

The Egyptian Expedition 1914-15. II. Excavations at Thebes

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FIG. 1. SITE OF THE EXCAVATIONS OF 1915 BEFORE GROUND WAS BROKEN

## THE EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION

1914-15

### II. EXCAVATIONS AT THEBES<sup>1</sup>

OWING to the general conditions abroad resulting from the war, as well as to the particular conditions in Egypt itself, among which the temporary scarcity of coined money was one of the most troublesome, it proved advisable the past season to limit the scope of the Expedition's excavations, while at the same time maintaining its organization and providing employment for its trained native workmen. Thus, it seemed best to devote our attention to several smaller undertakings which, while contributory to the general plan of the Expedition's work, would have tended to dissipate our forces if attempted in a season when larger operations were in progress.

During December and January, therefore, Mr. N. de G. Davies carried out the excavation of the large and important tomb of Surer, as subsidiary to his regular work of copying these Kurneh tombs under the provisions of the Robb de Peyster Tytus Memorial Fund, and went on with a small group of workmen to the clearance of the pits in the tomb of Puimrê and the fortunate emptying of the pit in the tomb of Nakht. The results of this work have already appeared in the *BULLETIN* in a report by Mr. Davies himself. Throughout February, March, and April, the main

<sup>1</sup>This is the second of two reports on the work of the Expedition during the season of 1914-15. A first report appeared in the *BULLETIN* of last month (November), and a general outline of the year's work in the preceding number (October).

body of our workmen was employed first in clearing three tombs on the northern face of the hill known as El Khokkeh, behind our Expedition House, and secondly in opening up a new quarter of the Palace of Amenhotep III, to the south of Medinet Habu.

The tomb-work mentioned, though reproductive, need not here be described in detail: it will suffice to say that of the three tombs cleared one was of Middle Kingdom date, the second of the period of Osorkon II, while the third, a small painted tomb immediately west of the Expedition House, belonged to the Eighteenth or Nineteenth Dynasty. This last was identified, on the evidence of an inscribed basis of a statuette and of plaster fragments, as the tomb of one Ta-nefer.

More important in its results was the work carried out on the site of the Palace of Amenhotep III. The southern and western quarters, together with the dependent village to the south, were excavated by the Expedition in the seasons of 1910-11 and 1911-12 (see *BULLETIN*, vol. VII, p. 184); but a considerable area to the north yet remains to be cleared before this uniquely important site is exhausted. The work of this season was confined to the western end of a tongue of land lying to the north of the area already explored and separated from it by the bed of a torrent-course and by a narrow strip of cultivation: its northern limit was fixed by a second and nearby parallel piece of cultivated land (see figure 1).

Here has been uncovered the western part of what seems to be a distinct quarter of the palace, inferior only in importance

to the royal apartments found in our first season's work. The walls of this quarter have been destroyed below floor level, or at most stand only a few feet above it; but the plan, fortunately, is clear throughout (see figures 2 and 3). The building seems to have been very accurately laid out and is solidly built, the walls being carried down through the surface deposits of gravel to the bed-rock. It is bounded on the south by two narrow and parallel

covered this year the most striking feature is a large, rectangular residential structure. Its western end is divided, seemingly, into two large and nearly equivalent suites of rooms of which the foundations alone remain (B and C). To the east of these suites and perhaps attached to them, two halls (D and E) occupy the entire width of the building except the narrow corridor F: the southernmost (D) still retains eleven out of the twelve column bases which once

