



REPORT OF EXCAVATIONS  
AT REQÂQNAH 1901-2

TOMBS OF

# The Third Egyptian Dynasty

AT REQÂQNAH AND BÊT KHALLÂF

BY

JOHN GARSTANG B.A. B.Litt F.S.A

*Formerly Scholar of Jesus College, Oxford; Reader in Egyptian Archaeology at the University of Liverpool*

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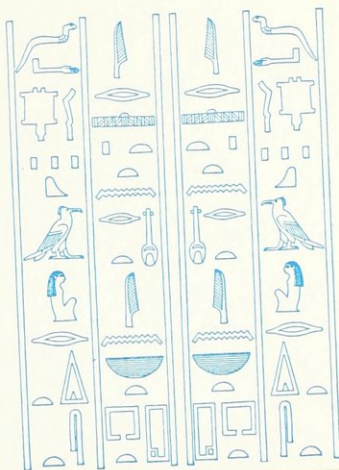
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THE THIRD EGYPTIAN DYNASTY





REPORT OF EXCAVATIONS

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AT REQÂQNAH AND BÊT KHALLÂF

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

JOHN GARSTANG B.A. B.Litt F.S.A

*Formerly Scholar of Jesus College, Oxford; Reader in Egyptian Archaeology at the University of Liverpool  
Author of "El Arâbah" "Mahâsna and Bêt Khallâf" "Roman Ribchester"*

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## TERMINOLOGY

PREHISTORIC PERIOD, remote, suggested only by rough stone implements.

ARCHAIC PERIOD:—

[Before {	B.C. 3000 to 2500]	(a) Pre-dynastic (sometimes called prehistoric).
		(b) Proto-dynastic (First, Second and Third Dynasties).

OLD KINGDOM:—

Before {	B.C. 2500 to 2000	The Early Pyramid Age (Fourth to Sixth Dynasties). [Transition (Feudal) Period, so called Seventh to Tenth Dynasties.]
----------	-------------------------	---

MIDDLE KINGDOM:—

Before {	B.C. 2000 to 1600	The First Theban Period (Eleventh and Twelfth Dynasties). [The Hyksos Period; so called Thirteenth to Seventeenth Dynasties.]
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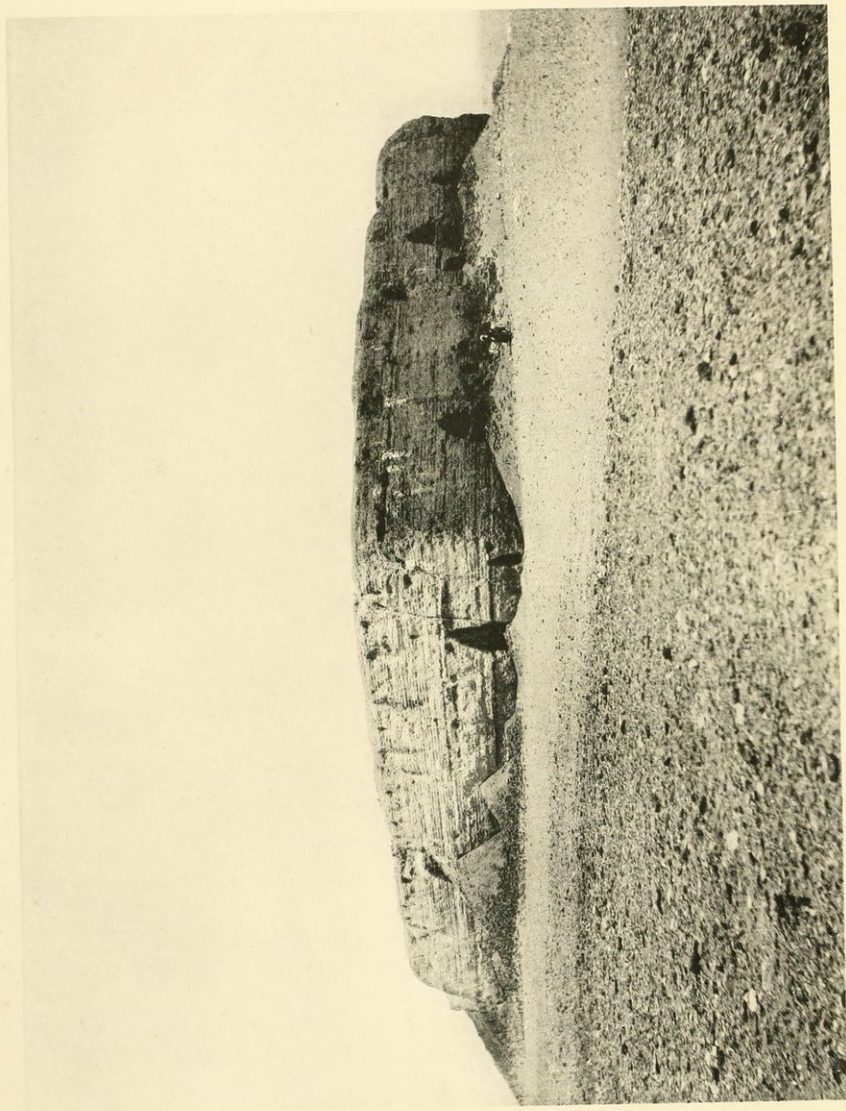
NEW KINGDOM or New Empire:—

Begins : B.C. 1600	The great Theban Period (Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties).
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TOMB OF KING NETER-KHET. III<sup>RD</sup> DYNASTY.



THE GREAT TOMB OF NETER-KHET AT BÉT KHALLÁF.

PATRONS  
OF EXCAVATIONS AT REQAQNAH, 1901-2

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY. SITE OF EXCAVATIONS. NATURE OF RESULTS. RELATION TO HISTORY.

BIBLIOGRAPHY, AND LIST OF REFERENCES.

With Plates I, II, III.

EXCAVATIONS made during the previous season, for the Egyptian Research Account, had resulted in the discovery of the first identified monument of the Third Egyptian Dynasty, the great tomb of King Neterkhet at Bêt Khallâf: this called attention to the desirability of continuing the exploration of that region, and so led directly to the formation of this expedition, the fruits of which are described in the following pages. But the description of new observations is not alone the object of the present volume. The earlier excavations<sup>1</sup> had already led to the identification of certain objects of art, forms, and customs, as characteristic of the period; to the determination, that is to say, of a series of archaeological types, recognizable when or wherever they should be found, ready at once to serve as a basis upon which to build with this newer material. So much, too, has been done of recent years to illuminate the prehistoric ages and the first two dynasties, that these new results fall naturally into place as a link with the comparative light of the Fourth Dynasty and the Pyramid Age which followed. It is,

<sup>1</sup> "Mahâsna and Bêt Khallâf": *Seventh Memoir of the Egyptian Research Account*.

indeed, now possible to trace, imperfectly maybe, but with some certainty, the story of this remarkable civilization, to follow to some extent its development, and to illustrate, however incompletely, its customs, from its remote origins in the fifth and fourth millenniums B.C. through all its earliest stages, till it stands more clearly revealed by the monuments and literature of the Ancient Empire. It is with this story, so far as it is illustrated by these researches, that the following pages are concerned.

The chief scene of excavations lay near to Reqaqnah,<sup>2</sup> an unimportant semi-Coptic village situated at the edge of the desert about two English miles northwards from Bêt Khallâf. It was thus some ten miles from Girga, the seat of the magistrate, filled at that time by Abdullah Bey, to whose good government and unfailing courtesy this expedition and others are indebted. But the place that ultimately absorbed most attention was only come upon in pursuance of a definite purpose, the exploration of the whole region

<sup>2</sup> Pronounced *Regagneh* (Arabic: الرقاقنة), the Q representing the letter *Qaf*, a guttural *g* or *k*.



northwards from the point where the Egyptian Research Account had left it in the preceding winter. In that year an examination had been made of the district lying northward of El Arâbah (Abydos) as far as Bêt Khallâf;<sup>1</sup> but attention had centred chiefly on the village of Mahâsna and the necropolis to its south, and on the excavation of the royal and semi-royal tombs found isolated in the desert above Bêt Khallâf. It therefore seemed desirable in the search for a general necropolis of the Third Dynasty, suggested by these larger monuments, to return to Mahasna and re-examine the whole tract from that point northward beyond Bêt Khallâf so far as the limited season would allow. Camp was thus fixed at the outset more centrally near to Sararwah, a small village attached for administrative purposes to Bêt Khallâf, where the good influences and hospitality of the head man or Omda, Mahmoud Effendi, produced a friendly attitude on the part of the inhabitants which was pleasant to recognize. It was thus found expedient not to move camp from this spot even when work had passed considerably to the north.

The region traversed in this exploration includes some of the best examples of the Egyptian desert. Wide as it is at Bêt Khallâf, yet more northwards where the edge of the Libyan plateau, its natural boundary, falls westward, it stretches out vast and impressive, in its upper reaches broken by numerous sand-dunes and undulations, which lower down give way to a seemingly unending waste of sands. Though much of the higher tract was scoured in following up the village tales, without fruit, the lower plain fringing the cultivated land was naturally the ground in which most work was done. The map on Plate II shows the disposition of the villages along its edge with the sites of excavation enclosed in a double line. Excavations of a sporadic character were made, however, further north, where the

hills creep down on to the cultivation near Kawâmil, outside the limits of the map, and even beyond as far as Arâba(t)-abu-dahab, in the province of Sohag, which formed the limit in that direction of the exploration. It may be useful to summarize briefly the results of these two seasons' examination of this tract, from Arâba(t)-El-Madfuna (Abydos) on the south to El Arâba(t)-Abu-Dahab in the north. These places themselves are separated by 60 kilometres or 38 miles. In the following account the distances in kilometres will be given from Abydos. The reference to the year in which the examination took place will be indication also of the memoir in which further accounts may be sought, for the season 1899-1900 was confined to El Arâbah (Abydos) exclusively, 1900-1 extended through Mahâsna to Bêt Khallâf, and 1901-2 resumed from Mahâsna and extended to El Arâbah in the province of Sohag. The map published in the report for "Mahâsna and Bêt Khallâf," 1902, Plate I, will be found continuous with that which illustrates this exploration.

0\* El Arâba(t)-El-Madfuna [Abydos], ancient burying places frequently through

5 El Kherbe to Alawnah.

7 El Alawniyeh, near, at

8 Bêt Allam [L. 1900-1]: (a) Predynastic cemetery early period; (b) Roman tombs in upper desert.

11 Maslahet [enclosed garden and houses]. To the north, site M, 1900-01. (a) Pre-dynastic Settlement of date L above. (b) Necropolis of VI-XI Dynasties, &c.

14.5. El Mahasna [N. 1900-01]. (a) Few tombs of Old Empire.

16 Bêt, Bet Dawd. [D. 1901-2]. Remains of Roman houses. (From one of these the stela D. I.) Traces of Greco-Roman burying places hidden by this village.

20 Bêt Khallâf [K. 1900-01]. Royal Tombs of III Dynasty.

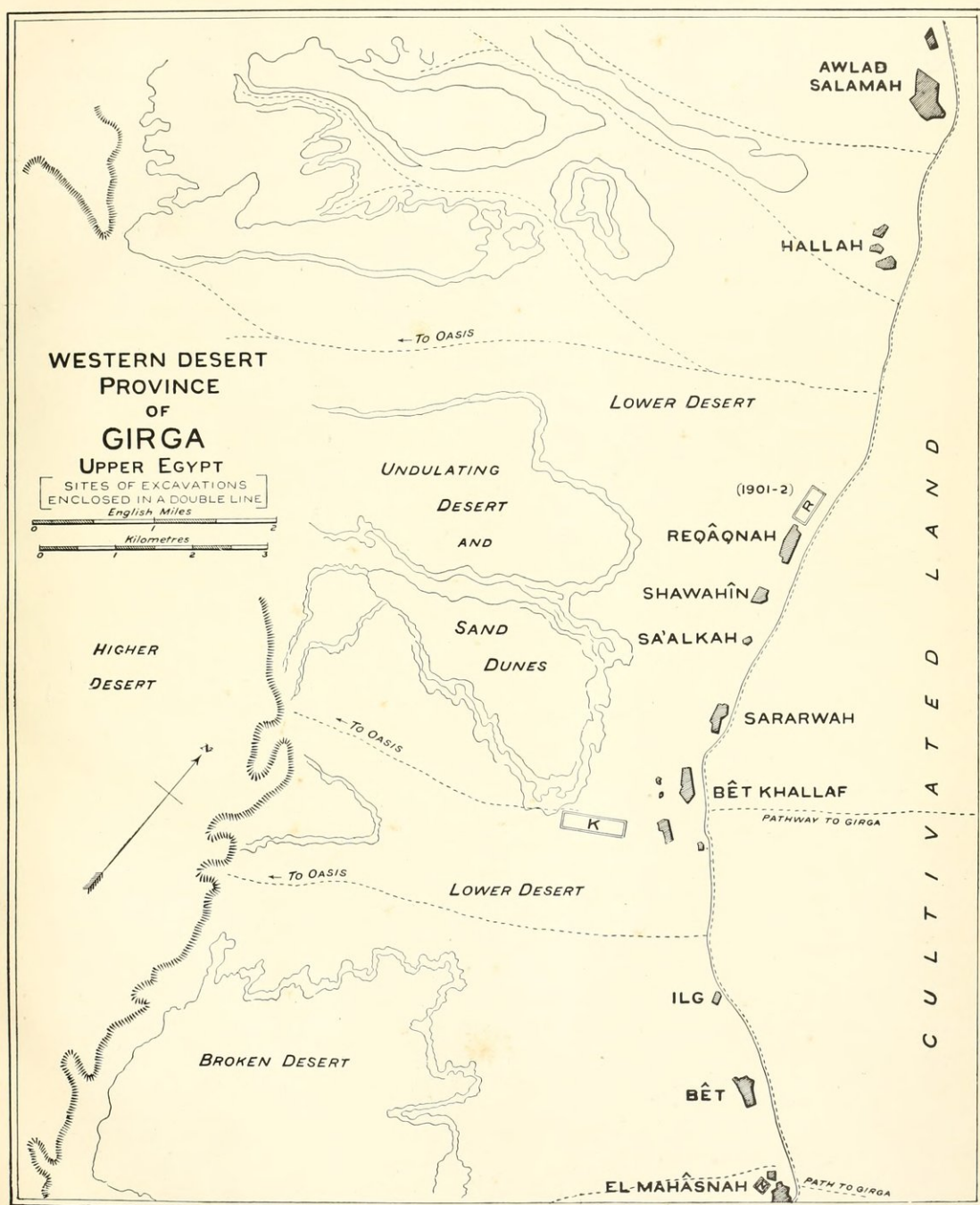
21. Sararwah, to the N. (B. 1901-2). (a) Tombs of XIX Dynasty. (b) Necropolis probably VI-XI Dynasties.

22. Sa 'Alkah [S. 1901-2]. Uninstructive tombs, probably VI-XI Dynasties, between this and

22.5. Shawahin. Beyond this the same class of tombs was continuous.

24. Reqaqnah. To the N. [R. 1901-2] (a) Stairway

<sup>1</sup> See Map, G.M.K., Pl. I.







tombs of early III Dynasty. (b) Necropolis of III to IV Dynasties.

28. From Hallah to (30) Awlad Salamah. No visible remains.

33. El Arābāt. To the N. [1901-2]. A plundered stairway tomb of II to III Dynasties. M. De Morgan tells of traces of pre-dynastic age.

38. El Kawāmil S. Sites explored by M. De Morgan, now completely overturned.

41. El Kawāmil N. To the N., 3 kilos, the cliffs come down to the cultivation. On the S. of this point are some cave-tombs, partly inhabited, of uncertain date. On the mound above, the signs of tombs and burials, possibly of Old Empire.

45. Beyond this point is an extensive Roman village in ruins, with rock-cut tombs in the cliffs above.

46. Shēkh Hamēd [Naga Abu Hamēd]. From here to the White Convent (41, Dēr El Abiad) and beyond to the Red Convent (53, Dēr El Ahmar) very extensive cemeteries of Roman and Coptic times, with some tombs of earlier date.

[54. Idfa. *Aphroditopolis*, lying in the cultivation.]

60. El Arāba(t)-Abu-Dahab. On the S. non-excavated tombs of XIX Dynasty. To the N., signs which have been taken for a pre-dynastic burying place. The graves may have been all plundered, but the appearance may be caused entirely by salt sifting.

It was not until after a few months' work that the main quest was rewarded by the discovery that the site which M. de Morgan had recorded as totally ravaged by the country people was indeed that which was sought. It was difficult at first to realize that the numerous small tombs, furnished for the most part so poorly that the native people had declined to plunder them further, constituted in fact the necropolis which the expedition had come to seek and examine. But first the analogies of some large stairway-tombs with those of Bêt Khallâf, and then the co-relations between these and the smaller tombs, at length gave the clues which led to the correct conclusion.

The necropolis was found to begin about half-a-kilometre from Reqaqnah, and to extend northward about that distance. The space lying nearer the village was occupied chiefly with Coptic burials. The site was divided naturally by an ancient watercourse, in which a scanty cultivation still persevered.

The southern portion was a fairly even tract, somewhat higher than its surroundings. In its south-east corner was a shekh's tomb much revered by the women of the locality. There was little indication on the surface of the numerous tombs lying below—the existence of No. 40, for instance, was not betrayed or suggested in any way. The great majority of the tombs, more than thirty in number, were of a late and uninformative character.

**Nature of** There were found, however, three  
**Results.** large stairway tombs, Nos. 1, 2, 40, of first importance, and fruitful in objects carved in stone; while some number of similar tombs of smaller size, and differing in details, supplied a special interest. To judge from the analogies they provided, these tombs seem to have been contemporary, or nearly so, with those of Bêt Khallâf, leading in type from the Second Dynasty into the Third, to which they chiefly belonged. The northern mound was found to cover a necropolis more systematically constructed. It had sprung up in its earlier stages, during the Third and Fourth Dynasties, from a series of small tombs placed in definite relation to one another, or adjoining, with pathways lying between the rows in which they had been built, as the photograph of it in Plate III, at the bottom, shows. Just later, but belonging to nearly the same epoch, two great mastāba tombs, with internal chapels and passages, and some elaboration of architecture, were constructed seemingly at its southern limit. A great mastāba enclosing a stairway-tomb had been already laid down among the first, and serves by its character as a useful and reliable link in form between the different types of the period. The extreme northern portion, slightly separated by a fall in the ground, was occupied by pit tombs enclosed with low walls, belonging apparently to the Fourth Dynasty. The mutual relations of these tombs and their disposition will be studied in connexion with Plate XXI,



Chapter VIII. To the north, east, and south this mound was limited by steeply falling ground; to the west it lay open to the Desert, and seemed to be continuous with, and related to, a series of tombs and burials of early character. These had been, most unfortunately, much disturbed, and the evidence they yielded was not satisfactory. In some of them were found fragments of pottery of the kind familiar in the latest prehistoric period, and this fact tends to support the story of the villagers that the pieces of pre-dynastic pottery bought at Reqaqnah (figured on Plate XXXI) came from that vicinity. In other cases burials were found, in the same area, of a type analogous to those of the better preserved portion of the necropolis. These seemed to suggest a mutual relationship, about which, however, there was no real evidence; but it seemed possible that the burials and the black-topped pots were related either by accident or by design. In the former case the beginnings of the site would be taken back a stage further than was otherwise suggested; in the latter case the burials were a little earlier in date, the pottery a little later, than might have been supposed, and the two would thus have been contemporary. In either case they pointed definitely to continuity in custom. But being as it were in a new field, dealing with a previously unknown period, problems daily arose which at the time could not be solved. It was only possible to make a record of observations, in the hope that later a patient comparison of these with one another, and with the records of others, might point to a conclusion. The next chapter will include a comparison and pre-summary of the evidence thus adduced, while the details of the excavations from which they are derived, with occasional summaries, follow severally in the subsequent pages.

Relation to  
History. The problem which they open up is one which in the study of early

Egyptian history is now of the first importance and supreme interest. It is concerned directly with the origin of the Egyptian people—not, indeed, with the ethnological question of their parent stock, for that is necessarily associated with the study of its early prehistoric period, but with a historical point not less important, as to the continuity or otherwise of the people, as revealed by the prehistoric culture, through and into the period when with the definite introduction of writing the historic age, known by the name of the First Dynasty, began. That there should be in either case some overlap in art and customs is not unnatural. But if no special innovations are to be seen, and if continuity of racial or essential characteristics can be traced beyond and living through the early historic times, and merging naturally with the gradual changes of a later period, then there is evidence of continuity of race. And the measure of that continuity will be determined by the proportion of those characteristics which survive to those which are discontinuous, and the extent to which those which are continuous prevail over or are predominated by any new ones which may appear at the suspected break.

Naturally the difficulties and limitations to the problem are great, but the evidence scientifically collated of recent years by different explorers is now sufficient to warrant an attempt to solve it. A list of references to the essential materials is appended to this chapter. Those sober records of excavations recently published by the Egypt Exploration Fund form a necessary preliminary, but the difficulty of tracing the series of early archaeological types through the pages of different volumes has led to the inclusion in this book, both in the plates and in occasional summaries in the text, of the evidence bearing upon the period of this excavation.

As having a direct relation in time and in character with the monuments of Reqaq-





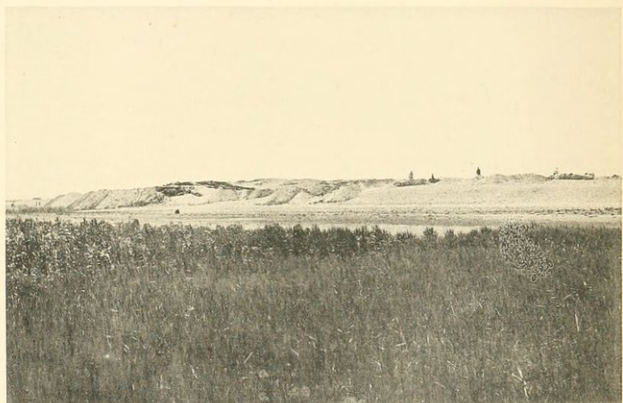
VIEW FROM S.E.



SOUTHERN MOUND AFTER EXCAVATION.



VIEW FROM N.E.



NORTHERN MOUND DURING EXCAVATION.



NORTHERN MOUND AFTER EXCAVATION.



NECROPOLIS IN NORTHERN MOUND



EXCAVATION OF NORTHERN MOUND.





nah, the careful records of excavations at El Kab made by Mr. Quibell, Inspector-General of the Service of Antiquities of Egypt, though done at a time when the comparative evidences were not accurately determined, yet viewed by the light of more recent discoveries becomes of great importance. The scholarly account, too, given by Mr. Randall-MacIver, of the excavations which he and the late Mr. Anthony Wilkin made at El Amrah, resulting in the linking up, partially at least, of the later prehistoric with the early dynastic period, is a contribution to the subject not merely of direct application to the problem of this book, but also essential to all serious study of early Egyptian history.

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## CHAPTER II

### ON THE CONTINUITY OF THE EARLY HISTORY.

Place of the Third Dyn. in Ancient History. **T**HE Third Dynasty takes its place in Egyptian History at a date somewhere in the fourth millennium B.C., when the country was emerging from infancy into a vigorous boyhood. It follows directly in time and in character the archaic culture of the earliest dynasties, and leads on towards that brilliant epoch in the life of the country to which custom has sanctioned the name of the Old Empire. It was with this late period that until recent years all histories of Egypt commenced: it is therefore well known; its characteristics have been familiar from the beginnings of Egyptology, and its archaeology has been the subject of much independent study. In this way it has become separated from association with the earlier periods. To any one noting only the individuality that distinguishes the Pyramid Age, it might indeed seem hopeless at first glance to attempt to trace it back to any relationship with the primitive character of earlier days.

Sequence of Development. Yet now that the details of the earlier period are scientifically recorded, it must appear, from the links of evidence which the Third Dynasty provides, that the features of individuality which have astonished the later world mark but a stage in the natural development of an earlier promise. It will be seen that it was due to no extraordinary influences from without, but essentially to the natural evolution of national character, that this development was manifested. Indeed the separate term "Old Empire" alone remains to imply any disunion with the culture by which it was preceded.

This application of distinguishing names to successive stages of historical movement is equally objectionable and misleading in considering the earlier times. It is the custom for convenient reference to apply to certain periods, which seem now to be divided as arbitrarily as were the dynasties themselves, a terminology which unhappily suggests periodical breaks in the continuity of the early history. A nomenclature somewhat as follows has been freely used to signify various chronological stages—

*a.* Pre-dynastic period [Sequence dates 30–80].

*b.* Proto-dynastic period [Dynasties I, II, and III].

*c.* Old Empire or Old Kingdom [Dynasties IV, V, and VI].

Subsequent periods are denoted Two Suggested Breaks. in a similar manner; and though this series of names is perhaps the best that has been suggested, it is still open to the fundamental objection that it implies a discontinuity between stages *a* and *b*, *b* and *c*. The latter of these implied breaks is removed now by the archaeological evidences which the Third Dynasty provides, but in connexion with the earlier division between the pre-dynastic and the early dynastic periods, or, as some may prefer to call it, the prehistoric and early historic times, there exists a problem which has been exaggerated and indeed largely bases its origin on a point of terminology.

Since the time when the discoverers in an error of identification applied the term New Race to the people whom DE MORGAN subsequently proved to be the veritable pre-

dynastic stock of the country, that name has continued to some extent in use, though deprived of its original significance. Originally used to define a race which was thought to appear between the periods known as the Old and Middle Empires, it remains to imply a difference of race between the pre-dynastic and the dynastic people to the minds of those English-speaking Egyptologists who have used it. That the term alone is largely the source of the problem that has arisen around it appears from the attitude of many distinguished archaeologists of the Continent, who fail to see any difficulty, maintaining that it is unnatural to pre-suppose any change of race, and that the burden of proof must rest upon those who believe the dynastic rulers to be a distinct people. Yet that a problem of material difficulty does exist appears from the words "dynastic conquerors" and "invasion of dynastic people"<sup>1</sup> from the pen of an equally prominent English Egyptologist, who accepts the matter as proved so far that he is able to define the features of the conquerors. Neither side to this unwritten controversy will admit the existence of a problem, though opposed upon a fundamental point.

**Evidence**      In the absence of contemporary  
**Applicable**      literature, any evidence which may  
**to the**      be applied to the problem must  
**Problem.**      necessarily be of an archaeological character. Even the king-lists and early inscriptions of sorts can hardly be introduced as historical records: but these monuments supply archaeological evidence of definite importance, which though less direct is also less liable to error. The continuity of early history must rely then mainly on three such features as these—

- (i.) The Permanence of Manners and Customs.
- (ii.) The Sequence of Archaeological Types.
- (iii.) Anthropometrical Analogies—and the like.

<sup>1</sup> Petrie: *A History of Egypt*, i. (1903), pp. 2, 3.

It may indeed be urged with some reason that from the examples which history affords, it rests with the upholders of discontinuity to establish their case by the deliberate destruction of these and similar items of evidence; to illustrate the disappearance of old and the introduction of new customs; to indicate breaks in the sequence curves which represent the development of archaeological types, and so on; yet from a neutral standpoint, as an illustration of method applicable to other instances, it is of interest to pursue the problem further.

At first, in general, the character of the evidence is to be examined and the doubtful elements eliminated. In the third branch of evidence, for example, the methods of anthropometry, it is necessary to provide a sufficient series of measures from each of the two periods to be compared. This initial difficulty of material, apart from others arising from intrinsic difficulties of the method, prevents its application in the present instances. In the other branches, again, an element of doubt rests in the assumed contemporaneity of equivalent forms in different localities. It is obvious that a sequence illustrated by a series of isolated examples can only be typological; and that it can only be made chronological by consideration of all elements of evidence both exclusive and inclusive. Such a series of observations can only be made by examining the whole history of each locality.

With a hundred such considerations it would be necessary in the application to analyse the contents of as many volumes for evidence that might bear upon the possible discontinuity or break of race between the pre-dynastic period and the First Dynasty. But **Race of the Monarchy.** for the present purpose the results of the excavations made at El Amrah,<sup>2</sup> with evidences introduced into later chapters of the volume, will be a sufficient illustration. There the explorers found that the site represented a

<sup>2</sup> R.M.A.



period which actually bridged over in date the pre-dynastic to the dynastic; that continuity was shown alike in the burial customs, in the evolution of tomb construction, in the development of worked stone vases, in the survival of "later" forms of pottery, and that discontinuity nowhere suggested itself. It will be shown in subsequent chapters describing the burial customs, tomb construction, and funereal furniture how this archaeological continuity is further demonstrated by direct survival or evolution of pre-dynastic types even through the Third Dynasty. On the other hand, two chief arguments may be raised against the continuity of the early race in dynastic times, which it may be well to examine more closely—

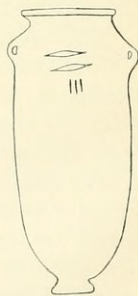
i. The disappearance of the fine polished-red, and black-topped, and decorated pottery, characteristic of the pre-dynastic period, and the appearance in its place of a rough pottery suggesting little knowledge of ceramic art.

ii. The sudden appearance of writing as a known art with the First Dynasty.

