

CHAPTER 2

REPORT ON THE 1983 EXCAVATIONS CHAPEL 561/450 (THE "MAIN CHAPEL")

Site supervisor: Ann Bomann

2.1 Introduction

The majority of the chapels from the earlier years of the Society's excavations at Amarna belong to the 1921 season, directed by T.E. Peet (Peet 1921: 179-182; Peet and Woolley 1923: Chapter IV; Anon. 1925). These include all the ones cleared on the slopes of the hill to the east of the Walled Village (Figure 1.3). Peet gave them a running series of numbers, beginning with 521, opposite the south-eastern corner of the village, and ending with 541. In the following season Woolley cleared a small separate group, nos. 551-556, lying mainly east of the north-east corner of the village. This did not, however, complete the chapel series. In the 1979 season of the current excavations the ground immediately adjoining the south-east corner of the Village was tested. Within the small area exposed lay the front of a courtyard, its entrance connected to a T-shaped basin cut in the ground (Kemp 1980: 12-15). It appeared to be the front of a chapel belonging to a series lying below the ones dug by Peet. The eastwards continuation of its southern wall was marked by a line of stones visible on the surface and running up the hill until it vanished beneath one of Peet's dumps. The number 450 was given to it, but no further work was done until this year (1983).

During the seasons 1980-1982, the excavations were concentrated in the ground lying south from the village, and Chapel 450 was left alone. A line of T-shaped basins was, nevertheless, found in 1980 and 1981 running in front of the village (Figure 1.4), and late in the season of 1981 the excavations reached a zone immediately south of Chapel 450, uncovering the edge of buildings of brick and stone which were at the same stratigraphic level as the Chapel (Kemp 1983). It was again assumed that here were more chapels. For 1983 the whole area around Chapel 450 was made one of the prime targets for excavation, absorbing two work teams. It quickly became apparent that two quite separate types of building had stood here. Chapel 450 was, indeed, part of a chapel, but one much larger than had been envisaged. To the south, however, the walls of brick and stone reached in 1981 proved to belong not to chapels, but to animal pens, and these form the subject of Chapter 4.

Peet excavated his group of chapels by digging into them from the front, dumping the spoil down the slope immediately below. On the very last day of that season of 1921 Peet's men uncovered the rear of what seemed to be an unusually large chapel lying further down the hill, and this was given the number 561. In the narrow corridor separating it from no. 523 he also glimpsed a wall at a lower level, and this made him speculate on the possibility that

more than one building period was present (Peet 1921: 182; Peet and Woolley 1923: 99, 101). No further investigation was undertaken by Peet's successors, however, for it now lay deeply buried beneath one of the dumps. This deterred not only Woolley in 1922, but also the robbers who, over the following years, attacked much of the site.

A start was made in 1979 on moving the great spoil heap, resulting in the discovery of fragments of painted plaster, probably from Chapel 524 (Kemp 1980: 14-15). This year the dump was entirely removed over eight squares, so exposing the ground surface last seen by Peet. The ensuing excavation has now revealed that Chapel 561, briefly glimpsed by Peet, extended all the way down the hillside almost to the corner of the village itself. The forecourt exposed by us in 1979 and numbered 450 has emerged as part of an annexe which not only provided a side entrance to the chapel proper, but also access to a range of ancillary rooms, one of which contained an oven. The line of T-shaped basins discovered in 1980-81 also becomes more intelligible as a result (Figure 1.4). It follows the path from the village gateway to the forecourt entrance of 450, implying that the building 561/450 was recognised as playing an important part in the life of the village as a whole, rather than serving the needs of one particular family group. For convenience, therefore, the building has been termed the Main Chapel.

By the end of the 1983 season the excavation of the Main Chapel was not complete, but enough has been cleared to reveal its size and main features. It lies at a slight angle to the grid squares so that, whilst in the forecourt the excavated squares extend across almost the full width, by the time one reaches the rear, one third of the shrine lies still in the adjacent strip of unexcavated squares. Furthermore, time did not permit the excavation of the deposit of drift sand covering the floor of the Inner Hall.

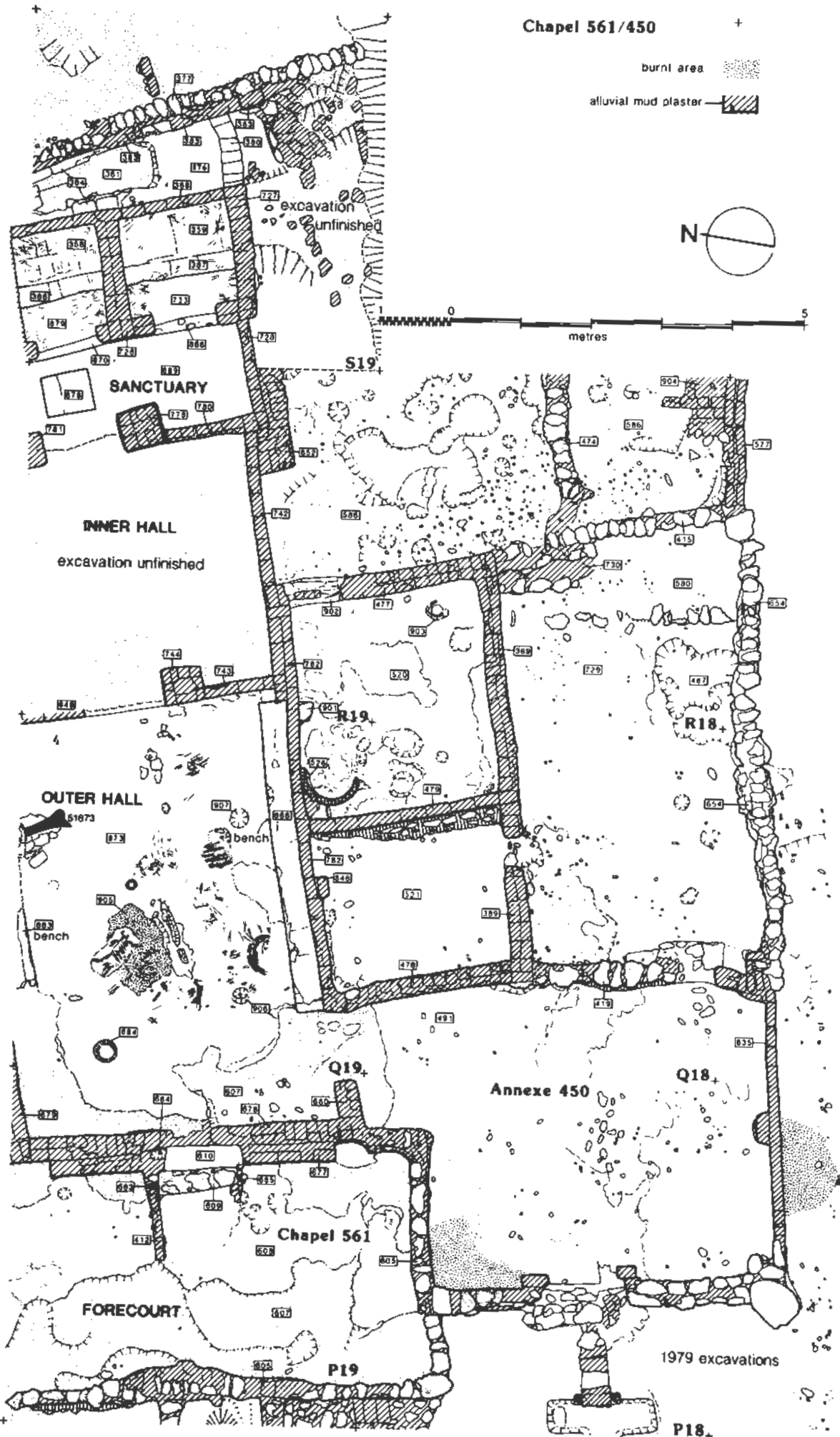
It will be noticed from the plan (Figures 2.1, 2.2) that the alignment of the building is not uniform. The forecourt is aligned fairly closely to the walls of the village, but thereafter it turns through a slight angle, as does the annexe 450. This angle does not bring it truly perpendicularly to the retaining wall beneath "Chapel" 523 to the east [377] (cf. Figure 2.10). The chapel's alignment and relation to 523 can be interpreted to mean that it was built later than 523 and its retaining wall [377]. The earlier walls at a lower level in the corridor in front of the retaining wall [384] add weight to this, although the investigation of this part is not yet complete. We know independently from the stratigraphy that chapel 561/450 is very late in the site's history. The value of these observations is that they offer, as yet, the only chronological link with the chapels dug by Peet, and raise the question: did the Main Chapel replace the others? Further excavation immediately to the north, and the re-clearance of more of Peet's chapels, may clarify this point.

