result was the total destruction of the brickwork. The team involved was next moved to re-clear a quite different group of 1921 chapels: nos. 528 to 531. This took the remainder of the season to complete, with intriguing results reported in Chapter 4. For a short time, too, the team working at Chapels 570 and 571 was

transferred to re-clear Chapel 537, reported in *COA* I: 101, but never, it would seem, planned. This has so far remained its fate since we, too, have been obliged to leave the planning until next season.

Increasingly the chapels appear to fall into several discrete and probably private groups (the Main Chapel excepted), each one with distinctive features added to a common basic layout, implying variations in group (presumably family) traditions of religious observance. When the planned re-clearances are complete the Workmen's Village chapels should provide an important demonstration of the existence in a single community of a limited degree of diversity of tradition within a generally homogenous framework of belief.

Chapter 6, by M.A. Leahy, on the hieratic labels found during the 1979-82 seasons covers the greater part of all inscribed material (excepting the hieroglyphic wall plaster) found to date. Now that excavation within the rubbish deposits has ceased the numbers of all categories of finds, hieratic labels included, have considerably declined. A few brief references to the dates on these labels have appeared in previous preliminary reports (*JEA* 67: 2, 14; *JEA* 69: 14), based upon preliminary readings only. Where these differ from those in Dr. Leahy's chapter the latter should be preferred, being based upon the opportunity of a lengthier and more intensive period of study.

Some of the following chapters bear the names of individual authors. The field reports were compiled by Kemp, but on the basis of the field records made by the team members whose names appear as sub-headings in the relevant chapters. The full staff list for 1984 runs as follows: Ann Bomann and Linda Hulin (site supervisors); Salvatore Garfi (Amarna Survey), Barbara Garfi (conservator and artist), Pamela Rose and Paul Nicholson (pottery), Dr. Jane Renfrew (botany), Gillian Eastwood (textiles), and Christopher Hulin (house maintenance).

The Egyptian Antiquities Organization Inspectors were Yahya Zakaria Mohammed and Mohammed Abd el-Hamid Mohammed, to whom a great many thanks are due, as also to their colleagues in Minia Province: Mahmud Hamza and Samir Anis; and to Dr. Ahmed Kadry, Dr. Aly el-Khouli, and the other members of the Higher Committee of the Antiquities Organization in Cairo, for both granting the permit to work at Amarna, and for assisting the expedition to function smoothly and efficiently.

That the expedition was able to achieve so much in a limited time was in part due to a generous donation from the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum in San Jose, California, to whose director, R.M. Lewis, a great expression of gratitude is due. Other valuable donations came from Lloyds Bank International, Cairo, and Higgs and Hill, London. The Amarna Survey was financially supported by a further generous grant from the Robert Kiln Foundation; Gillian Eastwood's study of the textiles benefited greatly from a grant from the Thomas Mulvey Fund of the University of Cambridge; Mr. Stanley Hattie also generously made a further donation for improvements to the expedition house at el-Amarna. We would like to record our appreciation as well to George Brown for his continued interest and support.

For the setting up of the printed text of this volume and for use of analytical programs, the expedition is grateful for the facilities provided by the University of Cambridge Computing Service, and to the assistance of Piete Brooks of the Computer Laboratory, under whose guidance the first tentative hieroglyphs

have been incorporated into the text, in Chapter 7.

## TECHNICAL NOTES

Most of the current excavation is outside the Walled Village, and is controlled by a grid of five-metre squares originating at a point in the south-west of the site. The squares are identified by prefixes consisting of a letter, representing the west to east axis, and a number for the south to north axis. The squares not only provide a framework of reference, but have also been used throughout as excavation units. Sections have been drawn along many of the grid lines, but no baulks retained, since the goal is area clearance.

Between 1979 and 1981 the site recording system recognised primarily stratigraphic soil layers, called "levels" and numbered in circles, beginning with no. 1 in each square. In the text of this volume level numbers are placed in round brackets, thus (1), with the five-metre square designation as prefix, e.g. M10(1). In 1982 the system was revised to incorporate all kinds of debris, not only layers, but walls, cuts, fills, and so on. These are now called "units", and numbering is sequential over the squares and from one season to the next. On the plans unit numbers appear in rectangular boxes, and in the text are written in square brackets, thus [1286].

In the excavation photographs, the wooden scale that appears is 1 metre long.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

The references for Chapters 1 to 5, which report on the 1984 fieldwork, will be found at the end of Chapter 5, on p. 64. References for the subsequent chapters, written by individual authors, will be found at the end of each of their chapters.

The following abbreviations have been used throughout:

AR: *Amarna Reports*. 2 volumes. London 1984-85.

ASAE: *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte*. Cairo.

BIE: *Bulletin de l'Institut d'Égypte*. Cairo.

COA: *The City of Akhenaten*. 3 volumes in 4, by T.E. Peet, C.L. Woolley, H. Frankfort and J.D.S. Pendlebury. London 1923-51.

Denk.: C.R. Lepsius, ed., *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien*. 6 vols. in 12. Berlin [1849-59].

GM: *Göttinger Miszellen*. Göttingen.

JEA: *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*. London.

JNES: *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*. Chicago.