Both of these objections have, superficially, a show of weight. But in regard to the former, it may be seen by any one studying the changes that took place in the pottery fashions of the pre-dynastic age,<sup>1</sup> how even before half that period had passed, the finer "decorated" and "black-topped" ware was rapidly disappearing, and how in the latter half there appears the increasing popularity of many of those classes which became the characteristic types of the First Dynasty. The art of pottery making was already declining, in favour of the working of stone vases, before the close of the pre-dynastic period: it was by no means a sudden change contemporary with the first monarch. That the art was not forgotten appears from the sporadic instances of the finer red pottery occurring here and there in later times, as the illustrations of this volume testify. But Egypt is naturally a country of stone.

<sup>1</sup> P.D.P.

**The Question of Writing.** In regard, too, to what has seemed an insuperable objection to continuity, namely, the sudden appearance of writing with the foundation of the monarchy, it would seem from a close study of monuments unearthed in recent years that an explanation is forthcoming. The carved objects from El Kab<sup>2</sup> seem to depict the closing stages of tribal fusion which led directly to the uniting of Upper and Lower Egypt and the founding of the monarchy.<sup>3</sup> There is reason to believe that under the nearer influences of Western Asia the culture of the Delta had advanced considerably beyond that of the South, and the palettes which record the victories of the Hierakonpolite princes suggest from their very style that these earliest monuments of Upper Egypt were the result of the culture thus assimilated. The Palermo Stone shows that a record of pre-dynastic princes of Lower Egypt was provided from earliest times. It is reasonable to believe that writing had already to some extent developed in the Delta before the union, especially as here and there signs of the art are found creeping into the upper country. In the tombs where those pre-dynastic rulers lay buried, whom Professor Petrie assigns to Dynasty O, whatsoever may have been their precise sphere, there also was familiarity with writing illustrated. Certain vases, unquestionably of early pre-dynastic times, one of which is here pictured, are inscribed with definite hieroglyphic characters. The inscription has been stated to be a forgery, but an accumulation of expert evidence has passed it as without intrinsic evidence of being false. A slate palette of the period from El Amrah



<sup>2</sup> Q.K. Plates XXV, XXVI B, C, XXIX.

<sup>3</sup> Newberry, etc.: *A Short History of Egypt*.

has on it signs not strictly hieroglyphic, but directly analogous.

A piece of shell in the possession of the Professor of Assyriology at Oxford is inscribed with a name of simple form and is associated with objects of archaic character. Yet in few private tombs indeed, and in none of the common tombs of the First or Second Dynasty, is any trace of writing to be found; how much less, then, may it be expected in the poor graves of the pre-dynastic people! The introduction of writing, unaccompanied by any change of national customs, is no evidence of change of race. Even the tombs of the kings themselves fell naturally into place as a phase in a natural evolution.

**The Natural Conclusion.** There is in fine a lack of those foreign or new elements distinctively associated with the early kings which would give them a character foreign to their surroundings. They were buried in tombs naturally evolved from those of pre-dynastic times, and furnished largely with objects elaborated from those in common use. The testimony of these early writings unites most forcefully with the evidence of each branch of archaeology, to indicate the natural development of the people through tribal stages, and the formation of a monarchy with the fusion of the tribes. It is but an instance of that natural constitutional growth which the history of nations in the East and in the West, in the ancient and the modern world, has since illustrated by many striking examples. If the evidence of the El Amrah excavations has been correctly read,<sup>1</sup> it would appear, too, that the First Dynasty was well begun before the pre-dynastic period, as it is defined, had come to its end. The two periods merge so completely that there is no join discernible.

**Growth of the Pyramid Age.** The appearance of any gap between the proto-dynastic period and the Old Empire is at once removed by the link which the Third Dynasty

supplies. That which, for instance, seemed a sudden change from mastâba to pyramid is now seen to be a process of evolution through successive stages. The huge mass of the mastâba of King Neter-Khet recalls at once, in appearance, the lowest step of the first pyramid at Sakkara: the two monuments, it seems, were built during the same reign. The analogy is further borne out by the long stairway which descends into the interior, protected at intervals by doors of stone let down from above. The mastâba itself is found to be merely an elaboration of the familiar stairway tomb which traces back its origin to the graves of pre-dynastic period.

The sites which have chiefly supplied the material for this volume are themselves continuous through the Fourth Dynasty, and the same was the case at El Kab also. It will be seen that in each branch of archaeological evidence, in architecture and tomb construction, in pottery-making and the working of stone vases, in the art of inscribing and the forms of names and titles, there is definite sequence, marked sometimes as an evolution or development, to be traced through the earliest dynasties into the light of the pyramid age which followed.

**Continuity of History Natural to Egypt.** To any one familiar now with the conservative condition of the Nile valley, any sudden change of constitution or radical change of race must seem violent and most unnatural to primitive conditions. In a country so exposed, a constant stream of immigration, with the influences which that brings, may be expected. But there is no present proof of discontinuity of racial history at any stage, little even to suggest it.

On the other hand, what seems true of its origin is true also of the whole. The history of ancient Egypt from its beginning to the end is that of a continuous people. There is the unique picture from the old world of the whole life of a nation. Its birth took place in the

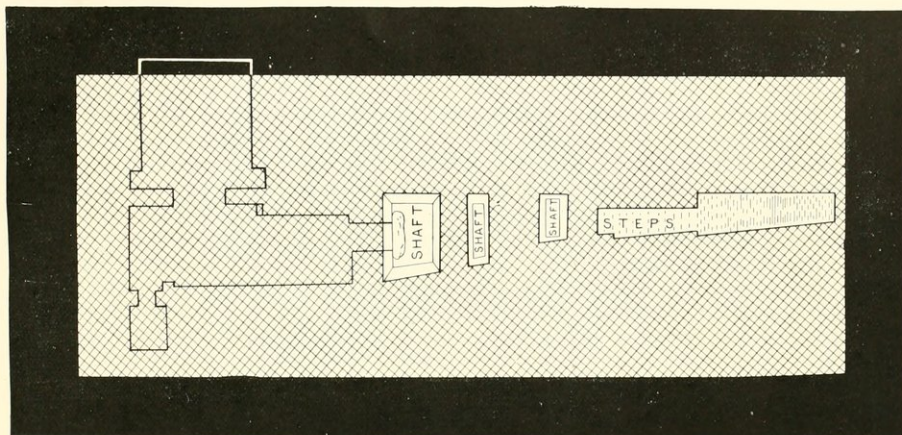
<sup>1</sup> R.M.A., pp. 12-13.



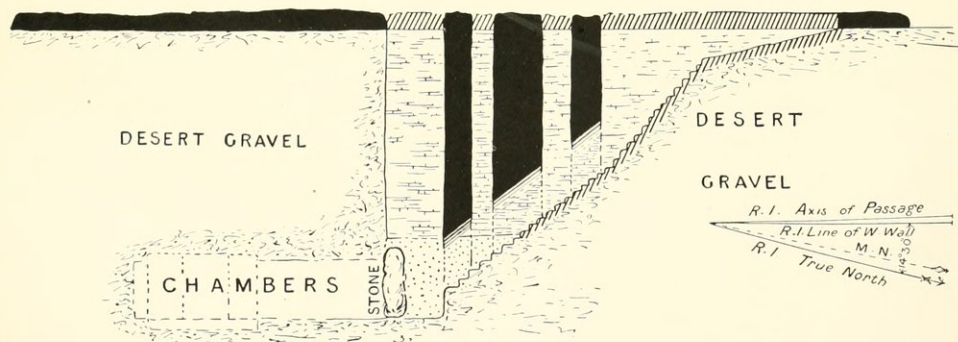
dimmet distance of present historical vision, when first those stone and copper-using people, coming from no certain direction, found their habitation on the marshy banks of the Nile. Subject always to the same unvarying influence of nature, they grew into a na-	tion; and, receiving from time to time new strains and fresh impulse from the numerous arteries of the country, developed a strength and a character that are without parallel in the history of the ancient world.
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1:150 REQAQNAH: TOMBS R.I. R.40. PLANS & SECTIONS.



R I PLAN

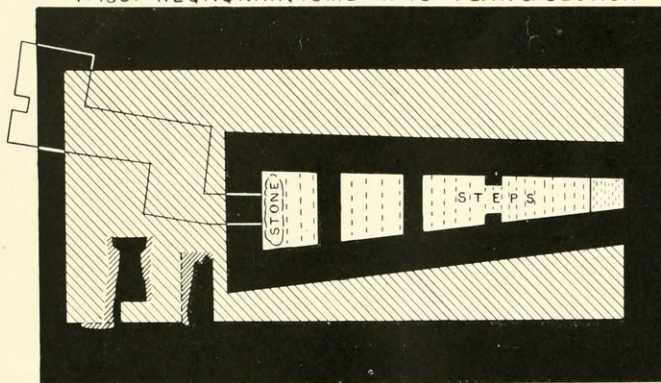


R.I. SECTION

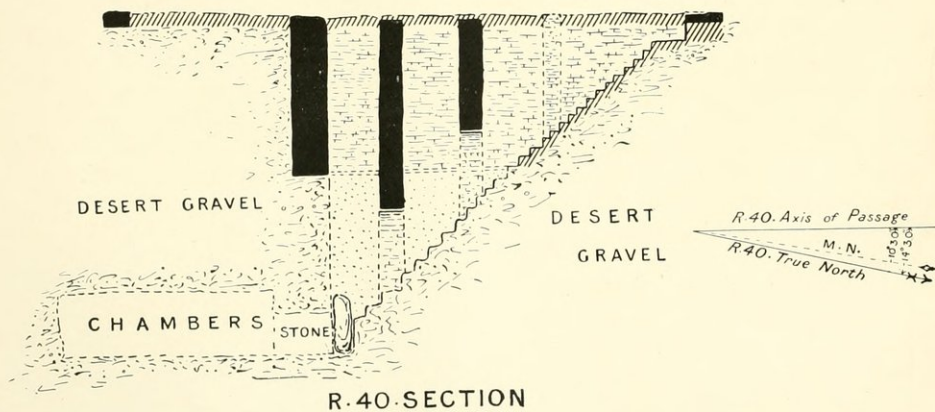




1:150. REQAQNAH, TOMB R.40. PLAN &amp; SECTION



R.40. PLAN



R.40. SECTION



## CHAPTER III

### CONSTRUCTION OF THE STAIRWAY TOMBS.

With Plates IV, V, VI.

THE large tombs at Reqaqnah were entirely similar in general design to the royal and semi-royal tombs of Bêt Khallâf. This fact, coupled with the position and analogous character of the tomb furniture from within, led to their ready identification as a further series of monuments of the Third Dynasty. The feature characteristic of this tomb is the stairway which descends in each from the ground level to a series of subterranean chambers. There is in each case also some superstructure, in the form of a rectangle, which encloses entirely the position occupied by the stairway, and usually the area of the underground chambers also.

The superstructure is not, as a rule, found in sufficiently good preservation to enable anything more than its position to be determined. In the plan of tomb R 1, for example (Plate IV A), the foundations of the stout enclosing wall alone remained, though doubtless some building had occupied the southern portion of the enclosure. The only tomb of this date that was preserved above ground, that of Neter-Khet, showed no trace of any chambers in its superstructure, or anything other than solid brickwork, except where shafts for receiving the door-stones and a few wells for offerings above the chambers appeared at intervals along the middle line. This one tomb, however, was somewhat exceptional. Among the others in both sites there seems to have been uniformly a space provided above the burial chambers, within the enclosure, for a special building,

which was probably a shrine or small chapel for offerings and prayers. In some of the tombs at Bêt Khallâf,<sup>1</sup> there was trace of stonework on the eastern side at this end, as though the door or some other feature of the architecture had been specially embellished in this way. In the present plan of tomb R 40 also (Plate IV E), there is sign of two inner walls at right angles to the east face. These seem to be the remains of a narrow doorway or entrance hall which opened out (at the extremity of the wall on the left or southern side) to a chamber within the enclosure. It is not clear where the entrance to the enclosure was placed, nor to what height the walls were built up. To judge, however, by the analogy of the tombs K 4, K 5, at Bêt Khallâf,<sup>2</sup> it seems probable that the tomb was entered from the eastern side, that the chapel or shrine stood over the position of the burial chambers, and that the outer wall enclosed the whole, including the long stairway, which was itself probably roofed or covered over in some manner.

The substructure of the tombs for the most part exhibits a similar uniformity. Differences of detail are determined for the most part by the varying character of the desert gravel in which the passage and chambers were dug. Normally a stairway descends between walls on either side to a series of chambers cut in the gravel at a considerable depth. If the desert gravel is hard, then little brickwork is required

<sup>1</sup> G.M.K. Plates VII, XVIII, XXV.

<sup>2</sup> See also Plate XXI, ch. VIII.

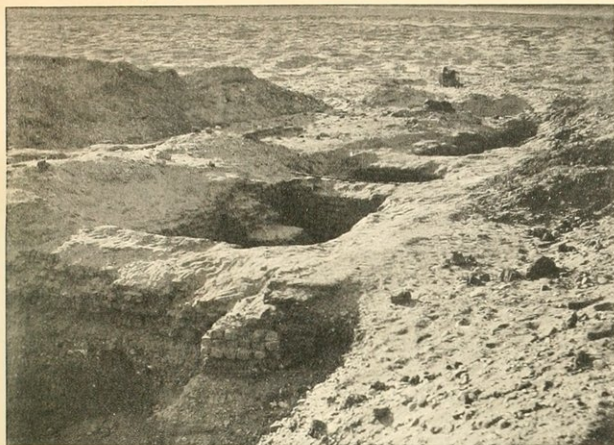
in support, as in the case K 3, at Bêt Khallâf. If, however, the gravel is yielding, then the sides of the passage are strengthened with brick walls on either hand to a sufficient depth. These walls are themselves built with a batter, leaning outward from the passage. They are also of considerable thickness, and their unseen outer sides are left rough, with many projections, to bind more freely with the desert sand and gravel around. These side walls are also restrained from yielding to the outer pressure by cross walls built at intervals between them. The strength of these buttress walls seems to have been determined also by local or special considerations. Its variability may be seen by a comparison of the section of tombs R 40 and R 1. It will be seen in a subsequent chapter that this feature is of peculiar moment in the evolution of these stairway tombs. But the interposition of these buttress walls leads at once to another feature of interest; for the passage being thus stopped, it becomes necessary to avoid this difficulty by some means, and so the arch is introduced as the most ready solution. If the cross wall is thick, as in tomb R 1, then the simple arch becomes a sloping barrel roof, of which an elaborated instance occurs in the tomb of Neter-Khet. The photographs on Plate V, showing the architectural features of tomb R 1, illustrates these details more clearly.

The picture of the stairway looking upwards from the bottom, shows how at the lowest stages the desert gravel has been found sufficiently strong in itself, and how nearer the surface it has been walled with brickwork on either hand. This picture looks under the cross wall supports, but that to the left of it, which shows the arches and doorstone from above, illustrates with clearness the methods of masonry employed, the bonding of the arches and their construction, and also the widening of the passage walls at the top. In the upper photograph, a view of the shaft-mouths

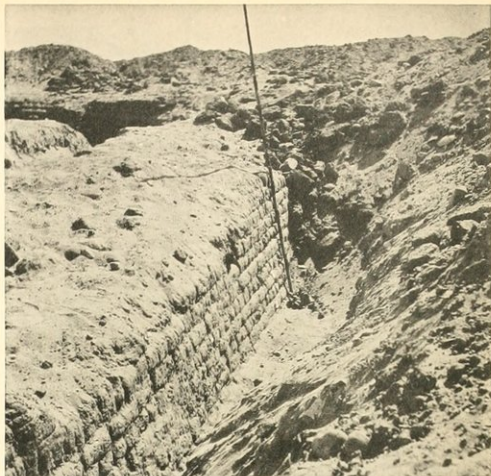
from the south-east, the positions of these cross walls and their appearance from above are indicated, in correspondence with the plan on Plate IV. At the foot of the passage, and closing the doorway of the chambers, was found the slab of stone shown in the photograph. The positions of the underground chambers are marked in the plan with black line upon the cross-hatching of the surface. It seems probable from several indications that, as in the cases at Bêt Khallâf, the burial had lain in the large room to the west of the series. The chambers and passage ways were cut simply in the gravel, unsupported by masonry; and owing to subsidence it was found necessary to excavate them by means of a hole cut down to them from the surface above.

The other of the two great tombs, No. 40, was evidently already partly collapsed before the excavation was begun. The passage-way was strengthened by stout props placed from side to side as the excavation descended. The chambers, however, had been previously reached by a hole forced from above, and it was found necessary to dig away for safety all the superimposed weight. In removing the props after the excavation had been completed, the treacherous sand and gravel again collapsed, falling through the roof of the empty chambers and carrying away a portion of the stairway, as may be seen in the photograph. The section thus exposed shows somewhat uniquely how the tomb was built. It seems that in this instance the whole space for the passage was first hollowed out; the brickwork was then laid, and the space without filled up with loose sand and stones. When this upper sand had thus been walled back, the work proceeded through a harder stratum below, the brickwork being discontinued even on the stairway, which was continued by steps cut in the desert. The construction of the tomb had probably been faulty from the outset, or too great reliance had been placed upon the strength of the

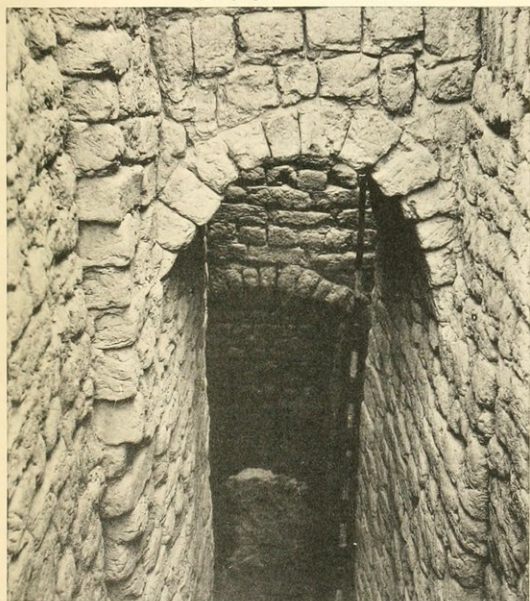




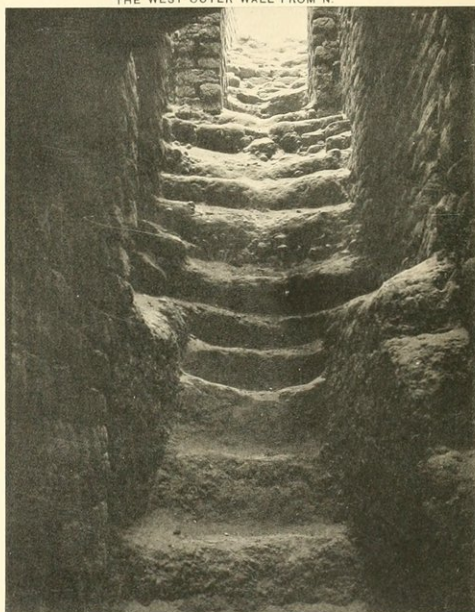
VIEW OF SHAFT MOUTHS FROM S.E.



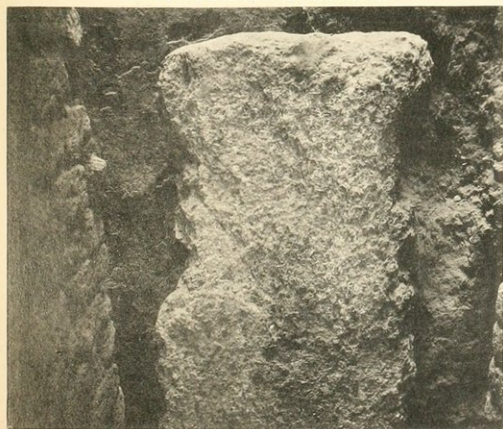
THE WEST OUTER WALL FROM N.



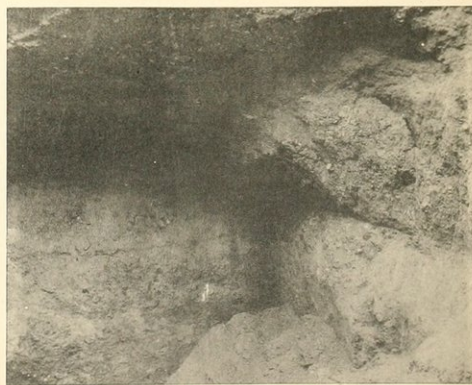
ARCHES AND DOOR-STONE FROM ABOVE.



THE STAIRWAY LOOKING N. FROM BELOW.



DOOR-STONE CONCEALING ENTRANCE TO CHAMBERS.



CORNER OF BURIAL CHAMBER.





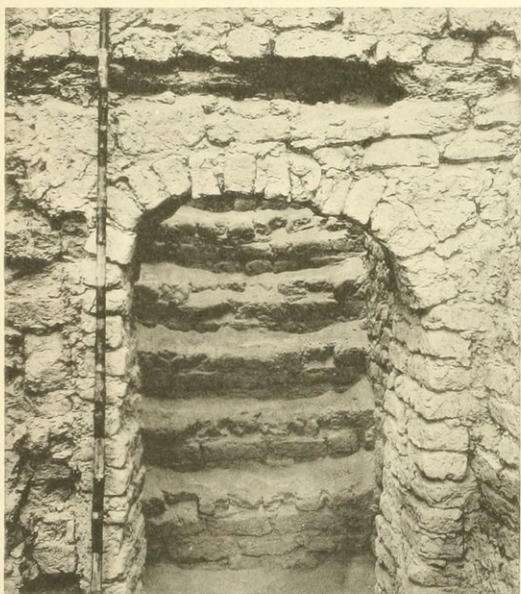




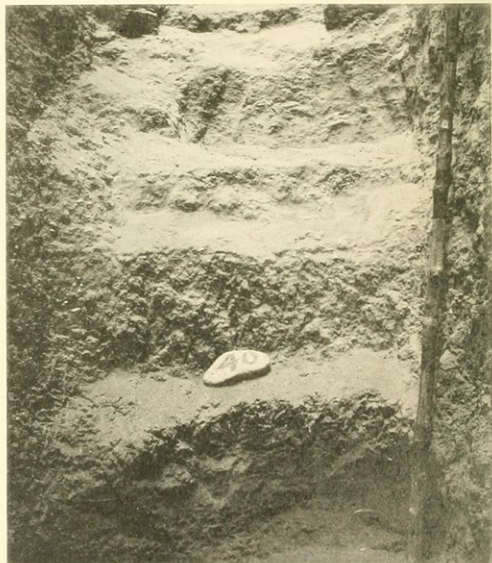
SUB-STRUCTURE AFTER COLLAPSE



STAIRWAY DESCENDING IN BRICK STEPS.



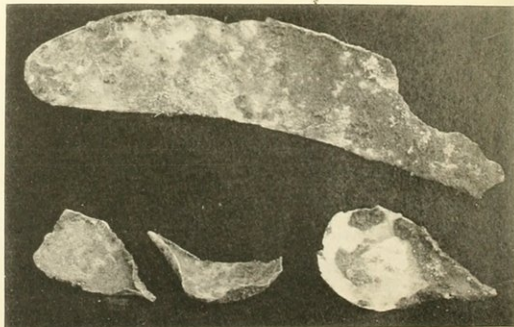
ARCHWAY AND STEPS, FROM S.



CONTINUED IN STEPS CUT IN THE DESERT.



GROUP OF COPPER VESSELS AND KNIFE



COPPER KNIFE AND SPOONS



natural bed of gravel, which failed to hold the weight of the side walls, bulging as they were from the pressure of the loose sand without. The lower archway had entirely collapsed before the excavation reached that point, and it was with great difficulty and some danger that the chambers were reached and the previous deposit rescued.

## CHAPTER IV

### OBJECTS FROM THE STAIRWAY TOMES.

#### a. Vases (Plates VII-XII). b. Pottery (Plate XIII).

THE various forms in stone working and pottery characteristic of the Third Dynasty are gathered together in the seven following plates. The selection has been made with a view to illustrating the varieties and variations of form, and to avoiding redundancy; but several considerations have necessarily interfered in the arrangement. To illustrate this subject properly it would be necessary to reproduce many of the objects several times under different heads, their shapes, their materials, their relation to other forms anterior and posterior, and in general their position in the development of such. But some of the objects are exceptionally large, and it is found convenient to group these together. The excavations at Reqaqnah, again, while supplying or illustrating a great proportion of the types, required supplementing by the results obtained at Bêt Khallâf in the previous winter to complete the series. These additions have therefore been placed together on Plate XII.

In proceeding to a consideration of these forms, it is well to note the extreme value and at the same time the limitations of this branch of archaeological evidence.

It may readily be seen by turning over the pages of excavators' memoirs, that certain forms in stone working and in pottery are characteristic of certain periods. In this way it is possible to define a certain number of archaeological types for each period. But it is not possible, except in special cases, to say that the individual forms are exclusively characteristic of that time, for the range of use of

each form is generally various, and may not be the same as that of others with which it may be found associated. The truth might be illustrated in this way, if it were possible to represent an average of equivalent forms by means of a graph, then each point on the curve would correspond to some place in history, and its position would be co-ordinated with the sequence of time. While it is not possible, then, as a rule, to define narrowly the period of any particular form, yet the associations of certain forms, or otherwise certain groupings of objects, may often be readily assigned to a definite date. It is this principle which Professor Petrie used in his "sequence dating" of pre-dynastic forms; but in regard to the early dynasties, the problem is more complex, and the material involved more copious and less definitive.

On Plate VI., the vessels, knife and spoons of copper illustrate the metal forms of the age. But the working of stone bowls is specially characteristic of the early dynasties. In pre-dynastic times, this art shared with that of pottery-making an important place in the early Egyptian culture. But with the decline of pottery, towards the approach of the First Dynasty, the working of stone vases assumed a new character and stimulus. The royal tombs of the First Dynasty at Abydos have furnished numerous examples of the height which this art rapidly attained. At Hierakonpolis and El Kab excavations have shown the forms familiar in these localities at a slightly later period.

The accompanying Plate, No. VII., illustrates a number of vases characteristic of the Third





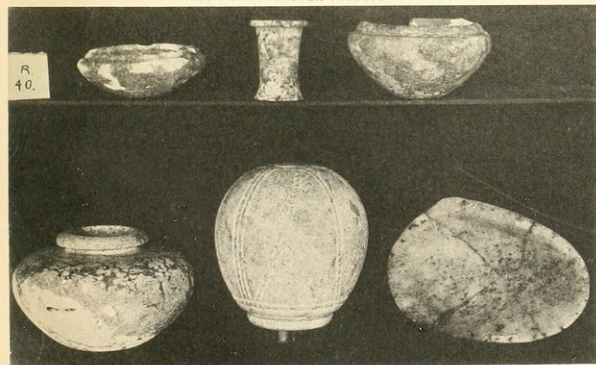
1:10

GROUP OF STONE VASES AND TABLES.



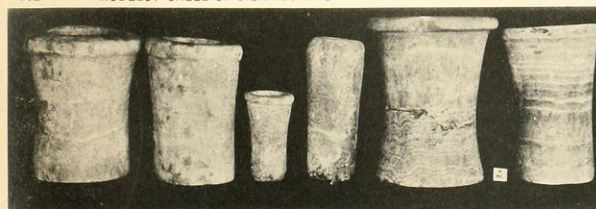
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GROUP OF ALABASTER VESSELS AND TABLES.



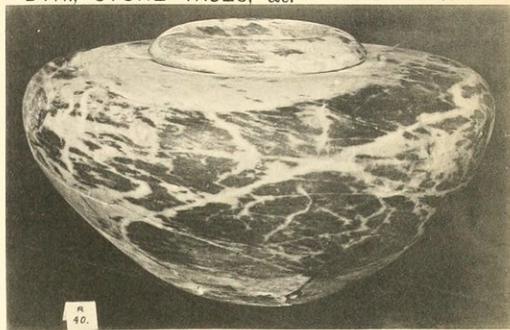
1:2

MODELS: SHELL OF DIORITE: MACE-HEAD OF ALABASTER.