2.2 Forecourt and stairs

The forecourt area lay below the limit of Peet's dump, and for this reason it is the one part of the chapel to have been dug over in modern times, with

Chapel 561/450

+



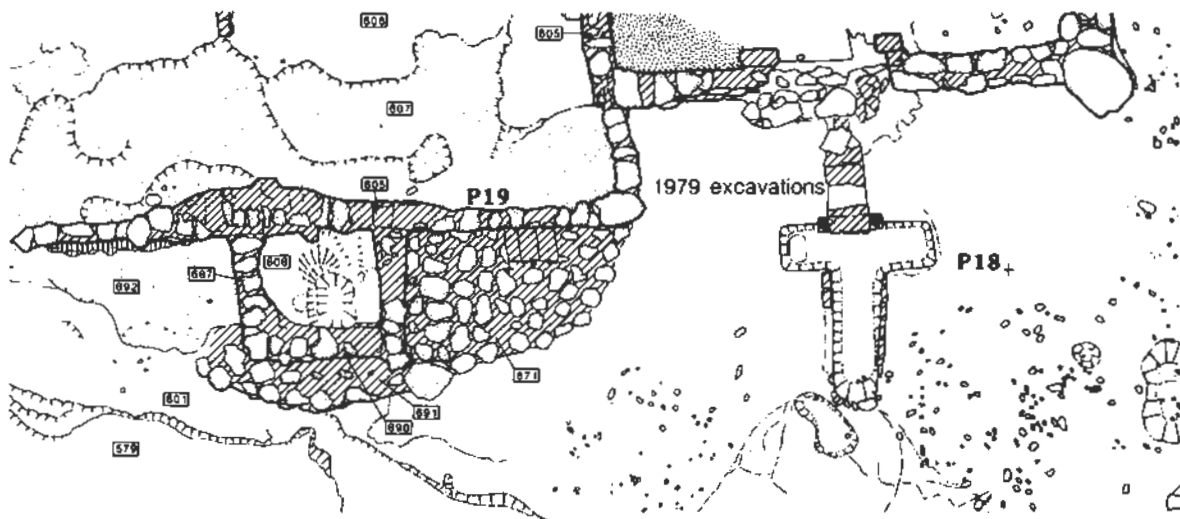


Figure 2.2. Plan of the Main Chapel (western end).

[(Facing page). Figure 2.1. Plan of the Main Chapel (originals by A. Bomann)].

the loss of much of the floor, and exposure of the underlying sand [607, 692]. It measures a minimum of 6.0 metres in width, and on average 3.0 metres from front to rear. The western and southern walls [605] were of stone and marl mortar construction. The forecourt itself was floored with a layer of marl plaster [608]. It was entered from the ground in front of the village [579, 601] from a roughly built flight of steps, the upper part of which [606] has been destroyed by illicit digging. The surviving parts of the steps are of stone and mortar construction, and consist of parallel flanking walls [687], and the two lowest steps [690, 691]. On the southern side, the corner between the steps and the forecourt wall was filled with a distinct layer of stones in mortar [871] which appears to have been deliberately laid down. These steps, and others between the various parts of the chapel, reflect the steady rise in ground level from west to east, which sets the rear wall of the chapel 1.73 metres above the ground immediately in front of the building.

The eastern wall of the forecourt [678] is a more elaborate construction, and must have served as the real front to the chapel. It was constructed of marl bricks. On either side of the entrance the brickwork was thickened in a way which implies that pylons were modelled [677] (Figure 2.5). The brick surfaces had been coated with alluvial mud plaster and then whitewashed. Traces of whitewash also survived on the south wall. A single step of stones in mortar [609] preceded the stone threshold. The threshold itself had been removed in antiquity, but the rectangular bed of mortar on which it had rested survived [610]. At the north end a hole probably marks where the door's pivot block had been set [684]. This entrance had been flanked by a pair of low projecting walls [412], that on the south having been destroyed by modern digging. Just before they met the pylons a wooden post or object of some kind had projected vertically from these little walls. In the hole of the northern one decayed wood still survived [683] (Figure 2.4). The southern one

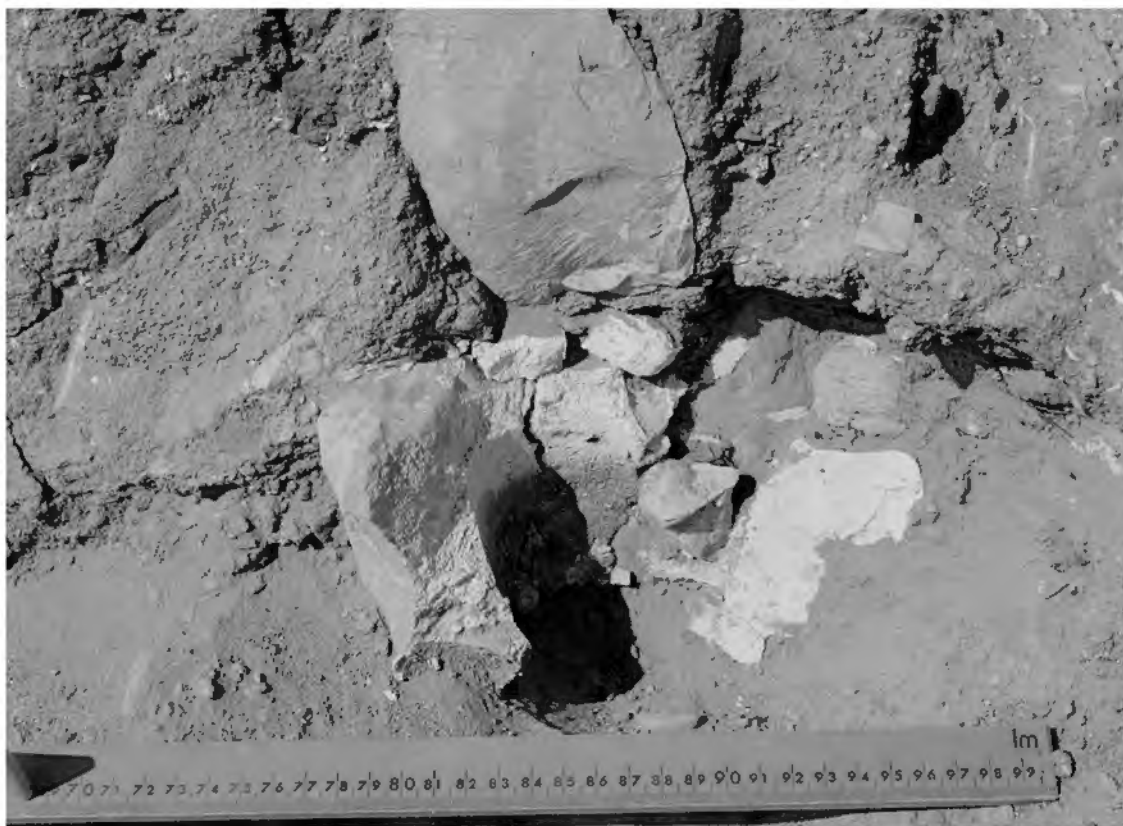


Figure 2.3. Main Chapel entrance: detail of the south side [685].