Mat.: W. Helck, *Materialien zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Neuen Reiches*. 6 parts. (Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur in Mainz, Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse, Jahrgang 1960: 10, 11; 1963: 2, 3; 1964: 4; 1969: 4). Wiesbaden.

Wb: A. Erman and H. Grapow, *Wörterbuch der Ägyptischen Sprache*. 5 volumes. Leipzig 1926-31.

ZÄS: *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache*. Berlin.





## CHAPTER 1

### REPORT ON THE 1984 EXCAVATIONS CHAPEL 561/450 (THE "MAIN CHAPEL")

Site supervisor: Ann Bomann

#### 1.1 Introduction

One of the principal discoveries of the 1983 season was the largest of the chapels which occupy the ground outside the village on the eastern side. It had escaped previous digging because much of it had been deeply buried beneath spoil heaps from the 1921 excavation of other chapels located further up the hillside. The 1983 season saw the removal of much of the covering dump and the exposure of roughly half or a little more of the chapel and its adjoining rooms (*ARI*: Chapter 2). Further work was made a priority for 1984, and by the end of the season the entire structure had been cleared except for a single five-metre square in the south-east corner (S18) where removal of the overlying dump was not completed until the end of the work, together with a small adjoining patch in S19 (Figure 1.2). The final stages of excavation also brought to light in several parts quantities of painted plaster from wall decorations. Two groups of fragments form the basis of Chapters 2 and 7.

The general setting of the Main Chapel is now much clearer. The hillside rises in the direction of the north-east corner of the building (Figure 1.11). Although the ground on which the Chapel stands also rises towards the east, it does so to a much lesser extent because it forms the floor of a shelf cut into the hillside to a maximum depth of about one metre (cf. the sections, Figures 1.5 and 2.3). The vertical sides to this shelf, plastered and partly reinforced with bricks and stones, form the boundary of the Chapel enclosure on the east, and along part of the north side as well. The north-eastern part of the Chapel was thus protected by this low escarpment on two sides, and in consequence has been exposed to erosion to a much lesser extent so that a good part of the brickwork still stands (Figure 1.1). The escarpment and the ancillary rooms on north and south surround the main body of the Chapel on three sides, and create, in effect, a small temenos for it. When the small area in the south-east corner has been cleared we will have excavated an unusually complete miniature temple.

#### 1.2 Inner Hall and Sanctuary

The Inner Hall had been left at the end of the 1983 season with the floor still covered by the ancient fill of collapsed rubble (*ARI*: Figure 2.1). Removal of this fill revealed that, like the Outer Hall, no columns or piers had been used to support the roof, the existence of which was confirmed by numerous pieces of mud roofing material found in the rubble (see below, section 1.5). Instead, the central feature was a low dais [999] resting on the mud floor [1161] (Figure 1.3). It had been made from two pieces of fine limestone, coated with gypsum plaster,

[(Facing page). Figure 1.2. Plan of the Main Chapel (originals by A. Bomann)].



Figure 1.1. General view of the Main Chapel from the east.

and was thus very similar to the dais situated on the floor of the corridor in the Sanctuary [878]. [1]

The Hall had been entered from the west by a doorway between two square brick piers [744, 848] flanked by screen walls [743, 1087] with windows above. The threshold [998] was made from two limestone slabs. It is interesting to note that the larger of these was a re-used threshold from another building with a smaller doorway. At either end were two slots to hold the bases of (wooden ?) jambs, but these had been filled with gypsum plaster. Because this block was narrower than the doorway into the Inner Hall the position of the northern slot was, in any case, unsuitable for holding a door jamb in position here. Probably this doorway and the one into the Sanctuary were not closed by doors at all.

The Sanctuary was reached by a flight of four steps [1000] (Figure 1.3), reaching a total height of 65 cms. The steps were flanked by low walls [1160] with curved tops, ending at the bottom with short flanking projections. These also had curved tops running perpendicularly to the others.

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[1] In AR I: 21-22 it was incorrectly stated that the plinth [878] was made from bricks thickly coated with gypsum plaster. Closer examination showed that the material beneath the plaster was, in fact, limestone blocks and not brick.





Figure 1.3. Main Chapel: the Inner Hall looking south, showing steps up to the Sanctuary, and limestone dais [999].

The north-east corner of the Inner Hall was the best preserved part of the whole building, the walls reaching a height of 1.53 metres. This had preserved, in the corner between the north wall [1031] and the Sanctuary screen wall [1182] most of the cavetto cornice which had run along the top of the screen wall, to form the sill to the oblong window which filled the space above. The cornice had been made by leaving a header course of bricks projecting forward, adding mortar beneath to form the curve, and then plastering the whole with more mortar and with a coat of gypsum. Sufficient traces remained in other places to show that a cornice of this construction had capped all four screen walls, at both ends of the Inner Hall.

The third and northernmost shrine was also excavated this season. This was the one that Peet had uncovered in 1921, and which appears on his plan (*COA I*: Plate XXIV). The rear wall had weathered somewhat following its exposure, but otherwise the shrine resembled the other two closely, although it possessed far



fewer blade cuts on the bench and on the floor (Figure 1.6).

