

AMARNA REPORTS IV

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 fourth volume of interim reports on excavations and survey, and on various related research projects. It is also the last on the Workmen's Village since the 1986 season saw the completion of these excavations. A report on a pilot ceramic survey in the main city is included, and observations on one of the principal religious buildings, the Sanctuary of the Great Aten Temple.

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AMARNA REPORTS IV

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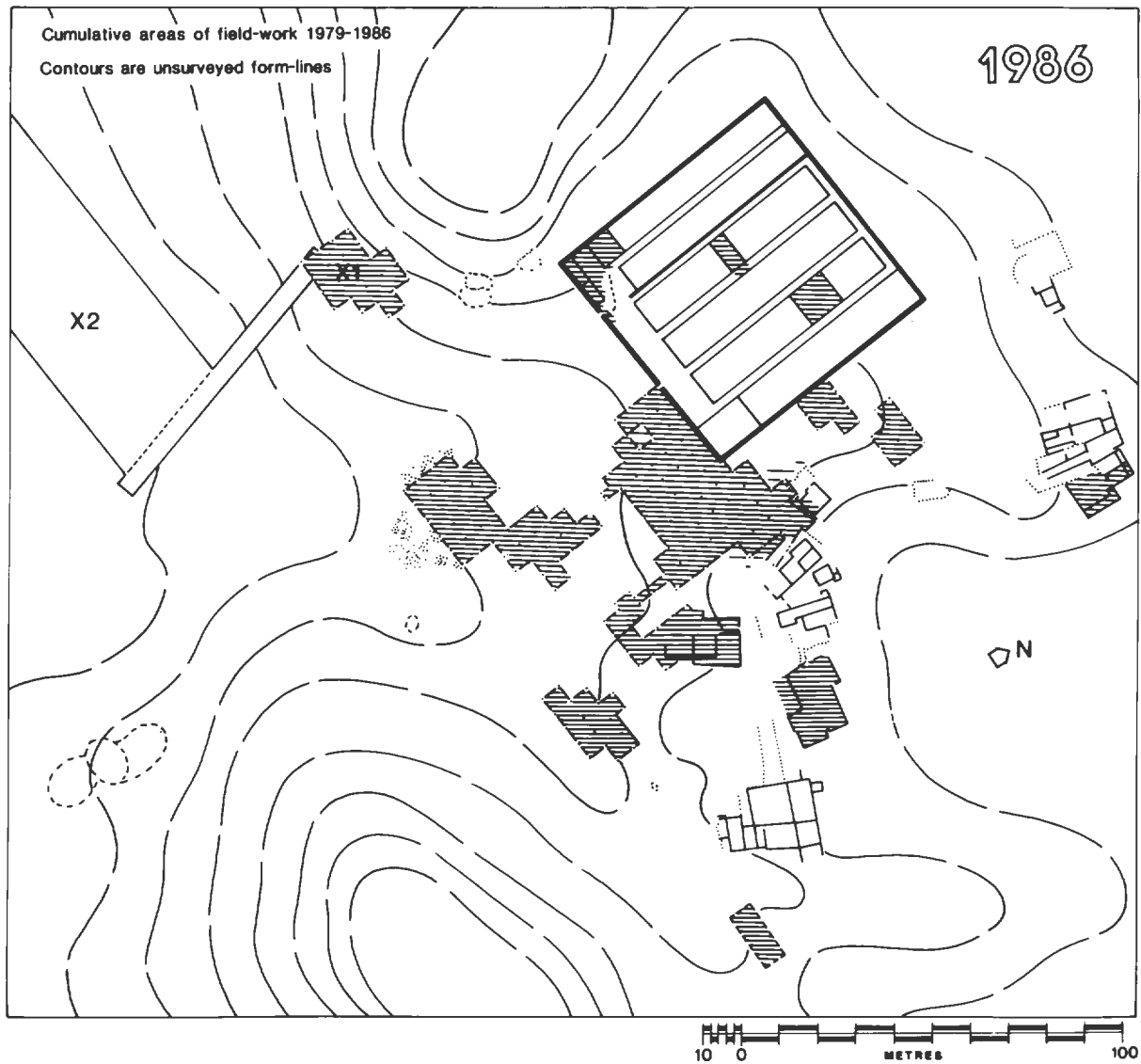


Figure 0.1. Map of the Workmen's Village, showing cumulative fieldwork carried out between 1979 and 1986.