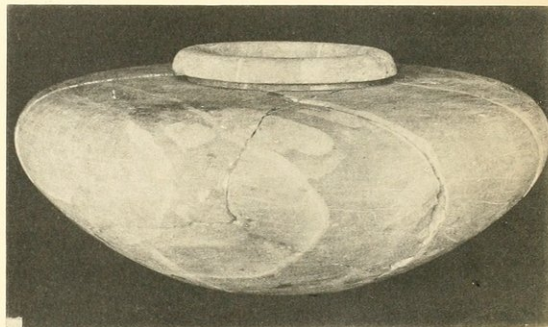
1:7

GROUP OF MODEL VASES.



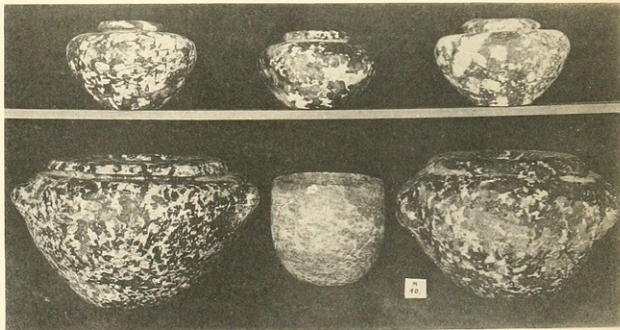
1:4

BOWL OF SACHYRINE MARBLE.



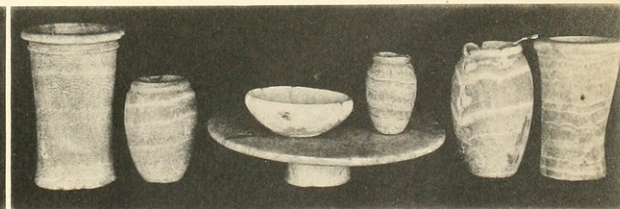
1:4

BOWL OF ALABASTER.



1:5

VASES OF DIORITE AND HARD STONE.



1:7

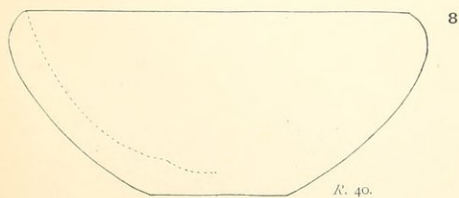
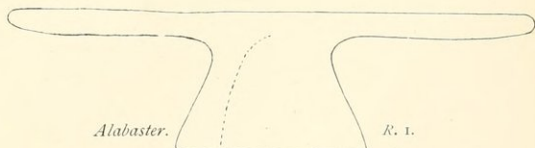
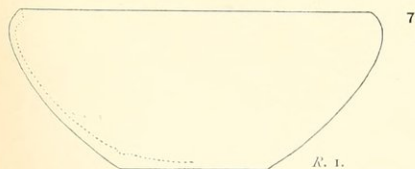
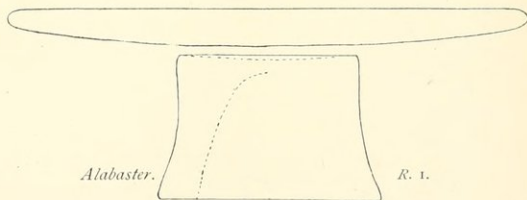
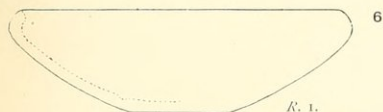
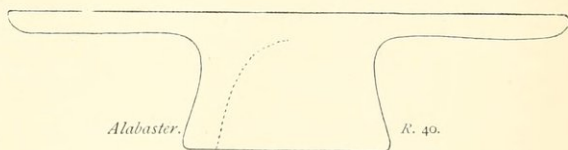
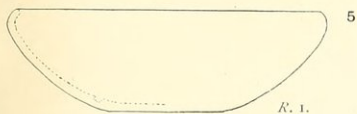
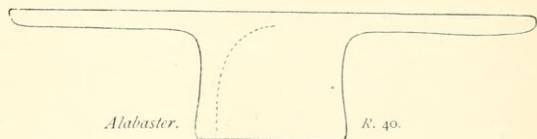
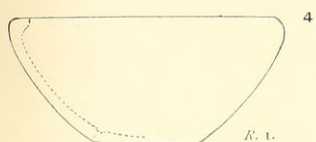
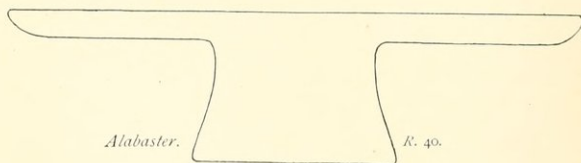
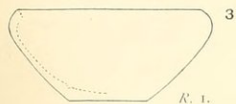
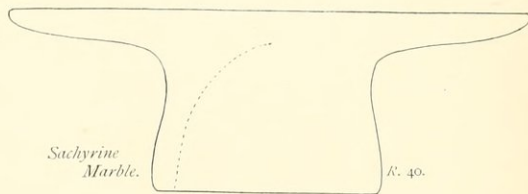
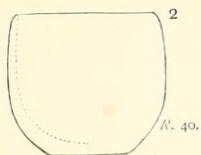
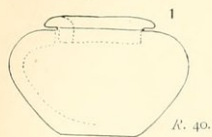
VASES AND TABLE OF ALABASTER.





1:3 REQAQNAH. TYPES OF HARD-STONE VASES (i.), AND ALABASTER TABLES: THIRD DYNASTY. VIII.

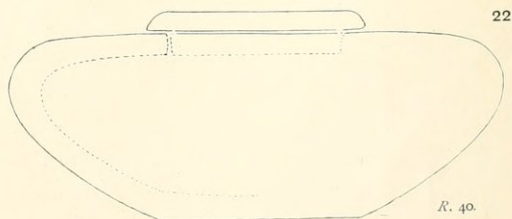
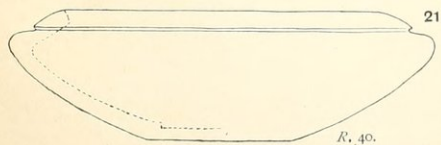
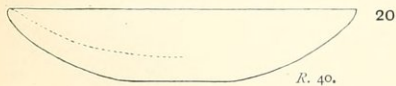
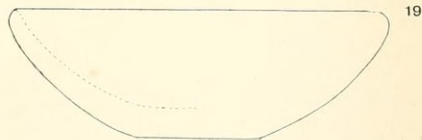
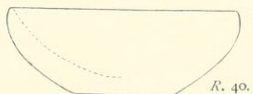
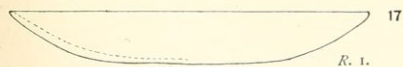
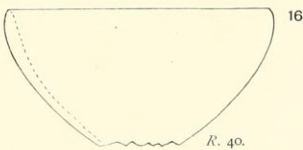
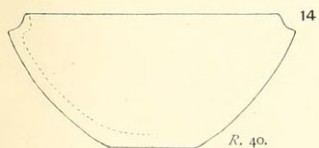
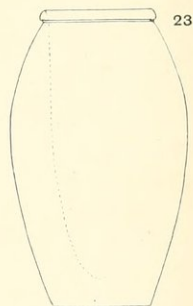
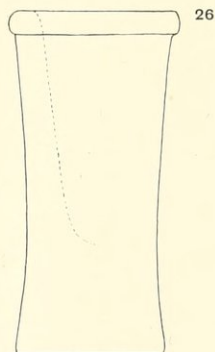
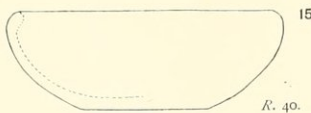
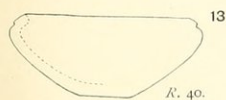
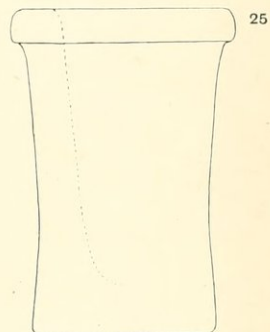
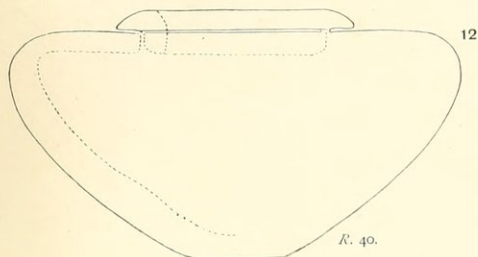
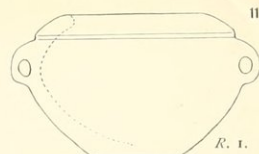
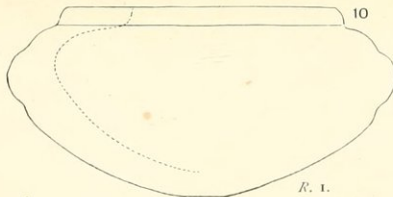
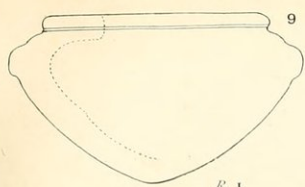
[Forms 1-8 chiefly in Diorite. Nos. 1 and 4 in Porphyry also.]







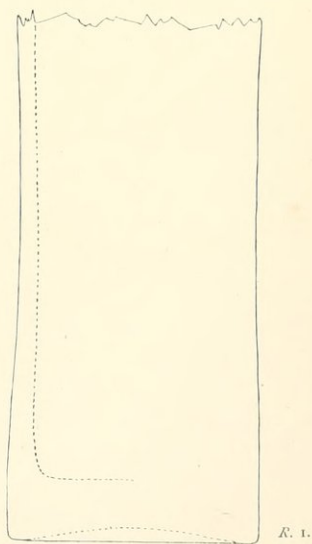
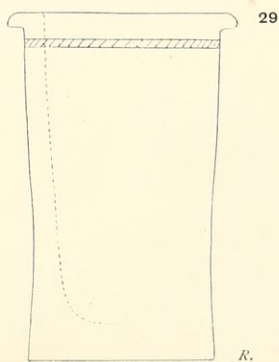
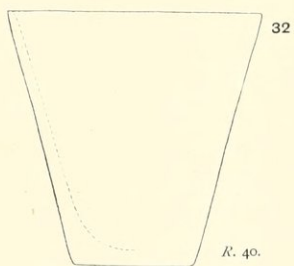
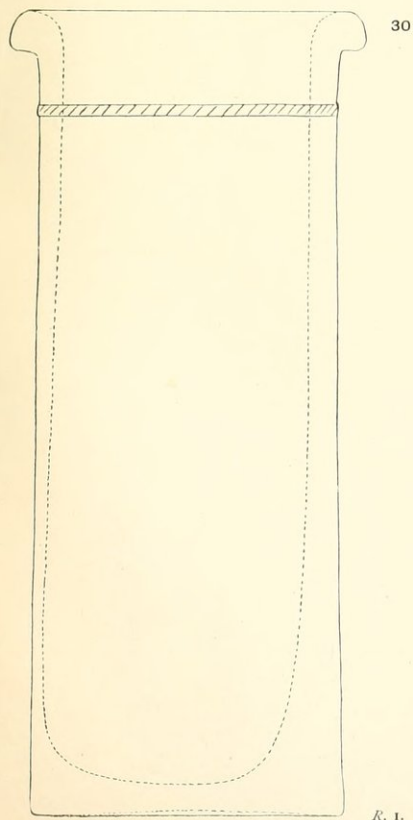
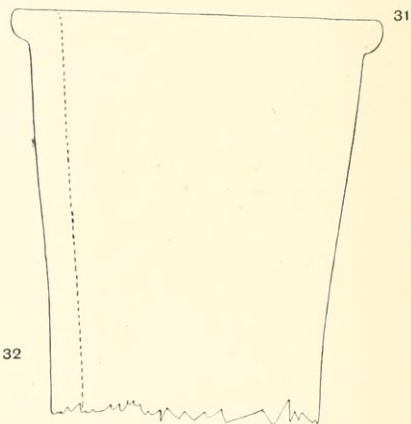
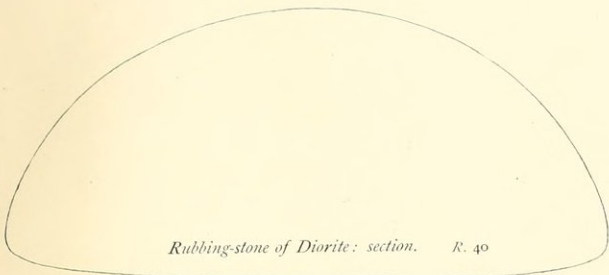
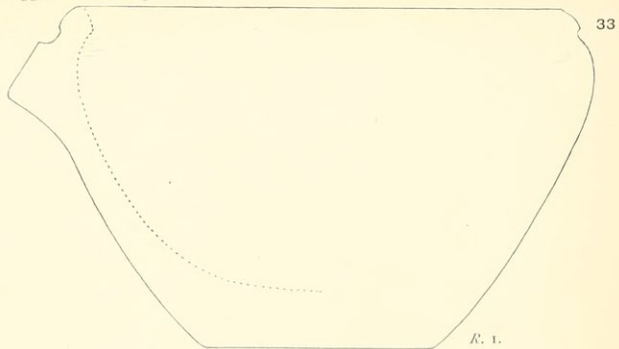
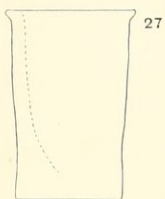
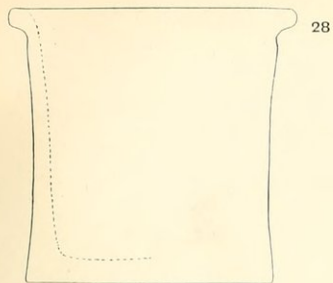
[Forms 9 and 10 in Diorite and Breccia; 11, 18, 21 in Breccia; 12 in Sacyrine Marble; 13-16 in Alabaster.]



[For photos of types, see Plate VII.; for additional types, Plate XII.]



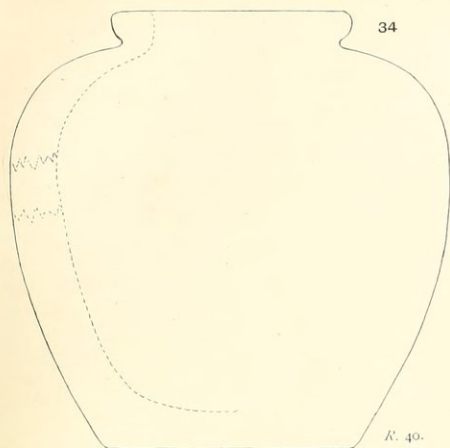
[Forms 28-33 in Alabaster.]



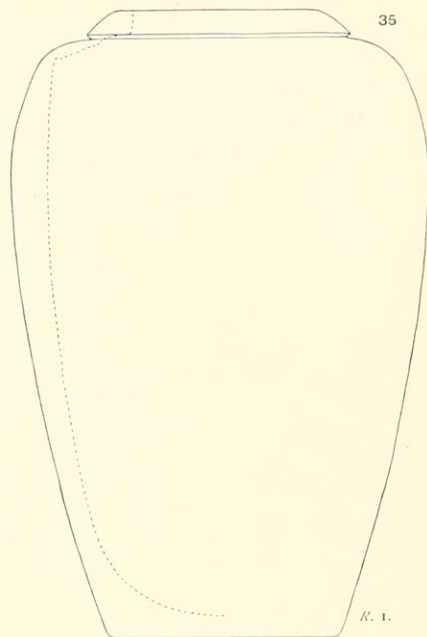




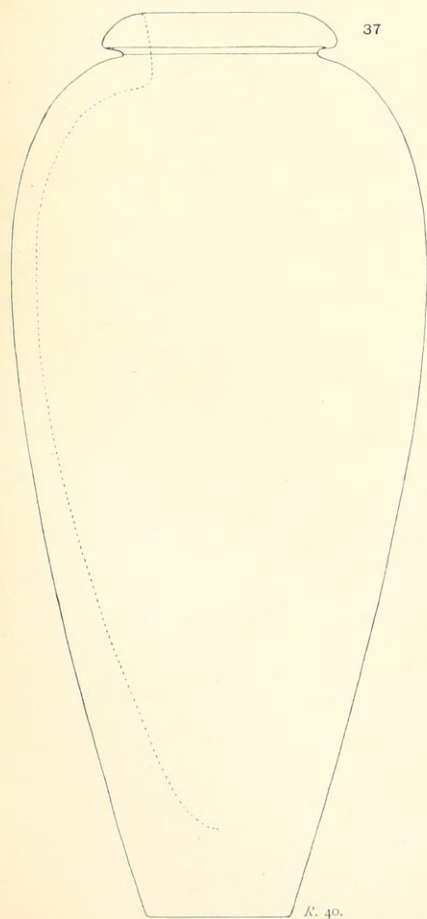
[Forms 34-37 in Alabaster. Photo of No. 37, Plate VII.]



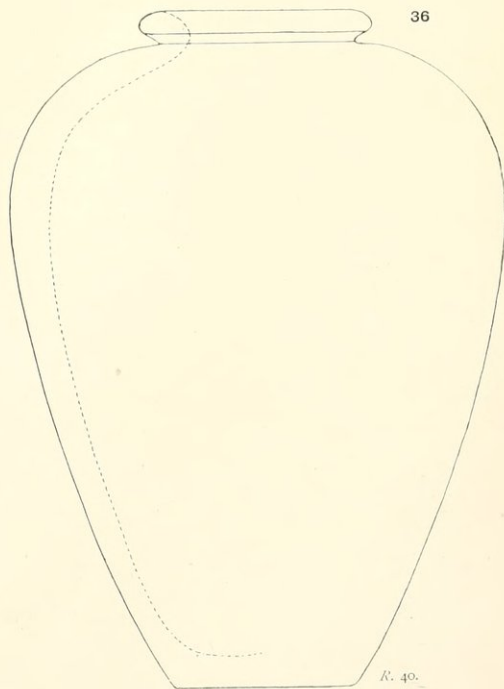
R. 40.



R. 1.



R. 40.

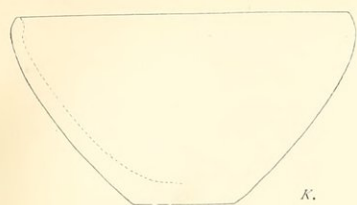


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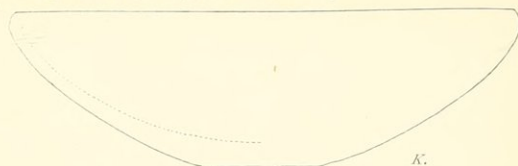




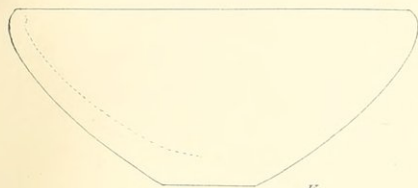
[Form 38 in Syenite; 41, 42, 43 in Diorite; 45 in Porphyry; 39-50 in Alabaster.]



41

*K.*


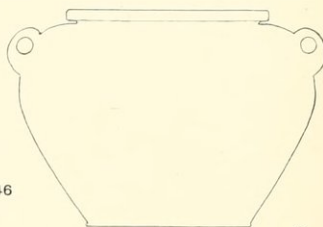
42

*K.*


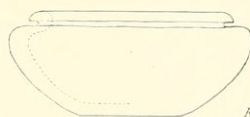
43

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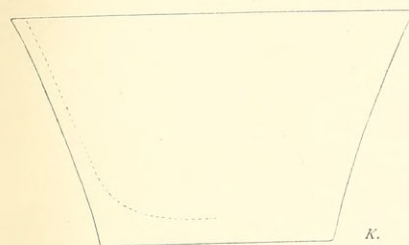

45

*K.*


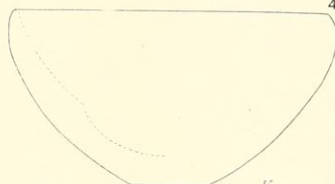
38

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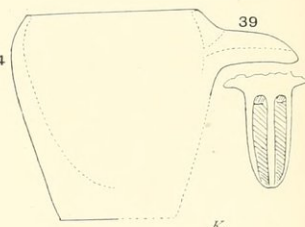
46

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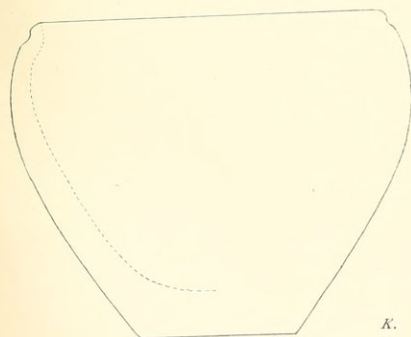
47

*K.*


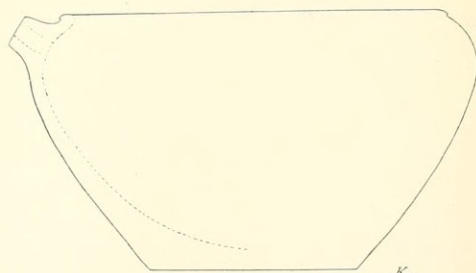
44

*K.*


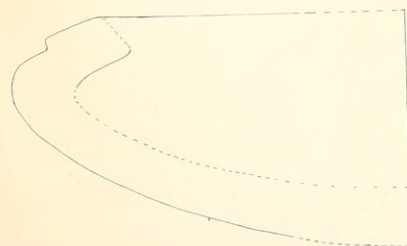
39

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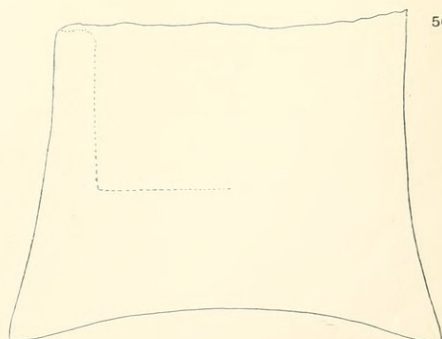
48

*K.*


40

*K.*


49

*K.*


50

*K.*



Dynasty. The material of which they are made is various. The Egyptian alabaster (in reality a limestone of special quality) was the favourite stone of the country, being found used for various purposes throughout its history. Of the hard stones, diorite is most frequent, and is often worked down with wonderful skill until translucency is obtained. Breccia, porphyry and steatite are other varieties less frequently employed. Sacyrine marble, a beautiful stone, of which one large bowl is pictured in the plate, is found somewhat rarely. In this instance a table of offerings of the same material accompanied the deposit.

A group of special interest pictured on Plate VII comprises a number of models of vases and other objects in limestone and diorite. They are called models because they are so unusually small and delicate, as the scale of the illustration (1 : 2) shows. In the upper row are two tiny vases, thin as paper, with a diminutive standing vase in the centre, all of limestone. Below, on the left, is a limestone vase, with narrower neck, and of somewhat larger size than the others. The central object of the row is the most remarkable. It is seemingly a mace head carved in alabaster, of balloon shape and appearance. The neck tapers with a small moulding. The different segments of the surface are bounded by a whip-cord pattern in relief, converging to the centre at the top, where a small cap of ivory is neatly inlaid. Next to this object is a small model of a shell, carved in diorite; it is of the finest quality of work, and translucent in final appearance.

The whole group just described was found in a single deposit within the burial chamber of the great tomb, R 40, where they had evidently escaped the plunderers who had previously robbed the burial of its treasures. It was a source of much disappointment that in none of these large stairway tombs of Reqaqnah could any seal impressions be found, nor the names of

the deceased persons recovered. The tombs were placed near the edge of the cultivation, and in each case the stairway descended so deeply that the chambers were found to have been filled from time to time with water, which slowly accumulated in them even during the excavation. Though sometimes pieces of clay of the kind used for jar sealings were come upon, yet from this cause probably the signs upon them had been hopelessly obliterated. There can be little doubt, however, in considering the proportions and furniture of these tombs, comparing them on the one hand with those of Bêt Khallâf, and on the other with the small tombs of officials and others in the necropolis described in the ensuing pages, that these larger tombs were themselves of royal or semi-royal importance. It seems very possible that these were the burial places of the kings of the Third Dynasty.

The five plates, numbered VIII to XII which follow, contain the outlines and sections of all the typical or exceptional forms in stone vases and bowls of the Third Dynasty. The series has been made as complete as possible by the inclusion in the last plate of the series of those forms which occur in the royal tombs at Bêt Khallâf, but are not fully represented from Reqaqnah.

The chief use of such a series is practical; for the excavator determines largely by association with dated objects the period of his otherwise undated deposit. In the early dynasties the forms and character of stone vases and pottery are naturally the most reliable criteria. This series will in due course be found incomplete, indeed but a nucleus; but it may be hoped that this publication may lead readily to the identification of further tombs and objects of the Third Dynasty. As the first volume devoted to the subject it will then have served its chief purpose.

The groups of objects themselves require little explanation. Notes are added to the



plates, explanatory of the materials, and giving the numbering of the tombs to which the objects belong, as well as a running sequence number for reference and quotation. The student will find it interesting and instructive to compare these forms with those of earlier times, published, for example in *Negadah and Ballas* (Petrie and Quibell), *El Amrah and Abydos* (Randall-MacIver and Wilkin), *Royal Tombs of First Dynasty* (Petrie), *Hierakonpolis* (Quibell).

It is noticeable, in conclusion, how definitely separated is the stone working of the earlier dynasties from that of the Old Empire by the absence as yet of any forms with pointed bases. But the archaeology of the period immediately following that which this site represents has not yet been separately summarised in convenient form, though well known in general.

**Pottery.**  
(Plate XIII).

The series of pottery reproduced in outline on Plate XIII has been selected with a view to minimising the number of types, by omitting those numerous forms which may be considered to be mere variations of these few. By this means a small series is isolated, which may be more readily borne in mind in the course of excavation or research. The variations may be seen by reference to "Mahâsna and Bêt Khallâf," and the few forms found in the smaller tombs at Reqaqnah are shown by photograph and in outline on Plates XXXI, XXXII.

The form, No. 1, which is somewhat rare, is found in a good quality of polished red pottery. An analogous shape may be seen on Plate XXXII. The form is not an early one, and the material, while it suggests the good pottery of pre-dynastic times, is best known from certain examples of the Fourth Dynasty and Old Empire in general, though it also survives that period.

Nos. 2 and 3 are both of thick rough pottery,

with dull brown surface. In this particular form they are seemingly characteristic of the Third Dynasty, but they are essentially variations of the somewhat earlier and still persisting form No. 4. The prototype of this dates back to the earliest beginnings of the dynastic period, linking even with the pre-dynastic. (See, for example, *Diospolis Parva* Pl. II, where it is dated s.d. 70-80.) In the royal tombs at Abydos also it is known (as seen in *R. T. I* Pl. XLIII), and it is, indeed, one of the common forms of the early dynasties. It survives in the Sixth Dynasty, as it appears from more recent excavations in the necropolis of Beni Hasan, in a diminutive form suggestive of No. 3.

No. 5 is of the same rough material and appearance as the foregoing, while the shape is natural, and hence common to several periods.

Nos. 6 and 7 are varieties of dishes in a better class of ware, made probably from the same clay as the polished red pottery, but not so highly finished.