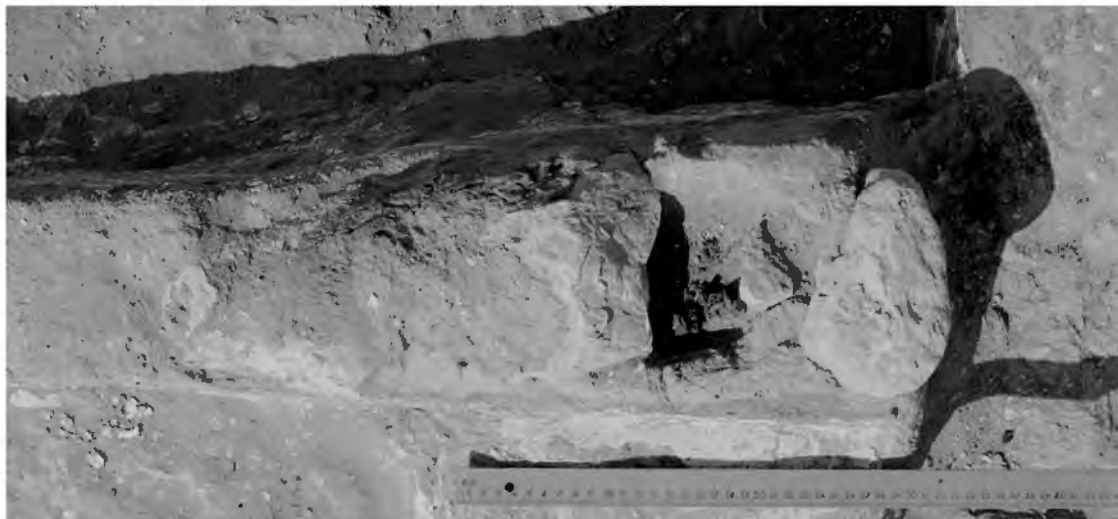


Figure 2.4. Main Chapel entrance: detail of the north side [683].

had been broken in half by digging, but this had revealed how the base of the post had been firmly set in gypsum before the brickwork had been completed around it [685] (Figure 2.3). The diameter of the post had been about 8 cms. Where the northern post [683] met the wall [412] the mortar had been moulded up on the west side to form a smooth, foot-like base.

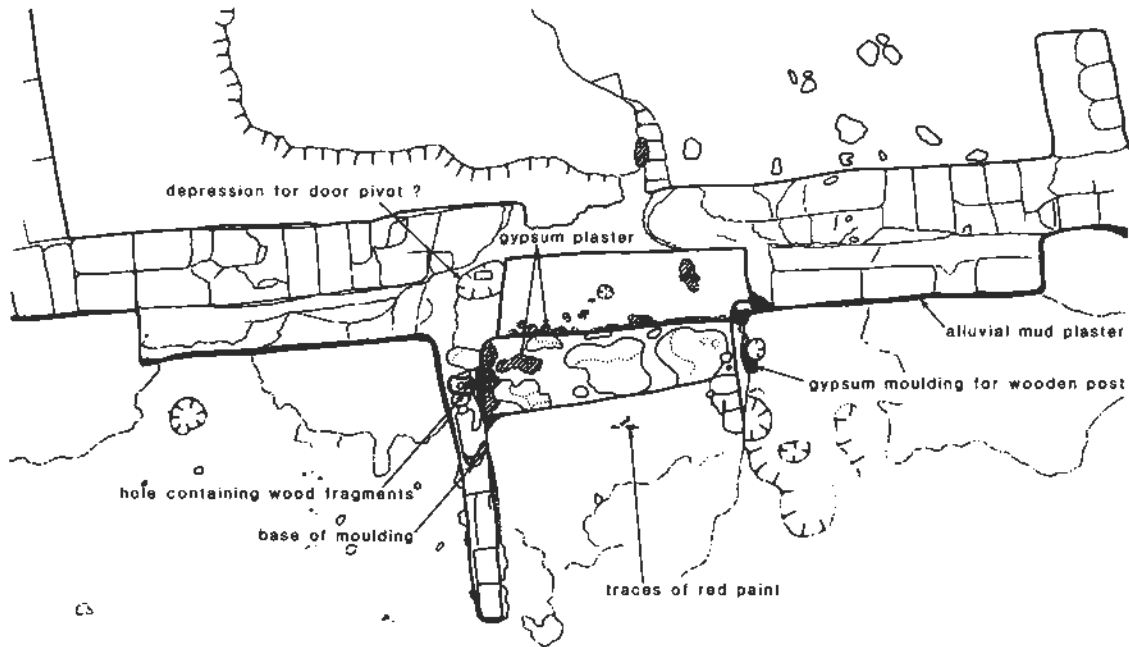


Figure 2.5. Main Chapel: details of the front entrance.

2.3 Outer Hall

This and the remaining parts of the Main Chapel proper are built from marl brick. It has two entrances: one the formal entrance from the forecourt just described, the other in the south-west corner leading in from the annexe, building 450. The western end has been damaged by illicit digging into the underlying sand [607], but over the rest Peet's dump had protected the ground. Beneath a layer of wind-blown sand the collapsed brickwork from the walls covered the entire floor and so left it undisturbed since ancient times.

The hall measures 4.40 by 6.10 metres. Brick benches, about 30 cms. high, ran along the north and south walls (Figure 2.6). The western end of the northern bench [863] has been destroyed by digging. Its other end still lies beneath the unexcavated debris of the next square, but at the very end of the work it became apparent that it is broken near the north-east corner by another doorway opening to the north. The southern bench [866] is intact, and starts beside the entrance from Annexe 450.

The Outer Hall contained no column bases. However, in the centre of the floor lay patches of grass matting and the remains of a timber beam, whilst pieces of mud bearing impressions of roofing materials were common in the overlying rubble. The Outer Hall must have been roofed, using beams resting on the side walls.

The floor [873] was of hard-packed marl plaster. A large burnt patch [905] lay near the centre. Just to the south and east of it the surface had been scored by blade-cuts, as occur in large numbers around the shrines (see



Figure 2.6. Main Chapel: view of the Outer Hall, looking south.

below). Pressed into the mud of the floor in this area were wooden shavings and also fish bones. It is probable, too, that pottery jars had regularly stood on the floor. Three circular depressions are cut into it [906], [907], and [884]. The last contained the impression and some remains of a circular ring of woven grass. A separate grass ring-stand (no. 5347) lay almost exactly in the centre of the floor. Other items recovered from the floor were a huge offering-stand of pottery (pottery no. 51873, see Chapter 12), part of a wooden standard or sceptre (no. 5319, Figure 2.12A, and section 2.9 below), a hand-brush made of grass (no. 5348), and a bronze javelin-head (no. 5294). A small quantity of painted plaster was found close to the eastern end of the Hall.

2.4 Inner Hall

This lay above the Outer Hall, and was entered over a step, between two brick piers [744, 848]. These piers were joined to the main Chapel walls by short lengths of wall [743] which showed signs of having been screen walls, 90

cms. above the floor of the Outer Hall. The Inner Hall is still partly buried beneath unexcavated debris in the neighbouring square, and the 1983 season did not allow enough time to clear the fill of drift sand and expose the floor. From front to back the Inner Hall measures 3.50 metres.

2.5. The Sanctuary

Nearly a third still lies unexcavated, but sufficient is clear for a description (Figures 2.7, 2.8). It is divided into two parts, a corridor and a group of three adjacent shrine chambers. The corridor was entered from the Inner Hall between a similar pair of brick piers [778, 781] and flanking screen walls [780] as occur between the Outer and Inner Halls.



Figure 2.7. Main Chapel: the Sanctuary, looking south.

At its widest point the corridor measures 1.35 metres across. In the centre, opposite the door, stands a rectangular plinth of brick thickly coated with

gypsum plaster [878] and in a remarkably fresh condition. [1] The floor [689] had also once been gypsum coated. The small wooden plaque painted on both sides (no. 5239; Figure 2.11A, and section 2.9 below) was found in the rubble fill [747] between the plinth and the entrance to the central shrine [870].

