



NEKHEN NEWS

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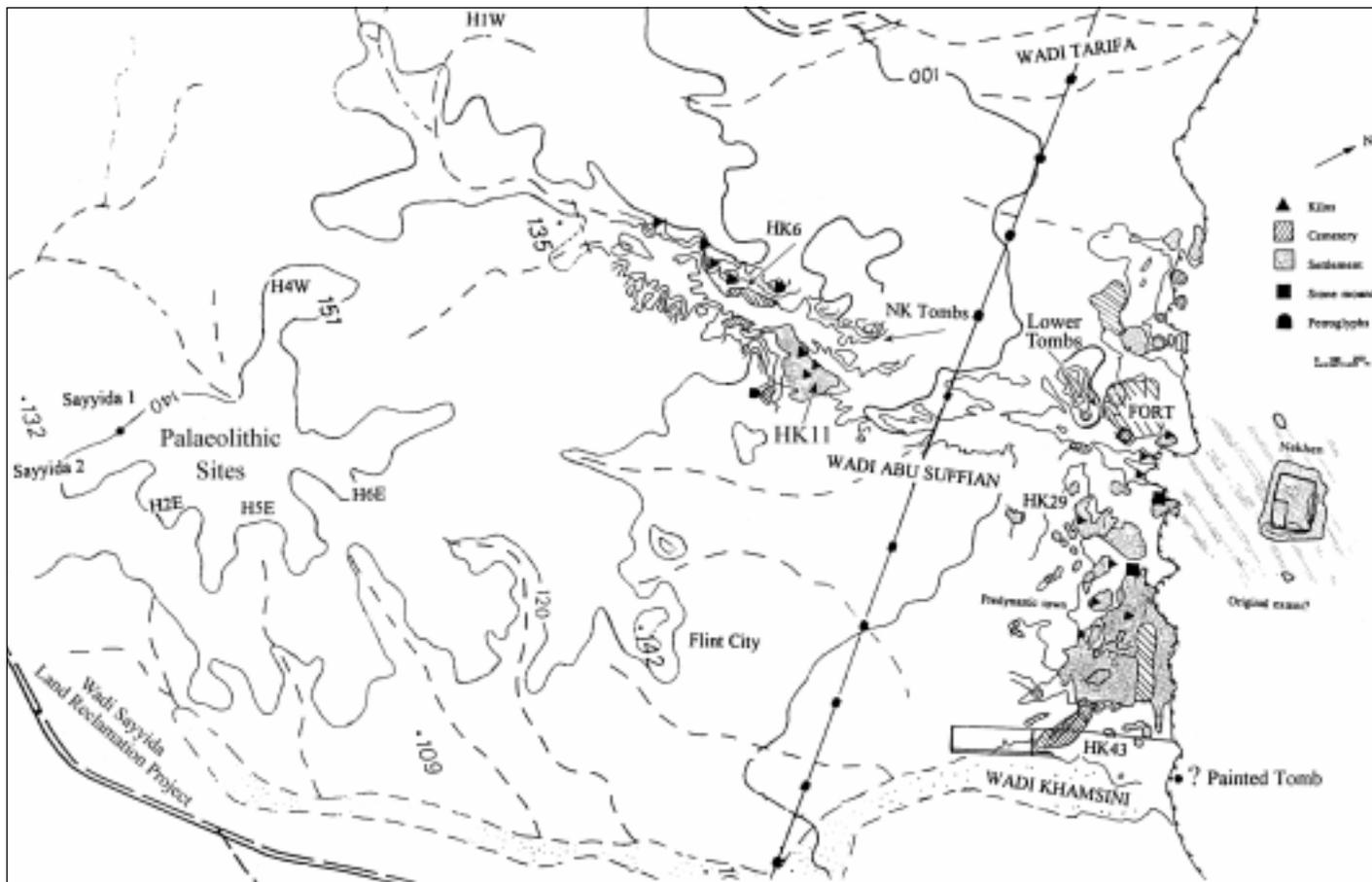
Fall, 1999



New Finds for the Next Hundred Years



Map of the Hierakonpolis Concession



Garstang's excavations in The Fort, 1905 (Liverpool University Archive Neg. H101).



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by the
Milwaukee Public Museum
800 West Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53233-1478 U.S.A.
PH: 414.278.2797 • FAX: 414.278.6100
e-mail: lupton@mpm1.mpm.edu
Carter Lupton, Head, History Section
Editor-in-Chief

D.G. Park/The Edge
Graphic Design/Layout
124 Monte Cresta
Oakland, CA 94611 U.S.A.
PH: 510.653.4885 • FAX: 510.653.6535
e-mail: dgedge@aol.com



Renée Friedman
Co-Director, Hierakonpolis Expedition
Co-Editor of the NEKHEN NEWS

Barbara Adams
Co-Director, Hierakonpolis Expedition
Co-Editor of the NEKHEN NEWS



We've got TMS (Too Much Stuff!)

—by Renée Friedman

The celebration of a century of scientific research at Hierakonpolis continued this year with a commemoration of F.W. Green's discovery on February 5, 1899 of the famous "Painted Tomb"—still the only known Predynastic tomb with painted decoration on its mud-plastered walls. In view of this anniversary, it is perhaps appropriate that so many of the highlights of the 1998-99 season derive from the various cemeteries throughout the site.

Barbara Adams kicked off the season in November 1998, returning to the elite cemetery at HK6. Not only did she find more of that intriguing elephant, but also two amazing and almost unworldly ceramic masks—Egypt's earliest (see cover). Later in the season, excavations at the workers' cemetery at HK43 revealed more of the dark side—clear evidence of ritual decapitation in the Predynastic period, which may nevertheless help to illuminate some obscure passages in later Egyptian religious literature. We hope that palaeo-pathological analysis, now underway, of the copious soft tissue remains from these burials will uncover a medical rationale for this practice.

It is, however, from this season's investigations of the remains of the living that we have been able to arrive at a diagnosis for our own condition: a serious case of TMS—Too Much Stuff! Everywhere we went this year, we made new and unexpected discoveries. We found ourselves in a wide range of locations and time periods: from Middle Palaeolithic mining sites to Predynastic pottery kilns, Second Dynasty palaces to New Kingdom tombs, and many places in between. In addition, research into the archival records left by F.W. Green at Cam-

bridge and the British Museum and by Klaus Baer at the Oriental Institute, Chicago, revealed that even outside of Hierakonpolis important information about the site can be discovered.

We are also happy to report that the first of the comprehensive publications of Michael Hoffman's work at Hierakonpolis, an account of his excavations within the elite cemetery at HK6 by Barbara Adams, is almost complete and should be in print in the spring. In addition, a substantial report on the 1996-1998 seasons by Renée Friedman *et al.* will be appearing this fall in the *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* XXXVI (1999).

For making this, our fourth season of renewed fieldwork possible, as well as allowing us to make some major improvements to our on-site dig-house, we are extremely grateful for the generous donations from Dr. Raymond and Beverly Sackler, Tom and Linda Heagy, the LaSalle National Bank and the Friends of Nekhen. A grant from the Institute of Archaeology, University College London funded excavation and study of the cemetery at HK6. A conservation grant from the American Research Center in

Egypt/Egyptian Antiquities Project allowed us to continue the conservation and documentation of the decorated dynastic tombs. Discovery Communications provided funding for the excavation of the intriguing enclosure of King Khasekhemwy, and Dr. Clive Cussler supported the investigation of the sub-surface magnetic anomalies around this magnificent structure.

TMS need not be a fatal condition and with your help and continued support, the prognosis is very good indeed.



Burial 147 at HK43 reveals its secrets.

Your membership in **The Friends of Nekhen** is an invaluable aid to the project's goals of excavation, preservation, and publication. Without you, our job would be not only more difficult but perhaps impossible. We need you! Join or renew today!



More Surprises in the Locality HK6 Cemetery

—by Barbara Adams

In November 1998 we resumed excavation at Locality HK6, the elite Pre- and Protodynastic cemetery in the Wadi Abu Suffian. As you may remember, last season's limited excavations produced the surprising and unique find of the burial of a juvenile elephant dating to Naqada I (c.3600BC). Such an unexpected and thrilling discovery in the first season more than justified the decision to resume excavation in such a plundered cemetery. But nothing prepared us for this year's finds.

Initially we were more than satisfied to find more of the elephant, including the left mandible and its ascending ramus to match the right mandible found last season in Tomb 14, and more dental plates and erupted teeth, which are important for exact age determination. As we continued excavation toward the east it became clear that various ovals marked on the site map were not in fact grave depressions, but remnants of a large, curved looter's trench running across the square. This deep trench must have been open when Tomb 14 was robbed because elephant bones were found within it. But this was not the only thing of interest found in this trench!

Two unique but incomplete straw-tempered pottery masks with cut-out eyes and mouths were found at the opposite ends of this trench. Only a small (but evocative) portion was found of one of them, featuring cut-out, feline-looking slanted eyes and an aquiline nose. Found with it at the south end of the trench was a tuft of twisted human hair, perhaps once part of a headdress. This mask was an amazing sight to behold as it came

face up out of the ground, so unexpected and other worldly. Moreover the find came, like that of the elephant, at a time during the excavation when the complexity caused by the plundering was especially frustrating. This mask is flat on the interior and not so readily envisaged as fitting over a human face, although it is certainly not too small to do so and the exaggerated slant of the eyes does not prevent the wearer seeing out.

The other mask is larger and more complete. It also has sloped, cut-out eyes and an aquiline nose, with brows, eyeline, mouth and a beard in plum red paint with white strap details. The breaks on the top corners of this bearded mask seem to be in the wrong position for human ears and may indicate that it once had bovine horns or animal ears attached. This mask is essentially life-sized and curves to fit over a human face—whether in life or in death remains an intriguing question. Even more curiously it was discovered at the north end of the trench with one pottery breast, which was hollow with a flattened rim where it had been attached to a vessel or a figure.

These masks are the earliest actual examples yet known from Egypt. Nothing precisely similar is known from the Predynastic repertoire, although the beard on the more complete mask is reminiscent of those seen on late Naqada II and Naqada III figurines.

The finds in the trench were a frustrating mixture of Naqada I and Naqada III sherds and other objects, including more elephant bones. It is hard to be sure of the date of the masks from this highly disturbed context, but stylistically they seem more likely to be Naqada III than Naqada I. Whilst it seemed obvious that the Naqada I artifacts came from the early tombs found last season, the source of the Naqada III objects was not clear until the end of the season. Then, a large, mystifying pit within the area delineated by the robbers' trench proved to be a cutting through earlier graves for a large mud-brick lined tomb (Tomb 16).

Approximately 1.5m wide, Tomb 16 had mud plaster coating on its interior walls and a deposit of virtually intact pots on its south side that date to Naqada III. It was noticed that some of these jars (R83B) contained fine white sand. F.W. Green's description of the famous painted tomb (Quibell and Green, *Hierakonpolis II*, 1902: 20) noted that the mortar between the bricks had been mixed with a paler, more yellow sand than that which was used to make the bricks, so these vessels could have been used to transport this sand from a source nearer the Nile valley. Another curious feature of the vessels reconstructed so far has been that they were all "killed" by being broken with a sharp object applied to the center of the body. A number of them also have incised or impressed potmarks near the rim.

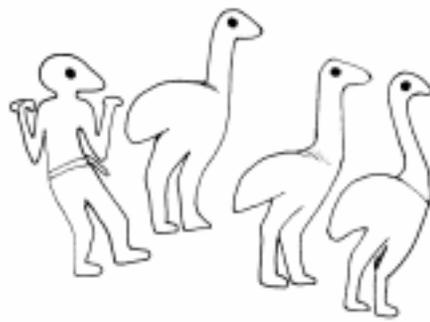


J. Rossiter

Straw-tempered pottery masks with cutout eyes and mouths.