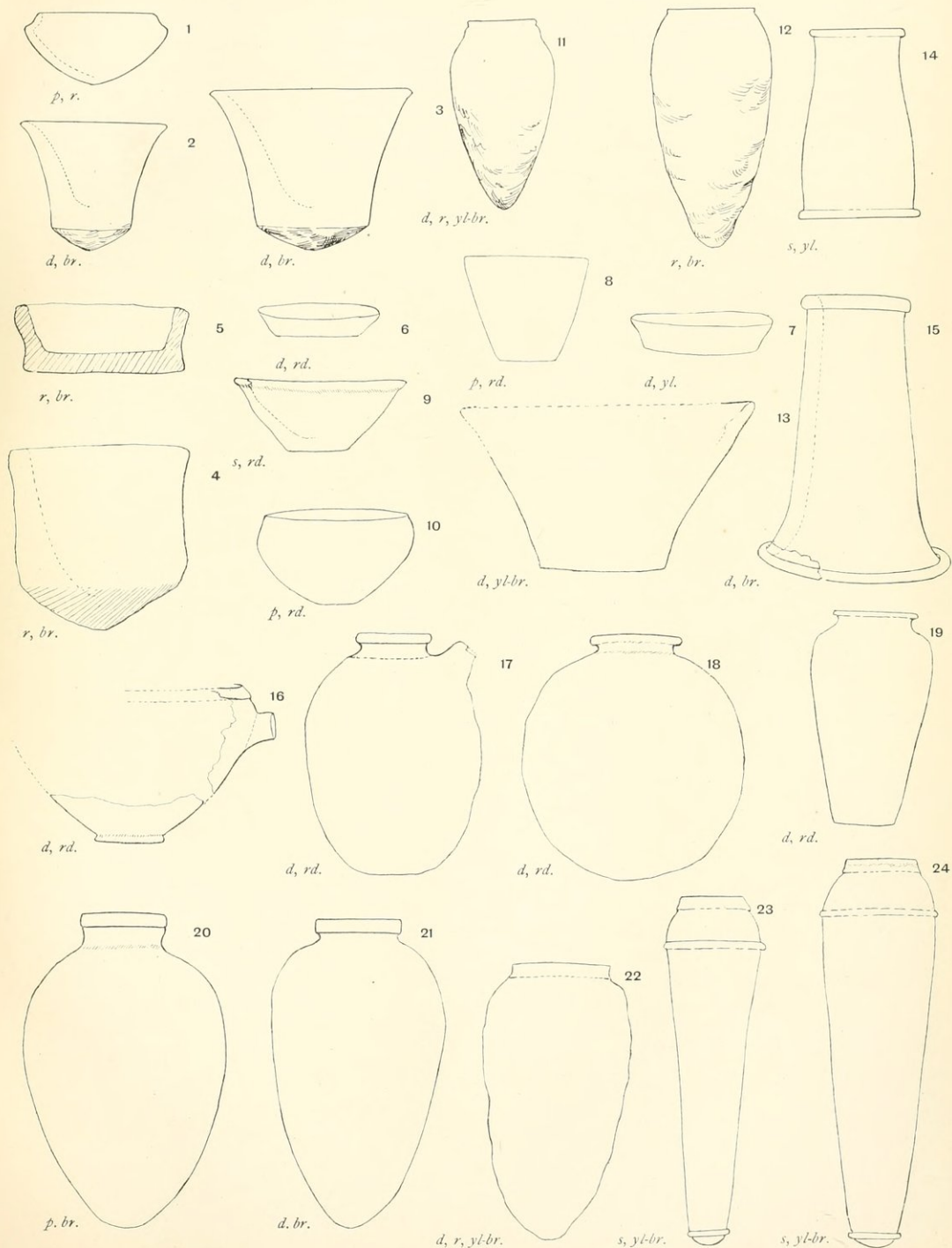
No. 8 is another example of the polished red pottery, and also is found in the same simple shape at an early period. A prototype is pictured in *Diospolis Parva*, where it is numbered 23a, with the long sequence-date range of 38-73. It does not, however, seem to have really died out, but rather persevered through some stage of change until it appears in its present form.

No. 9 is a somewhat unusual variety of this unpolished pottery of red clay. It seems to be specially characteristic of this period, though its prototypes of a slightly differing shape are well known at an earlier date.

No 10 may be placed almost in the same category with No. 8. The material is much the same, and it suggests equally the polished red ware of prehistoric times.

Nos. 11 and 12 are rough pots of the same material and appearance as Nos. 2 and 4, with

[Notes: *d* is dull; *p*, polished; *r*, rough; *s*, smooth; *br*, brown; *yl*, yellow; *rd*, red.]







which they are equally characteristic of the early dynasties. The surface is generally quite without finish, being dull and rough, with yellow-brown or dark brown colour. Its appearance is well shown by the photograph of pottery types on Plate XXXI. Pots of this character occur often numerous in groups, as, for example, in the tomb deposit No. 68, illustrated on Plate XXII.

The remaining varieties call for little comment. Nos. 14 and 15 are tall pottery stands, hollow but substantial, of unpolished yellow-brown appearance. The spouted bowl, No. 16, and the globular vessel, No. 18, are the better class of dull red pottery. No. 17, another form with spout, is of the same material, though not so well made. No. 19 is another example of an early form which dates back to the middle of the pre-dynastic period.

In No. 20 there re-appears a form common in the First Dynasty tombs of Abydos; but this vessel is unusual in the high polish, suggesting almost a varnish, which has been imparted to its brown surface.

Nos. 21 and 22 are both forms which have persisted from the later pre-dynastic period; the latter might be regarded as a standard form from which Nos. 11 and 12 are derived. Nos. 23 and 24, which are variations of the same model, are made in the best style of the period, with smooth surface of yellow-brown appearance. The form with variations is well known and characteristic of the early dynasties, and it occurs quite plentifully in the royal tombs of the First, Second, and Third Dynasties, as well as in some of the larger tombs with similar range. These twenty-four selected forms really illustrate the common varieties of pottery during the Third Dynasty. It is very noticeable how in this period, as in the earlier dynasties, the art of pottery making had declined from the high standard of the early and middle pre-dynastic period; how it nevertheless preserved some of the elements of its character, and how here and there a specimen of finest quality appears to show that the art was not really forgotten, but neglected.

## CHAPTER V

### SPECIAL FEATURES OF STAIRWAY TOMBS.

a. Arches of the Third Dynasty. Pl. XIV.      b. Miscellaneous Features. Pl. XV.

**Arches.** IN the royal tombs of the Third Dynasty at Bêt Khallâf, and in other large stairway tombs of that period in the vicinity, a noticeable feature of each is the barrel vault or series of arches under which the stairway descends. The oldest dated arch hitherto discovered in Egypt is that in the tomb of Neter Khet, K 1, Plate XIV; and the other arches shown on the same plate, which are dated by correlation with this, as also those on Plates V and VI, show by the variety of use and construction a perfect familiarity with the principle of arch-building even at this early date. The arches are built for the most part with bricks of usual size and shape placed on edge, and the inner spaces between adjoining bricks are packed with mud and broken chips.

**Construction.** Approximately true *voussoirs*, however, were not unknown. They were obtained from the ordinary bricks in one of two ways, either by the trimming down of one side (or of the two sides) to the required wedge-like form, or by the addition of an extra piece of mud to one side, which was allowed to dry on before it was used in the building, and so gave the required shape. The best example figured in which *voussoirs* were freely employed is shown on Plate V, in the photograph of the arches and doorstone from above. The bricks are fashioned in this case by the latter of the two processes, namely, the affixing of an extra piece of mud. In another example on Plate XIV, from the tomb of Hen-Nekht, the same

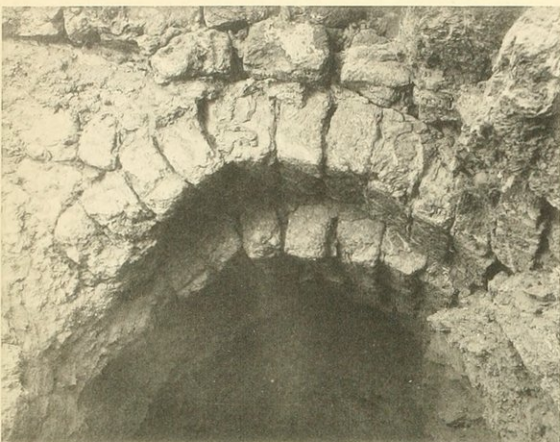
method is combined freely with that in which the bricks are trimmed down to a smaller size. The employment of any form of keystone is not customary, and probably occurs only by accident. An illustration of some interest is afforded by tomb K 110 (Plate XIV) in which the bricks placed lengthwise did not give the exact span, and so caused the space to be filled by a smaller shaped piece in the centre. The photograph is shown somewhat tilted, owing to the difficulty of position: the stick seen in the left is really vertical. It is doubtful whether the upper arch in this case would have stood by itself: it seems to have been designed merely to give balance and thickness to the whole.

**Evolution in Egypt.** The evolution of the arch in Egyptian architecture seems to have been spontaneous, natural, and local. From the absence of any such feature in the published plans of earlier tombs, it seems to date its origin to the early Third Dynasty. In the necropolis of Reqaqnah a number of smaller tombs illustrate the development of the corbelled or offset vault (e.g. Tomb 56, Pl. XIV), from which the true arch seems to have naturally evolved in Egypt as in Chaldaea. The series of sketches which show this has no chronological significance, for the form seems to have developed spontaneously, as stated, but they are drawn from actual examples of the Third Dynasty at Reqaqnah.

Previous to this discovery the earliest dated arch of Egypt had been found in the tomb of

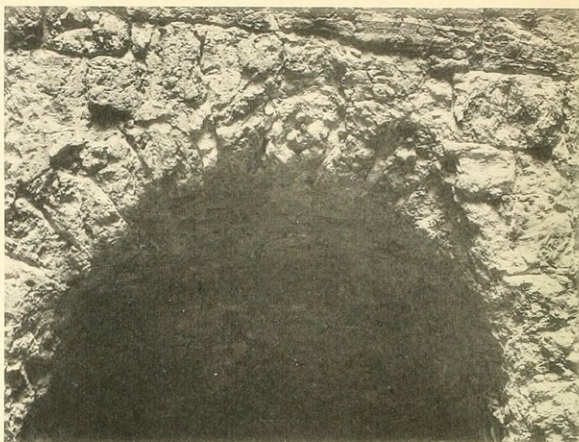






TOMB OF NETER-KHET.

K 1.

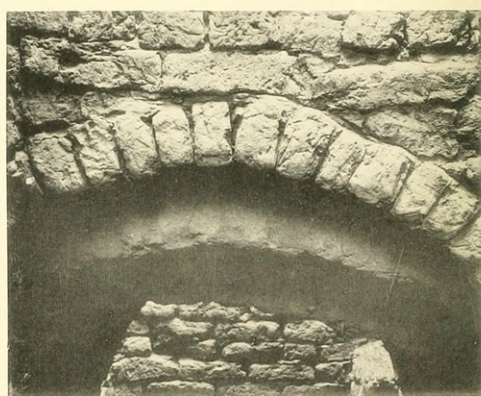


TOMB OF HEN-NEKHT.

K 2.



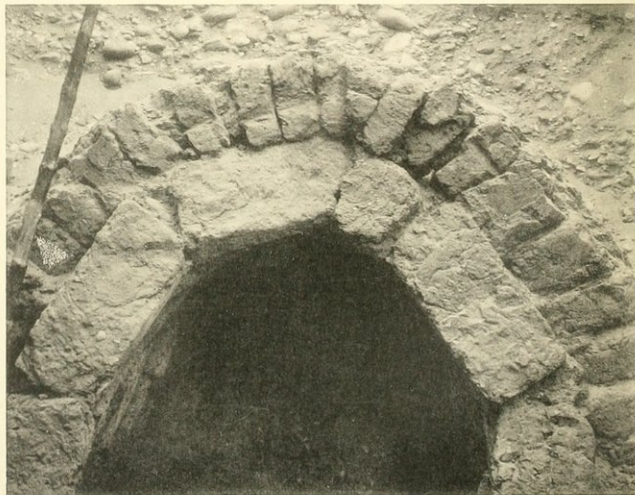
FIRST ARCH. TOMB R 40



SECOND ARCH. TOMB R 1.



FALSE ARCH. S. END. TOMB R 56, III<sup>RD</sup> DYN.



DOUBLE ARCH. TOMB R 110, III<sup>RD</sup>-IV<sup>TH</sup> DYN





Diagrams showing origins of Simple Arch (2A) and Off-set Arch (3).

Adu I at Dendereh,<sup>1</sup> of the Sixth Dynasty. M. Mariette, also, in a letter to MM. Perrot and Chipiez, cited by them in their *History of Egyptian Art*, II. pp. 77, 84, gives a rough diagram of an arch of the Sixth Dynasty, which he had observed at Abydos, and says: "Speaking generally, I believe that the Egyptians were acquainted with the principle from the earliest times." In Egypt, as at a later date in Phœnicia, there was no natural cause for the use of vaults or arches on an elaborate scale. Long slabs of limestone for roofing the temples and larger buildings could always be obtained at hand throughout the country, hence probably it arose that the use of the arch and barrel-vaulting originated and chiefly developed as the most practicable means of roofing the subterranean passages and chambers of the early tombs. The application of the principle on a larger scale in later dynasties shows it to have been properly understood. The vaulted roofs and spans supported by columns in the rock-hewn tombs at Beni Hasan, are examples of engineering skill in the Middle Empire; while the vaulted roof in the temple of Seti, at Abydos, and the Ramesseum, the elliptical vaults, too, at Thebes, show the further elaboration of the New Empire.

In other countries. The same natural and spontaneous evolution of the arch which took place in Egypt in the early Third Dynasty seems to have occurred at a corresponding period in Chaldæa also. In the absence of any early relative chronology, and the uncertainty of the actual dates of these early events, it cannot be said in which country the principle first developed. Present evidence points to Egypt, but the earlier sites of Chaldæa have still to be

scientifically described. In any case the development was probably independent. The same series of primitive attempts and "make-shifts" found at Reqaqnah have been observed also in the necropolis of Mugheir, the *Ur* of the Chaldæans. In Lower Chaldæa in general the use of the off-set arch and the methods suitable only to smaller buildings are frequent. The practical construction, too, seems to have been effected in many instances by the same simple contrivance as is found in ancient and modern times in Egypt. For example, the method of supporting a small barrel roof, as described in Chapter VIII, during the process of building, by inclining the bricks, seems to have been equally prevalent in Chaldæa. The domed roofs of *sheikhs'* tombs and the houses of Nubia are erected with similar saving of trouble. In Chaldæa, too, the system elaborated with time for decorative purposes. From the accounts of Strabo and Diodorus it seems that the hanging gardens of Babylon must have been supported by real centred arches. Sargon's palace at Khorsabad also exhibited some of the finest examples of this use.

In these countries the use of the arch begins at a much later time, and it is correspondingly less probable that it developed locally. In Persia at any rate the system was apparently copied, often rudely and without interest, from Chaldæa. At Tiryns there is a gallery with a pointed arch; and though the principle seems to have been understood by the Greeks even before the Trojan war, yet it cannot be traced back in their architecture to a spontaneous beginning as in Egypt. In Judæa the arched aqueducts of Herod are the best known examples, but this belongs to a day when the Romans, aided by necessity, had long brought

<sup>1</sup> Petrie: Dendereh. 1900.



the use of the arch to its perfection. It may be surmised that the Etruscans had brought with them from their Lydian home a knowledge of the principle derived by contact through the Hittite with the Nile and the Euphrates valleys.

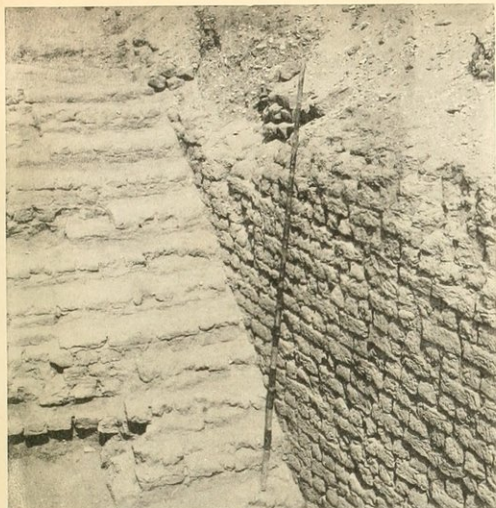
Tomb R 2. (b.) In addition to the two large  
Plate XV. tombs which have been described in the foregoing chapters, there were found and excavated several others with stairways and other features of interest. One of them, No. R 2, had been not less important than they. The small proportion of objects found within it, and the poor state of its superstructure, alone keep it out from a place among the chief results of the excavation. Some details of its construction, however, are of special interest. Above the ground only the outer wall could be definitely traced, often being preserved only in its lowest course of bricks. It was two metres thick, and enclosed the usual large rectangular space. From the north end, at the middle, the stairway led down as usual to a depth of about ten metres, when the doorway to the chambers was reached. After pulling back the great slab of stone which served as usual for a door a serious subsidence occurred, necessitating the excavation to be renewed from above the chambers, by removing all the superimposed weight of gravel. It was then found that a small plunderer's hole had already been forced in the same direction. Finally the clearing of the interior showed that the chambers were of simple character, consisting mainly of a passage some eight metres in length leading on the right (to the west) into a square room, which from an analogy may be called the burial chamber. The few objects, fragments of pottery, stone vases and copper implements, found within the tomb seemed to be of somewhat earlier character in general than those

from the other stairway tombs which have been described. It seems probable, considering all things, that No. 2 was indeed the earliest of the large stairway tombs on the site, dating to the Second or early Third Dynasty. It is thus of special interest to note that its stairway was not supported at any point by cross walls, though it descended somewhat deeply. Its angle too was steep, almost one in two. The sides were strongly bricked, and the stairway also, as seen on the photograph of Plate XV, was laid with bricks in two courses.

No. 14. A number of steps, the beginning  
Plate XV. as it seemed of an incomplete tomb, were found near to the position of tomb No. 1. They were numbered 14, and a picture of them appears in the plate. The chief interest in this is a hint of a curious constructional method. The side wall of the stairway is completed only so far as the excavation was proceeded, the courses ending irregularly pending completion. The indication is that the building of these retaining walls, the chief purpose of which was to keep back the falling sand, proceeded from the top. The bricks were added one at a time as space was cleared for them. This method was certainly not always used, but other indications of it in special cases have been noted.

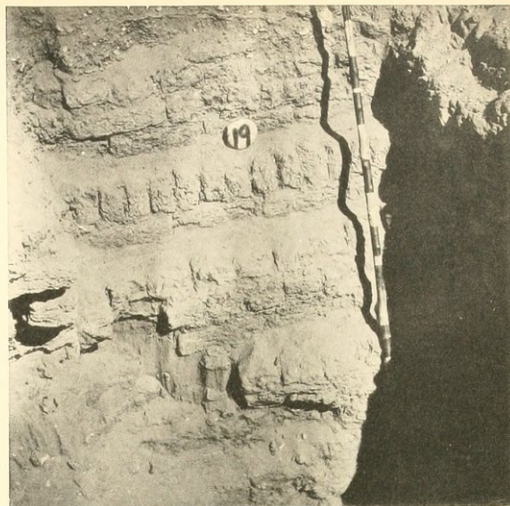
No. 19. Other small stairway tombs pre-  
Plate XV. sented features of interest in connexion with the history of this form of sepulchre. In the case numbered 19, the staircase descends for a metre and a half, and leads only to a small square space at the foot, where presumably the burial had been laid. This is the type of construction numbered 4 on Plates XIX, XX. Other instances were observed at El Kab. At the latter place, too, as here, the same form with the addition of a small subterranean chamber is noteworthy.





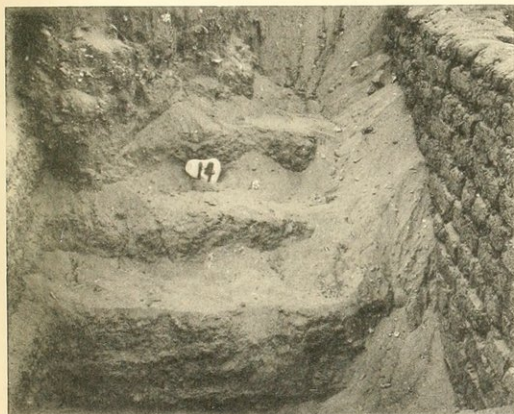
STAIRWAY IN GREAT TOMB

R 2.



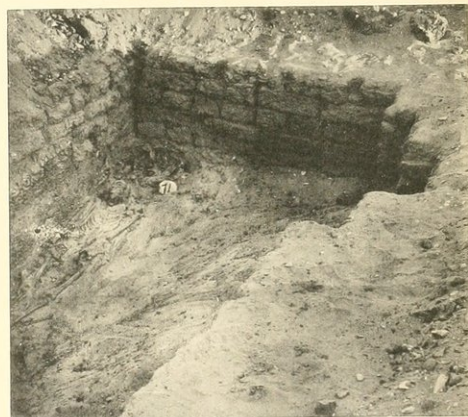
STAIRWAY OF SMALL TOMB

R 19.



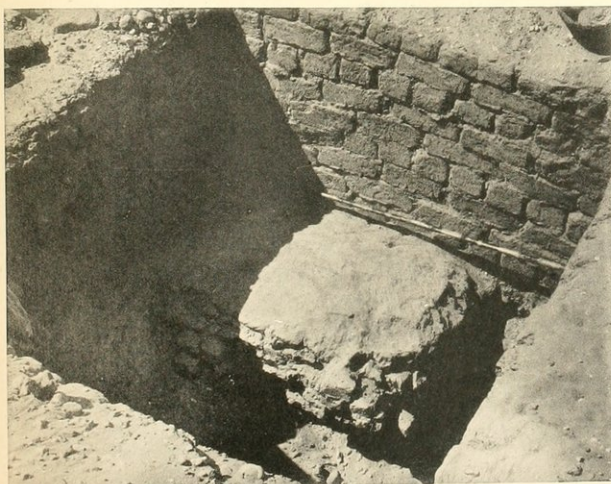
STAIRS OF INCOMPLETED TOMB.

R 14.



EXCEPTIONAL TOMB AND BURIAL.

R 71



ENCLOSED VAULT OF TOMB R 72. FROM W

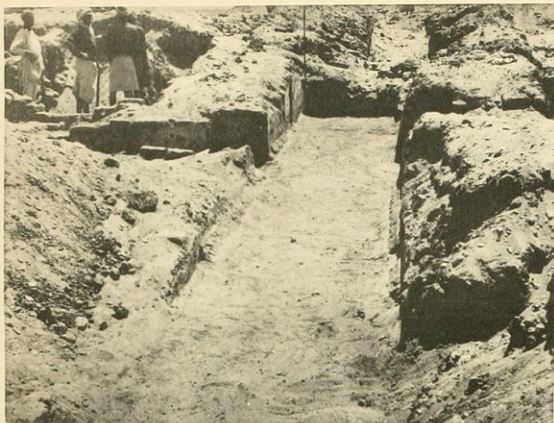


ENCLOSED VAULT OF TOMB, R 50. FROM S.









STUCCOED PASSAGE, LOOKING S.

R 75.



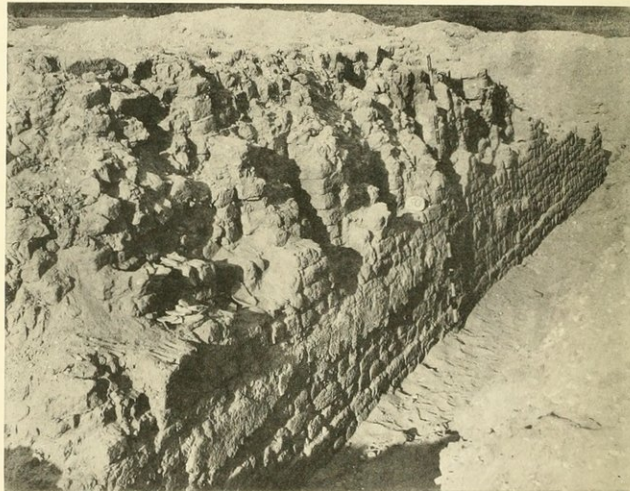
DOORWAY AND THRESHOLD, LOOKING E.

R 75.



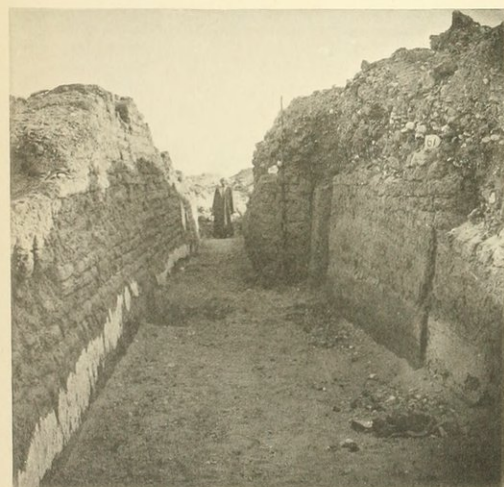
STUCCOED PASSAGE, LOOKING N.

R 50.



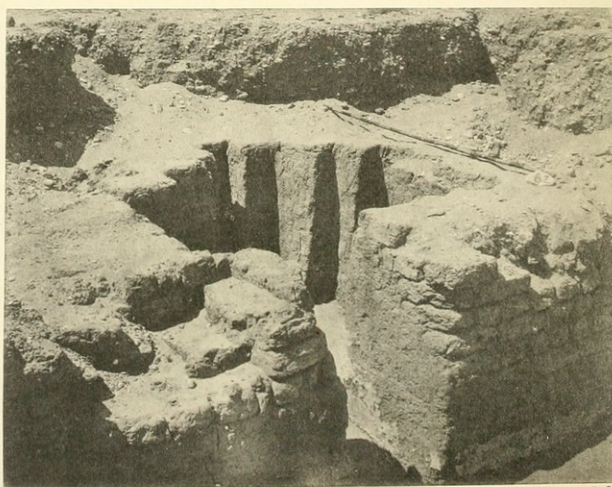
S. WALL, PARTLY PANELLED.

R 50.



W. WALL, TO LEFT, STUCCOED.

R 50.



UNSCRIPTED SHRINE.

R 62.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE LARGE MASTABAS OR PLATFORM-TOMBS.

With Plate XVI (R 75, R 50); Plates XVII, XVIII (R 70); and Plate XXI (Plans).

THE foregoing chapters have described those tombs which are characterized by a descending stairway, leading to a series of subterranean chambers. The present chapter is concerned with those large tombs of which the conspicuous feature is rather the architecture and general plan of the superstructure—hence called mastabas. In these there is a noticeable change in regard to the burial chamber and its approaches. In one instance, the earliest, a stairway survives, but in others it is supplanted by square shafts merely. It is found by analysis that this change is, to some extent, chronological, and that the evolution of one form from the other may be traced through various stages. This sequence has a definite importance, and the chapter which follows this will be devoted accordingly to its consideration.

In the present instance there are three great mastaba tombs to be considered, numbered respectively R 50, R 70 and R 75, the plans for which are shown to a scale of 1:200 on Plate XXI. Of these it appears at once, from their positions, that R 70 is of later date than R 75. There are indeed reasons, which will be made evident, for believing that R 75 belongs to the Third Dynasty, R 50 to the Fourth, and R 70 to the later Fourth or Fifth.

The tomb R 75 is of special interest. While preserving the plan of an extensive superstructure, it also provides the feature of a descending stairway. It thus serves as a bond in type between the stairway tombs, R 1, R 2, and R 40, described in the foregoing chapters, and the mastaba tombs R 50

and R 70, which are analogous to it in plan, but without any staircase. A comparison of the tomb plans on Plate XXI. will show also that R 75 is more clearly related to No. 50 than to No. 70, and there are other evidences that this indication is correct.

In the excavation of this tomb (No. 75), there was nothing found to reveal the name of the personage for whom it had been built. In the burial chamber, which was cleared with some difficulty owing to the weakness of its sides and the constant accumulation of water, there were found only some pottery vessels and fragments of stone vases, similar in character to those from the stairway tombs of the Third Dynasty. In the upper building, of which only the wall foundations remained, there were no small objects found. The entrance seems to have been through a small porch on the eastern side, leading at once to a doorway with stone threshold, which is shown in the photograph on Plate XVI. This approach leads directly to a long passage, running in either direction, north and south; and almost opposite is a large false door or panel of three recesses. The photograph shows the preserved portion of this passage, looking southward along its length, with the door to the left. It may be seen that traces of white stucco remain adhering to the walls. Here and there a close inspection suggested that the stucco had been covered with hieroglyphs in columns, painted on; but the portions were aggravatingly small and the signs indistinctly preserved, so that nothing except the fact could be recorded. At the southern end of this passage

Tomb R 75.

Plate  
XVI, XXI.

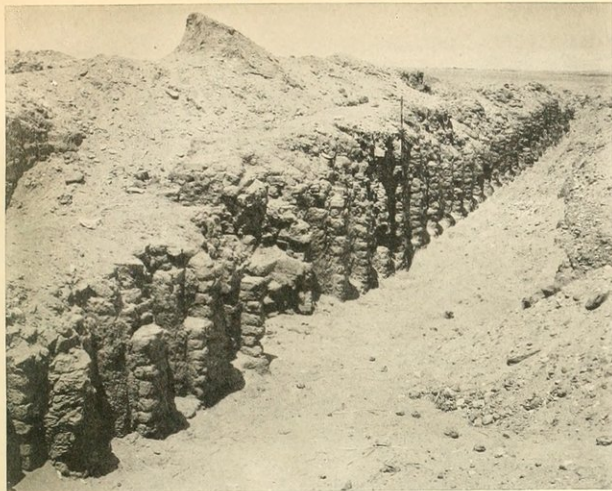
a door leads westward to a smaller passage or chamber, from which an inner door again provides a way to the interior of the tomb. This inmost portion is not in sufficient preservation to show what were the further details of the plan. From the northern portion of the enclosure, a stairway led down, southward as usual, to the single chamber below. It seems probable that here, too, as in the case of the stairway tombs, the space over the burial chamber was devoted to the inner chapel or sanctuary. The supplementary passages above ground, in this instance, seem to take the places of those which in the earlier instances were cut out, also below, on the eastern side of the burial chamber. Against this tomb there were built subsequently the series of tombs, 88, 89 of the Third Dynasty, the vaulted tomb No. 68, and the great mastaba tomb No. 70. There is a noticeable absence in the plan of No. 75 of any external panels or recesses, such as those which embellish the face of No. 70. But this does not prove necessarily that they were absent from the architecture of the building, inasmuch as only the lowest courses of the outer walls were preserved, and these panels, in the earlier instance, No. 50, did not reach down nearer than half a metre, or two feet, from the ground.