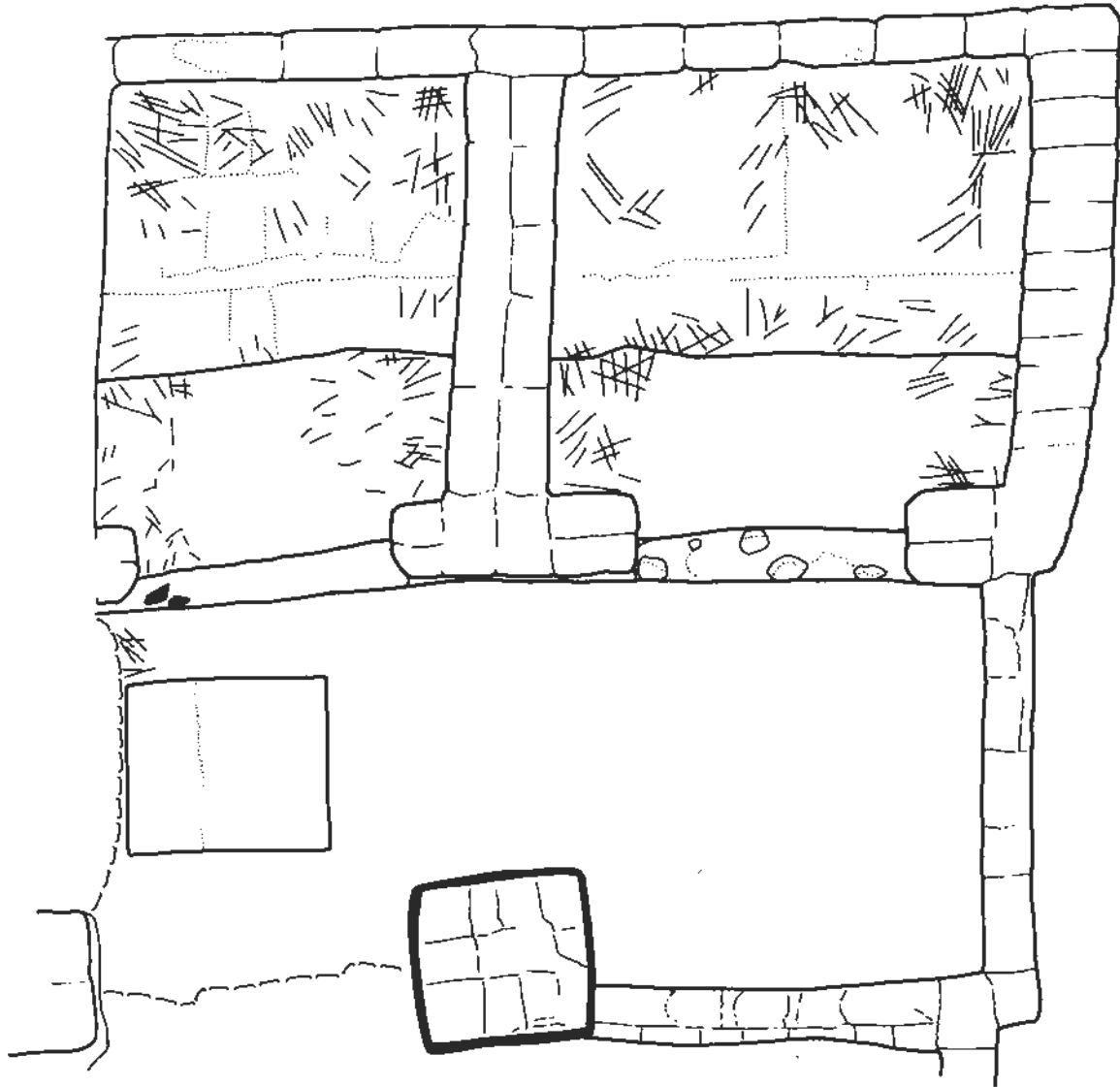


Figure 2.8. Outline plan of the Sanctuary, showing blade cut-marks.

The shrines are not identical in width. The central one measures 1.20 against 1.55 metres for the southern one. The floors are 37 and 44 cms. above the corridor. Each doorway [868, 870] seems originally to have had a wooden threshold. The rear part of each shrine was occupied by a bench, 56 cms. high [358, 359], the front edge projecting outwards and moulded in the form of a cavetto cornice [386, 387]. All surviving surfaces had originally been thickly coated with gypsum plaster. The floors and the surfaces of the benches

[1] Note the somewhat higher white-plastered pedestals in Chapel 524: Peet and Woolley 1923: 103, Plate XXVII.1 = Figure 12.7 of this volume.

showed ample signs of wear. This is apparent not only from the loss of plaster, but also from patches of narrow linear grooves that look as though they are cut-marks from blades. They are not concentrated in any one central place, as might have occurred if they had originated accidentally from, say, the cutting up of food. Instead they occur in the corners and towards the back, where whoever made the marks would have had to lean deliberately across.

Amidst the rubble in the corridor were quantities of fragments of painted plaster. These await conservation and study. Many pieces come from painted surrounds to the entrances to the shrines, which were topped with cavetto cornices painted in bold block patterns. Other pieces, however, come from wall scenes. The details are not yet clear, except that one group features a large vulture apparently clutching a *shen*-symbol. More fragments are likely to lie in the debris covering the northern end of the corridor, in front of the third shrine.

2.6 The Rear Corridor

This year's work on the Main Chapel began with the removal of the sand filling the trench which had led Peet to the initial discovery of the Chapel. At this point the hill slope is rising quite steeply, and the next building above, the so-called Chapel 523, is on a higher level. Separating the two levels is a retaining wall of marl bricks and stones [377], 1.11 metres high. It had been strengthened with closely spaced buttresses [383]. A corridor with a maximum width of one metre separates it from the rear wall of the Main Chapel [388]. Both ends remain buried in sand and other debris, but as it passes the corner of the Main Chapel a worn brick threshold [380] crosses it. Peet's workmen had dug a shallow trench [361] into the floor of the corridor [376]. This had exposed brickwork from demolished walls at a level slightly below that of the Main Chapel [384], and Peet had commented on this. The rest of the corridor still remains to be cleared, including more of what Peet had excavated, and at the present nothing further can be added to Peet's speculative comments.

2.7 Annexe 450

During the 1979 season part of what seemed to be a chapel forecourt was excavated, and numbered 450. It had a central entrance facing west, linked by a short path to a T-shaped basin (Kemp 1980: 12-14, Figure 5; Plate II.1; Kemp 1983: 11, Figure 5). Its full excavation now reveals that it served as a means of access to two joined buildings. By a doorway in its north-east corner the Outer Hall of the Main Chapel could be directly reached. A second doorway at the south end of the rear wall [419] led to a group of rooms and courts built more informally of brick and stone. One of them contained an oven [526]. This and the rougher style of building point to this part having had an ancillary function to the chapel, which will be commented on further. As already noted, the line of T-shaped basins in front of the Walled Village provided a path from the village gateway to this forecourt (Figure 1.4), making

it the most conspicuous means of access to the Main Chapel. It may well be, therefore, that the forecourt served a dual purpose: firstly as the more commonly used means of access to the Main Chapel, leaving the front entrance, with its pylons and ornamented staircase, as a formal entrance for use either on restricted occasions or by restricted personnel; secondly as the front entrance to the annexe. As finally revealed, the forecourt measures approximately 5.80 by 4.20 metres.

The rest of the annexe divides into two parts: two chambers constructed with some care from marl brick, and built against the southern wall of the chapel; three courtyards whose internal and southern walls are of stone and marl mortar construction. The division between chamber and courtyard is a real one, since roofing materials were found in the rubble of the former, but not in the latter. The chamber on the west (with floor [521]) was entered through a narrow doorway on the south. Its floor had been artificially banked up with a layer of crumbled marl, which was not easy to separate from the overlying rubble and debris from modern disturbance. Nothing indicative of the original purpose came to light, unless the organic content of the rubbish fill (principally unit [420]), which included coprolites, is evidence that animals were penned inside. This conclusion could be supported by the finding (in the overlying sand [418]) of a fragment of a worked limestone slab containing a circular hole which may have been a tethering-stone. An organic content was apparent in the floor deposits of the three courtyards as well.