### 1.3 The Side Chapel and North Annex

It was suspected at the end of last season that a doorway occupied the north-east corner of the Outer Hall. This proved to be so. It led to a Side Chapel, of two rooms, which ran the full width of the Outer Hall. The outer room was roughly 2 metres square. The eastern end (Figure 1.4) was entirely taken up by a well-preserved bench [1074] similar to those within the shrines in the Sanctuary, but wider. It, too, bore patches of grooves from a blade. On the back wall [1044] were painted vertical red and blue lines from a simplified *serekh*-design. Against the north and west walls stood a solid L-shaped bench [1094], c. 30 cms. high.



Figure 1.4. The Main Chapel: sanctuary of the Side Chapel, looking north-east.

A doorway in the west wall with brick threshold [1237] gave sole access to an inner chamber. It was a rectangular room, 2-2.5 by 4 metres, empty save for a solid brick bench [1095] extending along most of the northern side. Its eastern end had been destroyed by digging which was probably not modern. The south

wall was strengthened with a buttress [1088].

To the east of the Side Chapel the same width of space was continued to create a single long chamber, 1.5-2 by 4.50 metres, bordered on the north by wall [1028] which almost immediately became the facing for the vertical cutting into the rock bordering the platform in which the rear part of the Main Chapel stood. Two buttresses [1029, 1030] strengthened it. The floor slopes up fairly steeply, and was split into two levels [1185 and 1203] divided by a 30 cm. high step [1205]. The chamber could only be entered from the north, and rather awkwardly by stepping over the wall [1186], 50 cms. high, on to the top of a little block of brick-built steps [1204].

The purpose of this chamber is not apparent from anything recovered from the excavation. The rubble filling was intact, but when removed only a clear plastered floor [1185, 1203] remained without the covering of organic material found in the annexe rooms on the south.

#### **1.4 The rear corridor**

The narrow space behind the Sanctuary had been entirely cleared by Peet in 1921. All that remained to do was to empty the sand which had subsequently filled it again. It narrows from south to north, until it becomes only 50 cms. wide opposite the north-east corner of the Sanctuary. It then opens out into a small square space which provided the only access into the North Annexe. In 1921 Peet had exposed the remains of earlier walls in the floor of the corridor (Figure 1.6). Two are present [384], parallel to each other and separated by a narrow space. One of them is represented now not only by a foundation course of bricks but also by a single row of circular pads of mortar from the next course above. This wall formed the edge to a mortar floor [1243] which runs beneath the walls of the Sanctuary (Figure 1.5). The parallel wall, which also has remains of mortar from an upper course on it, probably runs back for a short way beneath wall [1258], which is actually a strengthening for the revetment wall [377]. Further north the floor of the corridor [1173] becomes continuous, but the marks show through of the foundations of two more demolished walls [1242]. The western wall of the pair originally joined the revetment wall [1048], traces of the join still remaining on the revetment face.

An inspection of the faces of the rear Sanctuary wall [388, 1218] and the revetment footing [1258] also reveals that originally the floor of the corridor had not just run over the tops of these earlier walls, but over a fill that had raised the floor of the corridor, and had actually run for a short distance over the surviving floor [1173], although its traces vanish before wall [1186] is reached. The thickness of this filling was between 25 and 30 cms. behind the Sanctuary (cf. the sections, Figures 1.5 and 2.3). If it had continued as far as wall [1186] it would have turned this wall into a low revetment and made it less of an obstacle for entry into the North Annexe. Unfortunately, Peet had removed this fill entirely.

These foundations, and possibly floor [1173] as well, clearly belong to buildings which pre-date the construction of the Main Chapel, as also must the cutting in the rock and the revetment walls. There is little chance of finding out



