

AMARNA REPORTS VI

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 sixth volume of interim reports on excavations and survey, and on various related research projects. It covers the excavation of a sample private house in the main city and an account of its contents, further clearances at and around the smaller Aten temple ("The Mansion of the Aten") in the Central City, and a variety of research projects carried out at the expedition house. Many of these focus on the ancient pottery and glazing industries at Amarna. The last chapter looks ahead to the contents of the next volume, which will be largely devoted to an entirely new part of Amarna, known as Kom el-Nana, where a major programme of excavation has been under way since 1988.

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AMARNA REPORTS VI

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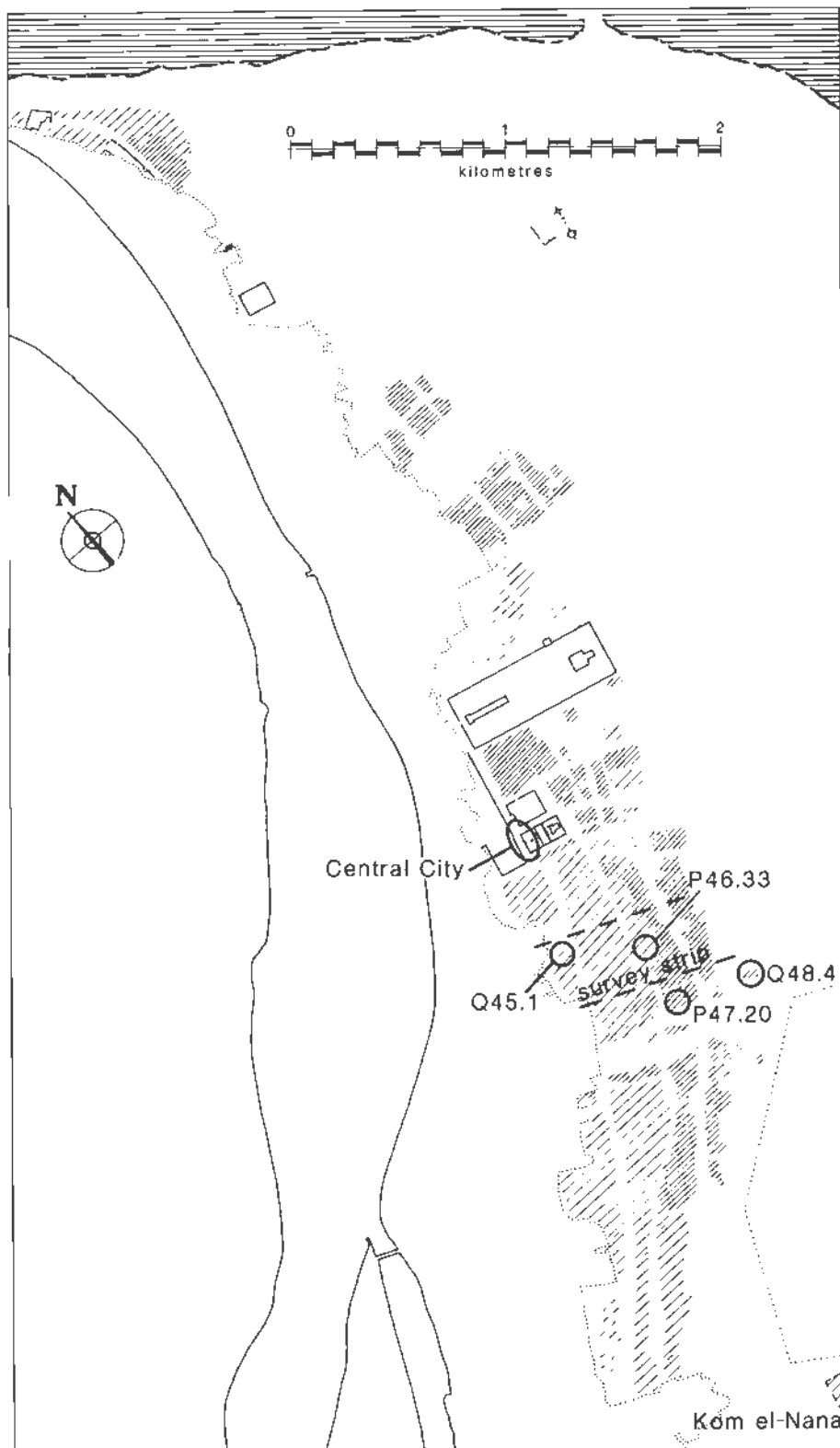