The adjacent chamber was entered from a doorway on the east side, in wall [477], across a threshold [902] which had originally held a wooden beam, and down a 28 cm. step to a hard-packed floor [520]. The chamber contained two minor structures. One, against the chapel wall [782], was a low projection, perhaps a support, made from a stone resting in mud mortar [901] and 25 cms. high. The other was a cylindrical oven of common design [526], standing in the north-west corner. It had been 85 cms. in diameter, had possessed a small circular hole near the base for stoking, and was made from mud burnt grey only from the heat of the oven itself. When the roof and walls of the chamber had fallen, the oven had broken, and its grey ash contents were scattered over the rubble of the chapel as well as that of the annexe.

The three courtyards were rough, casual constructions, subdivided by walls of stone and boulders in marl mortar. Of the three, only the westernmost, measuring about 6.0 by 3.20 metres, has been fully excavated; the eastern ends of the other two still lie under untouched ground. The difference in ground level between the two groups was countered by a rough stepping of the floor, using stones, concentrated in front of the entrance in the north-east corner of the main courtyard [730]. The two smaller courts apparently interconnected by a doorway at the western end of the badly destroyed wall [474]. Whether the patch of brickwork in the south-east corner [904] is part of another doorway opening to the south in wall [577] is not yet clear.

No distinctive evidence for the use of these courtyards has been forthcoming, except for the floor deposits of brown organic material which in places contain much chaff. Deposit [869] covering the floor of the north-

eastern court averaged a depth of 10 to 12 cms. This kind of deposit occurred widely on the floors of the adjacent animal pen area. It is thus perhaps a sign that animals were penned for periods in the courtyards of the annexe. It may be possible to be more positive about this when organic soil samples from the various areas have been thoroughly examined.

This relates to the broader question of the function of chapels such as these at the Workmen's Village, and to others, sometimes with side annexes, found at other sites, for example Deir el-Medina, Gurob (Loat 1905: 2, Plate XIV; Kemp 1978), and the northern temple at Buhen (Randall-MacIver and Woolley 1911: 105-06, Plan D). A few general points are made in the concluding section (2.10), but the subject requires a separate study in detail.

2.8 Appendix: "Chapel" 523

As an experiment to see how worthwhile the exercise would be, the nearest of the buildings excavated by Peet in 1921 was re-excavated at the very beginning of the season, and a fresh plan made (Figures 2.9, 2.10). Peet had given it the number 523, and in his report (Peet and Woolley 1923: 103, and plan on Plate XXIV, with partial view Plate XXVII.3, right side) describes it simply as: "A shapeless complex of rooms without feature of interest."



Figure 2.9. Building ("Chapel") 523, looking east.

The dismissive description reflects the fact that it is clearly not a chapel. It possesses nothing that resembles a shrine, nor the axial arrangement that

one would expect in a religious building of the period. Peet left these buildings exposed. Since his day sand and dried vegetation have blown in and protected the floors and the lower courses of brickwork, but the upper courses have decayed or collapsed. Nevertheless, the structural loss has been relatively slight.

Building 523 is built of marl brick throughout, except for its western wall, although the rough line of stones and mortar may be only the foundation for a brick wall.

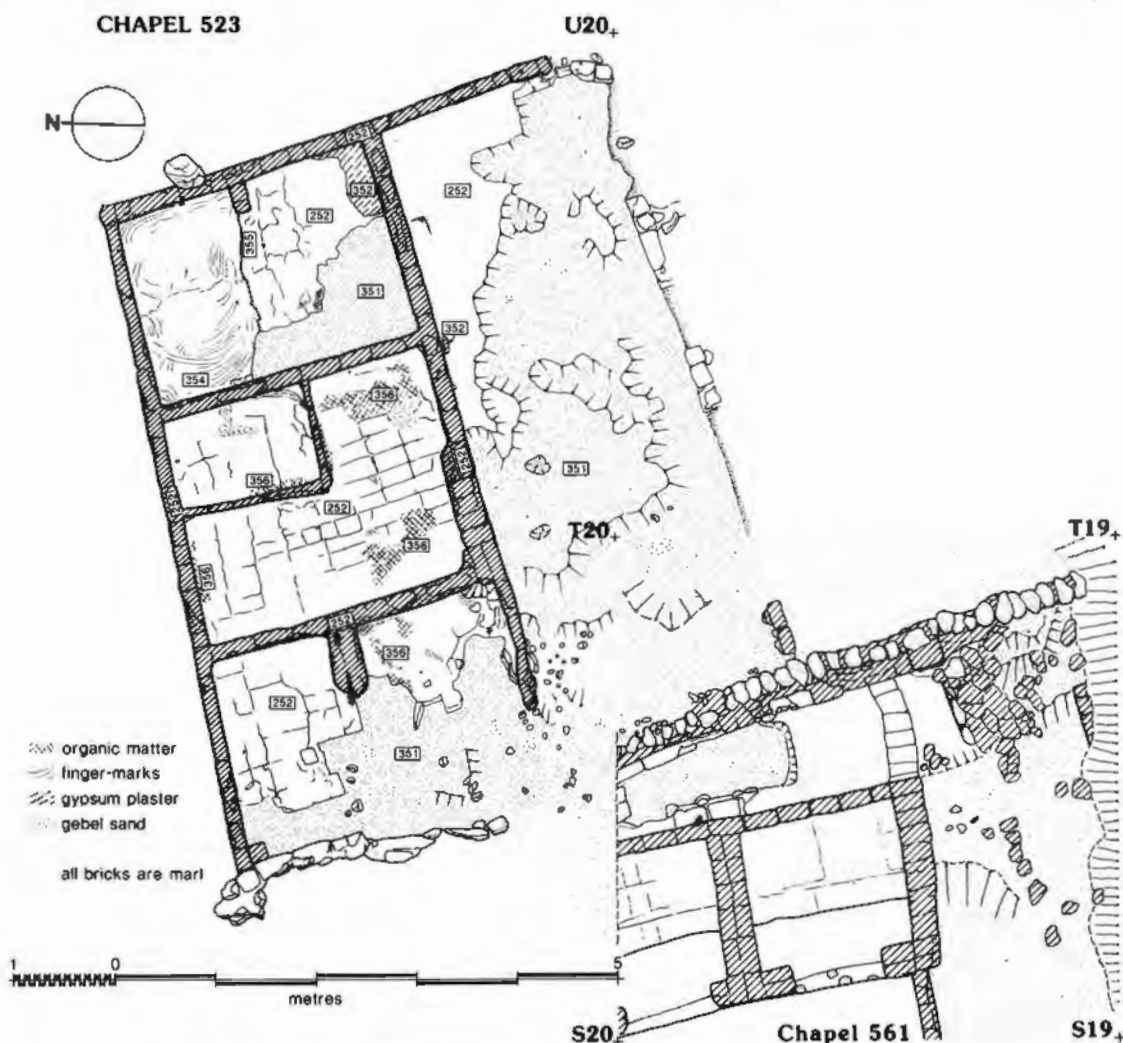


Figure 2.10. Plan of Building 523 (original by A. Bomann).

It consists of three enclosures which seem to have opened southwards into a corridor or long enclosure. All three were floored with brick, plastered over with marl plaster [252]. In the easternmost the thick layer of plaster still bore the finger marks from the original hand application [354]. In its south-east corner a patch of gypsum plaster [352] has survived from an original coating of this material over floors and walls alike. A short length of projecting brick wall and a linear ridge of mortar [355] show that the enclosure was subdivided into two parts. The central enclosure contained a smaller walled-off area in one corner, whilst a projecting tongue of brickwork in the western enclosure may likewise signify a partition wall.

Two observations can be made as to the original purpose. The first is that patches of a brown organic deposit [356] still adhered to the floors. This is the kind of floor deposit found in the courts of Annexe 450. The second is the resemblance it bears to the southern part of building 350, excavated in 1982 (Figure 4.7, areas xlv-xvi, and Kemp 1983: 11, Figure 5, in square M15). This is a resemblance not only in plan, but also in the use of gypsum to coat both floors and walls, something done in other parts of building 350. Building 350 is almost certainly a group of animal pens, and this suits well "Chapel" 523.