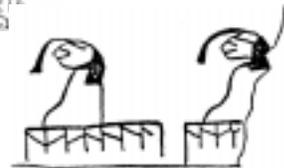
Masked figure on Two Dog palette (Ashmolean Museum)



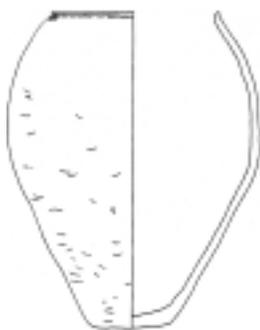
Ostrich Palette detail (Manchester Museum)



Seated figures on ebony label from Tomb of Hemaka



Time did not permit complete excavation of this tomb and with regret it was reburied to protect it until next season. It is hoped that further excavation will elucidate the contents of Tomb 16 and provide hard evidence that the masks were connected with it. Even in their plundered state, the wealth of the burials discovered at Locality HK6 is evident. Aside from the intrinsic value and beauty of some of the artifacts found to date, finds like the elephant burial and pottery masks are providing new information on the nature of wealth, ritual and iconography among the elite residents of early Hierakonpolis and fresh insights into some of Egypt's most enduring features.



Jar R83B from HK6

Aside from the intrinsic value and beauty of some of the artifacts found to date, finds like the elephant burial and pottery masks are providing new information on the nature of wealth, ritual and iconography among the elite residents of early Hierakonpolis and fresh insights into some of Egypt's most enduring features.

MASKS were made to serve a religious purpose in the Dynastic period; the mask was a medium by which the wearer became a divinity or a conduit for its powers. The funerary masks placed on the mummified bodies of the dead served to transform them into spirits born again in the afterlife. The use of human-faced masks in this context is well documented and dates back to the Fourth Dynasty. Only future excavation at HK6 will confirm whether this inception date should be revised back to the Predynastic.

On the other hand, the question of the extent to which masks were used by the living in Egyptian religious or funerary rituals has not yet been satisfactorily answered. Masks in animal form for ceremonial usage, although suggested in some depictions, have only rarely been recovered. The highly stylized nature of artistic representation in the Predynastic and Early Dynastic period makes it difficult to determine whether masks are actually being depicted and how and why they may have been used.

Two plausible examples appear to be worn by hunters on carved palettes of the late Predynastic period; the "Two-Dog

Palette," also from Hierakonpolis and the "Ostrich Palette." This usage of masks suggests a connection with hunting rituals. However, other intriguing depictions may be relevant, such as the seated figures on an ebony label from the Tomb of Hemaka (Tomb 3035) at Saqqara, dated to the reign of Djer of the First Dynasty. These have been interpreted as female images because they lack beards and have plaits rising from the front of their heads, but they could be wearing feline masks or represent the *repyt* or sacred image. A green glazed faience figure of a man or an ape from the temple of Nekhen at Hierakonpolis also may be wearing a mask with a wig attached, as indicated by incised lines that terminate in a rectangle on the back (below).

At present, we do not know if the Hierakonpolis masks were worn by the mourners as part of an elaborate funeral ceremony and then cast aside, or were made for the deceased and then thrown out of the grave by robbers. Could they be connected with the attention to the head suggested by the funerary practices uncovered at HK43? Further excavation may yet tell, so watch this space.



Faience figure from Nekhen with possible mask, (UC.15012, H: 8.0 cm.)

Pondering Paddy: Unwrapping the Mysteries of HK43

—by Amy Maish and Renée Friedman



"Paddy," Burial 85.

The "murder mystery" of the 1998 season continues, although the theme may be more "mystery" than "murder." The ten new burials uncovered this year were very interesting and provided insight into important aspects of Predynastic burial practices. But again, it is the young female nicknamed "Paddy" who is leading the way.

Paddy, aged 20-25 at the time of her death, was unearthed during the 1998 field season. She was found intact in Burial 85, heavily padded with linen around her hands and neck, which helped to preserve her down to a still properly positioned eyebrow (see *Nekhen News* 10, 1998:8). An in-depth osteological examination of her remains undertaken this season showed that there was more to this fascinating young lady than just appearance. It turned out that her throat bore cut-marks of the type found on other individuals last year.

Her most interesting counterparts in this saga are an elderly pair found buried together this season (Burial 147). The male was aged 60+ and the female was aged 50-59. This burial was signaled by the discovery of two detached heads, fairly close to the surface, suggesting that the burial had been disturbed. However, later on, the post-cranial remains of these individuals were found to be essentially intact; sharply contracted and intertwined in the small circular grave (see page 3). Initially it was assumed that this was just another burial in which the head had been displaced by looters. Closer scrutiny suggested a different explanation. Examination of the cervical vertebrae of both individuals revealed a pronounced number of cut-marks; over fifteen were found across the neck of the male.

The location and number of the cut-marks almost certainly indicate a complete removal of the head. The marks appear on the inferior and dorsal aspects of the vertebrae but were only made from the anterior aspect. Just as with Paddy, there is no sign of healing, so all that can be definitely stated is that the injury was peri-mortem, slightly before or shortly after the time of death. In no case are there signs of lacerations on the hands or jawline to suggest a struggle. The beheading was probably done at the grave, either at the time of burial or shortly thereafter. It now appears that the heads were detached together with some of the cervical vertebrae and then placed on the chests of their owners, where they were found during excavation. Adding insult to injury, or perhaps just another strange twist, potsherds were found stuffed into the nasal cavity of the man's skull (see page 25).

So far, seven individuals have been found at HK43 with lacerations of the throat. All cases have been adults with an age range of 18 to 60+. There is no preference for males or females. The respect shown to the deceased by providing them with a burial within the cemetery, and equipping them with grave goods, mats and linen, suggests that the purpose of this practice was not "to cause them to die a second death" or totally extinguish the person and keep them from entering the after-life. The purpose instead may have been to neutralize or purify the power of the deceased to prevent them from harming the living.

Interestingly, in four out of the seven cases of trauma, the burials were found intact. In relation to the cemetery, where only 10 out of 150 burials have so far been found intact, this is a high percentage indeed. It would seem that after this trauma was inflicted the burial was deliberately avoided and not subject to the widespread disturbances that we see in the majority of burials. But what was so special or different about these individuals?

A possible explanation may be found in some of the later religious literature from ancient Egypt. In particular, allusions in Egypt's oldest religious texts, the Pyramid Texts of the Old Kingdom (c. 2300BC), suggest that dismemberment was associated with purification and the removal of evil. Utterance 451 reads:

"O King, gather your bones together and take your head," says Geb.

"He will remove the evil which is on you O King," says Atum.

If "evil" is to blame here, we may actually be able to ascertain what type it may have been, due to the remarkable preservation of the

human organic remains from these burials.

This season we were fortunate to have with us forensic pathologist Dr. Elizabeth Race of Dallas, Texas. It is hoped that her analysis of the well-preserved soft tissues from these and other burials will allow us to determine



Some of the over 15 cut marks found on the neck vertebrae of the male (Burial 147).



Forensic pathologist Dr. Elizabeth Race examining the soft tissue remains. She is particularly pleased with a large fragment of a 6,000 year old brain.

Meanwhile, physical anthropologist Amy Maish examines a padless Paddy and makes the grisly discovery of cut marks on her throat.



Working together with the scientists, we hope to discover a medical rationale behind this strange funerary custom.

whether the evil was of a personal nature or was perhaps a reference to a particularly nasty or obvious fatal disease. Was severing of the head an ancient form of disease control? If so, it will have interesting ramifications for our understanding of both medicinal practices and funerary ritual in this early period. As the “mystery” unfolds, perhaps the enigmatic writings of later periods will become clearer as well.



Concession Survey

—by Renée Friedman and Dawn Youngblood, Southern Methodist University, Dallas

The growing pressure on the boundaries of the Hierakonpolis archaeological zone is a direct result of the Wadi Sayyida project, an ambitious scheme to reclaim over 400,000 feddan of desert to the west of and directly behind Hierakonpolis (see map page 2). In response to this situation, the Hierakonpolis Expedition mounted a survey along the southeastern and western edges of the concession. The purpose of this survey was to record and plot the location of archaeological localities that are in serious danger of being destroyed.

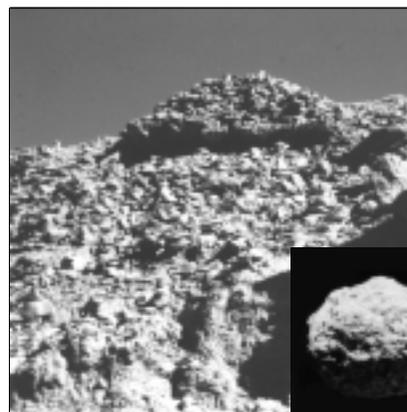
The first thing we found was the flint source for the Hierakonpolis region. This was an especially surprising discovery, as the area, mainly composed of Nubian sandstone, is not credited with locally occurring flint resources. The literature states that all flint had to have been imported from the region around Esna, some 30 km to the north, with far-reaching im-

plications for interregional trade going back to the Palaeolithic period. Clearly, this view can no longer be maintained. At the base of the southernmost ridge at the edge of the wide embayment of the Wadi Khamsini, we observed several large cobbles of flint. Looking up, we realized that this flint was derived from the ridge itself, or more specifically, one slope of this ridge. Remarkably, this slope is composed of fossilized coral full of flint. There were several mine cuttings in which we found not only the flint nodules, but also the extraction tools used to remove them, just as they were abandoned. There can be little doubt that this convenient location was the source for all the flint that Hierakonpolis needed. Predynastic ceramics found at the site attest to activity here at that time. Obviously, such flint outcroppings are rare in the region. The discovery of this resource in such a convenient location provides us with another possible reason for Hierakonpolis’ location and its explosive growth in the Predynastic period.

The Predynastic inhabitants were not the only ones to visit this hill, which we dubbed “Flint City.” Further exploration revealed a series of New Kingdom inscriptions incised into the rock high up on the rise. These record the names of several priests, with prayers and dedications to Horus of Nekhen, who is depicted as a crouching falcon with the White or Double Crown on his head. The location of the inscriptions suggests that this spot had been chosen not only for the commanding view it provided, but also because it marked the southeasternmost border of Hierakonpolis and would be the first place illuminated by the rays of the rising sun each morning (see back).

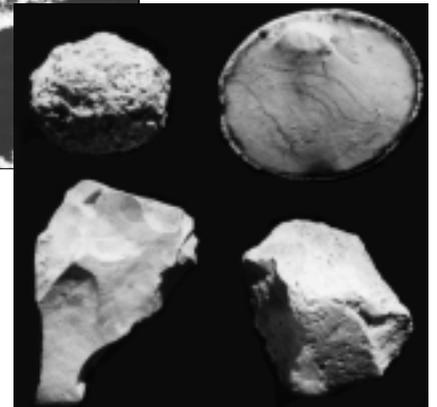
Later archival research revealed that this hill has had a good share of visitors. Recent examination of Cambridge’s collection of F.W. Green’s

Hierakonpolis notebooks shows that he too had found these inscriptions and made a full copy of them in his beautiful hand. And it’s



“Flint City”

An unexpected source of flint was found in the mining cavities cut beneath slabs of fossilized coral. There the early miners left surplus nodules of flint and their extraction tools.





Inscriptions discovered at "Flint City."

a good thing too, for we found several fallen fragments indicating that another, more recent visitor to the site has been attempting to steal them. The Green archive will be invaluable for replacing these stones in their correct context and for providing full readings for inscriptions now damaged.

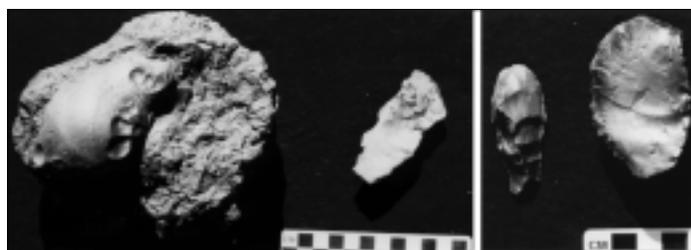
Another surprising discovery of the survey was a number of Middle Palaeolithic sites (120,000-40,000 years ago) located at the western end of the Wadi Abu Suffian (see map page 2). Located on the high ridges overlooking the wadi, these sites are easily identified by the dense clusters of small rough boulders strewn across the surface. Much to our surprise, these boulders were found to be composed of macrofossiliferous limestone containing high-quality flint cobbles. For an area that is not supposed to have flint, we ended up with a heck of a lot of it! These cobbles had been mined by the Middle Palaeolithic inhabitants to make a variety of tools.