PREFACE

This volume of *Amarna Reports* contains the last preliminary accounts of excavations at the Workmen's Village. After eight seasons the current programme at this particular part of Amarna has been completed; for the future it is planned to focus primarily in the Main City. In the Preface to *Amarna Reports* III some space was devoted to discussing at what point it would be prudent to bring to a close the current fieldwork at the Workmen's Village. The criterion against which decisions of excavation strategy have been made was stated: an area can be said to be finished when an argument of some detail supported by data from the various sources can be put forward to explain its present appearance. The strategy of the 1986 season, a short one of six weeks duration (March 2nd to April 10th), was devised with the intention of seeing whether the criterion could be met within this period for the remaining parts of the site. There were two of these: the zone of extra-mural debris on the east side of the Village, and the interior of the Village itself, with particular reference to the south-west corner.

In the former case the excavations of 1986 were conducted in a zone at the centre of what remained of the unexplored ground. They revealed a further set of animal pens and enclosed areas set aside for the growing of plants. Surface indications on the surrounding ground, which have been separately mapped, enable this pattern to be traced almost to the limits of this part of the site, and so render further excavation in the current programme unnecessary. With the interior of the Village two sites were explored. The house Gate Street 9 was selected for excavation to try to capitalise on the good state of preservation found last year in the neighbouring house, Gate Street 8. The results have been useful in terms both of architectural detail and of material found; but they also revealed how unpredictable are the effects of modern robbery. Despite the fact that the surface of the ground above this house was identical in appearance to that above no. 8, it proved in the end to have been far more extensively disturbed. Gate Street nos. 8 and 9, Long Wall Street no. 6 (dug in 1979), and West Street 2/3 bring to a total of four the houses excavated in the current programme, spread over three different sectors of the Village. The quantity of pottery and other material from them is quite considerable, and together comprises an adequate comparative sample. In the south-west corner of the Village the remaining obligation was to pursue the excavations laterally until the anomalies in the expected layout discovered last year were explained. Principally this involved a northwards extension until the regular pattern of unit houses resumed. By the end of the season it had been revealed that northwards from the open space which was found last year to occupy the south-west corner there extended a house which covered one-and-a-half of the standard house plots. It did this by simply adding a narrow annexe to run along the south side of a house of standard size. This brought its northern wall into line with the regular spacing of house divisions, which can be followed northwards across the unexcavated ground by reference to clear surface indications. Limited additional sampling of the ground was undertaken eastwards, to take in the secondary entrance in the Village Enclosure Wall. The results of this are summarised in Chapter 1. They included a detailed examination of the brickwork to check on the claim by Peet and Woolley that the western part of the Village was a later addition; in further pursuit of this a similar examination was undertaken of the brickwork at the corresponding juncture on the north side of the Village. Again, by the end of the season, the expedition's main objectives had been reached.

At the end of a season of excavation it is frequently the case that a particular building or area has not been exhausted. This point of termination is inevitably arbitrary, reflecting the length of the season in relation to the size of the area. One consideration in making decisions, therefore, is whether a given season's work on a particular part can be accepted as adequate. With some of the Workmen's Village areas it has seemed reasonable to accept that what has been accomplished in one or two seasons illustrates the nature of that part sufficiently. In other cases the individuality of the area concerned has seemed to merit an attempt at completeness. Two of the 1986 tasks fall into this category. One involved the clearance of the last remaining part of the Main Chapel, the south-east corner of the annexe, delayed on account of the great amount of 1921 dump that had had to be removed in previous seasons; the other was centred on the animal pen group 300, started last year but left with significant parts not completed. In both cases these left-over sectors contained more than expected. The south-east corner of the Main Chapel proved to house a dense little set of structures, including garden plots constructed with unusual care. At Building 300 it was found that in two of the lower pens the inner element had been a small cave cut into the hillside. Furthermore, as predicted in AR III, 56-59, further exploration of the

relationship between buildings and quarry fill has provided a valuable supplement to the existing stratigraphic record. These results are presented in Chapter 5.

Two further areas were examined in 1986, at the opposite edges of the site. One was a limited continuation of the selective re-clearance of the buildings excavated in the 1920s: in this case Chapel 556. The particular reasons for doing this are explained in Chapter 6. The most important find, in a substantial part of the building which had escaped previous attention, was a box-oven containing its original load of pottery bread-moulds, many of them of a new type. Since the study of domestic economy is one of the expedition's prime objectives this was a most welcome discovery. The second outlying site has the form of an irregular scatter of sherds not associated with structures at all, but significantly lying across the access route to the Village from the Main City. So shallow are the deposits that excavation is unnecessary: what was required was a careful strategy of sampling and mapping. This was carried out by Prof. Colin Renfrew and forms the subject of Chapter 7. The results are out of all proportion to the intrinsic worth of the material itself. In particular it coincided with other work which together led to the discovery of the site in the Main City from which, most likely, the Workmen's Village was supplied with water. This in turn provides a most important direct linkage between Village and City, one that it is hoped to investigate in the future.