The re-excavation of 523 must be counted a justifiable experiment. Although the 1921 plan, made by F. Newton, is accurate, its scale is so small that much detail is lost, and the inevitable straightening of lines creates a misleading impression of regularity in construction. Re-excavation and planning at a much larger scale not only brings to light much more constructional detail, it also focusses attention on a building, and each part of a building, in a more intensive way. The chances of a better understanding are thereby enhanced. Encouraged by this a start was also made on re-excavating the adjacent Chapel 522. However, time did not permit more than the shrine to be cleared and planned. It is hoped in future seasons to continue this work in a methodical fashion.

2.9 Appendix: wooden objects nos. 5239 and 5319

Object no. 5239 is a wooden plaque or tablet, measuring 11.3 cms. high, 9.0 wide, and 1.4 thick (Figure 2.11A). It was found in the Sanctuary, see section 2.5 above. The edges are smooth and rounded, except for the base, which is flat and contains a hole with rectangular section running up into the body of the plaque to receive the end of a rod. This would have been held in place by means of a round peg passed from one side through to the other. On each side a design is painted in red and black directly on to the wood.

Obverse: the figure of the jackal-god Wepwawet stands on a standard to which two streamers are tied. The jackal is in solid black, the standard in black outline with red filling the horizontal bar. Beneath it the figure of a man outlined in red kneels, arms raised in adoration.

Reverse: two running figures are painted in red outline. Each one carries a rod over his right shoulder. The rear figure raises his left hand, the other grasps in his right hand a long piece of palm rib with a few fronds still attached at the top, this item painted in black.

The plaque was evidently intended to be free-standing, supported on a pole. This and the depiction of the running men who resemble soldiers leads to a reasonably positive identification: it is the top of a small military standard. An instructive illustration occurs in the Theban tomb of Thanuny (Figure 2.11C), where one of a group of running soldiers (who may have been Nubians) carries a small standard on an otherwise unadorned pole, the standard bearing the design of two men wrestling (Brack 1977: 41, 45, Tafeln 8, 32; Davies 1936: plate XLV). This standard, like many shown in the New Kingdom (cf. Faulkner 1941), is square at the top, but this can hardly be a crucial distinction. Standards, sometimes borne

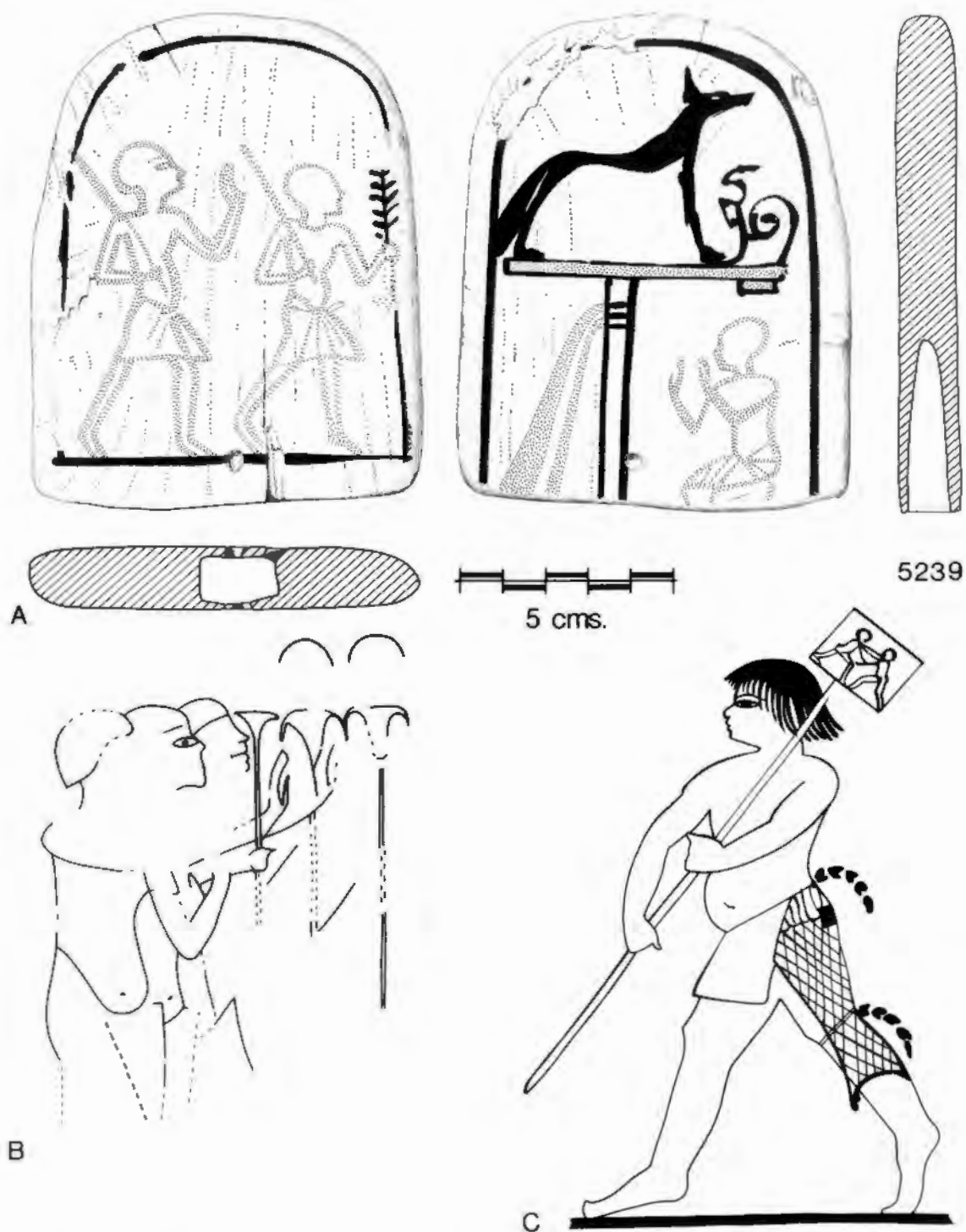


Figure 2.11. A: wooden plaque (object no. 5239) from the Main Chapel Sanctuary (drawn by B. Garfi); B: detail from the tomb of Panehesi, el-Amarna no. 6; C: detail from the tomb of Thanuny, Thebes no. 74.

by running soldiers, are depicted frequently in the Amarna rock tombs (e.g. Davies 1903: Plates IX, X, XV, XX; Davies 1905b: Plates XII, XXXI; Davies 1906: Plate VIII; Davies 1908: Plates XX, XXX). One example, in the tomb of Panehesi, includes a damaged group where the standards do appear to be small and have rounded tops (Figure 2.11B; Davies 1905a: Plate XIII). Round-topped standards are, in fact, fairly

common, but most fall into a separate category on account of their apparently much larger size and semi-circular shape, by which they resemble fans and sunshades. [2] Standards often, perhaps always, bore designs. These could either be added to a simple shape in paint or by some other medium, or the standard itself could be fashioned in the profile of the design. Amarna examples of the former category, to which our own would belong, are Davies 1903: Plates IX, X, XX, XXVI; Davies 1906: Plates XVII (our Figure 2.12B) and XVIII. Some designs took the form of emblems of deities (Faulkner 1941). The figure of Wepwawet on the obverse of our plaque fits into this category.

Figures of soldiers or guards, and their officers, carrying rods are fairly common in the 18th Dynasty. [3] The carrying of palm branches by soldiers or guards may have been a more specifically Nubian custom, to judge from men in the tomb of the Viceroy of Kush, Huy (Davies 1926: Plate 5), and an explicit reference in a Ramesside school text (P. Sallier I, 6.6; Gardiner 1937: 83; Caminos 1954: 316). However, there is nothing obviously Nubian about civilians, both women and men, depicted waving pieces of palm branch as a means of celebration (e.g. Davies 1905a: Plates XVIII, XI).