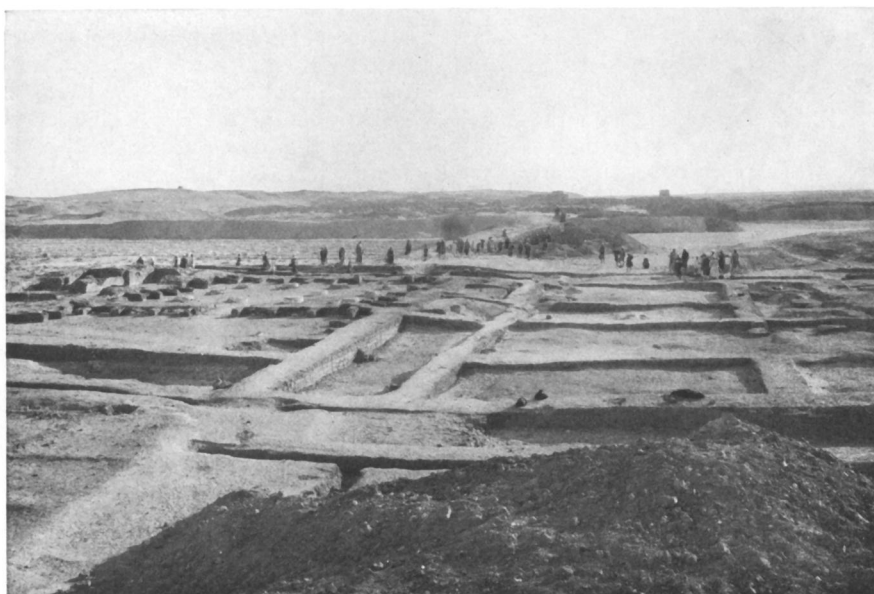


FIG. 2. GENERAL VIEW OF THE WORK FROM THE NORTH (MARCH 26)  
SHOWING ROOMS B, C, D, E, F

passages—probably mere screens against the noonday heat—which cut off a line of small five-roomed dwellings, to be regarded as servants' or retainers' quarters (A-A''' in figure 3), and on the north and west by a wide returning corridor. Farther to the west lies an area occupied by storehouses and possibly by workshops, since here were found not only the usual litter of broken wine jars and other pottery, but also a dyer's vat and a number of terracotta moulds for beads, pendants, and other ornaments. Only the fringe of this area, however, has so far been touched.

Of the new quarter of the palace dis-

adorned it, but the eight columns of the northern hall (E) have all disappeared. Around all four sides of each of these halls were found the piers which formerly supported shelves on and under which the occupants of the palace used to store spare furniture and chests and wicker baskets of clothing. Such might possibly have been the original use of D, as similar rooms were found elsewhere in the palace, but in E the bench is evidently an alteration built over the stuccoed wall faces and the decorative niches in the corners of the room.

Beyond the southernmost of these two halls, three remarkable chambers are

ranged along the south wall of the building; G is a bedroom almost equal in size to the royal bedchamber and easily recognizable by the recess with slightly raised floor at the southern end of the room where

end, though the purpose of this is not obvious. To the east of this room, again as in the king's private apartments, is a large bath-room (I) the roof of which was supported by four columns. The whole south