One well-defined oval concentration of these small boulders interspersed with Levallois flakes, cores, and tools was selected for testing (Sayyida I). Initial investigation revealed almost 60cm of *in situ* deposition—a level of preservation unparalleled for Middle Palaeolithic sites along the Egyptian Nile. Artifacts on the surface were slightly patinated (weathered) but in good condition, while those slightly below the surface were in excellent condition. Many appeared to be virtually as fresh as the day they were struck.



The test trench at Sayyida I revealed a remarkable 60cm of *in situ* deposit some 12,000 years old.

The sites are of immense importance, not only their preservation, but also the density and depth of deposit. The presence of small debitage or chipping debris, the way artifacts tend to lay flat, their freshness, and their high concentration within a "feature" all suggest a low energy depositional environment. This is one of the most desirable forms of deposit for prehistoric studies. Only a small number of Middle Palaeolithic sites along the Nile Valley have been thoroughly investigated. Further exploration of these sites promises to provide new data on primary extraction techniques, technological developments and the ancient climate. All we can do is hope that these sites will survive until further investigation can be undertaken in the coming field season, which promises to be as busy as the last.



Using a small tool (middle), Middle Palaeolithic miners extracted chert from a boulder from Sayyida I to make the tools on the right.

Coming soon...

Excavations in the Locality 6 Cemetery at Hierakonpolis 1979-1985

by Barbara Adams.

The death of Michael Allen Hoffman in 1990 not only robbed Egyptian archaeology of a foremost field director and fine scholar but also left the results of his excavations at Hierakonpolis unpublished for the most part, with the exception of his interim report, *The Predynastic of Hierakonpolis*, 1982, and various popular articles.

This volume is the first comprehensive report on Hoffman's excavations in the elite cemetery at Locality 6 in 1979, 1980, 1982 and 1985. Reconstructed from the field notes of Hoffman and his co-workers, it contains a description of the ten excavated tombs, which date to early Naqada II and Naqada III and include some of the faunal graves, which are a special feature of this cemetery, as well as a large catalogue raisonnée of all the excavated objects. There is a report on the fragmentary human bone by Theya Molleson and the botanical remains are described by Ahmed Gamal el-Din Fahmy. The volume is fully illustrated with copious photographs and line drawings (over 200 pp; 45 B&W; 30 figures).

Egyptian Studies Association Publication Number 4, SIA Publishing, expected Spring 2000. For further information contact the Egyptian Studies Association, Petrie Museum, University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT, England.

Investigations in the Fort of Khasekhemwy

—by Renée Friedman

Dominating the low desert of Hierakonpolis is an imposing structure built of sun dried mud-brick known as the “Fort.” It is the only standing structure at Hierakonpolis, and if the site can have only one, it is not a bad one to have. It is the oldest freestanding monumental mud-brick structure in Egypt, if not in the world (see back). Measuring approximately 67 x 57m (c.220x185 ft), with walls some 5m (16 ft) thick, it is still preserved in places to its original imposing height of 11m (36 ft). Decorated on its exterior with a series of niches and originally plastered white, it must have been a striking sight in its time. Almost 5000 years later, this monument stands as a testament to the abilities of its builder, King Khasekhemwy, the last king of the Second Dynasty (c.2686BC).



Renée Friedman measures the column base in The Fort.

Although it continues to be called a “fort” as it was first described, this structure certainly had no military function, although what its actual function may have been remains a mystery. It is clearly related to the ceremonial enclosures that were erected near the royal burial grounds of the kings of Egypt’s early dynasties at Abydos to house their mortuary cults. It was at Abydos that Khasekhemwy built another enclosure some

three times larger than the Hierakonpolis fort to accompany his huge desert tomb. These three structures alone earn this king the right to be called the first of Egypt’s great builders.

The Hierakonpolis fort is unique. It is the only one of these massive mud-brick enclosures to be found outside of Abydos. It is also the only one to include elaborately carved stone embellishments for the enigmatic structure within it. Its sizable granite column base and finely decorated door lintel suggest that, although smaller than its Abydos counterpart, the fort was no less important to the king and just as costly. But to what end? Intimately linked to this question is why King Khasekhemwy should build two of these huge enclosures in the first place?

The standard explanation has been that during the Second Dynasty Egypt was experiencing the first test of its unity, and in its second half the country was ruled by rival kings. It has been suggested that Khasekhem, as he was initially known, first ruled as one of these rival kings, perhaps from Hierakonpolis, given the number of fine objects bearing his early name found at the site. Following this scenario, he originally planned to be buried at Hierakonpolis and built his funerary enclosure and perhaps began a tomb. But when he defeated his rivals and assumed control of all Egypt he changed his name to Khasekhemwy, and built a new enclosure and tomb at Abydos, the long-standing traditional burial place of Early Dynastic kings.

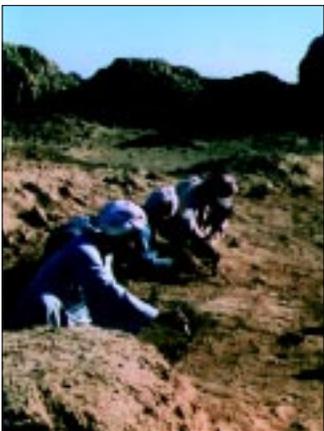
With generous funding from Discovery Communications, in February 1999 we tried to find out if this was indeed the case, while gathering more clues to help determine the purpose and function of our mysterious monument.

To determine whether Khasekhem(wy) had intended to be buried at Hierakonpolis and began a tomb to accompany his enclosure, we asked Tomasz Herbich (Polish Center of Mediterranean Archaeology in Cairo, University of Warsaw) to conduct a geophysical survey of the cemetery of Hierakonpolis’ early rulers at Locality HK6. If Khasekhem(wy) had planned to be buried at Hierakonpolis, this would be the place he would have chosen. However, no sign of a massive brick-lined tomb was discovered, nor any disturbance of the soil commensurate with the building of such a sepulcher. Thus it would seem that Khasekhemwy did not prepare a tomb at Hierakonpolis, or at least that his plans had not progressed to that point when he moved his immortal ambitions to Abydos. This being the case, it was clear that only exploration within the fort itself could provide answers to our questions.

Almost without exception, those who have come to explore Hierakonpolis have been unable to resist the temptation to probe in and around the fort, as the disheveled state of its inte-



THE FORT



Careful clearance around the walls was required to obtain a preliminary plan of the internal building within the fort. Some walls had been reduced to masses of fallen bricks, while others were preserved only at surface level.



Fragment of the lintel found by Lansing.



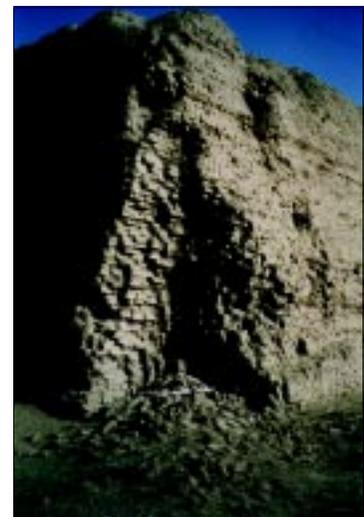
Niching at The Fort



The intriguing structure within The Fort.



Help! The Fort is falling apart!



rior attests. They have more successfully fought off the urge to publish their results, and other than brief notes and archival photographs we have little information about what has been done within it. One of the biggest culprits in this regard was John Garstang, who made excavations within the enclosures in 1905 on behalf of the University of Liverpool. We know he uncovered 180 late Predynastic graves some 1.5m below the level of the fort's walls, but it is unclear whether he actually discovered the building within the enclosure, or if it was already visible and he simply trenched around it. Unfortunately little in the way of plans or measurements was made and nothing about this internal structure was published.



King Khasekhem
(Ashmolean Museum)

Barry Kemp, who was the first to examine and publish Garstang's records, placed this building within a reconstructed plan of the fort only by extrapolating from archival photographs. However, the still visible remains of the walls show Kemp's plan to represent only a very small portion of this internal structure.

Prior to our excavations, segments of three walls not shown on Kemp's plan were visible and freestanding. Their denuded remains were carefully cleared and planned. Further comparing the plan to the actual monument we also noticed that an area free of early graves near the entrance in fact corresponded to a huge ridge of back dirt and debris. A small segment of a fourth wall just visible beneath this debris suggested that Garstang had not excavated this debris and that more intact sections of the mysterious internal structure might be preserved beneath it.

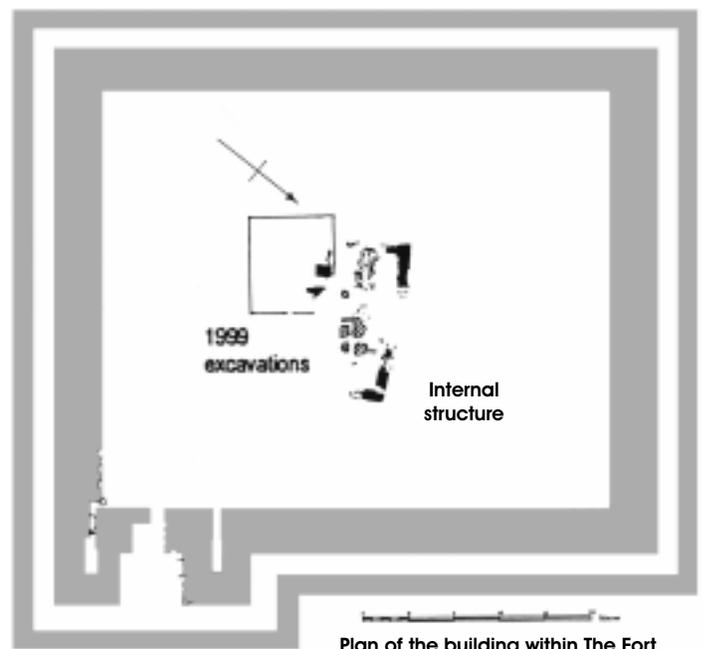
Accordingly, we began the arduous and tedious process of removing the debris—all two meters of it. An area of approximately 10m² was chosen, where excavation was conducted systematically by Joseph Majer and myself. Our efforts were finally rewarded with the discovery of two walls, which appear to have formed the jambs of a corridor or entrance way, perhaps the original entrance to the structure. But more intriguing, around these walls, we found several small fragments of pink granite. Although none are decorated, the stone is identical to that of the decorated and inscribed lintel of Khasekhemwy discovered in 1935 by the gate to the fort by Ambrose Lansing for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. More frag-

ments of this lintel were found this season in Lansing's back dirt piles outside the fort. The possibility exists that the lintel may have originated from the internal structure, which would then have been quite a sumptuous edifice, at least 15m long and 10m wide, entered through a richly ornate doorway and featuring at least two columns supported by granite column bases. These are among the earliest examples of the architectural use of granite.

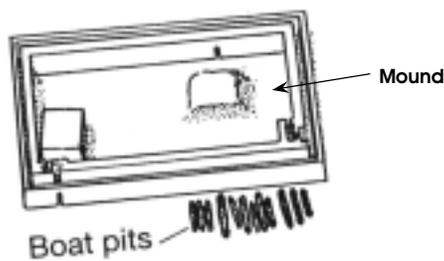
The association of the fort and its counterpart at Abydos to the earliest pyramids has long been recognized, but David O'Connor's discovery of boats and the remains of what he tentatively identifies as a proto-pyramid at Abydos indicates a more direct linkage. Indeed, Djoser's Step Pyramid complex at Saqqara seems modeled on Khasekhemwy's Abydos enclosure, including the chapel directly behind the entrance and the centrally placed sacred mound or pyramid from which the king's spirit dominated the surrounding assembly of gods in their shrines.

This is not the case in the Hierakonpolis fort, however. In the center of the fort, instead of a mound of sand, we have a well-appointed internal building—a palace. Could it be that a proto-pyramid was unnecessary because the king himself, and not just his spirit, was present to partake in the ceremonies? If this is the case, then the Hierakonpolis fort is not a replica for use in the next world, but the real thing for use in his lifetime.