# The Main Chapel

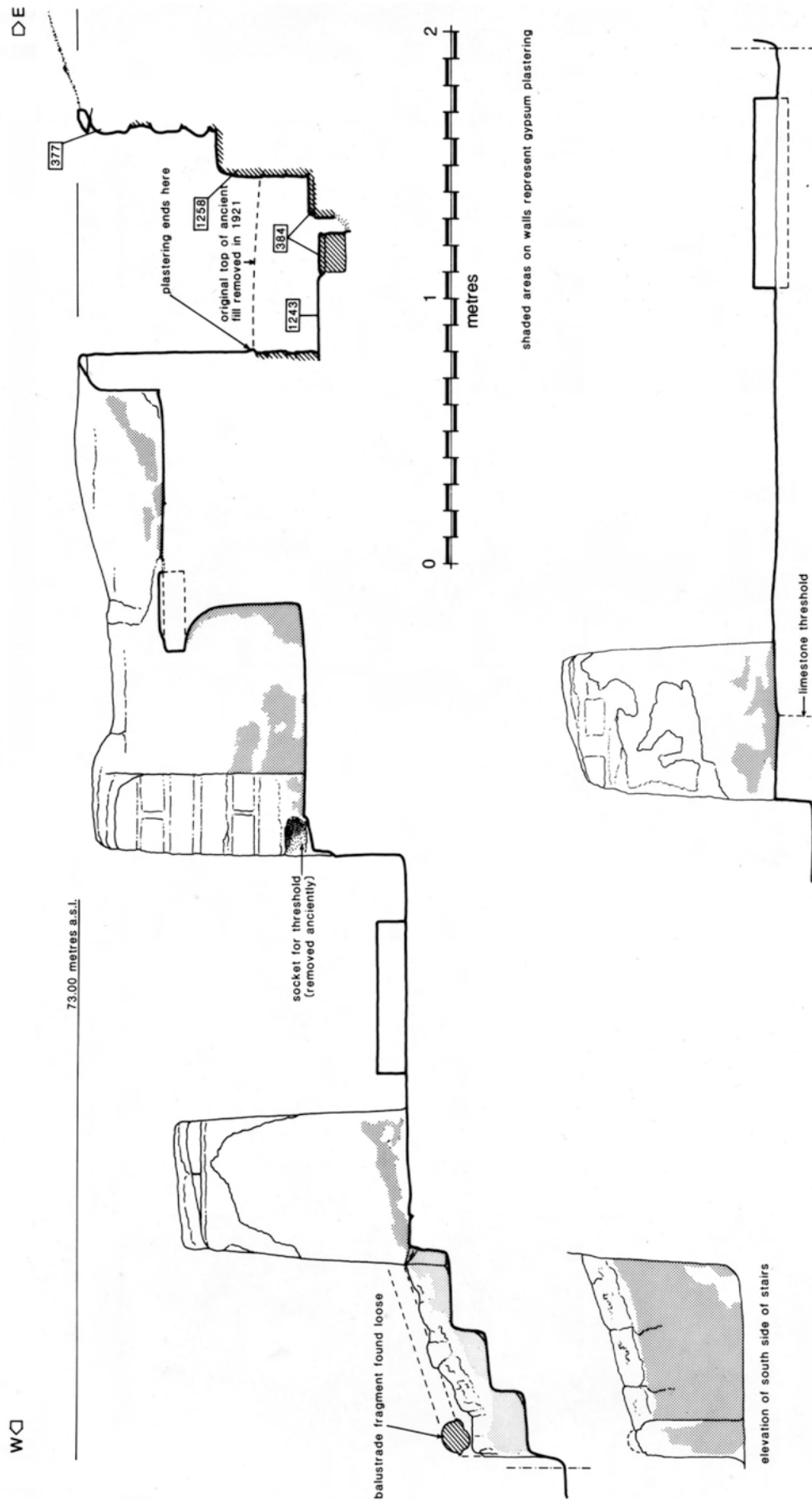


Figure 1.5. The Main Chapel: east-west section and elevation of the rear part.



Figure 1.6. The Main Chapel: rear corridor, looking west, showing the earlier foundations in the corridor floor.

more about them, however. Floor [1243] runs beneath the Sanctuary, but it cannot run as far as the Inner Hall, the floor of which is laid directly on bedrock. The general situation is, however, analogous to that of the walls found in 1980 on the floor of the small quarry in squares M17 and N17 (Kemp 1981: 10-13, Figure 4), and the scanty traces in the adjoining square N16. It has been suggested that these are the traces of the huts of the first occupants built as temporary shelters during the time that the Walled Village was being constructed (Kemp 1983: 10, Phase I).

### 1.5 The roofing of the Main Chapel

The rubble which fills the ruins of ancient buildings often comes from the original roof as well as from the collapsed walls. In dry desert conditions it is frequently possible to distinguish bricks from roofing material, even when both



Figure 1.7. Mud roofing fragment from R20 [1082] with reed impressions, and lengths of modern reed fitted into the grooves.

are fragmentary. Typically on Egyptian sites material from the roof will bear the impressions of reeds, matting, grass, poles, beams or the central ribs of the leaves of date-palm trees (Arabic *gereed*). This is because roofs were normally made from such materials, strengthened and protected by a covering layer of mud spread over the entire surface (cf. *COA I*: 57-8). Whereas little often remains of the organic material, clear and detailed impressions may be left in fragments of the original covering mud layer. One of the routine tasks of the excavation is the tabular registration of details of roofing fragments found. The results supply an important element in trying to envisage and to reconstruct on paper the original appearance of the buildings.

The excavation of the Main Chapel has yielded an abundance of roofing fragments. Indeed, in some cases the greater part of the original mud covering layer must be present in fragments (cf. Figure 2.1). More work remains to be done before a full assessment can be made, but the basic picture is already clear. The most important finding is that, beyond any doubt, the Main Chapel proper was continuously roofed from front to back, thus over the Outer and Inner Halls, the Sanctuary, the Side Chapel and the North Annexe. It would thus have had a very different appearance from that suggested for some of the chapels excavated in the 1920s. It was then regarded as typical for the chapels to have been open to the sky, except for the shrine (*COA I*: 93, Plates XXV, XXVI; Anon. 1925). This interpretation was probably based on intuition rather than on study of the constituents of the rubble fills. The Main Chapel could be used as an analogy for many of the chapels dug in the 1920s.

Most of the pieces from within the Main Chapel bear impressions either of round bundles of coarse grass bound with cord (as appear in the fragment illustrated in Figures 1.9 and 1.10) or of lengths of reed. Figure 1.7 illustrates one such piece. Fitted into the impressions are some lengths of reed which grow beside a drainage canal not far from el-Amariya and which resemble closely the forms impressed into the mud.