Figure 0.1. Map of Amarna, showing fieldwork locations described in this report.

PREFACE

THE last volume of reports, *Amarna Reports V*, brought the record of preliminary accounts of fieldwork up to date, to the conclusion of the 1987 season, with the exception of a sample house excavated within the Main City. As was explained in the Preface to that volume, the strategy adopted for the excavation of fresh ground was to explore, by means of surface survey and limited excavation, a broad east-west sample strip across the main housing area of the city. At the same time, as an entirely separate project, the Small Aten Temple in the Central City, first excavated by Pendlebury in 1931, was chosen for a fresh architectural survey.

Seven seasons of fieldwork have now passed without publication of a detailed set of reports, and the quantity of results makes it impossible to bring readers up to date by means of a single volume. Although the delay is regrettable, it does permit of a tidier approach; for the subsequent season, 1988, saw a major departure from the intended plan of work and the start of the excavation of a large new site which is less amenable than was the Workmen's Village to being broken down into a series of short and discrete chapters. This is the site of Kom el-Nana, lying to the south of the Main City, which was suddenly and unexpectedly threatened with conversion to agricultural land. Following consultations with the Egyptian Antiquities Organization, the expedition's principal research excavation was transferred from the sample strip in the Main City to Kom el-Nana, and is likely to remain based there for some time to come, given the size of the site and the fact that a relatively well-preserved settlement of Byzantine date occupies part of it.

Although it has been decided to hold over to the next volume a detailed account of the work so far at Kom el-Nana, the present volume ends with a chapter that is really an introduction to the site. Kom el-Nana in the Amarna Period was one of a number of temples and shrines which were located around the periphery of the city and represent an aspect of Amarna which is poorly understood. All but one of them lay in the broad southern sector of the Amarna plain. Over a number of years, beginning in 1977, the expedition has collected observations on and made assessments of archaeological features over this large area, part of which is cultivation and part desert and which stretches southwards beyond the point — opposite the village of el-Hagg Qandil — where the main ancient city of el-Amarna ends. The results fall conveniently into three categories: evidence for major buildings of the Amarna Period, desert roads and small buildings of the Amarna Period and Old Kingdom, and Byzantine sites which lie mainly to the south of el-Hawata. The plan is to publish these observations, either in *Amarna Reports* or in other works currently in preparation, as contributions towards a broader survey of the archaeology of the Amarna area as a whole. Because of its relevance to Kom el-Nana the first instalment is placed here as Chapter 15, and includes a discussion of how, as a group, these buildings might fit into an overall pattern of religious foundations at Amarna. It also provides supporting documentation for part of the notional scheme, proposed by M. Mallinson at the end of his Chapter 5, as to how Akhetaten as a whole was initially laid out.