Object no. 5319 is also made of wood, and was found in the Outer Hall (Figure 2.12A). It measures 11.0 cms. high, 9.4 wide, and 1.7 thick. It is shaped in the form of a lotus with pendant leaves, with a cylindrical boss on the top. A circular hole runs through from top to bottom. This shape was employed very commonly as a design element at the upper end of the handle of a number of classes of Egyptian objects. In this case, a mirror can be safely ruled out, and a palmiform fan is also less than likely in view of the absence of holes into which the feathers could be fixed. [4] In shape a more likely possibility is the ceremonial fan of the single ostrich-feather type, although detailed examples sometimes show more than one stem descending into the handle (e.g. Davies 1905b: Plate XXIX). These ceremonial fans, however, denoted the high official position of their bearer, and this reduces considerably the plausibility of this identification. This brings us to the most likely explanation: pieces in this shape were regularly fitted beneath military standards (Faulkner 1941; Davies 1903: Plates X, XV, XXVI; Davies 1905a: Plates XI, XVII; Davies 1906: Plates XVII [our Figure 2.12B]; Davies 1908: Plates XX, XXX). We cannot be sure that our piece comes from another standard, but the

[2] On fans see Fischer in *Lexikon* II: 82-83. Amarna examples of the broad-based, fan-like standards are Davies 1905b: Plates XII, XXXI; Davies 1906: Plate XVII; Davies 1908: Plates XX, XXX. A good example of the same shape used as a sunshade is Davies 1905b: Plate XIII.

[3] E.g. marines and officers in the Theban tomb of Thanuny (Brack 1977: 41-42, Tafeln 8, 32, 33; Davies 1936: Plate XLV); officers in the Memphite tomb of Harenhab (Trigger 1976: Plate 46); running guards in the Amarna tombs of Meryre and Mahu (Davies 1903: Plates X, XX; Davies 1906: Plates XXV, XXVI); officers in the Amarna tombs of Meryre and Ahmosi (Davies 1903: Plates X, XV; Davies 1905b: Plate XXXI).

[4] On fans see Fischer in *Lexikon* II: 82-83. Examples from the tomb of Tutankhamun are Desroches-Noblecourt 1963: Plate XX; 203, Figure 123; Edwards 1972: no. 23. A clear representation in an Amarna tomb is Davies 1903: Plate XIV.

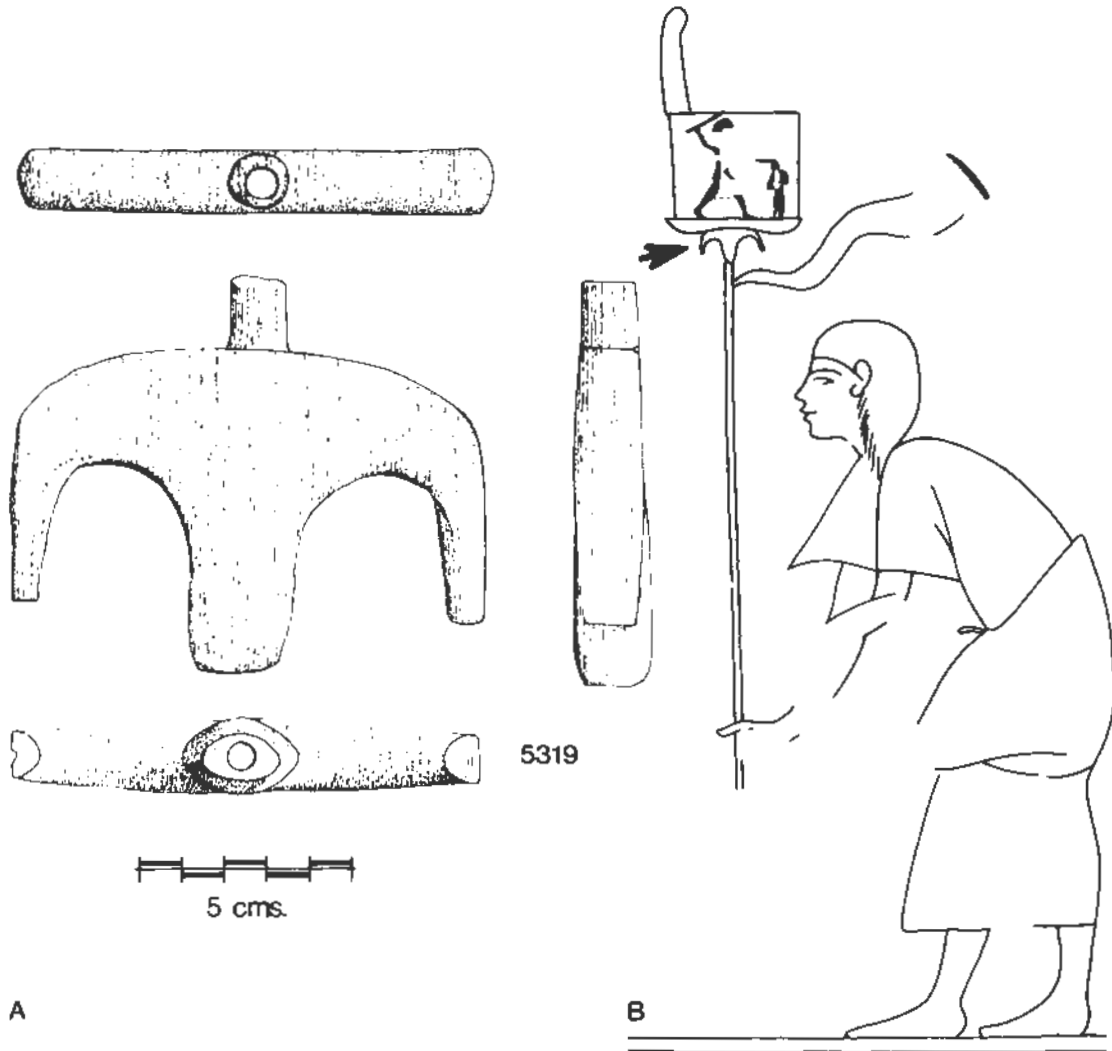


Figure 2.12. A: wooden object (5319) from the Main Chapel Outer Hall (drawn by A. Bomann); B: detail from the tomb of Mahu, el-Amarna no.9.

circumstantial evidence is more in favour of this interpretation than any other.

2.10 Interpretation

The analogy most suited for clarifying aspects of the Amarna Workmen's Village is Deir el-Medina, where, in the 19th and 20th Dynasties, a large number of chapels was built in the hillsides close to the village. Most seem primarily intended as tomb chapels, in that burial chambers are usually accessible from them. Some, however, which were clustered mainly around the Hathor temple, were places of worship, although the distinction is not clear-cut in architecture, and may not have been in the ways they were used (Bruyère 1948 contains the most important group).

Some of the Deir el-Medina documents also speak of buildings called *hnu*, a word which often means a chapel or small temple (lit. a "resting-place") (Helck

1963: 343; Janssen and Pestman 1968: 161-62; Kemp 1978: 130, and note 41; Meeks 1978: 281, no. 78.3033; Janssen 1980: 148-49). The Deir el-Medina *ḥnw* is frequently a private possession, a piece of property counted with but separate from a house. A man might refer to "the *ḥnw* of my father and mother", and other references show that people made visits to them on festival days, there to "sit" or "spend the day" (*ḥms*). Some texts may show that people also made offerings there as well (cf. Janssen 1980: 148-49).

In terms of the archaeology of Deir el-Medina the picture is clarified by two observations: some of the non-funerary chapels were provided with wall benches for people to sit on; some chapels of both kinds were provided with facilities for baking, either grinding emplacements for grain, or ovens. [5] This combination of evidence suggests that the Deir el-Medina chapels - whether built for a divinity or for a family, in which case they could also become the site for the family tomb - were used as places where individual villagers could retire to be in private, and perhaps also to take a meal. This would have been done especially on feast days, which were numerous, some apparently restricted to one man or his family. Special brewing of beer could also take place on these occasions (Janssen 1980: 145-149).