Figure 1.8. Mud roofing fragment from R20 [1080] bearing the impression of a rope mesh laid across closely set circular wooden beams.

A less common category, very thick, carries impressions of a coarse but evenly made mesh of double strands of thin rope. The impressed surfaces undulate slightly, implying that the mesh had been laid across rounded wooden beams closely set (Figure 1.8). This type of impression was confined to the North Annexe and must represent its roof. The roofing beams themselves had largely perished everywhere. Several pieces have survived, however, of a thick coating of mud which had been applied to the rounded undersides of the beams as a casing.



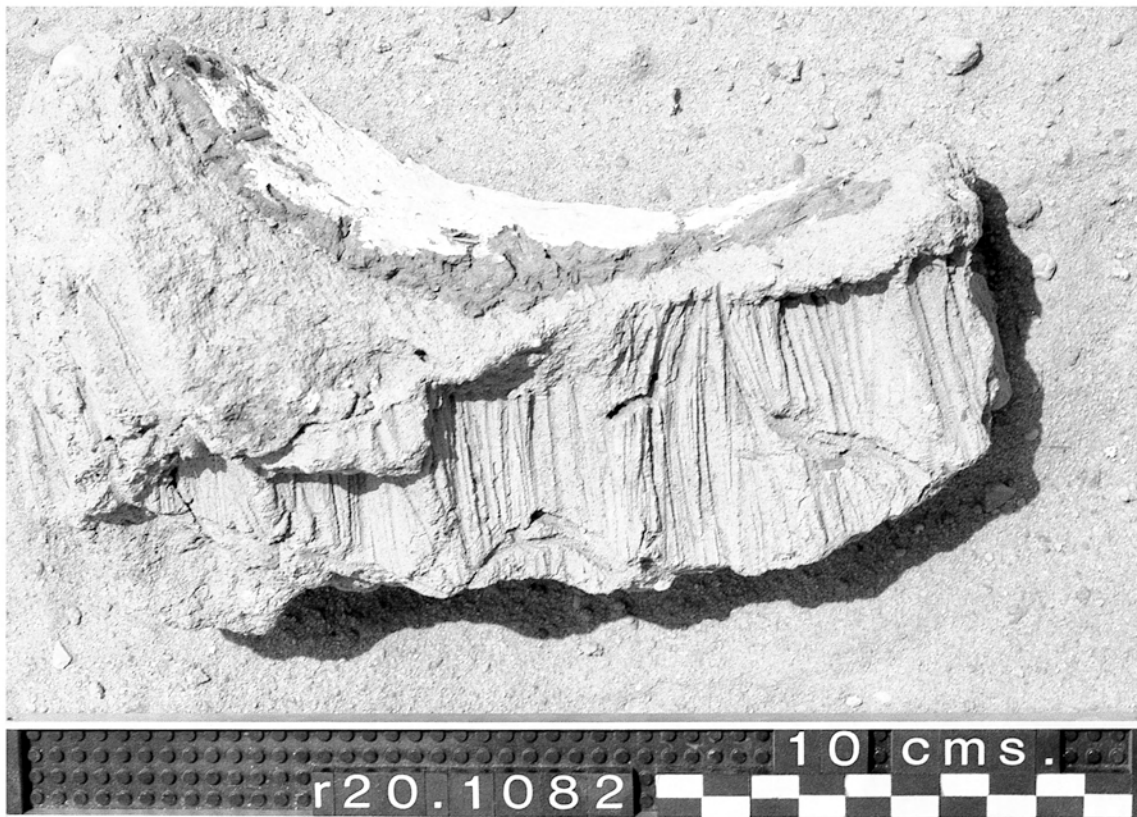


Figure 1.9. Mud roofing fragment from R20 [1082] bearing impressions of bundles of grass, and with part of the edge of a circular white-plastered window.

The rubble from the corridor in front of the shrines (R20[1082]) and from above the floor of the Inner Hall (R19[974]) contained respectively one and two pieces from circular apertures or windows in the roof. One is illustrated in Figures 1.9 and 1.10. It consists of a portion of roof with impressions of grass bundles, and part of the rounded edge to the window (internal diameter 22 cms.) covered with a thick layer of Nile mud coated with gypsum plaster. On the upper side the edge was surrounded by a thick rim projecting above the original roof level, presumably for protection. The outside edge of this rim was smooth as if originally it had been formed on the inside of part of a broken pottery vessel such as the shoulder of a *zir*. The significance of these fragments is that they would have introduced a small amount of direct light into the Sanctuary and Inner Hall, which would otherwise have been lit only dimly from light filtering through the two sets of windows in the partition walls separating the Sanctuary from the Inner Hall, and the Inner Hall from the Outer Hall.