Reports on the excavations at the Workmen's Village were only summaries; much remains to be done to prepare for publication a series of detailed reports which do justice to the small finds and organic debris which the site produced in abundance. A first volume of an *Amarna Excavations* series, this one devoted to the textiles and other evidence for spinning and weaving and written by Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood, is now ready for publication. In the case of the sample house, P46.33 (excavated in the main city in 1987), however, it has seemed preferable to publish here a detailed report, and this has been done over a series of chapters (1-4), although even these are not complete; for more is still to come on the botanical material, animal bones, and on the mass of sherds recovered. The description of the archaeology and architecture of this small and undistinguished house has led to broader considerations. Partly, these concern the site-formation processes which have been at work and which have produced an unexpected vertical distribution of debris, and partly the difficult question of whether even small houses such as this one possessed an upper storey or storeys. On both topics a preliminary airing is given in the course of Chapter 4. With regard to the artefacts found, it has seemed worthwhile to present them in some detail, for most of them belong to categories of material which, whilst common at Amarna, have been only perfunctorily dealt with in previous excavation reports. Chapter 2, and the related Chapter 11 on the glazed pendants, aim to create a more substantive basis for the study of the broad range of common artefacts at Amarna. In Chapter 13 a further category of material, rarely found or accorded recognition on settlement sites, is treated in depth, namely, pieces of pigment.

The architectural survey at the Small Aten Temple has not been affected by the change in excavation strategy and has continued each year since 1987. It is now drawing to a close and there seems little point in providing a summary of all that has been done. Brief progress reports have been published each year in the Editorial section of the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* and in the Egypt Exploration Society's *Annual Report*. Instead the opportunity has been taken, in Chapter 5, to describe in some detail certain of the results which bear on the broader topic of how the temple relates to neighbouring buildings, and to develop the general themes of chronological depth and spatial interrelationships within the Central City and across Amarna as a whole. This fruitful topic is still in an early stage, and needs to be pursued through a programme of selective small-scale clearances carried out across the Central City.

The discovery in 1987 of a small pottery factory (AR V: Chapters 2–4) and evidence for glazing have intensified the expedition's interest in these two ancient industries which seem to have been widespread at Amarna. The interest is partly in locating areas of production and their contexts, and partly in understanding better the ancient technology involved, not least so that the excavated record of such sites can be studied in a more informed and sympathetic way. A series of studies along these lines has been completed, and they are here grouped together as Chapters 6–11. In the study of ancient technology important complements to evidence from the past are careful observations of aspects of ancient practice which have survived to the present-day, and actual attempts by the researchers to replicate them. Both approaches have proved to be very productive for the study of the ancient pottery industry at Amarna, and the results of three such projects are included in this section. Several other lines of research based on material from Amarna have been pursued over this time and are intended to result in substantive publications. Chapters 12–14 are supplementary studies from two of them, on archaeobotany and wall paintings.

The fieldwork which is reported on here was carried out over a number of years (1987–92) and requires, therefore, a more extensive set of acknowledgements than in the past. The list should begin with the Inspectors of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization who have assisted with the running of the expedition and have shared the inconveniences of camp life: Ahmed Galal (1987), Mahmud el-Said Mahdi (1988), Talaat Fawzi Habib and Atta Makramallah Mikhail (1989), Eiman Mohammed Sadiq and Emad Ramsy Yussef (1990), Eiman Mohammed Sadiq and Adel Makari Zikri (1991), and Wagdi Naim Labib and Mahmoud Mostafa Mohammed (1992). For these same years a continuing debt of gratitude is owed to the members of the Permanent Committee of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization, to the late Drs Ahmed Kadri and Sayed Tawfik, and to Drs Ali Hasan and Ali el-Khouly and Kamal Fahmy in Cairo, and also to their colleagues in Minia Province – Mahmoud Hamza, Adel Hassan, Mohammed Abd el-Aziz Awad, and Yahya Zakaria – for again permitting the expedition's work to continue at Amarna and for assisting the expedition to function smoothly and efficiently.

The expedition greatly benefited over this time 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, Gordon Tindale, Peter Mackenzie Smith, Patrick Early; the Friends of the Egypt Exploration Society and Amanda and Michael Pike, and Rosalind and William Haddon of the Hongkong Egyptian Bank; and, for the loan of equipment, Richard Keen of Keminco. The late George R. Brown once more provided generous support for the expedition and survey. Stanley Hattie and Edward Henderson most kindly made donations for equipment. The work of removing dumps in the Small Aten Temple was immeasurably helped by the donation, by Coal Products of the UK, of a diesel-run conveyor belt, and by wheelbarrows from Chillington Manufacturing and Crossley Builders' Merchants. Our most consistent and generous supporter has been Alfred Baxendale of Cementone-Beaver Ltd whose practical assistance to the expedition has enabled it to operate on a scale which otherwise would have been impossible. Many thanks are also due to Louise Shearman for typing some of the chapters.