<sup>Tomb R 50.</sup> The mastaba tomb, No. 50, presents <sup>Plates XVI, XXI.</sup> some general affinities with the foregoing as well as some marked differences. The form, rectangular and oblong, with face to the east, is similar. There are in this instance two doorways, both leading directly into the passage running along the length. The inner walls were plastered, as before, and were preserved (as the photograph shows) to a considerable height. The eastern side was furnished with three of the false doors, or small shrines, the middle one being larger than the others. The most northerly seemed to have been carefully prepared for the reception of some standing object, possibly a statue. From the

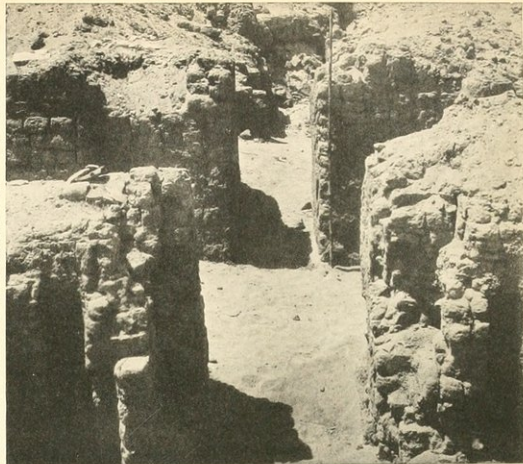
southern end of this passage, as in the previous instance, a door leads westward into the interior, from which there descend two square pits. The one was a shaft leading down to a chamber on the south side, which was found empty; the other was probably a well of offerings, but it descended to a great depth, and could not be excavated owing to accumulation of water. These pits were placed (as seen on the plan) centrally within the inner enclosure: it could not be determined whether there had been any roof, whether partial or covering the whole. Externally the western wall was preserved to the exceptional height of two metres; it had also been plastered with white stucco, as the photograph shows. The northern and southern walls were found panelled above a certain height, as the photograph shows; probably also the eastern face was similarly decorated, but it was not preserved to the course of brickwork at which embellishment began. In the excavation of this tomb several small objects of interest were discovered. The burial chamber itself was found quite empty, but near the door of the tomb, at the southern end of the passage, some fragments of stone were found nicely inscribed with hieroglyphs in relief and painted. Unfortunately they gave little information, with the exception of one piece having the reference *suten rek* (Friend of the King). In a small hole, again, bored into the top of the wall near the north-west corner, were found a number of small round balls of tenacious and seemingly foreign clay, inscribed with incised marks (as shown in Plate XXX) in some manner, which is not readily construed.

<sup>Tomb R 70.</sup> In the tomb numbered R 70 in the <sup>Plates XVII, XVIII, XXI.</sup> plan there is seen to be a building of greater size and architectural elaboration than those which have been previously described. Here the whole of the eastern face may be seen from the photographs of Plate XVII to have been decorated with double panels





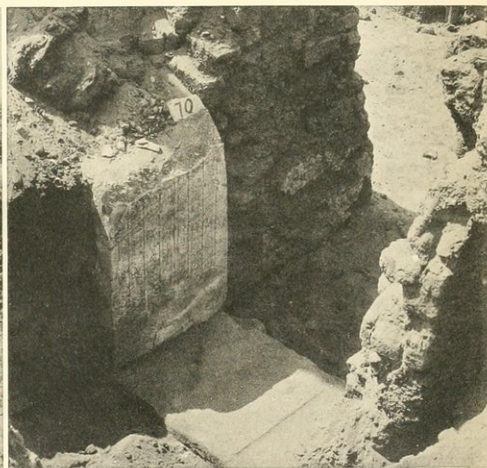
PANELLED E. FRONT FROM S.



OUTER AND INNER SOUTHERN ENTRANCES.



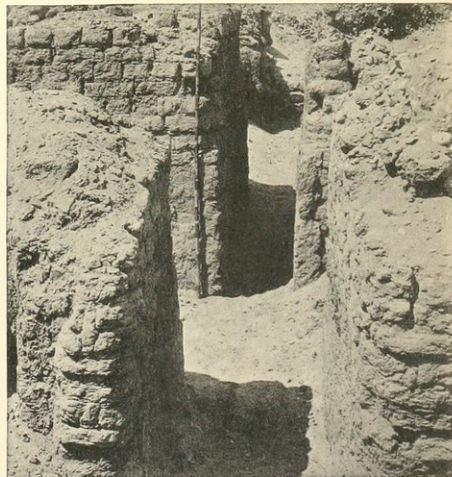
GENERAL VIEW OF SOUTHERLY ENTRANCE.



INSCRIBED JAMB IN SOUTHERLY ENTRANCE



PANELLED E. FRONT FROM N.

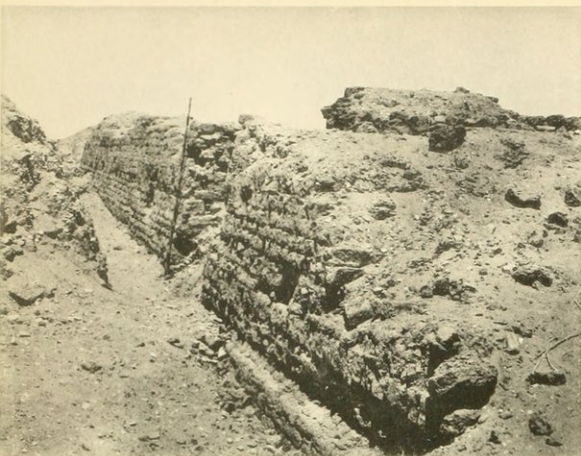


OUTER AND INNER NORTHERLY ENTRANCES.









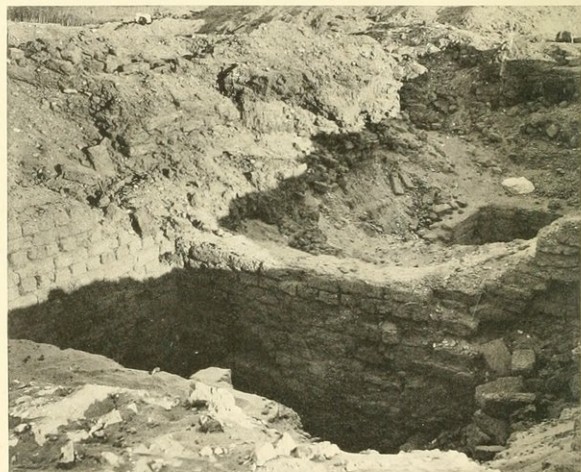
WEST WALL, FROM S.



VIEW SHOWING FIRST INNER PASSAGE, FROM S.



FIRST INNER PASSAGE, FROM N.



THE TOMB SHAFTS, FROM N.



SECOND INNER PASSAGE, FROM S.



THE SAME, SHOWING DETAILS.



reaching almost to the ground. The walls on the other side are plain; the outer wall on the west is preserved in parts to the height of nearly two metres. The plan shows that in this instance there are two long passages running parallel with one another, and with the eastern face. The curious way in which this tomb is built up to No. 75 at its north-east corner suggests a possibility that the eastern wall, and with it the easterly passage, was an addition to the original design of the structure. There is no reason to suppose, on the other hand, that it was not contemporary. There are in this case also two entrances, both from the east, which lead directly through the outer and into the inner passage. The analogy of detail with tomb No. 50 is further borne out by the threefold shrine or recess on the eastern side of the inner passage, corresponding almost in position to the main shaft of the interior. Unlike the two mastabas previously described, the inmost portion of the tomb was an entirely solid mastaba, or platform of brick. From this two pits descended simply from its surface. They seem to have been approached by a flight of steps leading as usual from the southern end of the inner passage. These pits were probably, as before, the one for access to the burial chamber, the other merely a well of offerings. They both

descended to a great depth, and being unsound at the lowest levels, a great excavation of the whole interior was necessitated. The progress of this (shown in Plate XXVI) resulted in the discovery of an interesting pot-burial below. The result of this clearance was to find the burial chamber broken, robbed and empty; but before the southern pit could be cleared out some serious subsidences during successive nights, threatening the upper walls of the tomb, made it necessary to leave that portion of the excavation not completed.

Apart from its architecture, the chief interest of this great tomb thus devolves upon a discovery made during the early stages of its excavation. This was a large slab of limestone placed as a jamb in the outer southern door, as seen on Plate XVII. It is inscribed with hieroglyphs in relief, arranged in seven columns, giving the names of a number of scribes. The inscription itself will be found described in Chapter XI, with Plate XXVIII, where the photograph shows better the quality of the work. The carving was of such clear character that the authorities of the Cairo Museum retained it as an example of the work of the time. It seems to belong to the best period of the Old Kingdom, and to this date probably the tomb itself may be assigned.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE EVOLUTION OF STAIRWAY TOMES.

With Plates XIX, XX.

**I**N the four preceding chapters the character of the larger tombs of the Third Dynasty has been examined in detail. It has been seen in Chapter III that the class of tomb most familiar to the period is characterized by a stairway descending from the north to its subterranean chambers, and in Chapter VI that a later class, distinguished by greater elaboration of the superstructure, seems to have gradually supplanted the former.

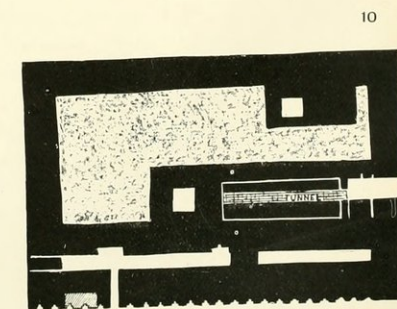
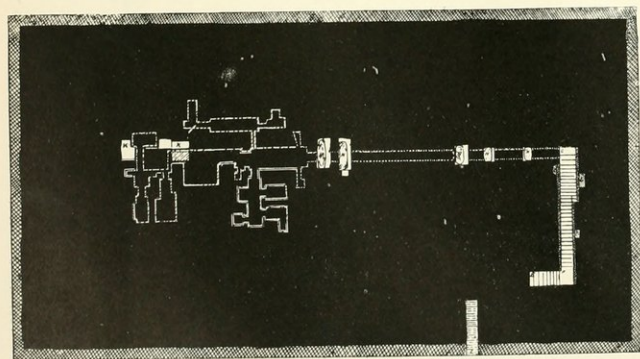
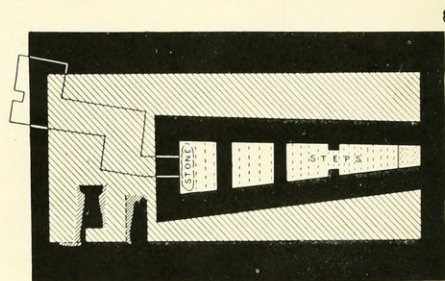
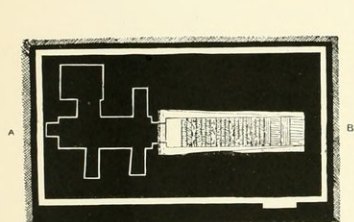
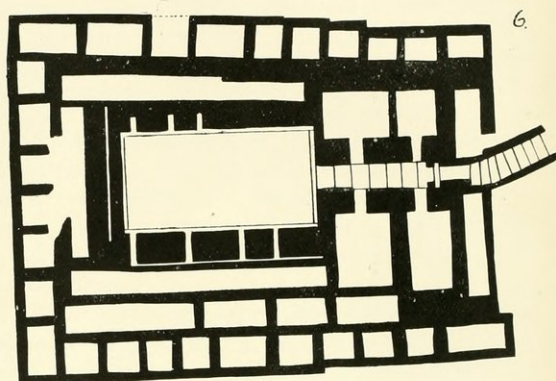
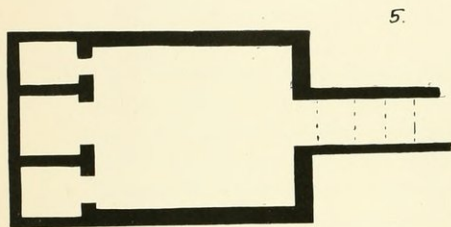
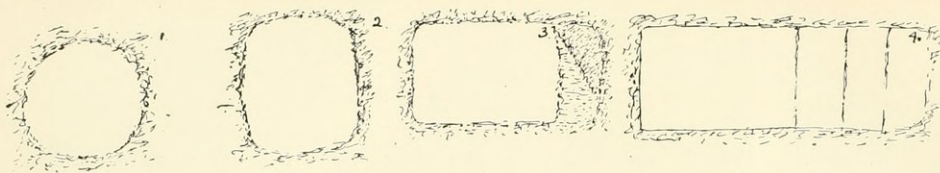
These two classes were related. The one seems to have evolved directly from the other, and to have followed it closely in time. Though distinguished from one another by names suggested by their leading features, yet even from the drawings which have illustrated the foregoing chapters it may be seen that forms occur which combine to some extent the features of each class, to which the names stairway tombs or mastâba tombs would be equally or jointly appropriate. But the stairway tombs have a direct relation with the earliest form of Egyptian grave. In a site jointly representative of the pre-dynastic and earliest dynastic periods, such as El Amrah, it is possible to trace the origins of the stairway tomb from the simple grave made as a mere hole in the ground. The later mastâba tombs, on the other hand, link directly with the structures characteristic of the Pyramid Age and the elaborate architecture of the Old Kingdom. There is therefore to be found in the evolution of these tomb structures a definite bond of continuity which links the earliest pre-

dynastic period with the full light of historic times. This element of evidence is associated so closely with the conservative customs of a people's history, that it must be regarded as of first importance in the problem of Egyptian origins.

In the diagrams which illustrate this evolution, the examples have been chosen so far as possible from the locality of Bêt Khallâf and Reqaqnah. Occasionally for some special purpose an isolated example of the elaboration of certain features has been introduced from elsewhere. It might have been possible, indeed, by adding to these series a number of extraneous intermediate forms which the site itself supplies only indirectly or imperfectly, to have illustrated a sequence of tombs changing gradually and uniformly from stage to stage. By this process the sand holes which served for graves in prehistoric times would be found linked in sequence, for instance, with the pyramids themselves. A result seemingly so incongruous demands caution against any error of generalization. Small changes seemingly in sequence are not necessarily consecutive in time. Forms may spontaneously recur, or even revert; or a whole series illustrating the development of an idea may prove to be contemporary. In the same way, analogous types of different localities are known in general to belong to the same period; but the fact cannot be used alone as evidence in particular instances. It is only when the whole history of a site is known in detail and in







general, from independent sources, that it becomes possible to trace the evolution of the forms it illustrates. Fortunately two years' work in this region have made it possible in this instance.

The diagrams which illustrate this evolution are grouped separately under plans and sections. So far as it was found desirable for the purpose, the sections are those of tombs whose plans appear on the preceding plate. Except in the cases numbered 1-4 of each, these drawings are made to scale from measurement of observed instances.

The first four represent the simple graves of prehistoric times. At first there were holes dug in the sand, either round (1) or oblong (2). Instances of this class are numerous, as at Negadah and El Amrah, and locally at Alawniyeh. Stage (3) shows the deeper grave to have suggested as a convenience a way down to it, provided by a roughly cut out step or steps. This also was observed at Alawniyeh. The next stage is important, being the first form of stairway tomb, where the chamber and stairs are more truly constructed, and the former probably covered by a roof of timber and mud. Instances occur at Reqaqnah and at El Kab. The whole development up to this point is natural and gradual. Another diagram might at this point have been introduced from instances observed at El Kab, where the stairway descends as here, but the desert surface having been found sufficiently strong, the small chamber at the foot was cut out, leaving a roof of gravel above it. The effect in appearance is the same exactly as that in which a roof is artificially supplied; but the link is important as leading directly to the subsequent development, which it may be easier to follow separately from this stage in plan and in section.

On Plate XIX the diagram numbered 5 shows the plan for a tomb found at Mahasna.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> G.M.K. Plates XXXIII, XXXV.

It was dated to the First or Second Dynasty on the evidence of objects found in its excavation. It illustrates a further development of the motive in No. 4. The stairway is more decided, the chamber is more true and lined with brickwork. One end of the room is divided by partition walls, providing a number of recesses or ante-rooms. The origin of this subdivision has been traced at El Amrah<sup>2</sup> to a desire for small recesses wherein to place the different kinds of offerings, and this development is seen to be in progress at the beginning of the First Dynasty. As a further illustration showing the elaboration of this motive during the First Dynasty, the tomb of King Qa at Abydos<sup>3</sup> is of interest (No. 6). Here the stairway descends as usual to the chamber, but the provision of a number of recesses about the main room is already accepted as so necessary that they have been built as separate chambers around the central one.

It has already been mentioned that these tomb chambers were roofed over with timber and earth, covered with mud; and that the experiment of excavating the chamber entirely below the surface, leaving a natural roof, was already being tried. All further development seems to have been prompted by a striving after greater security for the body of the deceased. Hence the subsequent deepening of the stairway, and the placing of a large stone against the door of the burial chamber, as it is found in a simple example (No. 7) of the late Second or early Third Dynasty. The depth of the chambers below the surface now compels their excavation, and the same desire for ante-chambers finds expression in a number of small rooms or recesses leading from the main chamber in various directions. The stairway tomb is now fully developed.

In No. 8 the same principles are illustrated; only in that case the deeper stairway or the more

<sup>2</sup> R.M.A. Plate IV.

<sup>3</sup> P.R.T. (i). Plate LX.



yielding character of the gravel through which it is dug has introduced the necessity for cross walls and buttresses to support the sides. The chambers are subterranean, and their door is closed by a large stone as before. It is natural that on the surface above the tomb, within its area, there should develop a chapel or shrine for the making of offerings and prayers after the usual custom.<sup>1</sup>

The remainder of this evolution will be clearly illustrated by the diagrams in section. It is important to notice in regard to the plans 9 and 10 a continual approximation towards the familiar appearance of mastâba in the Old Empire, as exemplified by the further series R 75, R 50, and R 70 on Plate XXI.

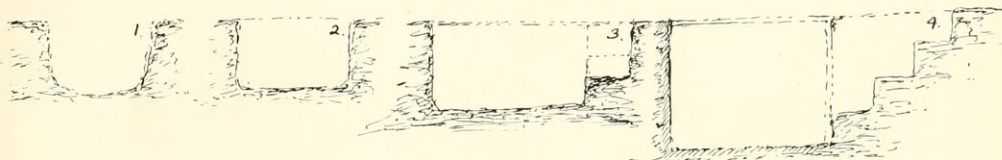
This change is indicated by the gradual widening of the cross walls in the passage, and the consequent closing of the open spaces above the stairs until these assume the form of mere shafts at intervals, utilized in the elaborate tomb (No. 9) as guides for lowering the stone doors. The stairway appears next, in the Sixth Dynasty tomb, completely roofed over, and so almost disappears from the surface plan. At the same time the visible structure above ground has been developing, and has already assumed the form in plan and the appearance characteristic of the mastâba (e.g. No. R 75, Plate XXI; No. 10, Plate XIX). The disappearance of the stairway at this stage consequently involved no visible change. The shaft leading directly down to the bottom of the passage, which seems always to have been found indispensable, served equally well for access to the chambers, when with this process of changes the necessity for a stairway was no longer apparent. The plans of these tombs thus illustrate a continual development, prompted by a visible slow change of purpose, linking the simple pre-historic grave with the elaborate mastâba of historic times.

<sup>1</sup> Maspero: *Manual of Egyptian Archaeology* (1902), p. 342.

The sections of these tombs present this evolution from a different aspect, and illustrate at the same time some points of analogy more clearly. The development of a stairway with the deepening and elaboration of the earliest graves (seen in diagrams 1-4) is natural, and leads directly to the form of stairway tomb in the First Dynasty, No. 5. It seems to have been an early custom to roof these small graves with twigs and mud, at the level of the surrounding sands. The appearance when covered over must have been the same as that of a small chamber excavated in the desert, leaving the natural roof of gravel above. That this method was actually in use has been shown by observed instances at El Kab<sup>2</sup> and at Reqaqnah. But until the stairway deepened considerably it must have been the simpler method to supply a new roof to replace the yielding surface sands. In the Third Dynasty, however, when the deepening of the stairway, in an effort to gain greater security for the burial, led down to harder strata of desert gravel, it became not merely possible but expedient to excavate the chambers entirely below the surface, leaving for protection as great a thickness of desert gravel as possible above them. This change marks a definite stage of development: the perishable timber roof gives way to the more desirable super-stratum of gravel.

The diagrams numbered 6 and 7 show well the stage of evolution reached at the beginning of the Third Dynasty. But these tombs (K 3 and K 4) at Bêt Khallâf happen to have been placed where the desert gravel was remarkably hard in the lower strata. It was only under such conditions that it was possible to excavate the stairway to any great depth without supporting the sides. At Reqaqnah, for instance, as the next diagram (No. 8) shows, it was found desirable in tomb R 40 to line each side with a brick wall, mutually supporting each

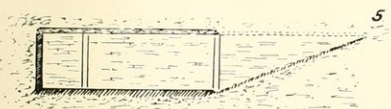
<sup>2</sup> Q.K., p. 7, etc.



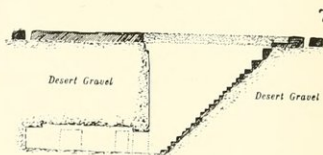
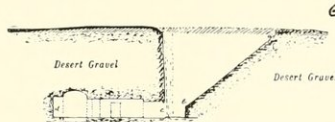
1, 2. Simple Graves of the pre-dynastic Period.

3. Deeper Grave, with Step down (Alutanîyeh, etc.)

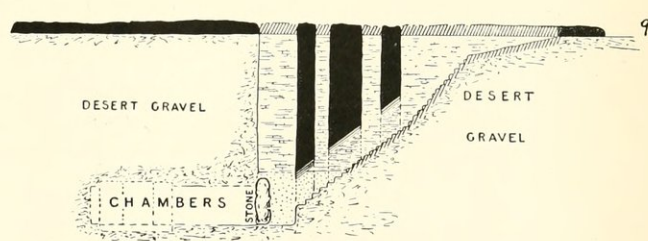
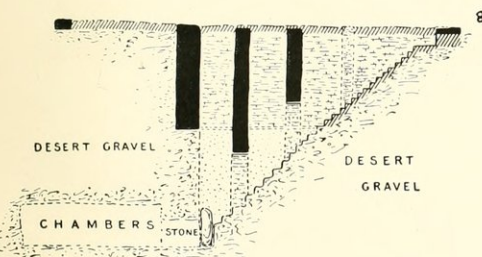
4. Deeper Roofed Grave, with Steps (Reqaqnah, etc.)



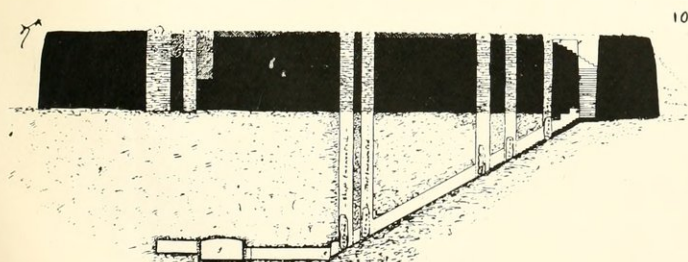
5. Simple Stairway Tomb of First Dynasty (Mahasna).



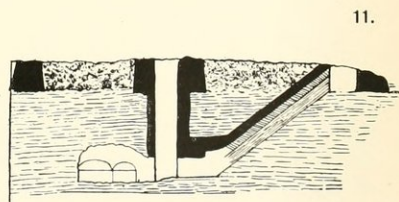
6, 7. Stairway Tombs of Early Third Dynasty, with Subterranean Chambers (Bêt Khallâf).



8, 9. Large Stairway Tombs of Third Dynasty, with Cross Wall Supports to sides of Stairway and Subterranean Chambers (Reqaqnah).



10. Elaborated Stairway Tomb of Third Dynasty (Bêt Khallâf).



11. Final Form of Stairway Tomb (Adu II, at Denderah), Sixth Dynasty.





other by slight cross walls placed from side to side. The passage below was kept clear by means of an archway. In a further instance (No. 9), the supporting cross walls are made wider and stronger; the spaces between them appear more as shafts or air holes, and the archways below them take the form of a series of short barrel vaults.

Though exceptional in many ways, the great tomb of Neter-Khet provides an interesting study in section (No. 10) of the elaboration of the principle of construction in stairway tombs at this stage of their evolution. The whole motive for this remarkable structure was security for the burial chamber. The passage leads down continuously to so great a depth that the shafts, which occur at intervals, appear as mere interruptions to an otherwise continuous tunnel. After serving their purpose as guides for the enormous stones which barred the way at six successive points, these shafts were closed up, and, like the stairway itself, their position was concealed by masonry built solidly above it. In these doors there may be seen the prototypes of those familiar in the pyramid passages: only in the latter case, after the stone had been supported in a position from which it could be readily dropped across the way as required, the remainder of the pile was built upwards, leaving the door in readiness to be closed from the interior. It is an elaboration of the principle just demonstrated in the tomb of Neter Khet. The whole mass which constitutes the superstructure of this tomb, again, guards against the possi-

bility of forcing a way, as was common, into the chambers below. It recalls at once, in appearance, the lowest stage of the step pyramid at Sakkara, of which the king who was buried here is reputed to be the builder. It would seem, in any case, that the same motive prompted the engineers in each case.

But this solid superstructure was not characteristic of the trend in the development of smaller tombs. By a glance at Plate XXI, the plan of tomb R 75, and the other large mastâbas, it may be seen that already the custom was coming into vogue in the Third Dynasty of erecting some form of a shrine above the site of the tombs. The precise form which this took was probably dictated by ritual: the door is uniformly on the east; the eastern wall is often elaborately decorated, and there is a passage-way or chapel coming along the eastern interior. The principle of the mastâba tombs was thus already well developed. The stairway might give way, through difficulty of construction, to the simpler tomb shaft giving access to the chambers. In more important tombs, as in that of Adu I or Adu II, at Denderah, the stairway might survive, or recur, as a continuous tunnel. But from a glance at the tomb plans of Plate XXI, or at those mastâbas which have been found elsewhere, it is seen that the disappearance of the passage, the original feature of the stairway tomb, no longer seems a matter of importance at a time when the superstructure of the mastâba tomb was receiving the whole attention of the architects in the Old Empire.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE NECROPOLIS. POSITION AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE SMALLER TOMES

With Plates XXI, XXII.

THE picture of a portion of the northern necropolis in Plate III has already shown the smaller tombs to have been arranged in it with some show of system. In that photograph two narrow ways are seen lying between the parallel rows of tombs, and in the plan on Plate XXI, two other divisions, less regular but more lengthy, are traceable in a similar direction. The preservation of the mastabas numbered 50, 60, and 61, indeed, gives to the way between them the appearance of a long walled passage, as shown by the photograph in Plate XVI of the west wall of R 50.

It is apparent, too, from the plan, that both the smaller tombs have been placed with due regard to the positions and directions of the others, and also bear some relation to the three larger mastabas. There are suggestions in these positions with regard to one another of the general scheme by which the necropolis grew; but it may be well first to examine what is more distinct, the evidence of the approximations of adjoining structures. On Plate XXV, for example, the general view of the shrine of Shepses, just shows on the left hand how this tomb had been completed, with the usual batter to its walls, before that numbered 63 was built up to it. In other cases the evidence is even more clear, where a wall of an existing tomb has been made to serve also for one placed against it with only three sides new. For illustration, No. 55A was built against No. 54, No. 66 against No. 67; No. 70 was

built later than 75, and No. 68 was subsequently placed in the corner formed by them. In this way certain definite relations between adjoining tombs are established. Bearing in mind also other matters of observation, such as the character of the tombs and the objects deposited with them, other relations between the groups may be inferred. The pre-position of No. 67, for instance, seems to have determined the somewhat symmetrical position of 64. No. 54, again, was probably earlier than the mastaba 50, because the smaller tomb is not placed in symmetry with the larger.

Combining all branches of evidence, the following seems to have been the order in which this site developed—

#### Early III Dynasty.

Mastaba No. 75; followed by group 88-89, and group 80-85.

#### Later III Dynasty.

No. 54; Nos. 56 A.B, followed by 55 A.B.  
Nos. 53, 58, 57; Nos. 52, 59; the tomb, 68.

#### III-IV Dynasty.

No. 64, followed by 63, 62, 61, in succession.