### 1.6 Ground north of the Main Chapel

The removal of Peet's large dump before the end of the season allowed time to extend the excavations for a short distance to the north of the Main Chapel, into ground largely untouched in modern times. The main feature to emerge was a terrace running northwards into unexcavated ground. The edge had

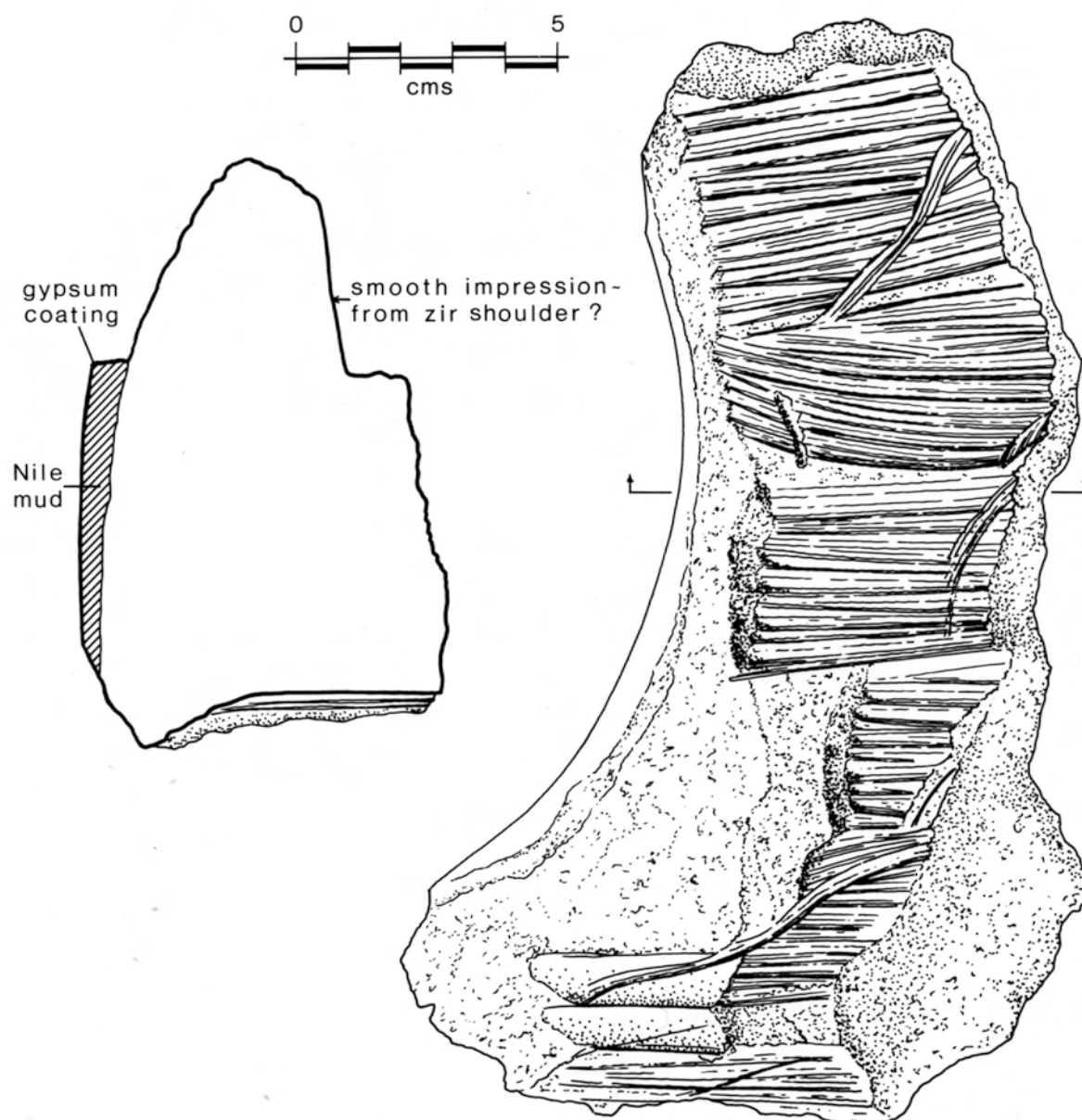


Figure 1.10. Drawing of the mud roofing fragment with window illustrated in Figure 1.9.

originally been about 90 cms. high, and had been faced with stones set in mortar. However, after completion a bank of sand and gravel had been laid against it, burying most of the revetment from view. At the south end this deposit [1128] had included a thick bed of almost pure wood shavings [1150].

The terrace had been reached by a flight of eight broad but shallow steps [1123] between low walls [1027] (Figure 1.11). They had been built at an angle to the terrace and a little to the north of the Main Chapel, the intention being to align them with the steps and entrance to Chapel 522 which lay at the back of the terrace. This part of the terrace had thus been turned into a forecourt for this chapel, and had been coated with marl plaster [1151]. A little further to the north (just off the edge of Figures 1.2 and 1.11) a low wall crossed the

terrace and formed the northern edge to this forecourt. Beyond it lie more low walls, presumably belonging to the front of the next chapel along, Chapel 521. But by the end of the season the relationships of walls in this part had not yet been fully clarified.



Figure 1.11. General view to the east of the Main Chapel, and, on the left, of the steps up to the terrace and to Chapel 522 lying behind. The late burial pit is in the left foreground.