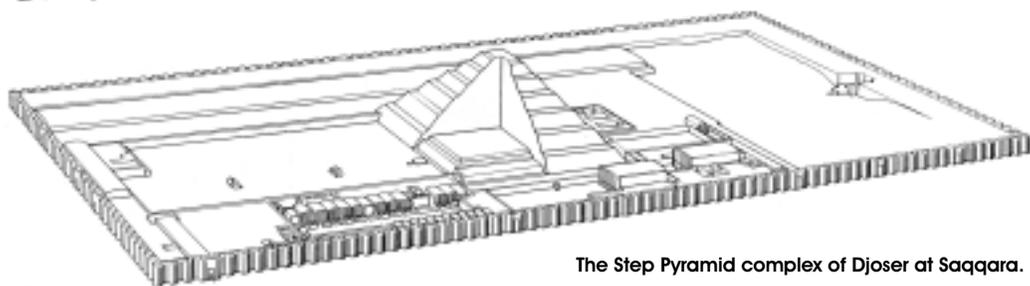
This conclusion is supported by the pottery recovered from the excavations, which dates Second Dynasty activity in the fort precisely to the middle of the reign of Khasekhemwy. As no pottery characteristic of the end of his thirty-plus year reign



Plan of the building within The Fort.



Reconstruction of the enclosure of Khasekhemwy at Abydos (after M. Lehner, *The Complete Pyramids*, 1998).



The Step Pyramid complex of Djoser at Saqqara.

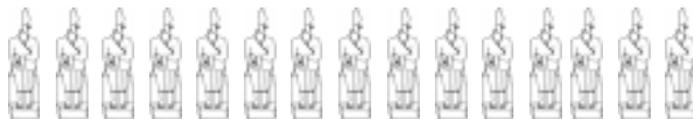
was found, it seems unlikely that the fort was a cenotaph or second funerary establishment. Instead, this imposing enclosure may have been built to commemorate the king's rejuvenation festival or perhaps even the reunification of the land under his command, for the grand festival when Khasekhem was reborn as Khasekhemwy. Indeed, what better place for such a celebration could there have been than the home of the patron god of Egyptian Kingship, Horus of Hierakonpolis?

Saving the Fort

The recent weather conditions (both rain and high winds) have had a decidedly negative effect on the condition of Khasekhemwy's fort. The main enclosure walls are coated with new mud flows caused by heavy rain in April 1998 and are crumbling. However, the greatest damage done to the fort in modern times has been at the hands of earlier archaeologists. Its walls have been undermined in the search for earlier graves, and once uncovered were left exposed and vulnerable. Gone are the days when Egypt was eternal. Its legacy now requires special care. At the end of the 1999 season, the walls of the internal structure were encased in mud-bricks in order to preserve and protect them from the natural elements. We also used

successful we intend to begin the conservation of this majestic structure as soon as possible. However, it won't be easy. Mud-brick is notoriously one of the most difficult materials to conserve and consolidate. As a first step, we intend to use a low-tech approach to this problem by recycling the fallen bricks to plug gaps and shore up foundations. In fact, it would be hard to improve on bricks that have lasted this long, and we hope to reconstruct the ancient recipe. Employing local brick makers to reconstitute the ancient bricks from the fallen debris, we will have local masons replace them with old-fashioned mud mortar. As it is estimated that over one million bricks will be needed, this effort promises to be as monumental as the structure itself and should give us a glimpse of what it must have been like to build it almost 5000 years ago. We hope we can count on all of our Friends of Nekhen to help.

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Pottery From the Hierakonpolis Fort

—by Dietrich Raue

The recent field work within the fort produced a good deal of pottery mainly belonging to several phases of the Predynastic period ranging from possibly Badarian (c.4000BC) to Dynasty 0 (c.3100BC). It also revealed some Early Dynastic pottery, which for the first time provides an independent date for the fort itself. The material was mixed together due to earlier excavation activities. Because of this, no intact Dynasty 2 contexts were found, but since the Early Dynastic material differs significantly from that of the earlier periods, its study is of some value and can lend additional support to the excavation results as well as new insights.

Pottery of the Early Dynastic period was not plentiful and most fragments were rather small. Yet within the limited sample were found two examples of the immediate predecessors of the carinated bowls of Dynasty 3 and the ultimate ancestors of the Old Kingdom Meydum bowl. Typical of late Dynasty 2, these bowls were entirely hand-made of marl clay and bear no trace of having been shaped on a core. As with the succeeding type, they are coated with a slightly polished red slip.

During the final decades of Dynasty 2 a new type of cooking pot was developed. This new type at first bears an internal lip and later an internal ledge. The first example from the fort clearly shows its origin from the tradition of simple bowls with direct rim in Dynasty 2, whereas the second fragment already points to later developments.

The sizable number of beer jars may be divided in two main groups. The major group exhibits just a mere remnant of a shoulder, while an in-curving rim and no shoulder distinguish the other group. Both groups have a tubular body and traces of vertical finger marks on the interior, created during the formation of the vessels. The local potters used the fabric typical for beer jars: a coarse clay mixed with gritty limestone, medium sized sand, and tempered by coarse chaff.

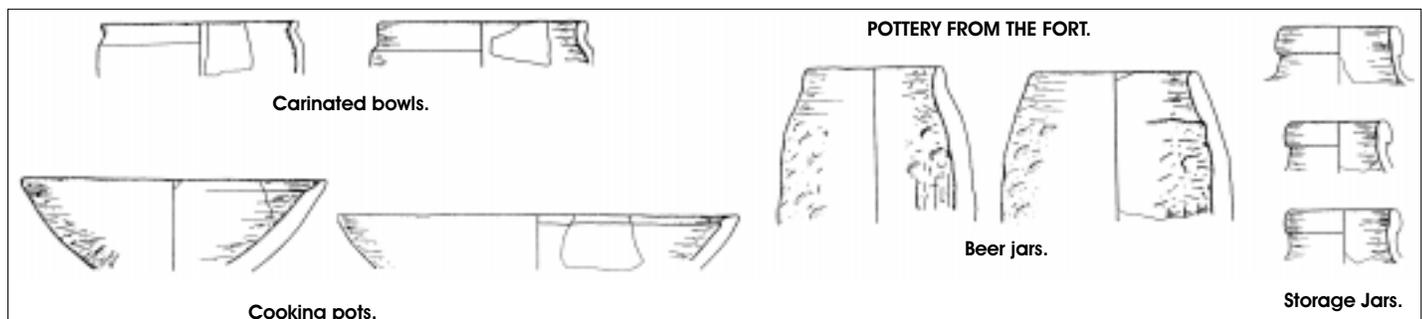
The three examples of marl-clay storage jars from the fort are also representative of later Dynasty 2 developments. They display the same subtle change from tall rims in the second half of Dynasty 2 to shorter and broader rims in late Dynasty 2 and earlier Dynasty 3 as observed at Elephantine Island, Aswan.

Though sparse, the new material from the fort allows for some observations on the chronology of Early Dynastic pottery and, by extension, some historical implications as well. The pottery displays characteristics of advanced Dynasty 2, but also elucidates the roots of some later developments in Dynasty 3. It can be compared with the development at Elephantine, where, for example, beer jars like those found in the fort have been recovered from the 'East City, Level VI', the stratum immediately below that containing mud sealings which bear the name of Djoser, the immediate successor of Khasekhemwy. Furthermore, beer jars with a collared rim, among other distinctive pottery types, as found among the funeral equipment of Khasekhemwy at Abydos, are absent from the fort. It is also noteworthy that no pottery types that were invented in Dynasty 3 have yet been found in the fort. All in all this suggests a date in the first decades of Khasekhemwy's long reign for the ceramic material from the fort and fits well with the close relationship of Khasekhemwy to Hierakonpolis from the beginning of his reign.

The general character of the ceramic material points to a domestic or secular context. No remains of specifically cultic vessels such as hes-vases are in evidence. However, the sample is still quite small. Nevertheless, it suggests that the Dynasty 2 pottery from the fort is connected with the building of the fort itself, and that little activity took place after its completion which left material traces in the form of pottery.

The adjacent surroundings were partially surveyed for Early Dynastic material, but no spoil heaps could be identified, such as may occur in the vicinity of sacred districts which were kept clean or at least cleaner than administrative or industrial areas. Until further material is found, it seems that the cult or memory of Khasekhemwy did not result in votive offerings and possibly that the fort may never have been "in use." On the other hand, the area was respected as a sacred place for thousands of years and to some extent is still revered today.

Dietrich Raue is an Egyptologist from Heidelberg University who has worked since 1988 for the German Institute at Dahschur, Luxor and Elephantine. His study of the Early Dynastic and Old Kingdom pottery at Elephantine brought him to Hierakonpolis to contrast and compare assemblages. We were very fortunate to be able to draw on his expertise during our excavations in the fort.



The Relief Decoration of Khasekhemwy at the Fort

—by Nicole Alexanian, Ägyptologisches Seminar, Berlin.

The pink granite fragments of relief decoration were found near the gateway of the fort and most probably derive from large decorated blocks that stone robbers dragged out of the mud-brick enclosure. By heating and then rapidly cooling such blocks, pieces of manageable size could be obtained. These were removed for reuse elsewhere, while the smaller bits were left behind where Ambrose Lansing, field director of the Egyptian Expedition of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, discovered them in 1935.

Lansing briefly reported his discovery and published a photograph of three of the most important fragments. One of them is inscribed with the name of Khasekhemwy and serves to date the fort to that king's reign (c. 2700BC). Apart from that however, this remarkable find remained unpublished. This is understandable in a way since the fragments are small and were in very bad condition when recovered. Nevertheless, they represent a significant addition to the meager corpus of Early Dynastic relief. They also provide at least a tentative idea of the original decoration and the possible function of the fort.

Thanks to the permission of the MMA and the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, I had the opportunity to study the fragments in Cairo in 1993 and 1994. The very fragmentary condition of the 103 pieces recovered makes it impossible to reconstruct the original monument in its entirety. Less than half of the fragments show identifiable traces of decoration and only about 25 pieces are sufficiently well preserved to provide some clue toward identifying the specific subject or establishing the scale of the original decoration.

Probably the most important of our fragments measures a mere 27x22cm. It bears the name of Khasekhemwy, "The Two Lords are at peace with him." The name is inscribed in the frame of the royal *serekh*, a formalized element of palace architecture surmounted by a

Horus falcon and the Seth animal facing each other, a motif unique to this king. The area containing the royal name is delimited on the right by a vertical line and above by a slightly curved line that runs across the preserved surface. These lines obviously represent the remains of the kiosk that sheltered the enthroned king on official oc-



Flinders Petrie excavating.

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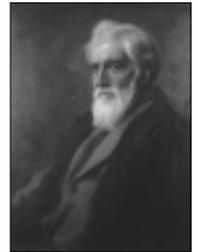
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Sir Flinders Petrie

casions and during festivals. Traces of the top of the White Crown and the pointed upper tip of the flail can still be recognized. They confirm that King Khasekhemwy was indeed represented enthroned with his regalia. Such scenes are regularly encountered in representations of the Sed Festival. During this celebration the king's rule and power were celebrated and confirmed in a symbolic way.

There are further fragments depicting more parts of the king. He appears at least four times and is the tallest figure attested on the monument, being between 52 and 58cm high. His costume makes it clear that scenes of ritual character were depicted.

Other figures are shown on a lesser scale. They probably represent attendants or priests who accompanied the king in his ritual actions. The largest fragment of all (36x39cm) represents an example of this type and shows two male figures advancing to the right. The figures most likely represent



a pair of attendants, the second probably carrying a standard. The new fragment of relief found this season by the Hierakonpolis Expedition may be part of a similar scene.

Another figure is shown running swiftly to the right. The narrow band visible behind the figure could be a ceremonial tail that was once held in the missing right hand. The figure wears a long wig; nevertheless, the ceremonial beard attached to its chin proves that a male is depicted. Two streamers hang down over the back of the wig. They can only be explained as belonging to a standard that was once shown above the figure's head. All this fits with the iconography of the royal Ka, a part of the king thought to represent his life force. Our fragment might have belonged to a depiction



of Khasekhemwy running a ceremonial course in the company of his Ka as part of the royal ritual of territorial claim.