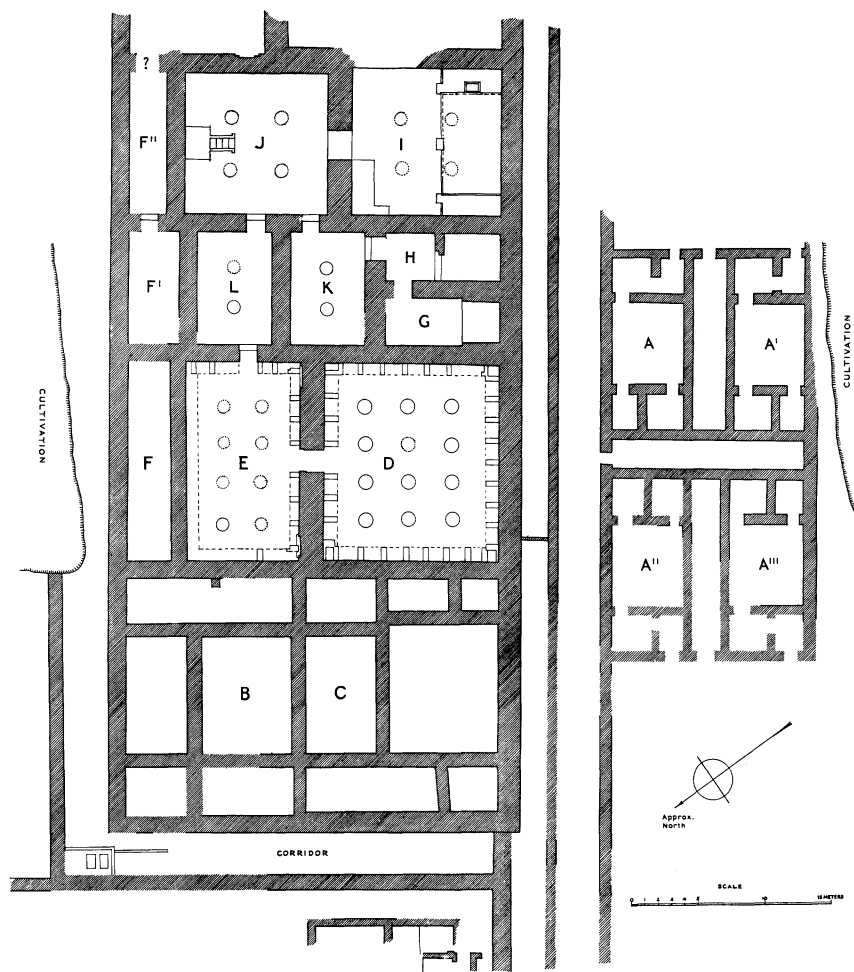


FIG. 3. PLAN OF THE EXCAVATIONS OF 1915 AT THE PALACE OF AMENHOTEP III

the bed was formerly placed under a ventilator turned toward the north breezes. H, which may for convenience (and with some probability) be labeled a robing-room, lies parallel to the bedroom and is also reproduced in the royal suite: its most noteworthy feature is a large, square limestone slab let into the floor at its southern

end of the room is occupied by a double bath—part of which unhappily is destroyed—consisting of a flooring of stone slabs surrounded by a low stone parapet. On each side and apparently between the two baths were gangways, each approached by a single stone step, and designed either to admit the bath attendants or for the

convenience of the bathers. In the north-west angle of the same room is a low L-shaped divan of white-plastered mud brick, which presumably served as a lounge for the bathers. A wide doorway with a deep limestone threshold in the center of the north wall of this room leads into a large hall (J) also once adorned with columns. Against its north wall and exactly opposite the doorway is a throne basis of white-washed and painted mud brick, approached by a flight of four steps and finished with a painted cornice of moulded



FIG. 4. THE THRONE PLATFORM  
IN ROOM J

mud (see figure 4). In the west wall two doorways give access to a pair of small two-columned rooms (K and L) by which one approached either the bed and robing-rooms, or the wardrobe-halls. Finally, the corridors F, F', and F'' lead from the rooms as yet unexcavated farther east directly to the destroyed rooms at the western extremity of the building.

The collocation of bedroom, robing-room, bath, and wardrobe-rooms closely associated with a throne-room is the typical plan of all the royal apartments; and this with the solidity of the building, the accuracy of its setting-out, and its spaciousness, almost equal to that of the king's own apartments, show that this dwelling was that of a personage little inferior to the king himself. A very significant feature is the absence of anything like the exten-

sive harīm accommodation of the royal quarter, and we may deduce that the building was occupied either by a woman or by an unmarried boy. It is possible to see here either the palace of such an important personage as Amenhotep III's principal wife Queen Tiy, who surely had an establishment of her own, or with a good deal of probability we may assume that here was lodged the heir-apparent, Amenhotep IV, later the famous Akhnatón. It is possible that we may go even further and see in the two spacious suites of rooms at the west end of the building the lodging of the daughters of Amenhotep III, in which case the quarter as a whole would be that of the royal children; but the denuded state of this part of the structure makes it impossible to recognize with certainty the use of any of the rooms.

In conclusion, much work remains to be done ere this quarter is fully explored. Its buildings certainly extend some distance farther eastward toward the great lake of Queen Tiy (the Birket Habu); but the saturated condition of the soil will make it even harder to trace the walls of crude brick as we advance deeper into the cultivated area. To the west also, the area of magazines and workshops remains to be explored; and at some distance to the north, the remains of a line of buildings, once decorated with inscribed stonework bearing the name of Amenhotep, appear to mark the northern façade of this palace of one of Egypt's most famous kings.

Cairo. H. G. EVELYN-WHITE.

#### HISTORICAL FAN, WAR-HAT, AND GUN FROM JAPAN

**L**AFCADIO HEARN has made us familiar with Matsue, a remote Japanese town in the province of Izumo lying against Korea; for near this town (at Kizuki) lived the man-who-was-a-god, directly descended from the Shinto deity who some twenty-five centuries ago inhabited this spot when the ancestor of the present emperor descended upon earth and made his habitation in Japan. On this occasion the Shinto god of Matsue did not hesitate to