Chapel 522 was entirely re-cleared in the course of this season's work, and a fresh plan made. This provided no surprises, except around the main entrance. This had the form of four shallow brick steps [1196] between flanking walls [1197], which turned outwards on either side of the bottom step, as seems to have been usual. Within the outer corner on the south side was a deposit of gypsum bearing the impression of a circular wooden pole, about 10 cms. in diameter. This is strongly reminiscent of the remains of pole supports against the sides of the main front entrance to the Main Chapel (*AR* I: 17-8). The corresponding position on the north had been damaged. No gypsum survived, but a slight depression in the desert surface marked the place where it should have been.

The physical relationships of structures in this part of the site add to the relative chronology. Until now the only one of the chapels integrated within the overall site stratigraphy has been the Main Chapel. Chapel 522 can now be brought into the scheme. The full chapel structure includes not merely the chapel building proper but also the piece of terrace in front and the stairs which descend from it and are so conspicuously on the same alignment. The junction



of the brickwork between the wall flanking these steps [1027] and the north wall of the Main Chapel [1028] shows clearly that the steps are later. [2] It follows that Chapel 522 is no earlier than the Main Chapel, and must therefore belong to the latest phase of the site's history of occupation in the Amarna Period. Building 523 can also, with reasonable confidence, be ascribed to this phase since it appears to have been constructed against the south wall of Chapel 522 [252]. Chapel 521 seems to be a further part of this group of buildings.

Further clearance of the terrace northwards is planned, and this may extend the relative chronology. Likewise, the excavation of square S18 in the south-east corner of the enclosure of the Main Chapel should open the way to examining the ground and wall relationships immediately to the south of Building 523, on ground hitherto covered by one of Peet's dumps.

### 1.7 The late burial beside the Main Chapel

The north wall of the Side Chapel had largely collapsed outwards. When the surface sand and modern dump was removed part of the collapsed rubble was found lying in a sheet [1026], and this was planned (Figure 1.12). The south-west corner of this layer is missing; instead a patch of sand [1075] appears. This probably fills a hole cut in modern times into the rubble from the surface at the foot of Peet's dump. A second patch of the same rubble appears on the eastern side of the square, partly burying the staircase and its walls.

Beneath this sheet of partially articulated fallen wall lay a packed layer of marl [1103] which is simply the decomposed and consolidated bottom part of the rubble layer, or possibly the remains of the first stages of the Chapel's collapse as the tops of the walls gradually crumbled away. It will be noticed that the pit in the south-west corner which cut through layer [1026] has been reduced to a shallow scooping in the surface of layer [1103]. This must be the base of the pit, which did not penetrate through to the underlying strata.

The removal of this layer and the surrounding sand [1122] exposed the even grey-brown surface which is the ancient ground level and probably a continuation of the terrace in front of the village. It was noticed that for part of the way along the foot of the north wall of the Main Chapel [1028, 1189] this surface had been cut away and the cutting filled with sand. No closer inspection was made until near the very end of the season. Then, whilst brushing the surface for photography, pieces of rope appeared, a pottery vessel, and finally fragments of painted woodwork. These established the presence of a burial and explained the sand-filled cutting in the ground: it was a narrow grave. The examination of this became a priority, and by the end of the season the contents had been exposed, treated with consolidants where necessary, lifted and transferred to the expedition's magazine. No time remained, however, for a full cleaning and study of the painted wooden coffin. It is hoped to include a full report on the burial in the next set of reports. All that will be described now

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[2] Likewise the narrow front wall of Chapel 522 [1241] appears to abut the eastern end of the north wall of the enclosure surrounding the Main Chapel [1048], but in this case it could be argued that this part of wall [1048] is older than the Main Chapel, having formed part of the lining to the rock cutting in which the Chapel and its antecedent building had been erected.