What can be said of the composition as a whole? Horizontal and vertical register lines are present on several fragments. They attest to the complex structure of the decoration that accommodated many figures—about a score are represented among the fragments. The figures of the king dominated the composition. His costume and the number of scenes make it clear that at least three ritual ceremonies formed the thematic core of the decoration.

What form did the monument assume? A freestanding stela could hardly have accommodated the variety of figures and themes documented by the fragments. The alternative is an architectural element that was originally integrated into the structure itself. Granite doorways set into mud-brick walls are well-known features of later pharaonic architecture. The fragments were found close to the entrance of the fort, therefore it is possible that the decorated panels were set up in the main gateway. On the other hand, the fragments of pink granite found near the doorway of the internal building make it quite plausible to imagine an original setting for the reliefs in this context as well. Wherever the original location may have been, the fragments represent one of the earliest examples of this type of royal propaganda on a major and permanent architectural scale,

a practice which would be taken to great heights by Khasekhemwy's successors.

There are striking similarities between the architectural layout of the fort, the Early Dynastic funerary enclosures at Abydos, the Step Pyramid complex of Djoser at Saqqara, and the temple area at Nekhen. They share the following features: a huge rectangular enclosure, a north–south orientation, and an access via a gateway situated in the eastern wall near the southern corner. The niched decoration of the outer walls constitutes another point of correspondence between the fort, a possible palace enclosure at Nekhen, the enclosures at Abydos, and the Djoser complex. Furthermore, the relief decoration preserved from the Djoser complex as well as objects from the Early Dynastic temples at Nekhen also show royal festivals. As we have seen, this was true for the decoration of the fort as well.

Consequently, we have reason to assume that all these different monuments shared a common function as a setting for the celebration or commemoration of ceremonies in the official state religion. The fort must have played an important role within this official cult surrounding the king. It is hoped that further excavations will help to clarify the specifics of these ritual activities.

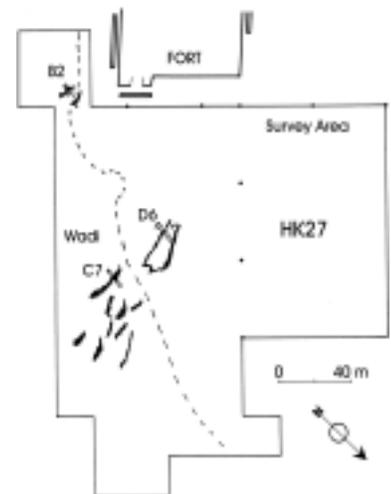


The Magnetic Anomalies near the Fort

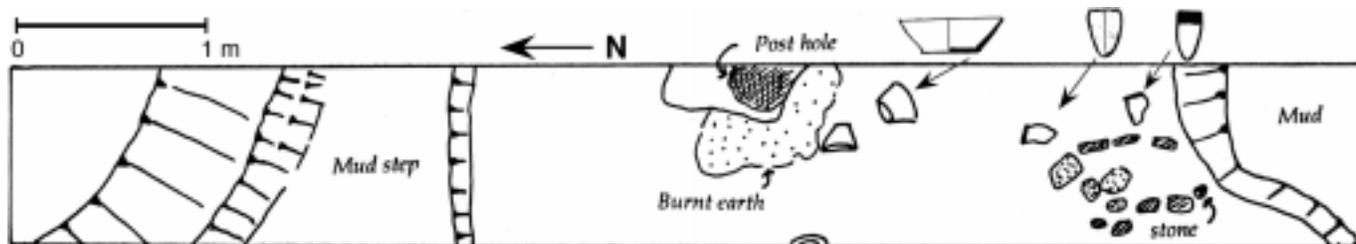
—by Renée Friedman

A geophysical survey of the area to the northeast of the fort of King Khasekhemwy was carried out last season to see if, like his Abydos enclosure, it was outfitted with buried boats. The survey revealed a number of magnetic anomalies and this season, with the generous financial support of Dr. Clive Cussler, three of the most interesting ones were examined by test excavations conducted by Chris Ellis and myself.

In all three cases, the origin of the magnetic anomaly was discovered to be geological, i.e., Nilotic silts deposited by Nile inundations and subsequently cut and ultimately covered by wadi action. Although no evidence for the presence of boats at Hierakonpolis was found, important information was



Magnetic anomalies near The Fort tested by excavation.



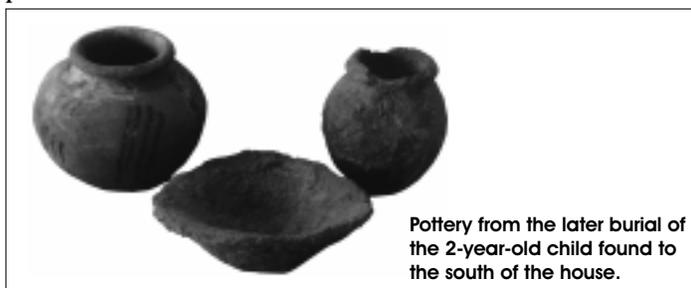
The trench through the Predynastic house at HK27 revealed fragments of the pottery types shown along with animal bones, lithics and carbonized seeds. There may be a hearth at the southern end.

obtained about the geomorphology of the region and its topography and climate in Predynastic times.

The intriguing keyhole-shaped structure detected by the magnetometer also turned out to be composed of Nile silt. However, its strange appearance was not entirely due to natural forces. Excavations revealed that the silt had been cut into and modified to create a semi-subterranean dwelling similar to that found by Michael Hoffman in 1978 at HK29. Relatively intact remnants of domestic activities such as cooking and lithic manufacture were recovered, as well as a posthole and residue from hearth cleaning. The pottery dates the establishment to the early Naqada II period (c. 3500BC).

Despite the size of the Predynastic town, well-preserved remains of domestic establishments have been elusive. The discovery of a relatively intact household in this location near the edge of the wadi is particularly important as it suggests that the livelihood of its owners may have been agriculturally based. If so, this house will provide a much-needed base from which to contrast and compare the material recovered from the potter's house at HK29 and the wadi settlement at HK11 (see map). It is only in this way that the full spectrum of life in ancient Hierakonpolis can ever be known. Unfortunately, there was insufficient time and manpower to fully investigate this household during the 1999 season and progress was slowed by other discoveries in the immediate vicinity.

First, a semi-intact burial of a small child was found to the south. Although plundered in antiquity, the grave still contained three pottery vessels. One was decorated with red paint in a series of wavy lines (Petrie's *Prehistoric Corpus* D27) and provides the Naqada III date (c. 3200BC) for this burial and the abandonment of the area in general for habitation purposes.

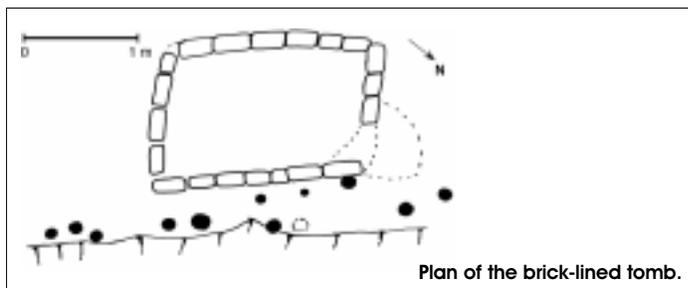


Next, as we tried to open out the narrow trench to investigate the new house, we encountered a brick-lined burial to the west. The surface indications of this tomb were carefully cleared and remnants of postholes belonging to its superstructure were detected. The cemetery of the middle class inhabitants in the vicinity (HK27) has been investigated by several archaeologists over the past 100 years and many interesting finds resulted, so it was with great anticipation that we began the excavation of the tomb. However, it wasn't too long before an odd sherd appeared in the tomb's fill. Examination of this sherd by our eagle-eyed inspector, Osama Ismael, revealed the neatly incised number "103" on its interior, strongly suggesting that the tomb had been previously cleared, probably by Ambrose Lansing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 1935.

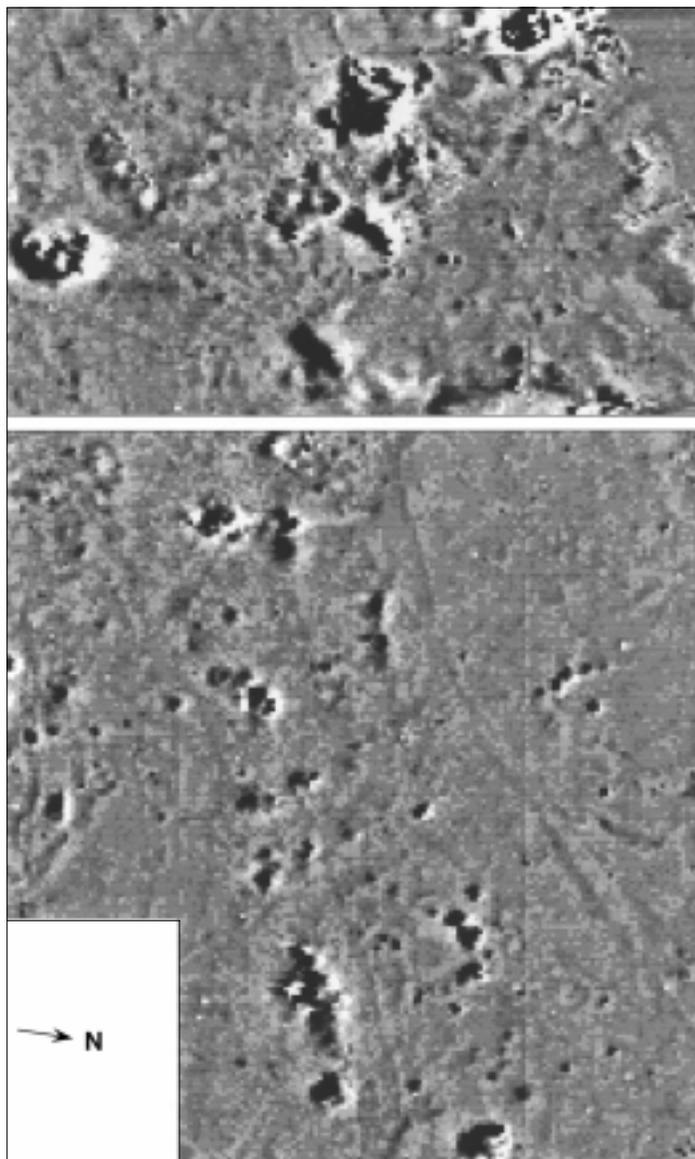
Complete excavation of the tomb showed that this was indeed the case. Only the head of the owner was found within the grave, apparently carefully cached and numbered with the potsherd for further study. Of the post-cranial remains, we found only weathered splinters lying to either side of the grave. This serves to underline how lucky we truly are to have found a relatively undisturbed cemetery at HK43 and our new house at HK27.



The tell-tale sherd.



Magnetic map of the southern section (S1) of HK11 showing the location of previously undetected Predynastic pottery kilns.



Magnetic map of the northern section (S2) of HK11 showing the location of anomalies that may be the remains of an undisturbed Predynastic settlement.

The Geophysical Survey

—by Tomasz Herbich and Renée Friedman

The results of the geophysical survey by the fort might be considered disappointing from the point of view of what we had hoped to discover, but it was a very useful exercise. From it we learned the limitations of this technology with specific reference to Hierakonpolis. Basically, it is a matter of geology. Because the desert portion of Hierakonpolis actually sits not on sand but on ancient silt terraces of the fierce Pleistocene Nile, the mud-bricks we had hoped to locate, being made essentially of the same material, could not be differentiated magnetically. Furthermore, we now know that any extensive dis-

turbance of the surface by looters serves to mix lenses of naturally occurring silts, producing irrelevant magnetic readings. With this in mind, we decided to give the machine one more chance at Locality HK11, a settlement and kiln site adjacent to the northeastern end of the HK6 cemetery.

There were several reasons for surveying this locality. The surface of HK11 is essentially free of the depressions and heaps created by *sebakh* (fertilizer) diggers that characterize other parts of Hierakonpolis. However, as traffic through the wadi becomes more frequent, disturbance of this delicate site increases. During the investigation of two recently dug holes, several complete pottery vessels, ash, and botanical materials were observed and suggest a high degree of *in situ* preservation. We wanted to see if the magnetometer would come up with the same conclusion.