#### IV-V Dynasty.

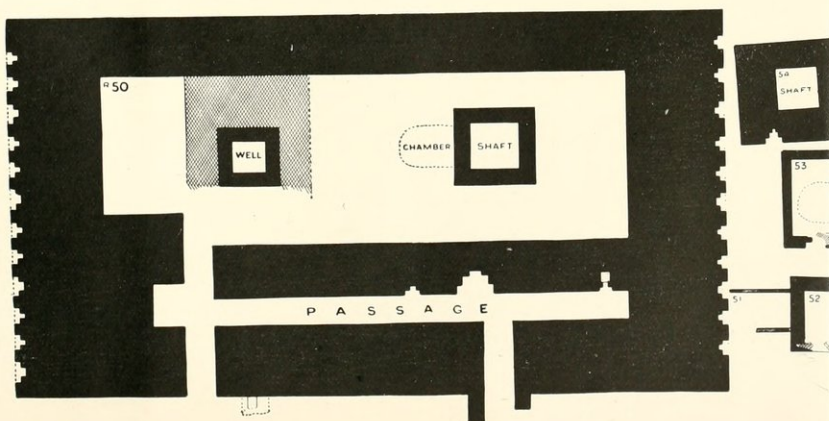
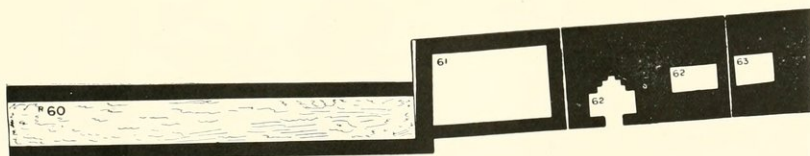
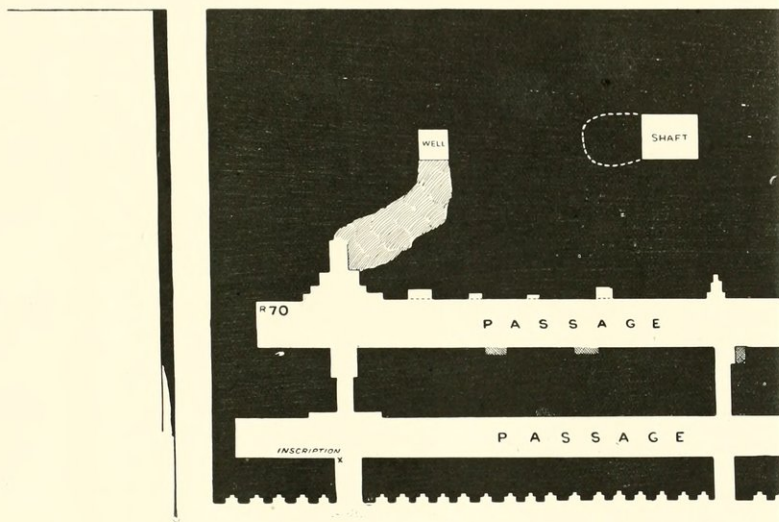
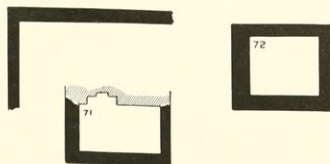
Mastaba No. 50; the walls, No. 51 and 60.

#### V Dynasty.

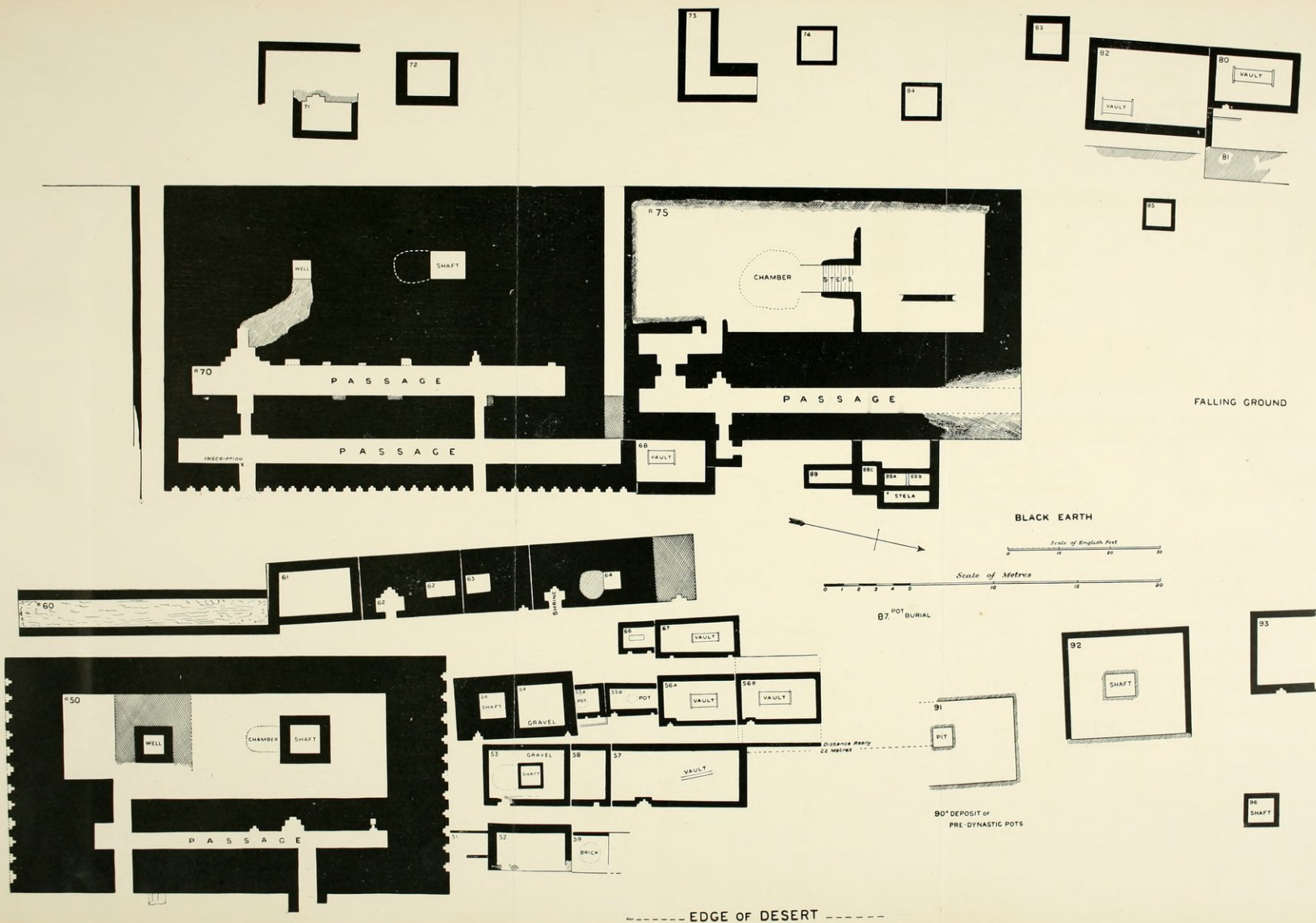
The Mastaba 70; the outer walls of tomb, 68.  
Independently: III-IV Dynasty: The series 91-99 to the north.

The foregoing tabulation pre-surmises some of the evidences which have not been described in detail. Some other details may be of interest. The slope of the walls, or angle of









batter, was tested in several cases, among them the following—

Angle of Batter.

R 1	slope: 5 in 30, or one-sixth.
R 50 W.	" : 10 in 94, or one-ninth (-).
R 54 W.	" : 23 in 122, or one-fifth (-).
R 54 N.	" : 17 in 122, or one-seventh (-).
R 61	" : 8 in 80, or one-tenth.
R 62	" : 5 in 70, or one-fourteenth.

In the better constructed and better preserved walls, the average batter lies between one-fifth and one-sixth.

The degree of orientation, too, though generally determined in great measure by the average direction of the Nile Valley, lacks uniformity. In the larger tombs it is as follows—

R 1. (West wall of passage)	: $14\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ W.
R 2. " "	: $\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ W.
R 40. (Central line)	: $10\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ W.
R 54. (West wall)	: $17^{\circ}$ W.
R 64. (Continuous face)	: $23\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ W.
R 70. (East face)	: $13^{\circ}$ W.

The correction to be applied is about  $4^{\circ}$  (+).

Though actually losing the effect by differences of preserved height, there is a general similarity between the tombs as seen in the plan. This effect arises from the characteristic feature of early architecture, the panel-recess, used in some cases with great elaboration, but here occurring only once or twice, upon the eastern face, in all cases towards the southern end. The tombstone or other object is sometimes found within, as at El Kab and Hierakonpolis, and the evolution into a shrine or chapel is seen in the two instances numbered 62 and 64 of this necropolis.<sup>1</sup> The architectural development of this feature is not traced: it occurs highly developed in the so-called tomb of Mena at Negada<sup>2</sup> of the First Dynasty. Nor is it peculiar to Egyptian architecture, being familiar in the early monumental works of Chaldea; and it disappears from common use in Egypt after the time of the Old Empire.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Maspero: *Archaeology* (1902), p. 342.

<sup>2</sup> M.T.R., p. 157.

The character and construction of this feature in its simple form is seen in the next plate, No. XXII; and its elaborate use as an architectural embellishment appears in the face of the large Old Kingdom mastaba No. 70 on Plate XVII. The effect of similarity which it gives to the outline plans of the smaller tombs, though it illustrates a common custom, is not carried out in further detail. Other differences may be found

Construction. in the construction of the tombs

Plate XXII. themselves. Excavation shows that the boundary wall may enclose variously a vaulted chamber or a large earthenware bowl, or that the interior may be built up solid with a square shaft descending in the centre. The character of the burials themselves varies little, and there is equal uniformity between the objects deposited with them. It thus appears at first glance that several modes of tomb construction are found co-existing at this period, superficially resembling one another, but differing in some details, hence tending from or merging towards a common form. It would be convenient to consider first those tombs which are not enclosed uniformly with the others, that is to say, with a brick wall panelled with recesses upon its eastern face.

Vaulted tombs, Of these there are two chief unenclosed kinds of present interest: the one is a vaulted burial chamber, built simply in a hole dug in the ground, and found like all the smaller tombs, covered with sand and hidden from sight. There is no picture here to show the first appearance of one of these; but on Plate XXIII the burial No. 110 is seen lying under the partly opened roof, while the details of this double arch are seen more clearly on Plate XIV.

It is of singular interest to notice that in appearance and construction this class of tomb, though here covered by nearly two metres of deep desert gravel, is exactly similar to a form commonly to be seen standing above ground in



many Arab cemeteries of to-day. Four or five thousand years have changed it not at all: for common use in Moslem burial it is the same now in character, in construction, and in appearance as it was then in the Third Egyptian Dynasty; only that now the direction of the graves tends towards the focus of Islam, whereas then it lay parallel with the Nile. Whether indeed its use has been continuous throughout the intervening ages cannot be said, it may seem doubtful; but it is of that simple design, combining ease of building with cheapness of material, which in a country where Nature suggests no change, is most likely to persevere. The hole being dug, two low brick walls of the required length are raised parallel to one another: at one end they abut upon the desert, or are joined there by a cross wall. The first bricks of the vaulted roof are laid against this, leaning to it, and supported thus, by friction and mud-mortar, even in the process of construction before the span is completed. The next course, which extends the vault though like an independent arch, leans similarly back against that which was just completed, to which it is bonded. In this way the barrel roof extends the length of the wall, leaving to the eye the effect, from the slant of the successive spans, of a vault that has partly collapsed in the direction of its length. It is a common Oriental method; its use is found alike in the ruins of ancient Khorsabad and in modern buildings of the Upper Nile.

The exposed end may then be closed by an independent piece of walling, either external or just inside the aperture. Another method of building the roof was equally familiar, and of possibly earlier origin. The side walls being made sufficiently strong to support the thrust, either by their thickness or by pressure of sand outside, a course of bricks is laid along them so that the ends of the bricks project uniformly a little way over the interior on either hand. The exterior ends of this

course are supported by weight of brick or other means. A second course is then laid upon the first, similarly projecting inwards beyond the course below, further closing the top. The process is repeated and carried up until the two sides meet, and being solidly built tend mutually to support one another further. Commonly only two or three courses were used in a roof of this character, like that of tomb 56 shown on Plate XIV; but this principle was common and might be put to elaborate purpose, as in the case of the roofed passage to the burial chamber of Nezem-Ankh at Bêt Khállaf.<sup>1</sup>

Cases at El Amrah. Tombs of this kind have been found in other sites, and seem to be of earlier origin. At El Amrah they were observed and their construction carefully described.<sup>2</sup> The roof there seems in all cases to have been the false arch: and the furniture of the tombs, chiefly pottery and stone vases, was all of that character which is found to appear at the close of the pre-dynastic period. The conclusion to which the excavator came from his consideration of the class in which he would include this form of tomb is not a little significant, though it refers more closely to the form of tomb next to be considered. His comparison of the forms of bowls and pottery, deposited in these tombs at El Amrah and those of Abydos, definitely assign the class to the First Dynasty, without excluding the possibility that they may have extended a short way into the Second.

At El Kab. The vaulted tombs of this character found at El Kab are described, owing to reasons already explained, as belonging to the Middle Kingdom.<sup>3</sup> The definite relative dates now assigned to the archaeological types which formed the basis for this conclusion, enable the period to be defined with precision from the complete and

<sup>1</sup> G.M.K. PLXXIV.

<sup>2</sup> R.M.A., 3-5. p.p. 28, 34.

<sup>3</sup> Q.K., pp. 13, 14.



scientific record which the excavator gave of his observation. It must appear that the majority of these tombs at El Kab pertain to the same period as those of Reqaqnah, namely the early Old Kingdom or the Third and Fourth Dynasties. One or two tombs, in particular No 264, seem to suggest a date in the Second or early Third Dynasty from its accumulation of pottery forms, which may be classed under Nos. 12 and 22 on Plate XIII, and other associated objects; but none of them apparently reach beyond that period in the Old Kingdom where the class of objects familiar to the early dynasties is gradually replaced by the newer forms.

That the custom was continuous, At Ballas, however, appears from its occurrence at Ballas in an association which must assign it in this instance to the early Middle Empire from the Sixth to the Eleventh Dynasties.<sup>1</sup> The vases and pottery were analogous in form and character to those found in sites of this date at Denderah and at Mahasna. Bead necklaces, too, were common, made variously of shell, glaze and cornelian. In one case a "button" lying, it is said, upon a man's jaw, and in another a scarab without inscription, are significant evidence. From what has since been learnt of the period of these objects, the general date of these cases may be definitely inferred.<sup>2</sup> It is of interest to find them here as elsewhere in definite association with graves of the recognized pre-dynastic character, though the excavator himself came to the independent conclusion from their relations that these tombs were clearly of a period posterior to that of the "foreign" (really the prehistoric) race.

It is thus seen that this class of tomb, the vaulted chamber (unenclosed) is familiar from before the First Dynasty till the dawn of the Middle Empire, and that its use was probably

continued. The class occurs also at the Reqaqnah within an enclosure, as mentioned below. The other form of tomb superficially unlike the majority at Reqaqnah, and occurring itself but rarely, is that of a plain rectangular enclosure. Of this simpler type the group of tombs 88A, B, C and 89, seen on Plate XXIV, is the only example. As shown in the plan, it is built up to an early stairway mastâba, and the pottery found in it (XIII, 2, 5), is of the character familiarly met with in the stairway tombs of the locality. The date of the group is thus plainly of the early Third Dynasty, and the association with it of a limestone stela of Se-Mery, inscribed and carved in low relief, makes the result of special interest. A style of tomb so simple and elementary can hardly claim a separate history; yet its origins are carefully described in the pages of El Amrah, and its early analogies noted. It may be that this was in fact the forerunner of the well-tomb so familiar in the later times. In the present instances the graves 88A and B, with the small surface inclosure, in which the stela was found on the eastern side, seem to have been built first; then 88C and 89 seem to have been added successively, though there is nothing to suggest any interval of time between the beginning of this group and its completion.

With the exception of the two relatively rare classes described above, the tombs of this necropolis were rendered uniform in outer appearance by the character of the wall which enclosed them on every side. However dissimilar in the interior, they presented to the eye a walled superstructure, plain on three sides, but panelled on the eastern face with a recess similar to that shown in the photograph of R 54 on Plate XXII.

The same motive carried along the face consecutively is the familiar decoration of the walls of large

<sup>1</sup> Q.B. p. 2. § 4 (2).

<sup>2</sup> G.M. Pl. XXXIX.

mastâbas (e.g. Tomb 75, Plate XVII). Sometimes the recess is represented in depth by a single brick, as in the enclosure of the pot-burials which adjoined the above (No. 55A, on Plate XXVII). More commonly it is double, as seen on Plate XXII in the photograph of pottery deposited against the side of No. 68. In other cases more elaborated it reaches a depth of three bricks, or even more. Usually in these smaller tombs there is one recess only, eastward from the position of the body in the burial chamber. In cases where the tomb consists of several separate portions there is commonly one to each division, as in the larger tomb of Shepses, Plate XXV. In other cases two are found, either dictated by a length of plain wall (e.g. R 56) or to add to an otherwise poor effect (e.g., R 55). In no case in the smaller tombs are more than two recesses found on a wall, nor do they appear on any other than the eastern face. Even in the largest mastâbas the western face (which was also towards the desert) is always plain.

With this general similarity in their outward appearance, the enclosed tombs resolve themselves into four classes, distinguished by differing forms of their interiors.

- a. Vaulted chambers within an enclosed area.
- b. Large inverted pots within an enclosed area.
- c. Square shafts through solid superstructure.
- d. Square shafts within an enclosed area.

(a) The first of these sub-divisions, the cases of burials under inverted pots, will form the subject of a subsequent chapter. It will be seen that the custom is of early, possibly pre-dynastic, origin, and that it continued into the early days of the Fifth Dynasty. The two or three cases here in which they are enclosed with a panelled wall, Nos. 55A-B on Plate XXVI and 250 on Plate XXVII, may have a local peculiarity suggested by the pre-existing character of the surrounding tombs. It will be seen that these instances, from their associations and furniture, must be assigned to

some period shortly after the time of Seneferu, and, therefore, in the early Fourth Dynasty.

(b) With regard to the age and origins of the vaulted chamber, there is little more to add to the description given in a preceding section of this chapter. The addition of an enclosing wall seems to be here a development which is also chronological. That is to say, the vaulted tombs which are enclosed seem also to be the earlier and original practice. As in the case of the enclosures of pot-burials, it may be that here the surrounding walls were built to harmonize with the general architecture of the necropolis, which was also characteristic of the age. That this was probably the case appears from the case of tomb No. 68 shown in the plate (No. XXII), and in the plan preceding. Here the vault seems to have been constructed at some time just subsequent to the date of the early mastâba, No. 75, to the west, which it adjoins, and a numerous deposit of pottery vessels (chiefly of the forms 11 and 12 of Plate XIII and their analogies) was placed near it on the eastern side. At a somewhat later date, when the mastâba No. 70 was constructed or completed, in order seemingly to protect this tomb and at the same time to preserve the harmony of appearance, the panelled wall was built around it in the corner formed by the adjoinment of the two mastâbas, upon and above the pottery vessels which the photograph shows to be lying under and around the wall on either side. The examples of this class are plentiful. No. 56A, which is seen in the photograph of Plate XV, is a good example, and No. 56B is similar to it. No. 80, shown in detail on Plate XXIII, is deeper within, and some of the offerings of pottery remained in the enclosed recess of its eastern wall.

A further case, No. 72, may be seen from the photograph of Plate XV. to be less usual. Here the vault is placed at the foot of a square shaft of brickwork about two metres in



depth. This seems to be a definite link with the sub-division next to be described.

(c) The pit-tombs or tombs designed essentially with a vertical shaft leading down to a burial chamber below the ground, were uniformly similar in these features. They differed in the character of the superstructure, which was in some cases solid, and in other cases merely an enclosure or enclosing wall. Those which were solid were related to one other and to the general necropolis; those which were hollow were confined to a mound apart in the extreme north of the site. This distinction is also one of time; for the former were homogeneous and dated approximately to the age of Seneferu; while the latter were a slightly later growth dated by a cylinder seal of Khaf-ra. The solid superstructures are in effect mastabas, and their tombs are models in miniature of the greater structures which are more familiar by that name. In the plate (No. XXII) the photographs of the nameless tomb No. 54 show that it was nevertheless a well-finished and imposing building. It had a length of 7 metres, and is preserved to a height of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  m. The walls have a uniform batter of one-seventh, and the panel recess is constructed with some elaboration. The shaft is lined with bricks to a depth of 2 m., and leads down to a small chamber situated, as in all cases, to the south. In this the burial was found undisturbed, as described in the ensuing chapter.

Still larger, and more elaborate, was the tomb structure of Shepses, royal scribe of Seneferu. In this case the building was 10 m. (33 feet) long, and, as may be seen in the plan, consisted of three portions, continuous but distinct. The northern end was solid, and was furnished with a threefold panel in its eastern face. The central portion enclosed the shaft which led down to the undisturbed burial chamber. The southern end consisted essentially of a small chapel over the burial

chamber, in the eastern interior wall of which was a wooden shrine of striking interest. This was composed of wooden jambs, recessed in the usual way, with lintels above, the upper and outer one squared, the lower one rounded. On the central panel was the figure of Shepses with staff and baton, and the jambs are inscribed in relief in an early manner (Plates XXIX, XXX). It is prototype of the false door of later times. The end of the mastaba, just seen on the left of the photograph of the general view of the shrine on Plate XXV, is completed with the usual batter and finish. It thus appears that buildings which abut upon it to the south, Nos. 63, 62, 61, 60, are of consecutively later work.

In the first of these cases, tomb No. 63, no chamber had been made, and the burial lay, therefore, in a usual attitude at the bottom of the shaft, as shown in Plate XXIV, and described in the ensuing chapter. The other pit-tombs were normal; some, however, were so deep that though the excavation of them was continually postponed as water was come to, yet at the end of the season, with the approach of summer, their depth had not been fathomed. It was certainly greater than 13 metres.

(d.) The pit-tombs enclosed merely by an outer wall were themselves similar. In some of them the chambers were very small, and the burial consequently lay partly protruded into the bottom of the shaft. A weakness of the gravel bed at this point may have been the cause. In some cases, as may be seen in the plan, the enclosure was comparatively large, while its wall was only one or two bricks thickness.

In addition to these four chief classes, tombs or graves of exceptional character were occasionally met with. The small and simple enclosure, No. 66 on Plate XXIII, with its cover of large bricks, is an instance, and being apparently a hasty expe-

Shafts merely  
enclosed.

Other cases.



dient, hardly constitutes a type. Possibly the imitation of round pot forms illustrated on Plate XXVII should be included under this category. A more striking case is that numbered 71 on Plate XV, where the design of a rectangular enclosure is combined with that of the familiar form of recess, which is accordingly built on the eastern interior face, that is, of its western wall.

Such was the disposition and character of the smaller tombs constituting the necropolis at Reqaqnah, representative probably of the middle classes

of the district at the close of the Third Dynasty and the beginning of the Fourth. Their general co-relation with regard to date may more suitably belong to the general problem of burial customs of the period, and will accordingly be considered in the ensuing chapter. In this main question the evidence of tomb construction is naturally of first importance, and may be used as a basis for the discussion. It is, therefore, convenient to tabulate in some way suitable for reference the different classes into which the tombs have been seen to group themselves.

## ANALYSIS OF SMALLER TOMBS AT REQAQNAH.

Class.	Characteristics.	Dated Examples.	Illustrated.	Range of Use in General.
1.	Rectangular Enclosures.	No. 88A. III Dynasty.	XXIV.	Before I-[? IV].
	Variant:	Nos. 88 B-C. Analogous.	XXIV.	
2.	<i>Inverted pots.</i>	No. 71 "	XV.	[not evident].
	a. Not enclosed.	Nos. 70A, 87.	} XXVI-VII. }	Before I to V Dynasty.
	b. Enclosed.	Nos. 55A, B, 250.		
3.	Vaults not enclosed.	No. 110. ? pre-III.	XXIII. XIV.	Before I through O.E., and possibly continuous.
	" enclosed.	Nos. 68, 80, 56A-B, 80, III. 57, 58, 66, 67, etc.	XXII-III. XIV -V. Analogous.	
4.	Square shaft: solid superstructure.	No. 64. End III. Shepses temp. Seneferu.	XXV.	About III and continuous.
5.	" enclosed.	Nos. 54, 63. II. No. 92. IV. Temp. Khafra.	XXII-XXIV. XXXII.	Common form later without panelled wall.
6.	Exceptional cases.	Nos. 91-99. Nos. 66, &c.	XXI. XV.	

With the exception of Class 2 of burials under inverted pots, which on account of its more definite range will form the subject of a separate subsequent chapter, the burial types of these smaller tombs will be described in the pages next ensuing.





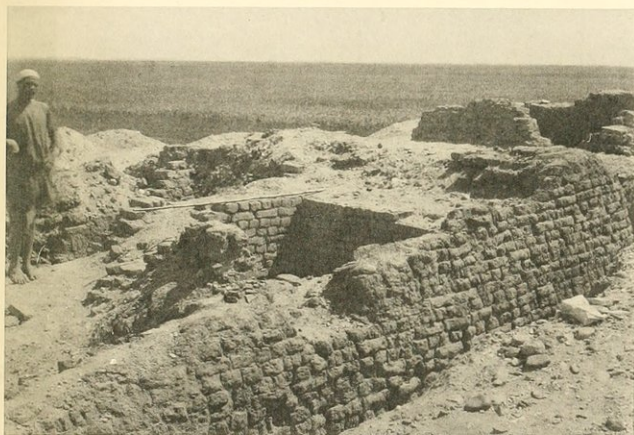
SITUATION OF TOMB STRUCTURE.

R 54.



PANEL RECESS, EAST WALL

R 54.



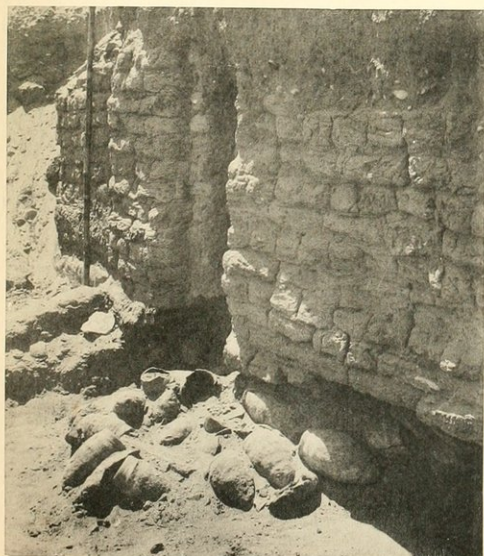
SHAFT MOUTH, FROM N. W.

R 54.



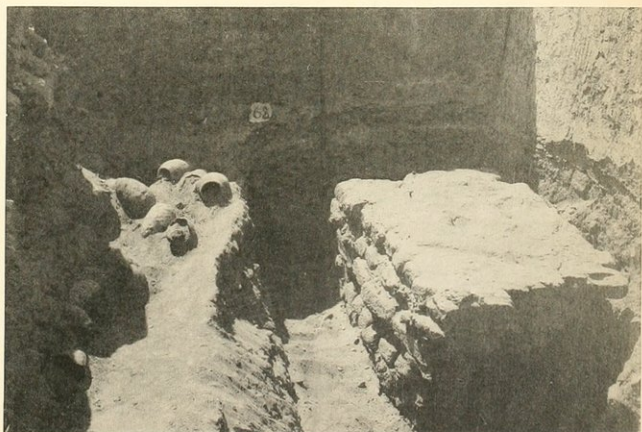
BURIAL (DECAYED) R

54.



DEPOSIT OF POTTERY, FROM N. E.

R 68.



TOMB-VAULT, WITHIN

R 68.





## CHAPTER IX

### BURIAL CUSTOMS.

a. Burial Types in General. Plates XXII-IV.

b. The Tomb of Shepses. Plate XXV.

THE previous chapter has considered the construction of the smaller tombs found in the necropolis of the Third Dynasty at Reqa-nah: this and the subsequent chapter will be concerned rather with the burial customs of the period, the method of interment, and the furniture placed with the dead. The differences between them, distinguished here as types, will be found chiefly in the character of the tombs themselves, and their relations one to the other will thus depend in great measure upon the evidences already considered.

By turning over the plates of illustrations it may be seen that the first appearance of the burials present many differences, and it will be the object of the present chapter to see whether these bear any relation to the character of the tombs, and so further advance the general problem.

In the preceding chapter it was seen that the tombs of the site group themselves into six classes, and it will be convenient to follow the order of tabulation with which that chapter concluded—

- (i.) Burials with rectangular enclosures.
- (ii.) Burials under inverted pottery vessels.
- (iii.) Burials in vaulted tombs.
- (iv.) Burials in pit-tombs with solid superstructure.
- (v.) Burials in pit-tombs with enclosing wall.
- (vi.) Exceptional cases.