This material greatly clarifies the Workmen's Village chapels. They seem to have been built not as tomb chapels in the first instance, and many examples were provided with benches for assembly. Annexe 450 contained an oven. So far, this is one of only two ovens found in its original position outside the Walled Village. The other, thought by Peet to have belonged to "probably later arrangements", was found in a broken corner of Chapel 528 (Peet and Woolley 1923: 105, Plate XXIV). In this connection it is instructive to consider the distribution of pottery bread moulds at the site (cf. Jacquet-Gordon 1981). Bread moulds at Amarna are not part of the general pottery repertoire but are confined to particular contexts, in the main city to two large bakehouses in the Central City, beside the two Aten temples (Kemp 1979: 7-12). Bread made in moulds was baked in clay ovens (e.g. Cooney 1965: 73-74, no. 46), and used in the production of beer (Wild 1966). [6] Although we cannot say if mould-baked bread was always used for beer, the markedly restricted distribution of bread moulds at Amarna shows that it held a particular significance. At the Workmen's Village sherds from bread moulds have been a rare find. So far, thirty-nine sherds have been identified from the current excavations, to which can be added a single complete specimen found by Peet (Peet and Woolley 1923: 103, Plate L, no. XXX/1041; cf. Kemp 1979: 11, note 19). Their rarity can be judged from the total sherd record so far of 52,000, and the thirty-nine sherds must represent a fewer number of actual vessels. Several joins occur, for example, amongst the group from square K19. Their distribution is given in Figure 2.13. The first point to make is that, except for the three from house Long Wall Street 6 inside the village, none of the sherds comes from within a building or from within an undisturbed rubbish deposit. The group beside the entrance to the Walled

[5] Kemp 1978: 130, note 41 cites a few references; the side annexe of the Hathor shrine of Seti I is another, Bruyère 1948: 101; Badawy 1968: 270-71.

[6] Wild's material is mainly Old Kingdom, but plate XI is from the Theban tomb of Kenamon, of the 18th Dynasty; cf. Kemp 1979: 10.

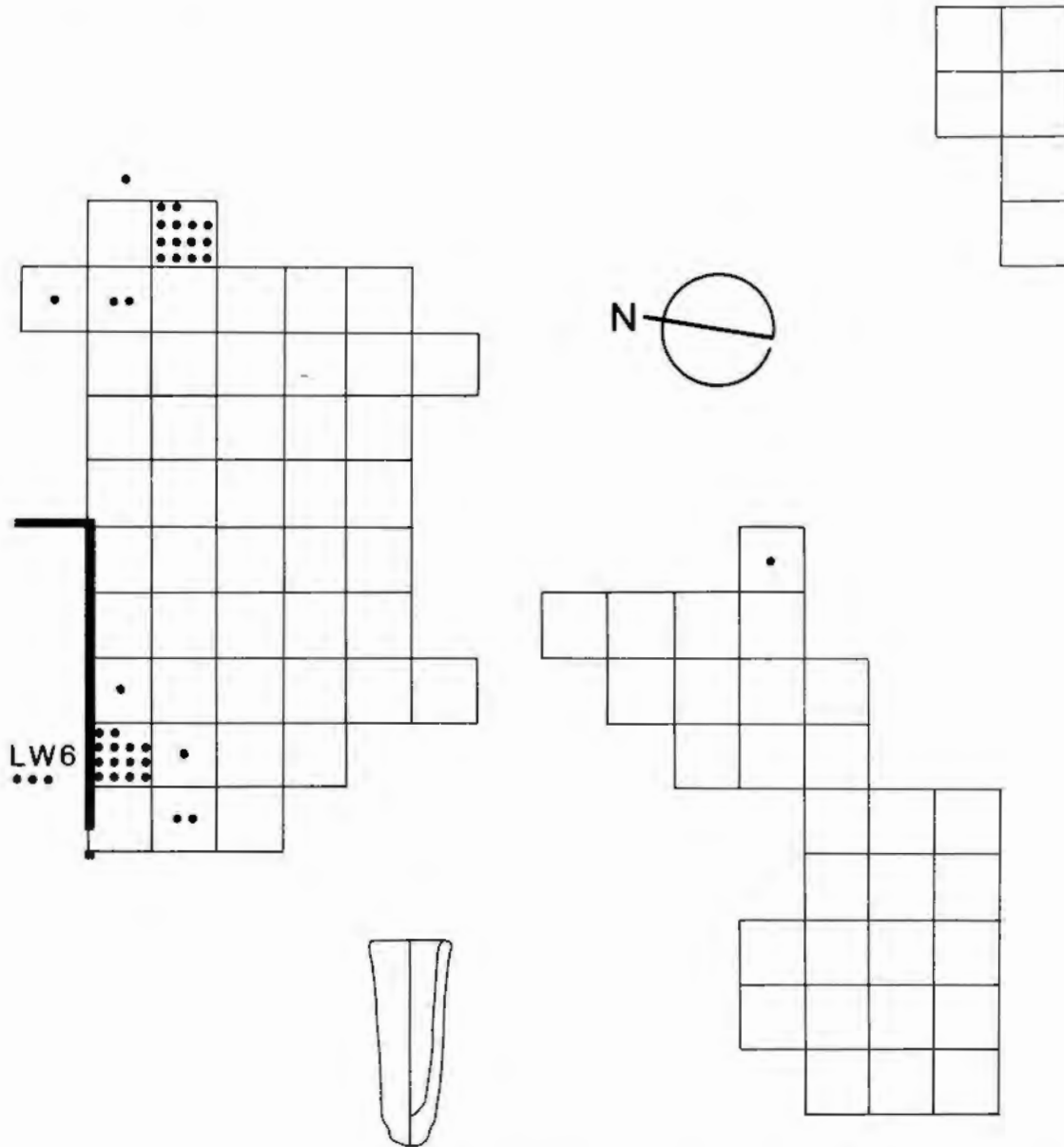


Figure 2.13. Distribution of sherds from pottery bread moulds at the Workmen's Village. "LW6" = house Long Wall Street 6, excavated in 1979.

Village, centred on square K19, was found in a thick deposit of wind-blown sand that had accumulated between the desertion of the village and the outward collapse of the village enclosure wall. They may not, therefore, reflect behaviour contemporary with the village's occupation. The other group, at the east end of the Main Chapel and concentrated in square S18, comes entirely from the dump from Peet's 1922 excavation of the chapels behind. From their position in the dumps we can judge that they were found most likely in building 523, which is where the solitary specimen recorded by Peet himself was found.

Peet's chapel excavations did not produce an oven in this area, and the re-clearance of building 523 brought to light no signs of a fireplace. The implication must be that the bread moulds had been dumped there anciently. The ground

between the current limit of excavation at the back of Annexe 450 and building 523 has never been excavated, and it is therefore possible that another oven remains to be discovered. Otherwise, the nearest oven is the one inside the annexe. In either case there must be a strong presumption that mould baking on a very limited scale was carried out in the vicinity of the Main Chapel.

Other pieces of evidence support the idea that special meals were prepared and eaten in the Main Chapel. Fish bones were found pressed into the floor of the Outer Hall, which also contained clear evidence that pottery jars had repeatedly stood there. Animals may have been penned in the courtyards of the annexe, providing a source of meat. As already noted, a probable fragment of a tethering-stone was found in the rubble above one of the annexe rooms, and another (5362) was found inside Chapel 571 (see Chapter 3).

Although these remarks apply to chapels generally at Amarna and Deir el-Medina, for the Workmen's Village Main Chapel a more particular use can be discerned as well. As noted in section 2.5, the floors and benches of the shrines in the Sanctuary bear patches of linear cut-marks. They occur also on the floor of the Outer Hall, but alongside evidence for other activities so that a prosaic explanation may apply to them here. In the shrines, however, they are alone and distinctive in that they occur in places inconvenient to be the product of accidental cutting. The marks look as though produced by a sharp metal edge. It could be the edge of a knife, in which case it could be an example of the practice of obtaining the particles from a holy building for inclusion in a medical or magical potion. Amongst the finds in the Outer Hall was a bronze head probably from a javelin. This raises another possibility: that the cut-marks were made by the javelins of the guards or soldiers to whom the wooden standard or standards belonged. The purpose would again have been to absorb power from a holy building. This is, of course, a very speculative suggestion, but it points to the need for a more acute examination of the cut-marks themselves.

Neither Peet nor Woolley mention anything like this in the chapels excavated in 1921 and 1922. In the course of the 1983 season the shrine of Chapel 522 was re-cleared for planning, and in this case it can be confirmed that no cut-marks are present. The scheme to re-clear more of the old chapels will broaden the comparative basis further. In making comparisons with the other chapels, it should also be born in mind that the Main Chapel may be later in date than the others, and have also replaced them, serving a different community than the original one of workmen.