Selected areas of HK11c were excavated in 1978-9 by J.F. Harlan. Among his discoveries was a pottery kiln of the Predynastic period. It appears to be one of the earliest up-draught kilns ever discovered and therefore extremely important for the history of technology, the pottery industry, and craft specialization. However, it was subsequently discovered that Lansing had cleared this kiln in 1935, making its contents and configuration suspect. The gradiometer is highly sensitive to the magnetic anomalies created by high temperatures, and another purpose of the survey was to locate potentially intact pottery kilns to supplement and check the information derived from the earlier excavations.

With the task of locating kilns, we finally found something the gradiometer could do and do well! During a survey covering 0.4 hectares in the southwestern part of the site, several anomalies of the high amplitude ($\pm 50\text{nT}$ and $\pm 150\text{nT}$) typical of kiln sites were registered. On the map (S1), the anomaly in the NW corner (upper right) corresponds to the pottery kiln excavated in 1979. The anomalies in the center of the map have left no trace on the surface and may indicate the presence of an intact kiln complex. Other high anomalies correspond to surface concentrations of ash suggestive of other buried kilns. The temptation to begin excavation immediately was immense, but was ultimately resisted.

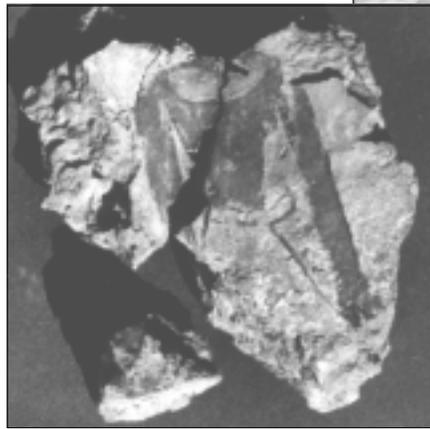
Surprisingly successful as well was the survey of 0.66 hectares of intact surface area in the northern part of the site (S2). Subsurface settlement remains were revealed in the form of a series of small anomalies that may be interpreted as fireplaces and domestic hearths. Indications of settlement patterning may also be seen, as the majority of anomalies fall within a 30m-wide strip while the area to the west appears magnetically sterile. Verification by archaeological excavation of selected anomalies is required for the correct interpretation of the map, of course, a project we plan to begin early next season.

A Look at the Lower Tombs

—by Vivian Davies, British Museum

While the expedition's work on the New Kingdom tombs at the Burg el Hammam continued apace, a British Museum team (Vivian Davies, epigrapher; Eric Miller, conservator; and Jim

Fallen plaster from the tomb of Horemkhawef was repaired and replaced in the tomb.



Rossiter, photographer) was devoting himself to the conservation and recording of two earlier painted tombs, those of Horemkhawef and Ny-anekh-Pepy, lo-

cated in Old Kingdom Hill, about 500 meters to the west of Khasekhemwy's enclosure. The only tombs in this hill in which decoration still survives, they were first cleared in 1892/3 by J. J. Tylor and Somers Clarke. Their photographic record of the walls, including the original glass negatives, are housed in the archives of the British Museum's Egyptian Department; hence our interest and involvement in the project.

Imperfectly published, long neglected, and now in a sorry state, the tombs have deserved much better, as both contain scenes and inscriptions of great interest and importance. The tomb of Horemkhawef, a *tour-de-force* of provincial art, is especially notable for its imaginative depictions of craftsmen and of hunting. It can be dated, largely on the basis of the owner's biographical stela (now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York) to the end of the 13th Dynasty or beginning of the 17th Dynasty, a period from which very few other tombs are known.

Ny-anekh-Pepy's tomb is less celebrated but equally interesting, with strikingly lively and original scenes of boating and cattle. Its dating, however, is less straightforward (it has been variously assigned to the late Old Kingdom, the First Intermediate Period, the 12th Dynasty, and the Middle Kingdom) as indeed is its ownership. Henry Fischer was the first to point out that "at least some of the paintings cover traces of earlier decoration" (*JARCE 2*, 1963: 47-8). As a result of our investigations, we can now fully confirm that Ny-anekh-Pepy was

indeed a secondary user or "usurper" of the tomb. His painted decoration entirely covers that of an earlier owner, as is clear in several places where the later plaster has fallen away to reveal the original decoration, still well preserved, underneath. For example, a section of the original inscription has been uncovered on the tomb's False Door (see color pages), while parts of the original tomb-owner's figure, done on a smaller scale than those of Ny-anekh-Pepy, are clearly visible on other walls. While the secondary usage of tombs was commonplace in ancient Egypt, few surviving examples show the process so clearly and completely.

For the first time we have also been able to determine the name of the original owner. It occurs four times in the tomb: once on the reveal of the entrance and three times (in differing states of preservation) on the False Door. It can now be confidently read as *Iffy* and not *Itti*, as tentatively suggested by Fischer. The problems of dating remain to be fully resolved, but for the present, general stylistic criteria suggest the late Old Kingdom for *Iffy*, and the Second Intermediate Period, roughly contemporary perhaps with Horemkhawef, for Ny-anekh-Pepy.

Another highly interesting feature of these tombs, not previously documented, is that both contain copious amounts of hieratic inscriptions written in black ink on a number of the walls. They are mostly incomplete and very faint, but are still legible in parts. We have yet to record them in full but our initial observations indicate that the majority, if not all, are graffiti left by later visitors, many of them scribes, who "had come to see this tomb" and pay their respects. Dating perhaps to the early 18th Dynasty, they form a significant new corpus of such material and, following further research, should help to shed valuable new light on the history of this important but much ruined necropolis.

Iffy 4244



Part of the unique boating scene in the tomb of Ny-anekh-Pepy. (British Museum archive)



The work in the decorated
Dynastic tombs continues to
be financed by the Egyptian
Antiquities Project (EAP) of
the American Research Center
in Egypt, Inc. (ARCE) under
its USAID Grant for the
"Restoration and Preservation
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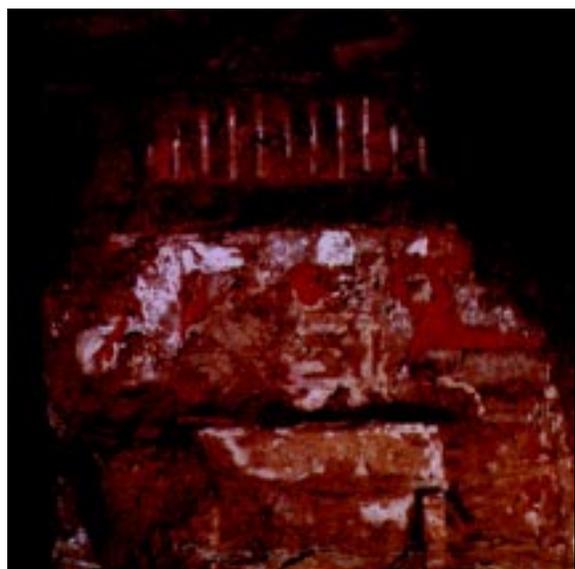
From faded remnants, Will
Schenck is able to retrieve
the masterful painting, the
richness of detail on the walls
of the tomb of Hormose. The
results are worth the effort—
compare the photography with
the drawing on next page.



A Master and his Apprentice: The master artist was clearly responsible for the decoration of this beautiful leopard skin robe (top). The apprentice tries his hand at the same (bottom) with quite different results!



General view—the tomb of Ny-ankh-Pepy.



False Door. The red hieroglyphs beneath the yellow lion are part of the original decoration of Itjefy.



The Artists in the Tomb of Hormose

—by Betsy Bryan, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore.

For the past 5 years I have been studying the unfinished Theban tomb of Suemniwet, a royal butler during the reign of King Amenhotep II (1472-1400BC) in order to understand the techniques and methods used by Egyptian artists in the middle of the 18th Dynasty. This work has produced interesting results that illustrate the diversity and creativity of Egyptian painters' artistry. For the past two years, examination of the late New Kingdom tomb of Hormose at Hierakonpolis has given me the opportunity to compare painting methods used hundreds of years later and to learn whether artists continued to demonstrate individual approaches in both style and technique.

One of only three or four known tombs dating to the end of the New Kingdom, the tomb of Hormose is also of historic

importance. It contains unique testimony to the renewal of the temple of Horus by Ramses XI, which had been built some 500 years earlier by Thutmose III, as well as interesting scenes associated with the care of the infant god Horus, not by his mother Isis but by the tomb owner's wife Henut-ao. Given the blackened state of the paintings when work began in 1998, as the cleaning progressed I was surprised to discover that the tomb preserved an impressive amount of evidence indicating how it was decorated.

The lower registers of the walls of the main chamber preserve the processions of family members before Hormose and his wife, seated on the north side, and before his parents on the south. Due to the large number of human figures of similar size and dress, I was able to identify patterns of stylistic details that were consistent and eventually combined to identify two distinctive line artists' hands. The patterns included such details as navels (round or oval), necklace string ties (straight or wavy), garment pleating techniques, and the representation of five toes on outer feet, among other diagnostic features. The artist responsible for decorating the southern side of the chamber was the less accomplished. Vertical lines to guide the placement, orientation and drawing of the human figures were inevitably observed on this wall while none could be found on the northern. Indeed, the northern side appears to have been painted for the most part by the master. Although the figures on this wall show extensive evidence of change between the initial and final rendition, all corrections appear to have been done free hand with great confidence. Indeed, in one case this season we identified a complete sex change!

The best example of the two hands at work was evident on the leopard skin robe that Hormose wears in the depictions on the two jambs flanking the statue niche (see color pages). On the south side of the niche we see the hand of the master—evenly spaced roundels, well-applied spots, and even line width. The north side was painted by an artist attempting to match the southern one as closely as possible but with varying success, as the photographs make clear.

There was not, however, a pure south/north (that is, left and right) division between the artists, as known in the tombs of the Valley of the Kings for example. The decoration of this tomb is more complex than that, as some scenes show evidence of true workshop production with varying skills in drafting and in-painting. This is apparent on single large elements, such as the barque of Horus and the shrines before it. These will be further documented in the coming season by the help of the USAID grant administered by the American Research Center in Egypt's Egyptian Antiquities Project, which has allowed us to conserve and study this tomb.



Henut-ao restored to the beautiful mistress of a beautiful tomb. Note also the lovely *wedjat* eye bracelet on her right arm. (Drawing by Will Schenck)

The Tomb of Djehuty: Putting it back together again!

—by Ed Johnson



This season the collected fragments of the famous biographical inscription of Djehuty were finally reinstalled in the tomb. The inscription was the object of an attempted theft in 1989. Using a crowbar, thieves attempted to remove the inscription but the horizontal bedding of the sandstone caused it to shatter rather than scale off into salable artifacts. The culprits (from Esna) were apprehended before further damage was done. Over the past three years we have been collecting the shattered fragments by laboriously sieving and manually sorting all of the debris cleared from this tomb. The fragments have now been reassembled and we replaced them in their original location this season.



We used standard epoxy for this and coated the five large fragments and the wall fracture with several coats of Paraloid B-72 for insurance. This formed a separation layer which allows reversal of the process with acetone should any of the pieces slip during reconstruction and the placement need to be corrected. *That* only happened once!

Slowly all the fragments were reinstalled in their original locations, with only a small number of fragments remaining unplaced. Next season, after the possibility of any further mends has been exhausted, the remaining gaps will be filled to promote the structural integrity and aesthetic appearance of the inscription. Once the gaps have been filled, the filler will be colored appropriately to resemble the original stone. Almost like new.

Left and above right: Finally the fragments of Djehuty's biographical inscription are reinstalled.

A Visitation

The local village at Hierakonpolis, known as Kom el Gemuwia, is a very traditional one. Although educated, the wives and teenage daughters of the villagers are still secluded in the harem at the back of the houses and rarely venture out. They are even more circumspect in their movements when the Expedition is present because of the foreign and non-related men the work attracts. At the end of the season, when the crew had diminished to three female members, we were surprised to receive a request from the ladies asking if they could visit our work in the tombs of the Burg el Hammam. Having heard stories of the dramatic results in the tombs from our workmen—their husbands and sons—they were curious and wished to take advantage of this opportunity to come out and see for themselves.