(i.) Burials in Quadrangular Enclosures. (i.) The simple class of burial within a rectangular enclosure has a naturally early origin. They have been observed at Kawâmil and El Amrah,

and in their earliest form followed a separate class in the catalogue which Mr. MacIver gave of the tombs from the latter site.<sup>1</sup> There they appear to have come into use in the First Dynasty, and to have continued during the latter growth of the necropolis. The form evolves naturally from the unbricked grave of similar shape, which is again related back directly with the oblong, oval and round graves of the prehistoric character. It appears to have been roofed in various ways, as for instance in the case of the small grave No. 66, Plate XXIII, roofed with a flat cover of brick; but in its essential character of a four-sided enclosure of brick walling, it seems to have been roofed with boughs and twigs plastered over with mud.

No. R 88a. In the plates (XXIV and XV) only Plate XXIV. three cases of the Third Dynasty are illustrated, but they include some features of special interest. In the case of that numbered R 88A, Plate XXIV, the chamber was about one metre in depth, with the same width and a slightly greater length. Within, the burial lay with the knees sufficiently bent to admit the body to the grave. The original presence of a decayed wood coffin or lining to the tomb, was suspected by certain indications, but could not be proved. The face was towards the east, as the photograph shows, and behind the head was a pot of the form No. 2 of Plate XIII. Against the tomb on its eastern side, within a brick enclosure, was a limestone stela, in somewhat poor condition, bearing a name which may be that of "Se-Mery," a royal

<sup>1</sup> R.M.A., pp 11-12.

"Uab." The hieroglyphs are in relief, as also is the carved figure of the deceased, who is represented in the earlier style, with staff and baton. This is one of the earliest private stela known: it is now in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford.

No. R 89. In another tomb of the same group, No. 89, Plate XXIV, the grave is longer, and the body consequently extended. In this case the face looked towards the east, and no pottery or furniture of any kind were placed with the deceased. The inner face of the wall which enclosed the tomb was plastered with mud, and even the outer wall of No. 88c, against which it was built, thus forming its north end, was similarly treated. The other compartments of this group contained little. No. 88b, which was attached to 88a, contain fragments of characteristic early pottery, chiefly the form Type 12 of Plate XIII. The chamber 88c, which was distinct but not separated from the two former, was quite empty.

No. R 71. A variant of these forms appears Plate XV. in the exceptional case of tomb R 71, which lay on the western side of the large mastâba 75. Here the enclosure was somewhat large, but shallow, being, as may be seen in the photograph of Plate XV, but five courses deep. In the eastern face of the western and therefore inner wall, a panel-recess had been constructed as described in the preceding chapter. Along the eastern side, and towards the south end of the enclosure, the burial lay extended on its back. No other grave was found analogous to this.

(ii.) Under Large Pots. (ii.) The class of burials under large inverted pottery vessels presents so many features of interest, and is represented both here and elsewhere in a series so complete, that a separate chapter, which follows this, is devoted to its description. The burials themselves were necessarily always violently contracted; and it seems probable that the dead was squeezed first into the vessel, which was

then overturned in its appointed place. In this way there is a total disregard of cardinal points. Some examples occur within a masoned enclosure, others lie unattended in the desert sand. In the case of brick tombs built in imitation of this form, the lower course or courses seem to have first been laid, and the body then placed within. The building was then completed above it. The graves of this kind are accompanied commonly by the familiar forms of rough pottery, Types 2, 3, 11, 12, Plate XIII.

(iii.) In Vaulted Tombs. (iii.) The evolution of this class of brick tombs with vaulted roofs has been described already in the preceding chapter. The chamber is sufficiently long to enclose a full size coffin; and its roof, originally an imitation made on a principle of compensated projection, became in the Third and Fourth Dynasties a real arch constructed in different ways. This seems to be a class definitely separable from that of simple quadrangular enclosures, though included in that category by the excavator of El Amrah.<sup>1</sup> It may, indeed, have evolved typologically from a small enclosure covered by slabs of brick placed across the top: the present excavation disclosed both that character of roof and a further stage in which the grave being somewhat wider the bricks were brought into approximation at the top from either side. In this relation the earliest burials were necessarily compressed or contracted, as in the case No. R 66 on Plate XXIII. But the matured custom, as it seems preferable to separate it from the introduction of a new principle of construction, shows a certain uniformity. The burial lies in nearly every case extended, the head north and face eastward, with some contraction at the knees as determined by the size of the tomb. There seemed, in most cases, to be indications of wood coffins, hopelessly decayed, in which they had been enclosed.

<sup>1</sup> R. M. A., p. 11.





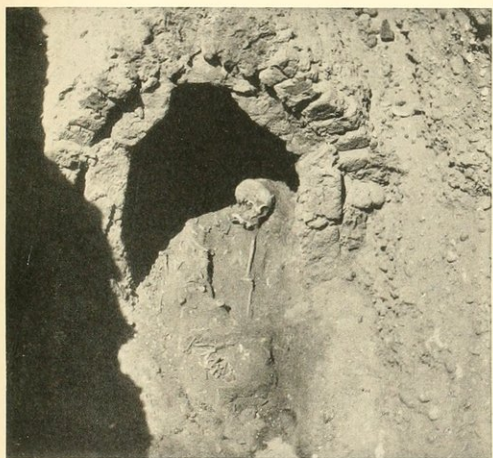
OFFERING PLACE, E. FACE.

R. 80.



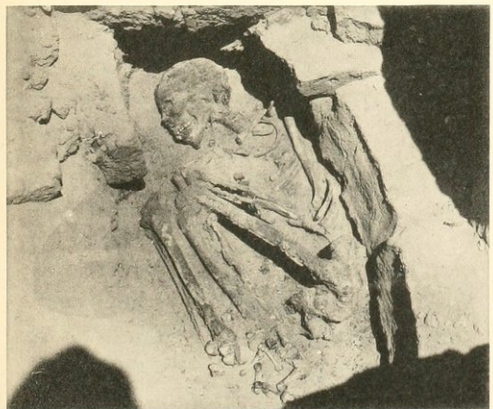
BURIAL VAULT, FROM N.

R 80.



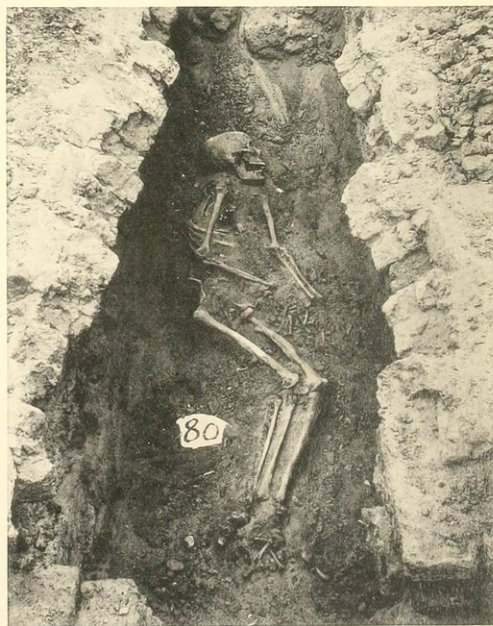
BURIAL UNDER DOUBLE-ARCHED VAULT.

R 110.



BURIAL UNDER FLAT COVER OF BRICK.

R 66.



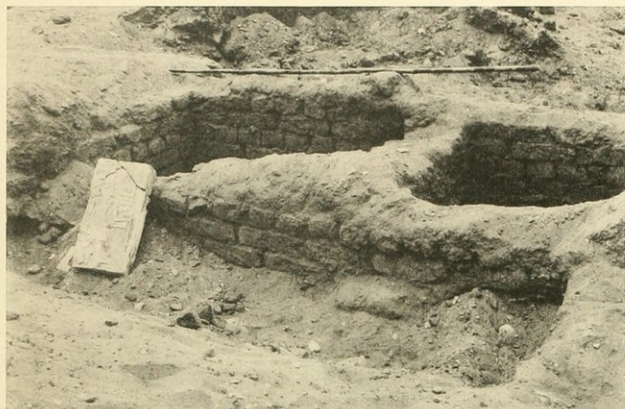
BURIAL, FROM S.

R 80.



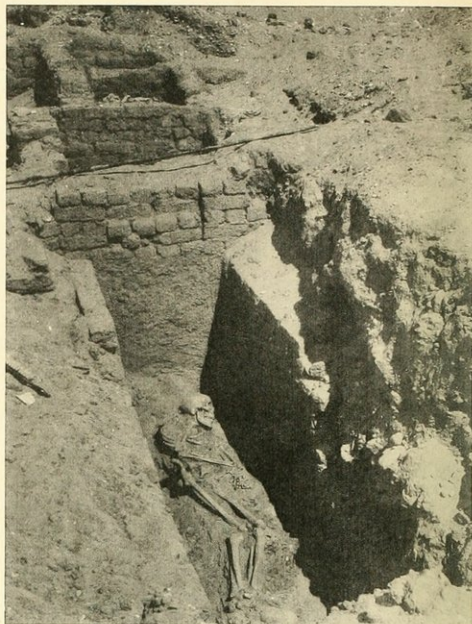






TOMB-STONE IN POSITION, E. FACE

R 88A



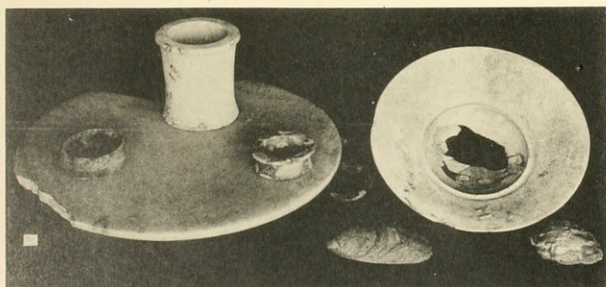
BURIAL FROM S.

R 89



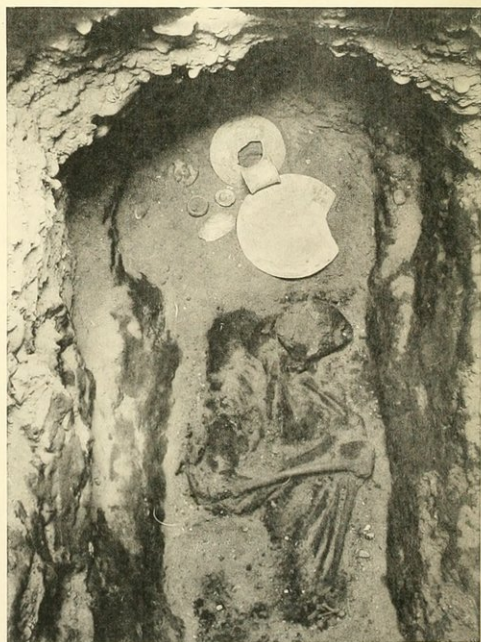
BURIAL FROM S.

R 88A



BURIAL DEPOSIT, VASES AND SHELLS.

R 63



BURIAL FROM ABOVE, S

R 63



Pottery characteristically of the Third Dynasty, both the rougher elements and the recurring finely polished red pieces (e.g. Types 1, 2, 11, 12, 14, 22 on Plate XIII), was placed commonly in the grave, either within the vault or outside the door, or against the place of offerings on the eastern face. In one case a wooden head-rest, with fluted column, lay near the head (Plate XXXII).

Perhaps no better illustration of this method of interment could be found than that numbered R 80. In Plate XXIII may be seen three photographs: the first shows the offering place and recess on its eastern face (at the south end, as usual); the second, a general view of the enclosure with the top of the vault based below; the third, a view from above of the burial itself, after partially removing the roof for the purpose. (The left *femur* is seen to have been broken and badly joined.) The character of the pottery is shown by photograph on Plate XXXI. The appearance of other burials of this class was very similar, differences occurring only in construction of the tomb. The burial R 110 on the same plate, for instance, shows a similar general character. Other burials conforming directly with the type were Nos. 56A-B (Plate XV), No. 22 (Plate XV), No. 68 (Plate XXII), and others, Nos. 57, 58, 67, 97, 98, 99 not illustrated on the plates. A catalogue of the separate tomb-deposits will be found appended to Chapter XI.

(iv.) Pit Tombs (a). It has been found convenient to distinguish typologically between the Plates XXII, XXIV, XXV. two classes of pit-tombs at Reqa-nah, namely those which are covered by a solid superstructure through which the shaft descends, and those which are merely enclosed by a surface wall. Their features are described in the preceding chapter. The examples of each kind are plentiful: the burying places of the mastâba tombs themselves fall into one or other of these divisions. Of the former kind illustrations occur on Plates

XXII, XXIV and XXV, numbered 54, 63, 64 respectively.

The burying place itself is usually a small recess under the southern end, at the bottom of the shaft which leads vertically down through the gravel. The chamber itself is not masoned in any way, but about the mouth of the shaft there is commonly a supporting wall which may extend deeper than the general mass of the superstructure. The whole series of this type is referred by analogy and position to the tomb of Shepses (No. 64), in which was found a bowl inscribed with the name of Seneferu, king at the close of the Third Dynasty.

No. 54. In No. 54 (Plate XXII) the burial lay fully contracted in the small chamber, with head north and face east, as the photograph somewhat indistinctly shows. In the chamber on the east side of the burial were three pieces of pottery, two of them examples of the Type No. 2, Plate XIII; and one of them a finely polished standing spouted vessel of best red pottery and finish, the form of which is outlined on Plate XXXII, No. 4. Both pots are shown in the photographs of Third and Fourth Dynasty pots and Plate XXXI, being the first and third of the upper row.

No. 64. Burial No. 64 was even more contracted, and seemed to have been set in hard mud. It lay in the same relative position as the above. As seen in the photograph of Plate XXV, it was accompanied by a deposit of two alabaster pieces, both broken—the one a table, the other a bowl in which, as stated, was the graffito of Seneferu.

No. 63. The burial numbered 63 was not quite the same in appearance or position. The gravel bed in which the shaft was dug was very yielding, and no chamber had been cut under the end for the reception of the burial; the body therefore lay in a less contracted attitude at the bottom of the shaft. A birds'-eye view taken from a difficult position shows the features of the burial on



Plate XXIV. The outline of the decayed bones is seen in the dark earth, and at the head are a number of objects of stone and shell. The deposit rested undisturbed, as seen in the photograph, and the adjoining picture shows its character. It comprises a table, a standing vase of alabaster, and a bowl of the same material, a small vase of diorite and another of breccia, two shells, the one an oyster, the other a common species found in the Red Sea, and a bracelet seemingly of bone. By reference to Plate XXXII, where the forms of these objects are shown in outline, it may be seen that the bowl of alabaster is of an unusual and interesting character. It seems to represent directly a form better known in copper, with an inner ridge all round to imitate the joining of two portions of different curvature which compose it. The object is exquisitely wrought: the central basin which on its outside preserves the general straightness of outline and flat bottom, on the inside is worked down in a curve to the thinness of paper. [It remains, with the group, at the Ashmolean Museum.]

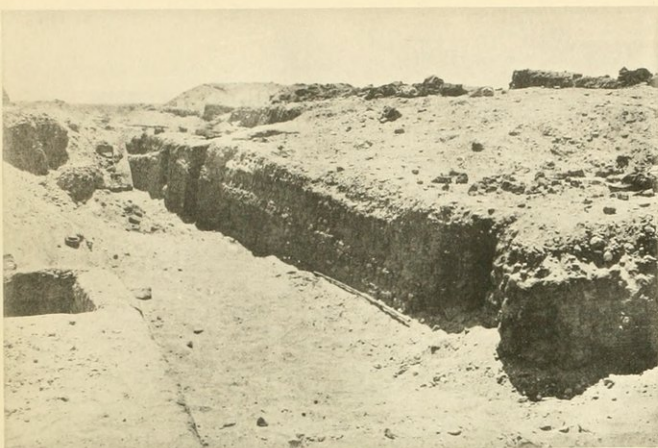
(v.) Pit Tombs (b). Burials in the second class of pit tombs were entirely analogous, but owing to an accident of situation it was not possible to obtain good photographs of them. In some cases water stood in the bottom of the tombs for some weeks after they had been cleared, and it was only after this had dried away that the burial could be traced with difficulty from the position of the decayed bones. These shafts were uniformly somewhat deeper, averaging six to seven metres, against four to five of the former class. The most important of these burials was No. 92, with which was a deposit shown by photograph on Plate XXXI. It consists of two small standing vases of alabaster, a finely worked bowl of translucent diorite, and a small glazed cylinder seal of Khafra, king of the early Fourth Dynasty. The inscription on the latter object *Ra. Kha. ef.*,

*Neteru mer* (Khafra), beloved of the Gods, is shown on Plate XXXII. Another burial of this class, No. 99, was accompanied by a well-worked bowl of steatite, shown in the same photograph. Other burials e.g., Nos. 93, 95, 96, were furnished with pottery of the types 2, 3, 11, 12, Plate XIII, as shown in the inventory at the end of Chapter XI. Probably owing to the damp character of the ground the chambers for these tombs had not been properly excavated; and sometimes the burials lay partly protruding into the shaft, but they preserve none the less their uniformity of appearance, being all fully contracted, with head generally north, and face toward the east. It thus appears that the distinction between the two classes of pit-tombs is entirely one of super-construction, and that they are otherwise related by character of the burials and tomb furniture, and by dated objects almost contemporaneous.

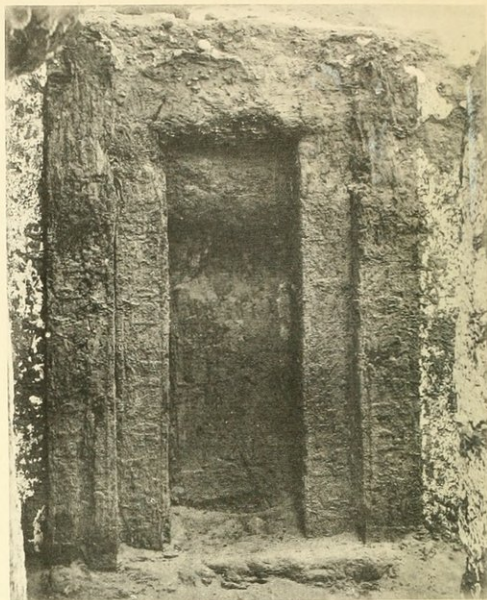
(vi.) It has already been seen that the Exceptional Cases, the necropolis at Reqaqnah are Plates XV, XXIII, allied ultimately in character and in tomb structure to one or more of the preceding classes, of which they are local variants. Thus the burial No. 71 shown on Plate XV, within an enclosure somewhat differing in features from all others, still falls under Class (i.) of quadrangular enclosures. The burial itself, extended and with head south, is exceptional—indeed, unique. Another case, No. 66 on Plate XXIII, is similarly to be allotted to Class (iii.) of vaulted tombs, being indeed but a simple reversion to the original motive of such. The burial itself is accordingly contracted. Other exceptional cases occur, though early (e.g., No. 100, allied to No. 66, but not roofed) but all may be included ultimately in the foregoing classes; the type of burials may thus be summarized, following the classification of their tombs, with which the preceding chapter closed.



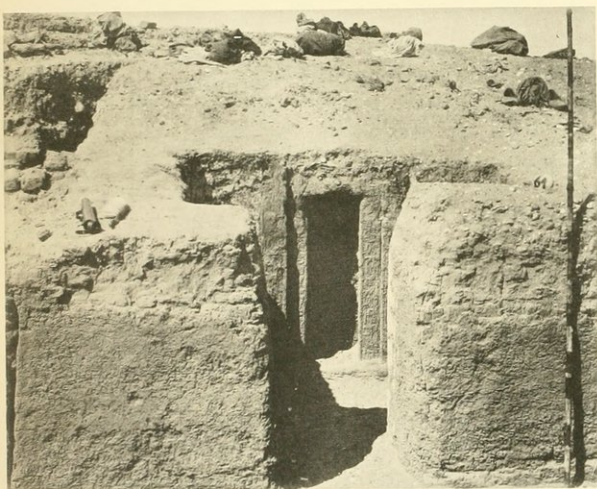




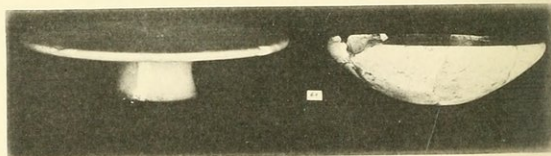
EAST FACE OF TOMB STRUCTURE, FROM N.



INSCRIBED SHRINE IN E. SIDE.



GENERAL VIEW OF INSCRIBED SHRINE



1:6

TABLE AND DISH OF ALABASTER.

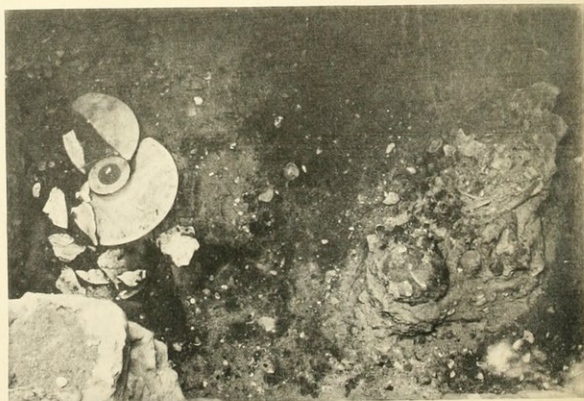


2:1

NAME OF KING SE-NEFER-U INSIDE BOWL.



CLOSED DOOR OF BURIAL CHAMBER, FROM ABOVE.



DEPOSIT (LEFT) AND BURIAL (RIGHT) AS FOUND.



i. *Rectangular Enclosures*.—Burials generally extended, or contracted to suit the size of grave. The head is usually north, but face either east or west, while an exceptional case has the head to the south. Though not found with any special furniture, these are not necessarily the burials of poor persons. One stela of a Royal *Uab* (an unexplained title).

ii. *Pottery Vessels*.—Burials fully contracted; no definite position. Here as usual not accompanied by objects other than rough pottery, but elsewhere (e.g. *El Kab*) found richly furnished.

iii. *Vaulted Chambers*.—Burials generally extended, with head invariably north and face east; accompanied with rough and also with polished pottery vessels.

iv. and v. *Pit Tombs*.—Burials invariably contracted, with head north and face east. Furnished variously in cases with vases and deposits of good quality, or with the rougher pottery. Two objects inscribed with kings' names, and one inscribed and panelled Shrine of "Shepses, Royal Scribe."

vi. Exceptional cases are generally referable to one or more of these classes.

#### b. THE TOMB OF SHEPSES. Plate XXV.

The foregoing pages and the preceding chapter have given a description of the smaller tombs at Reqaqnah and the burial customs which they exemplify. It may be fitting at this stage of the work to single out as a basis for comparison this tomb of Shepses, Royal Scribe, for special description, to illustrate the kind of burial accorded at the close of the Third Dynasty to a somewhat important minor official. It is not alone on account of the identification possible in this case that it seems worthy of special mention, but because also of certain architectural features peculiar to its superstructure, as well as the completeness and preservation of its interior.

The building itself is seen in the photograph on Plate XXV to have the appearance of an oblong rectangular block of masonry, standing rather more than a metre high above the original level of the desert. Until the clearing seen in the picture was made it was entirely hidden from view, and the regular surface of the ground was covered, as the interior is seen

to be, with brown pebbles and flints which betrayed no indication of any building below.

The eastern side is just ten metres in length, and the walls as they rise slope inwards with a uniform batter of 1 in 6. Near the northern end of this face (Plate XXU) is a small recess of the kind already familiar, and in the place more usual near the southern end is a further elaboration of the same motive. Here, as the photograph shows, a doorway leads into a small chamber or chapel, in the opposite wall of which, facing the east, is a panel recessed between two pre-posed jambs on either side, with a rounded lintel, all of wood. It is in fact a prototype of the false doors common in a later period. The picture shows that the grave is inscribed with hieroglyphs in relief, and that the panel bears a figure of the deceased in civil dress, holding his staff and baton. The inscription was unfortunately most difficult to follow, the whole surface having been destroyed by the insidious woodworms so that the whole crumbled away to the touch. So much as could be made out is further shown in detail on Plates XXVIII-XXIX. But beyond giving the name, Shepses, of the deceased, with his title, *Seten Sesh* (Royal Scribe), and some indication of one formula known in the Old Empire, little more can be made out.

The surface of the tomb being cleared of sand and stone, it was found to be structurally all solid, with the exception of a central shaft, two metres square at its mouth, which descended to a depth of four metres. At this point the entrance to the burial chamber was reached on the south, showing the door closed up with brickwork and undisturbed. Opening this the almost empty chamber revealed the simplicity of the burial. On removing a small accumulation of rubbish fallen from the hollowed roof, the bones of the dead were found in a fully contracted and huddled-up position on the western site, with a deposit of one bowl and one table

of alabaster on its eastern side, both broken. On freeing the bowl it was found to be incised on the inside with the graffito shown in the plate by photographic enlargement, twice the natural size. It is the name, "Seten bit Se-nefer-u," of Seneferu, the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, with whose death the Third Egyptian Dynasty came to a close.



## CHAPTER X

### BURIALS UNDER POTTERY VESSELS.

With Plates XXVI, XXVII.

CONTINUITY of custom through the earliest dynasties seems to be further illustrated by a mode of burial more strange but not less significant than those which have been described. From the latter end of the pre-dynastic period, continuing through the First, Second, and Third Dynasties, so far as those can be distinguished, the crude method of interment in a large inverted bowl seems to have survived, and become possibly more common, at the dawn of the Old Kingdom, when other traces of the earlier manners were already fast disappearing.

The custom was never general: the recorded instances are few, and though doubtless others have been observed, yet it seems clear that this method was more generally familiar than practised. Whether, indeed, it was reserved for some special class or caste cannot be asserted upon present evidence, though it may reasonably be conjectured. That it was generally known is suggested by the diversity of the sites from Kawâmil, north of Reqaqnah, to El Kab in the south. The persistence of this custom while others changed, too, in view of its comparative rarity, seems further to suggest a special *raison d'être*. From the nature of some instances which will be adduced, it does not seem likely, as supposed by the explorer of *El Amrah*,<sup>1</sup> that it is explained by the substitution of a cheap ready-made receptacle for the more elaborate cist or coffin. Some burials

of this class, on the other hand, particularly those at El Kab,<sup>1</sup> are more elaborately furnished than those of other kinds which are more plentiful.

The associations of these graves are fairly clear. In the early stages, at the close of the pre-dynastic period, they are found here and there, with the graves familiar to that time, and as the early stairway tombs begin to evolve and the period merges with the early dynasties, they are found with these, too, sometimes as separate burials, and sometimes in small chambers occupying the chief position in the tombs. Later again, with the advent of the Old Kingdom, and the gradual disappearance of the stairway tomb in favour of the large mastâba, these pot graves are found again in relation, sometimes in the centre of a special small building, at others placed in one of the main burial places of a large mastâba which includes some of the more general customs also. Before trying to establish any co-relation, it may be well to examine first both the new instances observed in this expedition, illustrated on Plates XXVI, XXVII, and to glance also through the accounts of other previously recorded examples.

The burials of this class throwing most light upon the present problem are those two illustrated on Plate XXVI. The burials themselves were much as usual. On inverting the pots the bones of the buried were found entire,

<sup>1</sup> R.M.A., p. 11.

<sup>1</sup> Q.K. pp. 4, 6, 9.

in the one case, numbered 55A, with the head towards the north-east, in the other (70A), which is plainly shown, with the head directly south. The former were black with the adhesion of some resinous substance, as in a case recorded at El Amrah<sup>1</sup>, and accompanying the burial was a rough pot shown in the photograph of the type No. 2 on Plate XIII, which is known to have persevered from the late pre-dynastic period through the early dynasties to the beginning of the Old Empire.<sup>2</sup> In the latter case the bones lay vividly white and undisturbed, and the large bowl, which was itself somewhat rough, was not accompanied by any further examples of pottery. In the details of burying, as in general, there is to be seen no conformity in these two cases with any defined custom. The positions of the two coffins, again, were equally dissimilar, and it is of moment to compare them in detail.