By the end of the 1986 season no archaeologically significant parts of the Workmen's Village remained without a record of some kind having been made, that record being in most cases one based on excavation. This is not to say that every part has been totally examined. On the east side of the Village the ground north of the Main Chapel almost certainly contains further elements belonging to chapels or tombs, including the remains of a separate chapel marked on the ground by a concentration of boulders and stones (no. 558). Further elements belonging to the various groups of animal pens also remain unexplored. They do not, however, amount to the basis for a further season of excavation. The network of information that we have now covers the site sufficiently to suggest that further work will bring us few returns in better understanding. The 1986 season is thus the last at the Workmen's Village in the current programme. It is now planned to take the excavation into the Main City.

Hitherto, the expedition's prime concern with the Main City has been to complete the topographic survey. The map sheets now provide an accurate basis for mapping other aspects of surface archaeology. Two pilot projects have been undertaken to initiate the extension of the scope of the archaeological survey at Amarna. One, by Ian Shaw, has concentrated on non-ceramic artefacts (and forms part of his Ph.D. thesis); the other, by Pamela Rose and Paul Nicholson, is a survey of surface pottery and is reported in Chapter 9. Because modern excavation is bound to be far more limited in its horizontal extent than the clearances of earlier decades it is of great importance to develop effective strategies of surface sampling. The results reported here are most encouraging.

The form of this volume follows the scheme of previous ones, with three levels of contribution. Some chapters were independently written by the persons whose names they bear. The field reports, however, 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 1986 runs as follows: Ann Bomann, Ibrahim M. el-Saidi, Lisa Heidorn and Angela Tooley (site supervisors), Salvatore Garfi (Amarna Survey), Prof. A. Colin Renfrew (Site X2 sampling project), Dr. Howard Hecker (animal bones), Dr. Jane Renfrew (ancient plant remains), Andrew Boyce (artist), Pamela Rose and Paul Nicholson (pottery, including the ceramic survey), Dr. Robert Miller (flints), Ann Cornwell (magazine inventory), Fran Weatherhead (painted wall plaster), Beth Shannon (registrar), and Ian Shaw (Hatnub Survey). The Egyptian Antiquities Organization was again most ably represented by Ibrahim Mohammed el-Saidi, who added to his rôle of Inspector that of site supervisor and greatly facilitated all aspects of the expedition's work. The Hatnub Survey was looked after carefully and helpfully by Nagah Abd el-Sabour Hassanein. A continuing debt of gratitude is owed to the members of the Permanent Committee of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization, to Dr. Ahmed Kadri and Dr. Ali el-Khouli in Cairo, and to their colleagues in Minia Province - Mahmud Hamza and Adel Hassan - for again permitting the expedition's work to continue at Amarna, and for assisting the expedition to function smoothly and efficiently.

The expedition has greatly benefited from the interest shown and practical support given by members of the British community in Cairo, and in particular The British Council, in the persons of Brian Vale and Peter Mackenzie Smith. Through Mrs. Deborah Keirle and Christopher Keirle

of the Hongkong Egyptian Bank several valuable channels of assistance were opened up, most especially that which enabled a four-wheel drive vehicle to be purchased. George R. Brown once more provided generous support for the expedition and survey. Mr. Stanley Hattie most kindly made a donation for equipment. The Amarna Survey was financially assisted as well by further generous grants from the Robert Kiln Foundation and The British Academy, and the various surveying needs of the expedition (including the Hatnub Survey) were made much lighter through the loan of an electronic theodolite from Ian Mathieson and the hire of an extra conventional theodolite from the Royal Geographical Society.

For the setting up of the printed text of this volume and for use of analytical programs, the expedition is indebted to the facilities provided by the University of Cambridge Computing Service.

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 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). Some references to this system will be found in the latter part of Chapter 5. 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 9, which report on the 1986 fieldwork, will be found at the end of Chapter 9, with the exception of the technical bibliography which accompanies Robert Miller's appendix to Chapter 1. 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*. London.

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

BIFAO: *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale*. Cairo.

CdE: *Chronique d'Égypte*. Brussels.

COA: *The City of Akhenaten*. London.

GM: *Göttinger Miszellen*. Göttingen.

JEA: *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*. London.

Lexikon: W. Helck and E. Otto (later W. Helck and W. Westendorf), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Band I-. Wiesbaden 1975-.

MDIAAK: *Mitteilungen des Deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo*. Cairo.

NARCE: *Newsletter of the American Research Center in Egypt*. Cairo.

RT: *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*. London.