We were, of course, delighted to grant their request, and as most of the information and imagery in the tomb of Hormose actually concerns his wife, Henut-ao (whose family connections may have arranged its decoration and whose money may have paid for it), their visit seemed even more appropriate. They arrived late one afternoon with babies and children in tow. Our conservator, Lamia Hadidi, took them through the tombs, explained to them what our work entailed, and told them the story of Henut-ao, which they all found particularly interesting. Many questions were asked, and the visit lasted until sunset.

Their visit shows that the impact our conservation project goes beyond just the preservation of the tombs. The long-term survival of Hierakonpolis as a whole is dependent on a local interest in its monuments. In future we hope to encourage this interest with a small museum in one of the rooms of our new but growing dig house.



A young visitor in Hormose.

An Artist in Hormose: A Day in the Life...

—by Will Schenck

27 January 1999. 7 AM: Standing in the back of the pick-up truck, leaning up against the driver's compartment, the fresh wind battering against our faces—this is the real wake-up call. The morning ritual to this point has been on autopilot. Looking now across the desert, the mound of the Burg el Hammam rising up before us, the day is truly beginning. At the base of the hill we lumber out, handing out buckets, bags, tools, chemicals, cameras, whatever. Usually it is just the three of us; Ed Johnson, Lamia Hadidi and myself. We start up the steep path at our own individual pace, loaded like pack horses or decorated like Christmas trees with whatever and however much we have to carry—no one wants to make a second trip! As we near the top, the truck has shrunk to the size of a matchbox toy and we sense that first moment of glorious isolation, masters of all we survey. We enjoy the solitude and that rare commodity, peace and quiet, which our roost in the hill provides.

As Ed and Lamia take their places on the scaffolding and resume the cleaning of Hormose's soot stained ceiling, I unfurl today's sheet of clear acetate, carefully cut the night before to the standard 60x90cm. It has to be placed gently against the wall and secured by small balls of Blu-tack and masking tape carefully placed only in damaged areas so as not to harm the fragile plaster.

I have now reached the lower register of the antechamber's north wall. This register contains a sequence of vignettes illustrating the funeral procession. Yesterday I finished copying a group of standard bearers. Today it is the complicated, badly faded group of mourning women. I have devised a method of using different colored markers to denote the condition of the decoration. I make no attempt to reproduce the color of the pigments used to paint the figures, as the range is far too large. I begin by outlining all of the damaged areas with the red pen.



Artist Will Schenck copying the mourning women.

This usually takes some time since so much of the plaster has fallen away. Before starting with the scene itself, I put on the blue crosses that indicate the points of overlap with the surrounding sheets as well as noting the vertical distance from a standard horizontal line measured throughout the tomb. This information will be critical when it comes to joining up the individual sheets for publication. Next I check for areas of plaster which have popped off the wall, leaving behind a ghost outline of the original painted design. These I note with the letter 'c'. Don't ask me why. Another check is made for areas of color that were not originally outlined in the red or black paint used in this tomb. These areas are indicated with green ink. Finally, I am ready to begin the real job of copying the surviving scene with the black ultra-fine point marker.

The group of women mourners is drawn in an almost sketch-like manner. Many lines indicating legs and arms seem to vanish into a tangle and it is hard to make out which limbs belong to whom. After outlining several heads I try to follow their bodies through to the arch of their feet and end up with too many legs! This is weird. Fortunately the scene is fairly standardized in New Kingdom painting. I think back to the famous scene in the tomb of Ramose at Thebes and stare at the wall some more. At last I make the crucial discovery. In amongst the jumble of lines in the center I find what is certainly a nose and lips. The penny drops. Channeling a beam of sunlight with foil-covered cardboard, in the raking light I now see three or four little heads, shoulders and side locks of little girls mixed in the fray with the women. Now I understand all of those extra legs. What a relief!

As the season progresses, I will think back on this occasion as a relatively easy piece of detective work. Future scenes will require the opinions of almost the entire team. Crowding into the narrow antechamber, they will stand closer, step back, point to this line, and try to follow that line. Eventually it will come, almost like an optical illusion, and every one will finally see it, nod, and leave me the difficult job of getting it recorded before the illusion fades.

11 AM: Second breakfast takes me by surprise. The three of us retreat with the food hamper for a picnic in another of the rock-cut tombs along the terrace. Looking out across the desert toward the dig house and the fort we rest our weary eyes and stretch cramped muscles. During breakfast we decide to enhance the work experience by setting up my Walkman with small speakers. We initiate the experiment with Lamia's copy of *Shaherazade*. It seems the perfect choice and the acoustics are unexpectedly excellent. Back to my mourning women and girls, with the appropriately sad and eerie music wafting from

the inner chamber, I can't help but think that Hormose would have appreciated this added touch. But it is now a race against time. From bitter experience I know that, for reasons not clearly understood, the acetate will warp if it is left on the wall overnight. I must finish my ladies before the end of the working day. Now that I know what I'm looking for, the work goes much faster and I see the small details that I'd missed earlier—curled fingers, locks of hair, etc. But the end of the day always comes in a rush.

2 PM: The truck has been sighted on the horizon and equipment is being packed away. One last line and I'm finished for the day. Gently I peel the acetate from the wall and carefully roll it into a plastic tube for the return journey to the house. Already my mind is on tomorrow's challenge: a group of men carrying a mysterious shrine... and the next music selection.

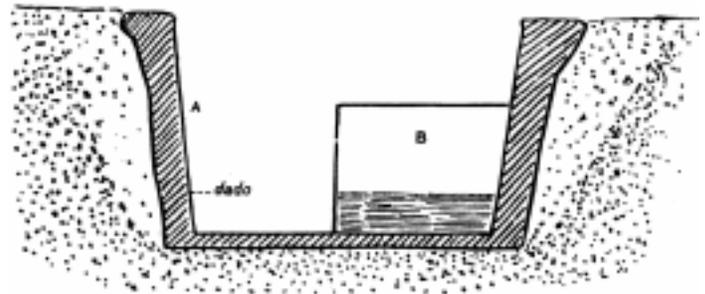
The Painted Tomb at Hierakonpolis

—by Barbara Adams

In 1899, during his second season of work at Hierakonpolis, it was reported to F.W. Green that there was a looted tomb with signs of paint near the desert's edge south of the town of Nekhen. Hastening to the location, Green cleared at least five rectangular mud-brick lined tombs, but only one of them had plastered and painted walls. The wall paintings were copied and then removed and taken to the Cairo Museum where they are still on display. The tomb itself has never been relocated. It is thought to have been part of a chieftain's cemetery on the far southeastern edge of the site, an area now under cultivation.

The Painted or Decorated Tomb 100 is dated by its contents, which are in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, to the middle Gerzean/Naqada II period of the Predynastic sequence, Kaiser's Stufen IId1-IId2. The rather high date of 3625 ± 125 BC was obtained from C^{14} analysis of a freshwater shell from the tomb in 1983; however it probably dates closer to 3400BC.

The tomb's dimensions were 4.5 x 2 x 1.5m. The paintings



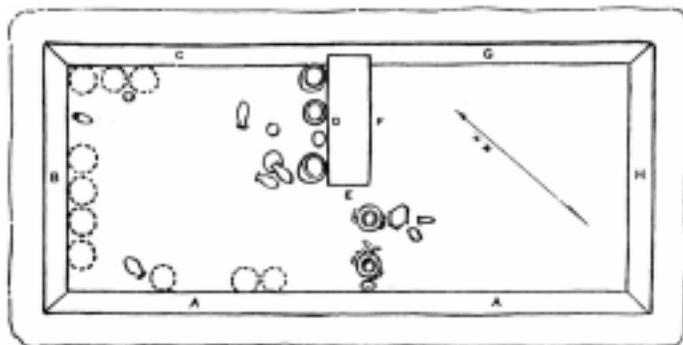
TRANSVERSE SECTION

were found on one long wall (A-A) and on the end of the semi-partition cross wall (E). There were traces of red figures on the whitewashed wall F but they were too faint to trace. A black dado bordered by a red ochre line occurred on all the walls in the southern half of the tomb and beneath the main painting on wall A-A. The background of the main scene was painted a light buff with yellow ochre and covered with scenes of hunting, combats and boats, painted in white, red and black. All the boats, except one, were painted white with an overwash of bright green (see back cover).

There are numerous parallels between the paintings and Gerzean art as found on Decorated pottery (D-class) and rock drawings. Many of the motifs were carried through into Protodynastic and Early Dynastic art. Notable among the motifs are the antithetical group of a man holding off two lions (Master of the Animals); the chieftain or king shown at a larger scale smiting prisoners with a pear-shaped macehead; the priestly figure dressed in a leopard skin robe; and the trussed ox. The boats all lack the oars which are shown on the Decorated pottery, but include the centrally placed cabins, one of which bears a figure seated beneath a canopy.

The tomb contains the largest and most complex Predynastic scene ever found and it has been said that all later monuments dating to the Protodynastic and Early Dynastic periods only replicate and refine the subjects which first appear here. No wonder the tomb has been the subject of much discussion since its first publication.

A bibliography of the most important discussions of the Painted Tomb compiled by Stan Hendrickx can now be found on our web site, www.hierakonpolis.org.



Plan of the Painted Tomb from Quibell and Green, Hierakonpolis II, 1902.



“A Harmony in Black and Ochre”

In 1899 F.W. Green returned unaccompanied to Hierakonpolis to map and “make sense” of what had been done the previous season. His personal diaries, made available to us by his son, John Green, show that it was by no means an easy task. The remarkable discoveries of the first season were a hard act to follow, and already within the first month, despite the discovery of the stela and granite door jamb of Khasekhemwy, Green was getting a little discouraged. On January 29, 1899 he wrote, “So far the work of this year has been almost entirely ‘academical’, no objects of any great value having been found...” However that was soon to change, for on February 5, 1899 the entry reads “I have been very lucky today. I have found a New Race [Predynastic] tomb decorated with drawings of men, animals, ships, etc., like those on the decorated vases from Naqada but here we have for the first time a wall painting showing clearly in colours what is so puzzling on the pots...”

The description and beautiful colored drawing (back cover) of the justly famous Painted Tomb published in *Hierakonpolis II* (1902) give little hint of the labor involved in collecting this information. For Green, the discovery would mean another four months of constant worry and application under difficult circumstances, made even more arduous by what appear to have been uncharacteristically bad weather conditions.

Kom el Atermar

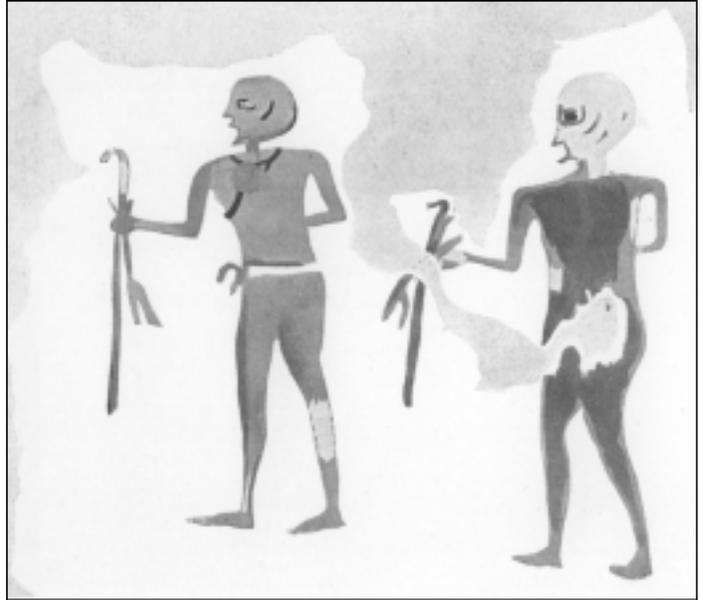
3.4.99.