Since 1989, the year of its creation, a major beneficiary to the expedition has been the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research in Cambridge, which has not only made generous grants but has also provided a project room specifically for the expedition. The University of Cambridge and the Faculty Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies have also amply assisted through allowing myself leave to work in Egypt, through the provision of library and related facilities and, through the computing service, assistance in the setting up of the printed text of this volume.

TECHNICAL NOTES

The system of excavation and recording developed at the Workmen's Village was transferred to the Main City, and proved fully adaptable with one difference. This concerns the excavation grids. The whole city is notionally covered by the 200-m grid established by the German expedition of 1911. This, however, is too large to be a practical guide to excavation, not least because on the ground it is difficult to fix with precision. The decision was made in 1987, therefore, to continue to excavate within five-m grids of local application tied to the overall Amarna Survey and thus to the older excavations. Two separate grids were laid out for 1987, Grid 1 and Grid 2, to cover respectively the well/pottery factory Q48.4 which was reported on in *Amarna Reports V*, and the sample housing area which includes house P46.33 described in Chapter 1 of this volume. In each grid the squares are identified by prefixes consisting of a letter, to represent 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 the basic frame for excavation. For the sake of consistency a grid was also created for the Small Aten Temple work, becoming Grid 3.

As a second order of reference, for complete houses or buildings the old system of numbering houses by the 200-m grid has been continued. Thus the house which was excavated in 1987 bears the number P46.33 (a complete listing of this set of numbers is given in AS: Chapter 4). The basic recording system used is a direct continuation of that employed at the Workmen's Village, a single open series of numbers applied to all kinds of debris, not only layers, but walls, cuts, fills, and so on. These are called "units". On the plans unit numbers appear in rectangular boxes, and in the text are written in square brackets, thus [3087].

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

The references for Chapters 1 to 5, which report on the 1987 fieldwork, will be found at the end of Chapter 5 (pp. 216-17). References for the subsequent chapters will be found at the end of each of them.

The following abbreviations have been used throughout:

- AR: B.J. Kemp, ed., *Amarna Reports*. 5 vols. London 1984-9.
AS: B.J. Kemp and S. Garfi, *A survey of the ancient city of El-'Amarna*. London 1993.
ASAE: *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte*. Cairo.
BIFAO: *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'Archéologie orientale*. Cairo.
CAJ: *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*. Cambridge.
CdE: *Chronique d'Égypte*. Brussels.
COA: T.E. Peet, C.L. Woolley, H. Frankfort, and J.D.S. Pendlebury, *The City of Akhenaten*. 3 vols. London 1923-51.
Descr. Carte: *Description de l'Égypte. Carte topographique de l'Égypte et de plusieurs parties des pays limitrophes*. Paris.
Denk. Text: K.R. Lepsius, *Denkmaeler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien. Text*. Berlin 1897-1913.
GM: *Göttinger Miszellen*. Göttingen.
JARCE: *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*. New York.
JEA: *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*. London.
JNES: *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*. Chicago.
JSSEA: *Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities, Journal*. Toronto.
Lexikon: W. Helck and E. Otto (later W. Helck and W. Westendorf), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 6 vols. Wiesbaden 1975-86.
MDAIK: *Mitteilungen des Deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo*. Cairo.
MDOG: *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft zu Berlin*. Berlin.
RT: N. de G. Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*. 6 vols. London 1903-08.
Urk IV: K. Sethe and W. Helck, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie. Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums*, vol. IV, pts. 1-22. Leipzig and Berlin 1906-58.
ZÄS: *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*. Berlin.