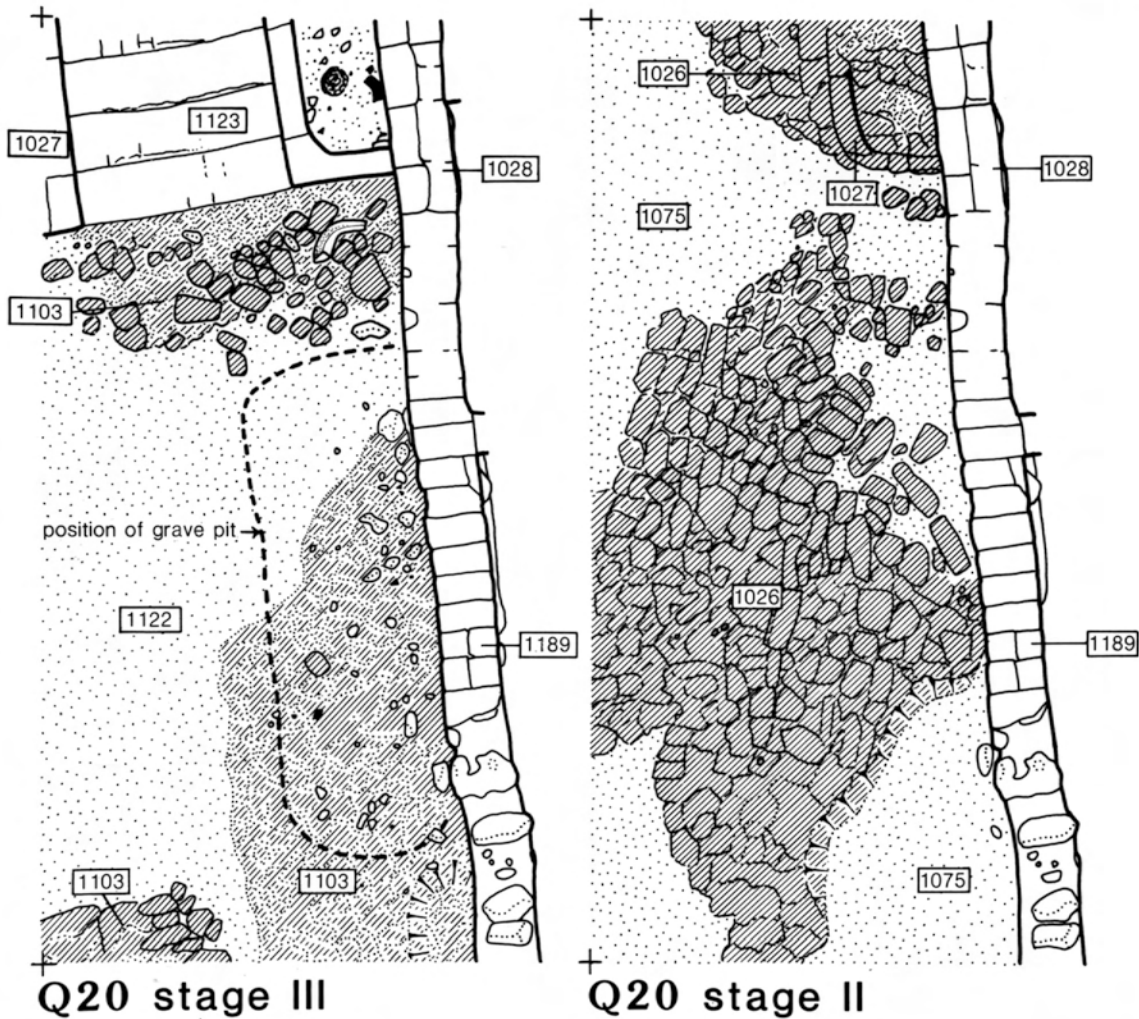


Figure 1.12. The northern part of square Q20 planned at the second and third stages of excavation. They show how the late burial pit was covered and sealed by the collapsed wall rubble from the Main Chapel (originals by A. Bomann).

are the general circumstances of the burial, which provide an interesting glimpse of conditions at the site after the end of the Amarna Period.

The burial had been laid in a narrow pit cut through the terrace [1211] into the underlying bedrock [1216] for a depth of between 60 and 80 cms. (Figure 1.11). A single mummified body had been placed in a painted anthropoid coffin and carried to the site slung by means of stout ropes beneath two narrow tree branches still retaining their bark. When the bearers reached the grave they lowered the coffin into it, and laid the carrying poles beside it, leaving the ropes still wound round the coffin (Figure 1.13). At the foot end they laid a pottery jar containing a liquid and a group of little pottery bowls. The jar had been carried up in a separate rope sling, much of which survived. The ceremony completed, the pit was filled with sand, and the burial left without any marking on the ground.

From inspecting the plans of the site made during the course of excavation (Figure 1.12) it is abundantly clear that when the burial was made the north wall of the Main Chapel [1028, 1189] was still standing. The two layers of rubble from



Figure 1.13. The late burial in its pit, looking west.

the wall's collapse [1026, 1103] run unbrokenly over the outline of the grave except for a short distance at the east end. Only a provisional date for the burial can be given at this stage. John Taylor of Birmingham University, who has recently completed a doctoral dissertation on coffins of the Third Intermediate Period, has kindly furnished the following note, based on preliminary photographs: "Comparison with the closest parallels from Thebes suggests that this coffin dates to the 20th or early 21st Dynasty (a date of c. 1200-1050 B.C. should exclude the possibility of error). This is based on the evidence of the physical form of the coffin, the disposition of the figures on the sides of the case, and the painted wig stripes at the head. The accuracy of this dating depends on the assumption that the course of stylistic development at Thebes ran more or less parallel to that in other parts of Egypt. Although there is not as much evidence for this as one would like, it does seem to be broadly

true."

It had already been established in 1981 that the southern enclosure wall of the Walled Village had not collapsed until the Late Period, on account of sherds of this date found beneath the rubble. That wall was, however, a more substantial one than those around the Main Chapel, and it is still a surprise that it should have stood for a century and a half at the very least in view of the use of what seems to be an inferior kind of brick, made of local desert marl without straw temper.

This does, however, help to explain why the burial was made here. If the walls were still standing to this height, some of the painted decoration could also have been visible. The Chapel would have appeared as a ruined place of sanctity to the small community that was probably living in the area of the modern village of el-Hagg Qandil, at the site known as the "River Temple" (COA I: 128-9). The previous excavations within the Workmen's Village had already discovered at least one burial of this general date (ibid.: 76, 129; unpublished E.E.S. negatives 1922/38-40). Some legend may still have surrounded the general site of Amarna and given it an aura of strangeness.