This morning before going down to continue the drawing of the decorated tomb I took a photograph of the great majest or jar that was brought yesterday from the N.R. cemetery. I got my “sofragi” boy to stand next to it with a birch stick it was as high as his shoulders

It is quite large being made of red porous earthenware

I drew the two best preserved figures on the same cross wall of the tomb

They are much better in workmanship than any of the rest and have a decided Egyptian look. Their bodies are represented and painted in red ochre with sections of black they hold curious staff staves in their hands



“I drew the two best preserved figures on the small cross wall of the tomb. They are much better in workmanship than any of the rest and have a decided Egyptian look. These two men are painted in red ochre with necklaces of black. They hold curious staves in their hands with what look like huge tassels attached... The only colours used in the tomb are yellow ochre for the ground, red ochre for the figures and blue black for certain portions of details etc., white, probably gypsum, and traces of green (malachite?) on the hulls of the boats. The general effect is ‘a harmony in black and ochre.’” (F.W. Green Diary 3.4.1899)

First there was the usual wind which “springs up at about 10.30 or so continuing to blow until about an hour before sunset” (2.4.99), an event well known to those of us who have worked at the nearby cemetery at HK43. This was particularly annoying for Green as favorable light for the long job of copying the paintings only occurred in the afternoon. “It is impossible to draw there if there is any wind as the tracing paper gets blown to tatters in a few minutes and you are almost blinded with the fine desert sand.” In addition, “From time to time great columns of whirling dust sweep over the site smothering everybody. These columns are known as *Shitan* or devils.” (26.3.99). On three occasions violent rain storms forced him to erect a canvas tent over the tomb and spend an anxious night worrying about its protection.

But it was not all frustration and apprehension at the Painted Tomb. Although the search for other decorated tombs in the area was unsuccessful, interesting finds both large and small were made. “In one grave that of a child of 7, I should think, was found a boat of earthenware and a small golden spoon very like a salt spoon” (13.4.99). In another a huge storage jar

a boat  of *lutenware* and
 a small golden spoon 
 maybe a salt spoon

was recovered intact: "I got my 'sofragi' boy to stand next to it with a two metre rod, it was as high as his shoulders" (3.4.99).

However as the season dragged on into summer, the heat and the loneliness began to take their toll. "I went down to the tomb this morning with the intention of beginning the colouring of the drawings. I worked for about an hour, but the air was so dry that the colour dried in ugly streaks, and at 11 AM a strong wind sprung up which deluged me and my work in fine sand so that I had to stop or have my work ruined by being converted into coloured sand paper... I am getting 'stale' having been out here nearly alone for nearly 5 months" (4.5.99).

The heat also had an effect on general living conditions. Readers of *Nekhen News* 9 may recall Annie Quibell's commendation of tomb living. Green was not quite so glowing in his praise. "I have had an epidemic of creeping things lately. For besides a new brood of mice or small rats who one by one drown themselves in my basin, I killed a light buff coloured snake near my *zir*, or drinking water jar, and at lunchtime smashed a scorpion about 3 inches long who was quietly making the tour of my tomb. In one of the tombs, reserved for guests as it has a more or less intact roof, the bats hang in clusters like bunches of animated grapes: it is useless trying to destroy them as they can be counted by hundreds... Among other things there has been a slight plague of locusts" (2.5.99).

"I shall not be sorry to get away as I have been by myself with occasional visits... The effect of being by myself is to make one rather lazy" (12.4.99), and clearly homesick. In an entry written shortly before his departure, we see a man who has reached the end of his tether: "I had a watermelon for lunch. They are of good quality here with bright red flesh + dark brown pips but I think them much like a weak solution of grass, and though cool, a greatly overrated fruit. Personally I prefer a boiled cabbage" (13.5.99).

When even a good watermelon can't cheer you up, it is definitely time to go home!

Support the Friends of Nekhen!



www.hierakonpolis.org

Check It Out!

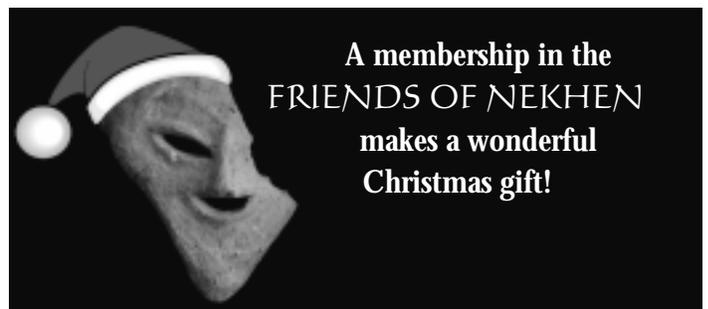
Thank you for your patience while the Hierakonpolis web page got up to speed. We've worked out most of the bugs and added many new features. You will now find an illustrated in-depth look at the first mummies, and—coming soon—a virtual reality tour of the Lower Tombs. "News From the Field" will bring you real time coverage of the season's events as they happen. As a millennium special all portions of the web page are free of access to everyone. Check it out—



www.hierakonpolis.org



The most interesting (and grisly) discovery at HK43 this year was the burial of an older man and woman (Burial 147). Although the grave was initially considered to have been disturbed by looters, later examination revealed that the heads had been cut off, probably at the time of burial, and placed on the chests of the essentially intact bodies. Over 15 cut marks found on the neck vertebrae of the male, who, in addition, had potsherds stuffed up his nose!



A membership in the
FRIENDS OF NEKHEN
 makes a wonderful
 Christmas gift!

THE HIERAKONPOLIS HOME PAGE

Raising the Roof

Thanks to your generous contributions to the Hapy-Horus Project, *real*/hot water showers for the Hierakonpolis dig house are several steps closer to becoming a *reality*. This season, again with the expert help of Günter Heindl, we raised the roof over two new bathrooms and two additional bedrooms in the dig house's new wing. Plumbing and a new septic system remain to be installed, followed by tiling and fittings. If all goes well, by the end of next season we may just be ready for the crowning glory—the long-awaited solar hot water system. Your continued extra support for the Hapy-Horus project could help make the difference. We hope you will continue to make Horus happy, and a lot of archaeologists as well. Your generosity will be much appreciated—daily.



Günter Heindl helps raise the roof over more new rooms.

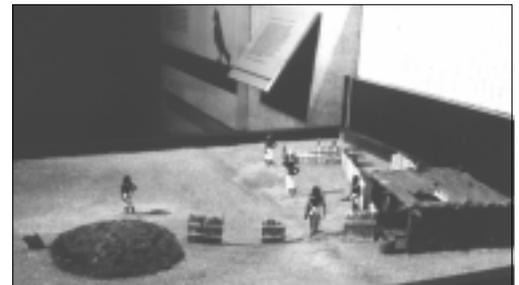
Hierakonpolis Exhibition

We regret to report that the Hierakonpolis Exhibition in the Nubia Museum at Aswan had to be postponed for administrative reasons. However, Mark Easton, Director of the American Research Center in Egypt, has kindly agreed to a mini-exhibition in the Cairo ARCE offices, tentatively planned for January 2000. This will include illustrated information panels about the site and the model reconstructions of the burnt house, the temple and the mound at Nekhen, which were prepared by Mike Hoffman for the *First Egyptians* exhibit in 1989. These models have recently been donated to the Hierakonpolis Expedition by the McKissick Museum, South Carolina, and will eventually be placed on permanent display in the on-site museum we are currently building into our house at Hierakonpolis.

We are grateful to Dr. Ben and Pamela Harer and William Caveness of USIS for their generous donations, which are making this exhibit possible.

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Models

Archives

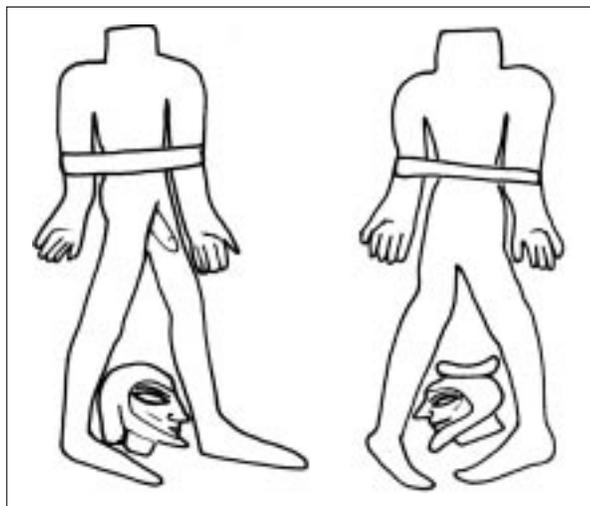
Since our return from the field, we have had the good fortune to be able to check our observations against those of Prof. Klaus Baer, who studied the decorated tombs in 1969 and 1978 with the Hierakonpolis Expedition. A copy of his notes, held in the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, has now been made available to us and has been invaluable particularly for working out the poorly preserved decoration in the antechamber of Hormose and the now fragmentary scenes in the tomb of Horemkhawef. We are very grateful to the Oriental Institute for providing us with what is turning out to be a gold-mine of information. We are also grateful to Dr. Henry G. Fischer for kindly making his important photographs and tracings from the tomb of Ny-anekh-Pepy available to us. If any of our readers would like to share their photographs of the Hierakonpolis tombs taken prior to 1990, we would like to hear from you.

Help the Hierakonpolis Project: Join the Friends of Nekhen

Hierakonpolis is a site intimately associated with the birth of the Egyptian state at about 3100BC. Its hoary antiquity and links with the first pharaohs were recognized by the ancient Egyptians, and nearly a century of archaeological research has confirmed this vast site's central role in the transition from prehistory to history and the rise of early Egyptian civilization. The largest Predynastic site still extant and accessible anywhere in Egypt, Hierakonpolis is continually providing exciting new glimpses into this formative and surprisingly sophisticated age.

The Hierakonpolis Expedition is a long established research project investigating the origins of Egyptian civilization. Since 1967, archaeologists and scientists have systematically explored the settlements, cemeteries, and temples of this rich site in an attempt to better understand the cultural and environmental processes that transformed a land of farming, herding and fishing villages into the world's first nation state.

The Hierakonpolis Expedition staff is drawn from colleges, universities, museums, and private walks of life throughout the United States, Britain, Egypt, and the world—professionals who have been working together in a cooperative scientific endeavor to produce over 30 years of exciting discoveries.



DON'T BE A MISSING MEMBER!

Friends of Nekhen

Nekhen is the ancient Egyptian name for the site of Hierakonpolis. The **Friends of Nekhen** is a group of concerned organizations and individuals, scholars and lay persons alike, which is helping the Hierakonpolis Expedition to continue its work and achieve its goals. In return for their support, **Friends of Nekhen** will receive the yearly members' newsletter, *NEKHEN NEWS*, which describes and illustrates the Expedition's latest discoveries and accomplishments. Membership in the **Friends of Nekhen** also entitles you to special travel arrangements with Expedition tours and reduced rates on Egyptian Studies Association publications. *Your help is needed* to achieve the project's goals of excavation, preservation and publication. Site report publication and resumed excavations are the current priorities. Your contribution (tax-deductible in the U.S.) will support important research that might not otherwise be possible.

Hierakonpolis Online

The Hierakonpolis website is designed to be a major source of information about the expedition, the history and prehistory of the site, and about the Friends of Nekhen. Membership entitles you to the *Nekhen Password*, giving you access to exclusive areas at our website. Here you can track progress as it happens, view the important and exciting new discoveries made each season, get to know the staff, and more. Keep your eye on www.hierakonpolis.org!

Special contribution for

The Hapy-Horus Project

(see article page 26)

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Check here if this is a gift membership.

Membership Application

I would like to help the Hierakonpolis Expedition by joining the Friends of Nekhen. In return for my tax deductible contribution, I understand that I will receive the annual newsletter, and qualify for reduced rates on expedition publications. My membership will also entitle me to join expedition tours to Egypt visiting the site of Hierakonpolis.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Postal Code _____ Country _____



In this issue...



New discoveries in The Fort.



Priests placed invocations to Horus of Nekhen in this stunning location, "Flint City," to catch the first rays of the morning sun. Unfortunately, modern looters are already aware of this newly rediscovered site.



Celebrating 100 Years of the Painted Tomb.