The tomb R 55 forms part of the general necropolis of the late Third Dynasty. By reference to Plate XXI, it may be seen that this tomb lies between and abuts upon those numbered 54 and 56. No. 55 is also subsequent to either of these, because it is merely built up to their walls, which serve at its south and north ends respectively. The plaster which originally covered the northern wall of No. 54, as may be plainly seen in the photograph of its east face of R 55, Plate XXVI, is continuous, not only between the two walls of No. 55, but also behind the joins or abutments of these walls, showing that they had been built up to an already completed structure. The case is similar at the junctions with R 56. R 55 is thus later than either R 54 or R 56. Now of these, No. 54 is an example of the class of small mastaba with eastern panel-recess, and with central shaft a few metres in depth, giving place to a burial

chamber towards the south, which has already been assigned in this necropolis to the period of Seneferu at the very end of the Third Dynasty. The pottery deposited with this burial was accordant with this date. The mastaba No. 56 was of a possibly earlier but nearly contemporary form, enclosing in a thin wall, with small panels on the eastern face, a burial vault covered with an imitation arch. It is thus clear that the tomb R 55 is of date subsequent to the end of the Third Dynasty. But that it was not widely separated in date from the tombs which it adjoins is probable, both from its position in the necropolis, the analogous panels in its eastern face, and from the types of pots found within it. It is safe to say that it is of date just subsequent to the end of the Third, and therefore of the early Fourth Dynasty.

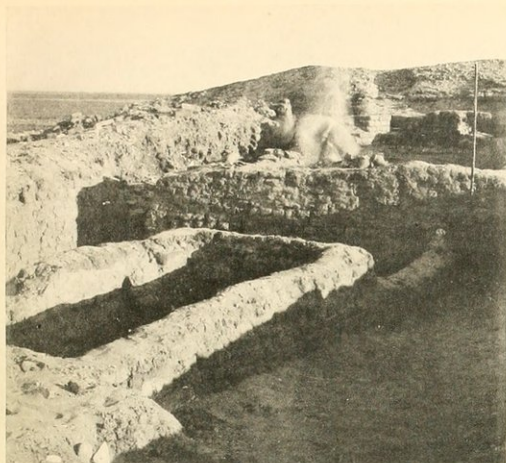
As seen in the plan on Plate XXI, and in the photograph of the Positions of Enclosures, Plate XXVI, the tomb R 55 consists itself of two separated portions, lettered A and B. Of these A was the later, being built up to B; but as the tombs are identical in character with similar pot-burials, similarly furnished, they were probably contemporary, or nearly so. It is also immaterial which one be selected for illustration. Inside the enclosure, in the middle, at the depth of about one metre in each case, the inverted large pot was come upon as seen with photo (Plate XXVI), accompanied with the small pot of type No. 2 (Plate XIII). The pot turned over revealed the burial as found shown in the next picture. This is all that can well be said in description: the pot A was rather smaller than usual, and was seemingly made to contain the remains of a small man.

The other burial under a pottery vessel pictured on this plate (No. 70 A, Plate XXVI) was not accompanied by any masonry or other pottery. It was come upon in course of excavating the great mastaba No. 70, under the foundations, lying in an older stratum of earth.

<sup>1</sup> R.M.A., p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> For examples, see P.N., xli., 76; P.A., xxix., 60-62; Q.H., lxix., 15.



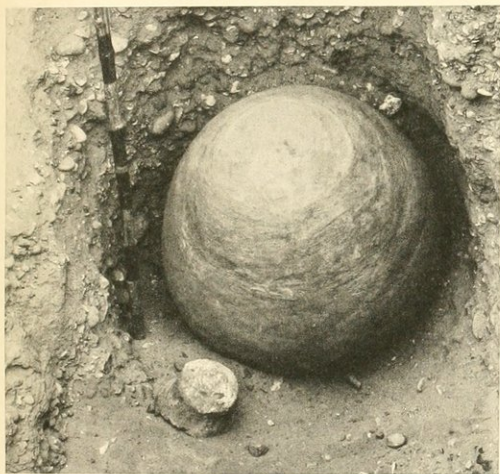


POSITIONS OF ENCLOSURES.

R 55a-b.

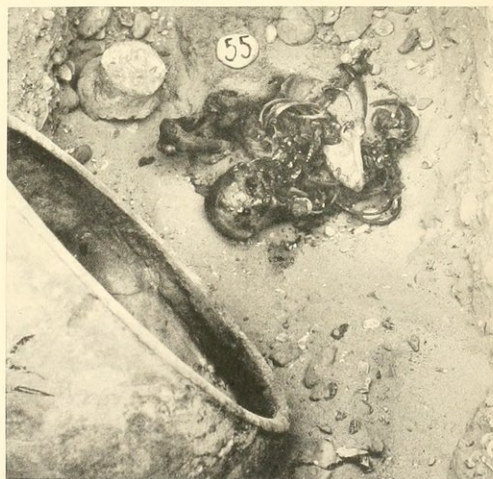


EAST FACE OF R 55a.



POTS AS FOUND.

R 55a.



BURIAL AS FOUND, FROM N.

R 55a.



POT AS FOUND.

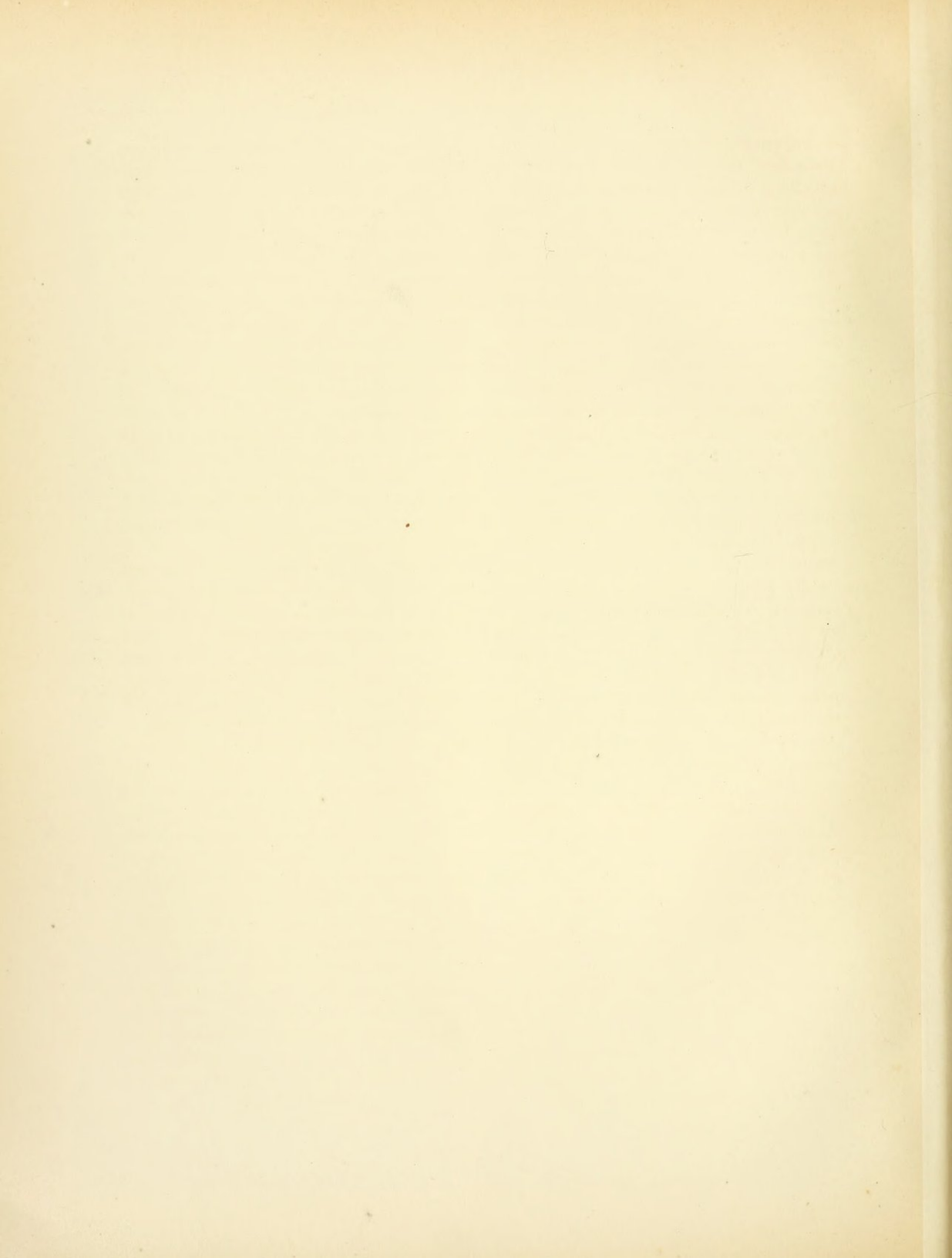
R 70a.



BURIAL BELOW POT, FROM W.

R 70a.





The mastâba itself is dated to about the Fifth Dynasty. We thus have two cases of pot burials (in all, three examples), to each of which one limit of date may be assigned. The one was not before the Third Dynasty (and probably not much after); the other was not later than the Fifth Dynasty, with no limitation at the superior date. Since, as has also been seen in other instances, the tendency in so small a site must be towards co-relation, and a consequent limitation of periods represented, the natural conclusion, so far as it is warranted by consideration of three cases, is that on this site the class of burial pertains to the Fourth Dynasty or just earlier: it is thus synchronous, or nearly so, with the general period of the necropolis.

Upon the next plate (No. XXVII) are some interesting examples of the uses of this custom, and the imitation of it. The burial No. 87 is illustrated in a series of three photographs; the first shows the large pot as found without relation to anything at hand, in the desert, about one metre deep. Still, viewing from the west, the second picture shows the bones revealed by the up-turning of the pot; while the third picture shows in more detail the head towards the east, and the partial adherence of the skin, particularly to the thigh-bone and forearm, preserved by application of some thin bituminous liquid.

No. 250 was found isolated just to the south of the mastâba No. 50. The surface was protected by a strong retaining wall, with eastern panel, and the large pot was within at a depth of nearly two metres. The burial presented no unusual feature.

The imitation of this form in brick is of peculiar interest. The best example is that numbered 59. The photograph on Plate XXVII is taken from above, looking down upon the rounded construction, the top of which only had been broken, or had fallen in. Within, the burial lay in the fully contracted position, without accompanying deposit, the

bones themselves being those of a person not yet adult. The method of construction is illustrated by the picture below, in which is seen the lowest course of bricks standing upon end, and the beginning of the second course laid horizontally upon them. The bricks on the outer surface had been partly smoothed, and the spaces between them roughly filled with broken pieces, and possibly with sand. It is of special interest to note that this construction must have been built, in its upper courses at least, after the burial had been placed in its destined position.

In another case (No. 251), also pictured, the masonry was better and on a different principle. The lowest three courses alone were found preserved, built of bricks placed horizontally, upon a definite scheme of masonry well shown in the photograph.

The six instances of burials under large pots described above have been selected as illustrating both the characteristics of this mode of interment, and those special features which are either peculiar in themselves, or throw some light upon the nature and period of this strange custom. It seems plain that the method of procedure was simply to squeeze the body, in these cases unadorned, into a conveniently large pot, and to overturn it on the sand, either sunk between lightly-constructed walls, or without any further indication of the place of burial. In this site, too, the custom seems to have been contemporary with the period of the surroundings, the overlap of the Third and Fourth Dynasties. This does not, however, prescribe the limits to its use. It does not seem, indeed, to have lasted beyond the Old Kingdom; if so, the excavation of early Middle Empire sites, such as are found at Denderah<sup>1</sup>, Mahasna<sup>2</sup>, must have disclosed cases of its survival. But of its earlier usage there seems to be definite evidence.

At Kawâmil, some 20 kilometres northwards of this site, where a

<sup>1 2</sup> M.E.P., p. 140.



span of the western hills abuts and looks down upon the cultivation, there seem to have been cases found in association with pre-dynastic remains.

At Ballas<sup>1</sup> the explorer came to the conclusion after observing, but not recording, several instances, that "these burials occurred both inside and outside the stairway tombs, and the mouth of the pot was sometimes upwards, sometimes down. No grave was found certainly undisturbed, but some Old Kingdom pottery was found in each of them, and it is probable that the original mastabas (staircase tombs) were of the Old Kingdom, and also the large round pots." It is necessary to note with regard to this statement that observations at other sites agree to demonstrate that the large pots originally were placed mouth downwards, and that disturbance accounts for the finding of them in other positions.<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to notice that while the date of the necropolis in general was misplaced, yet the excavator's independent observation of these instances led him thus early to conclusions, now seen by the light of newer evidences to be so nearly correct.

At El Amrah, just south of

Abydos, the excavator's scientific examinations of this class of burial led him, from his experience, to record<sup>3</sup> that "whenever these burials have not been disturbed, the pot is always inverted over the body, which is laid in a violently contracted position."

The nature of these burials at El Amrah seems to have been similar to those already described<sup>4</sup>; but, unfortunately, none of the burials there of this class was accompanied by any deposit. In one case only the traces remained of a reed mat which had covered the

bones. At Abydos,<sup>1</sup> however, the same writer records his observations of several cases of interest. In one case, numbered X 8, a cylindrical flat-bottomed jar of pottery, of a type<sup>2</sup> supposed to have come into use at the close of the pre-dynastic period, was found with the burial below the round pot. Outside, but within the grave, were three other pots, one specimen of the prototype to No. 20, on Plate XIII, and two of a pot<sup>3</sup> similar, but longer and thinner. These three are found to appear late in the pre-dynastic period, and to range also to its close. In a third case, numbered X 45, another pot<sup>4</sup> with flat bottom and decorated with simple wavy lines, was included with the burial. This pot also is known in the later pre-dynastic period. Two other graves, unfortunately disturbed (X 60 and X 72) contained pottery of the same time in which the prototype of No. 22, Plate XIII is included, and with one was a slate palette also of pre-dynastic character. From this site, as well as from El Amrah, it appeared that these burials under round pots were co-related with those within elementary coffins of pottery. The excavator in fine was able to decide, from consideration of the two sites, that the use of this mode of burial began in the late pre-dynastic period and continued (at least some way) into the First Dynasty.

While interesting in itself as a first example of the application of scientific method to this inquiry, the evidence of this result is also of great moment in its bearing on the question of continuity. It shows in a scale clearly defined with regard to its surroundings, the origin of this custom in the late pre-dynastic history of the locality, and its history continues with and possibly through the First Dynasty. In the earlier part of this chapter it was seen that at

<sup>1</sup> Q.B., p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup> R.M.A., p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> R.M.A., Plate II, No. 3.

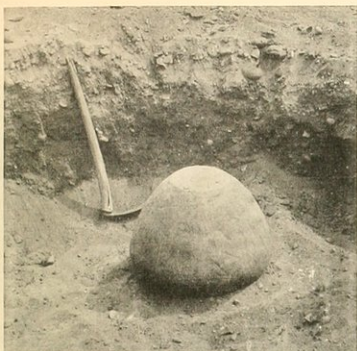
<sup>1</sup> R.M.A. *Abydos*, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> P.N., xxxii, 85.

<sup>3</sup> P.N., xl, 36A, 38.

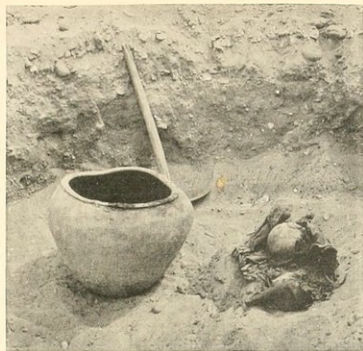
<sup>4</sup> P.N., xxxiii, 21.





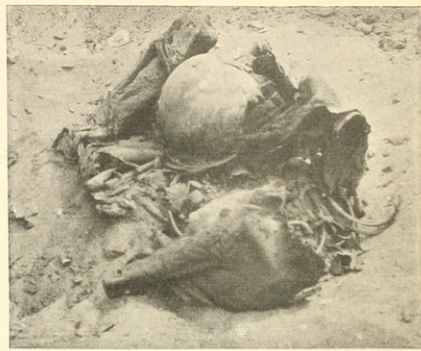
POT AS FOUND, FROM W.

R 87.



BURIAL AS FOUND.

R 87.



THE SAME, NEARER VIEW.

R 87.



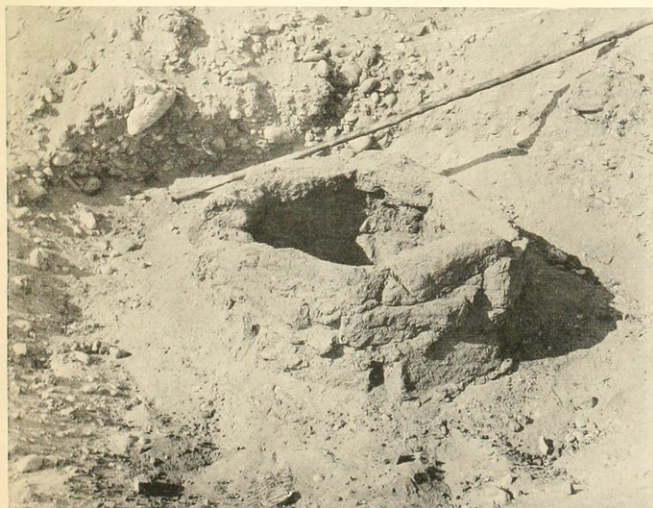
ENCLOSURE OF POT BURIAL FROM N.E.

R 250.



THE FORM COPIED IN BRICK.

R 59.



ANOTHER EXAMPLE IN BRICK.

R 251



CONSTRUCTION OF ABOVE.

R 59





Reqaqnah the same custom was maintained at the close of the Third and during the Fourth Dynasties. The interval also is represented by examples equally significant and individually of greater interest.

In examining the records of observations at El Kab, with due regard to the series of archaeological types more recently established from the early dynasties, it becomes plain that at this site the cases of this method of interment link at once the limits to its range that have been found in the other places mentioned. It is of singular interest to note that in the case of the same excavator's work at Ballas, while the true archaeological relation of these early forms was still completely doubtful, yet his observations were such that they now become evidence of first value.

The analogies in detail between the sites of Reqaqnah and El Kab have been already illustrated; but the origins of the latter are considerably earlier. The round hollow graves of pre-dynastic character<sup>1</sup> are frequent, and others of the earliest customs find numerous examples.

Cases of burials under large pots at El Kab seem also to occur at the earlier dates, and to be from that time continuously represented. That numbered 231,<sup>2</sup> for instance, with its sherds of incised ware and early pottery cannot well be later than the earliest dynasties. No. 166,<sup>3</sup> again, is more definitely dated, as it seems, by a cylinder of Ka-Ra, to the Second Dynasty. In this case, too, the burial preserved entirely its original furniture. Under the large round vessel in an oblong grave, nearly a metre in depth, the body lay packed with mud in usual contracted position, with head to the north and face east. Outside were same alabaster jars, the remains of an ivory veneered box, and two pots with line and dot

decoration. From one of these there were taken out several objects of ivory, a small alabaster cup, two shells stained green with malachite, as well as beads of ivory, green felspar, gold, cornelian, blue grit and serpentine. There were included beads of cylindrical form made of blue grit, with gold caps at the ends. The whole character of the deposit is reminiscent of the pre-dynastic character, yet the cylinder of translucent steatite found with it seems to give the name of ka-ra [nefer-ka], probably the *Xaups* of Manetho, King of the Second Dynasty. The character of the deposit is accordant with this reading.

In a third case, numbered 185,<sup>4</sup> accompanied by an ivory comb, stone bowl, beads of various patterns and material, the head of the burial was to the south, and the forms of the pottery found with it seem to assign it in date to the Second or Third Dynasty. Two further instances of burials accompanied by considerable funereal deposits, bowls of diorite, tables of alabaster and the like, approach more nearly the Reqaqnah period. With the one,<sup>5</sup> No. 301, was a black stone cylinder, with the other a piece of diorite bowl, both inscribed with the name of Seneferu. A seventh example belongs to the same time. In this case,<sup>6</sup> C 5, the burial was placed in one of several shafts of a mastaba, and was accompanied by diorite and porphyry bowls, alabaster vase and table, a shell with green paint, and an interesting ivory inlaid box. The other burials in the mastaba seem to have been nearly contemporary. The eighth instance, No. 42,<sup>7</sup> belongs also the Fourth Dynasty, being furnished with a typical series of vases and pottery, which form a group of some interest. A last illustration, though from a disturbed burial,<sup>8</sup> No. 178, shows a copper

<sup>1</sup> Q.K., p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Q.K., p. 5, xx, 32, ii, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Q.K., p. 4, § 7, xxiii. viii 2, x 44.

<sup>4</sup> Q.K., p. 6, x, 22, 39, 44, 48, xii, 23, 27, 31.

<sup>5</sup> Q.K., p. 10, xx, 30.

<sup>1</sup> Q.K., p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Q.K., p. 7, Plate XII.

<sup>3</sup> Q.K., p. 9, Plate I-7.



cylinder of User-Kaf, first king of the Fifth Dynasty, the date at which the whole series comes to an end. The excavator's impressions of these burials at El Kab led him to remark<sup>1</sup> that "the early date of these burials can hardly be doubted, but it has not yet been determined whether they belonged to the same race as the Neolithic graves, or whether they belonged to some other element in the population."

The selection of these examples  
*Summary.* of burials under large pottery vessels has been made chiefly with a view to illustrating the range and continuity of this custom. The series has thrown light incidentally upon two other associated problems. The same sites which indicate the range of time delimit also in great measure the extent of country in which the use of this method has been chiefly observed. It is not to be concluded that the custom was confined to the country lying between Thinis and Hierakonpolis. Cases have been observed in rock-hewn tombs north even of Beni Hasan. Yet up to the present the sites which most numerous represent this class are those districts of the upper country which are now best known from excavations.

The association of this custom indeed, with other burial customs of early origins, however they might change, is not a little remarkable. Through all the gradual changes by which the early simple grave gave way to the early stairway tombs, and these merged with the commoner mastaba, the instances of these pot-burials are found in association not numerous, but unvarying and persevering. And conversely their associations are in all cases those which are uniquely of early origins and natural development. In this way a small evidence becomes of importance, though but a single thread in the bond of continuity it is

yet unbroken and without a flaw. The second question answered is that of the relative importance of these burials. So many of them are found without furniture that they have been regarded in part as a cheap form of other allied classes with which they are found associated. But that does not seem to be correct. The examination of this necropolis at Reqaqnah has shown that nameless and unfurnished graves at this age are no proof of poverty. The tomb of the royal scribe Shepses of the time of Seneferu was not furnished at greater cost than the graves of some nameless persons at El Kab whether of the same age or earlier, whose bodies rested simply under an inverted bowl.

A third point arises, in conclusion, and requires a short consideration. Much of what has been demonstrated, particularly with regard to the dates of the various graves, relies for its truth upon the assumed contemporaneity of early types in different localities. That this is a safe hypothesis for the later times of the New and Middle Empires is known by numerous examples. In the early days, too, there is no reason to suppose that it was otherwise. The common forms of the pre-dynastic types in different and often widely separated places, the signs of a similar course of development both at different sites, and on the same sites at different epochs, and, more conclusively, the remarkable dated analogies between burying places so far removed as Reqaqnah and El Kab, go far to establish the probability of this supposition.

It may then be concluded upon  
*Conclusion.* the present evidence of observed cases that the custom of interment under large round pots appears in Upper Egypt at the close of the pre-dynastic period, and is uniformly continuous through the early dynasties to the advent of the Fourth. It is associated with other early modes of burial, at

<sup>1</sup> Q.K., pp. 10, 11.

first only by proximity, and later also by co-relation. As a practice it is not common, but it is constant; nor it is not demonstrably representative of poorer or richer people or of a differing element of race. But the latter possibility is suggested also by the intrinsic appearance of the burial, which though not uniform as to orientation, invariably recalls the modes of burial familiar in the earliest origins, and it often appears to be furnished with objects themselves seemingly of earlier character than the period to which it belongs.



## CHAPTER XI

### OBJECTS FROM THE SMALLER TOMBS.

#### With Plates XXVIII—XXXII.

- a. Inscribed Objects: (i) Stelæ (xxviii); (ii) Door frame (xxix); (iii) Clay balls (xxx). b. Smaller Objects: (iv) Pottery and stone vases (xxxi); (v) Forms of same (xxxii). c. Inventory of Tomb Deposits.

THE present chapter contains a description of the smaller objects individually. Their associations and their bearing on the general subject of this volume have been examined in the chapter dealing with the tombs and deposits with which they were found. At the end is an appendix giving a list of these smaller tomb groups arranged in numerical (working) order of the tombs themselves after classification.

Inscribed Objects. (i) On Plate XXVIII the first photograph is that of a limestone stela, about 20 inches or 50 cms. in height. It was found as described in Chapter IX (Plate XXIV) against the eastern face of a small wall-enclosed tomb. Its condition was poor, and the surface was so weathered that this photograph of it after restoration of the body at the Ashmolean Museum is preferable to those taken at the time of discovery. The figure is represented in the old style, with staff and baton, facing left; and in front are offerings including the leg of an ox, a goose, bread, and wine jars. All the carving and the hieroglyphs are in relief. The inscription is partly lost in the centre, but refers to a Royal *Uab*, whose name may have been *Se-Mery*.

On the same plate the second photograph is that of the inscribed slab found in the southernly entrance to the great mastaba No 70, as described in Chapter VI (Plate XVII). It is made of limestone, and about 30 inches in

height. The carving is in relief in the best style of the Old Empire. The hieroglyphs are arranged in seven columns, with vertical divisions. The portion preserved seems to give a list of names of scribes, arranged symmetrically in columns as follows:

- (a) ———, ———, *Thent-tha*, *Senes-em-ab*,  
*Ka-nefer*, ———, *Ua-sau-es*, *Am-Khent*.  
(b) *Mesa*, *Sa-mery*, *An-qem-mu*, *Y-Kaü*,  
*Uz-wr*, *Seref-Ka*, *Shepses-Ka*.

(ii) Following the stela on Plate XXVIII are two views showing details of the inscribed wooden shrine of Shepses, R 64. Other pictures are given on Plate XXV in connexion with the description of the tomb in Chapter IX (b); and a scale diagram occurs on the next plate, No. XXIX. The wood was entirely rotted by the action of wood worms, and though strengthened in every possible way before removal became dust before its journey was completed. The surface too had suffered greatly by the action of this pest, and it was with the greatest difficulty that anything of the inscription could be made out. Such as it was the diagram shows: it contains some features of interest, the drawing of the *SH* in the right column, and the spelling out of the word *SeSH* with the letters *S* and *SH*, determined also pictographically with the usual sign. The formula is part of one usual in the Old Empire texts, and at the bottom there is plain the name of Shepses, Royal Scribe. [Un-



See HESP.

REQAQNAH. INSCRIPTIONS: STELA R 88a, SHRINE R 64, III<sup>RD</sup> DYN.; SLAB R 70. 28.



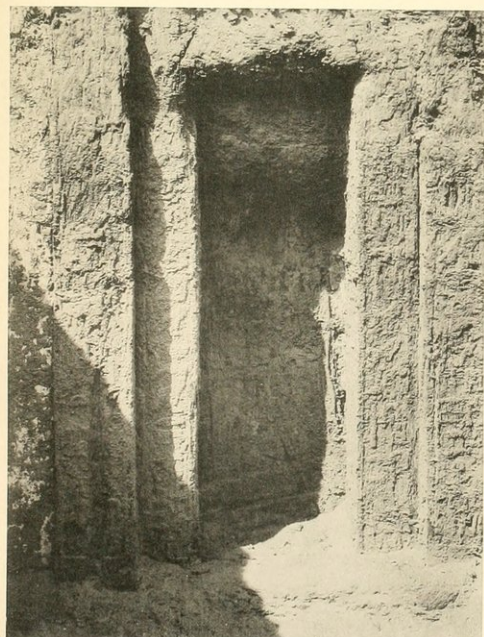
STELA OF A ROYAL UAB, SE-MERY.

R 88a.



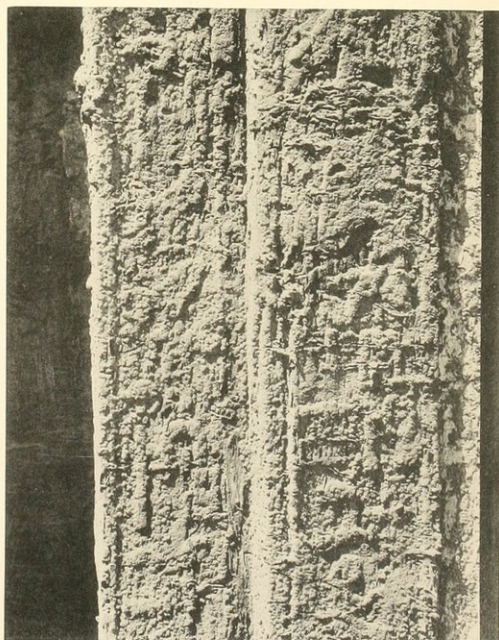
STONE BEARING NAMES OF SCRIBES.

R 70



SHRINE OF THE ROYAL SCRIBE, SHEPSES.

R 64.



NEARER VIEW OF THE JAMBS.

R 64.



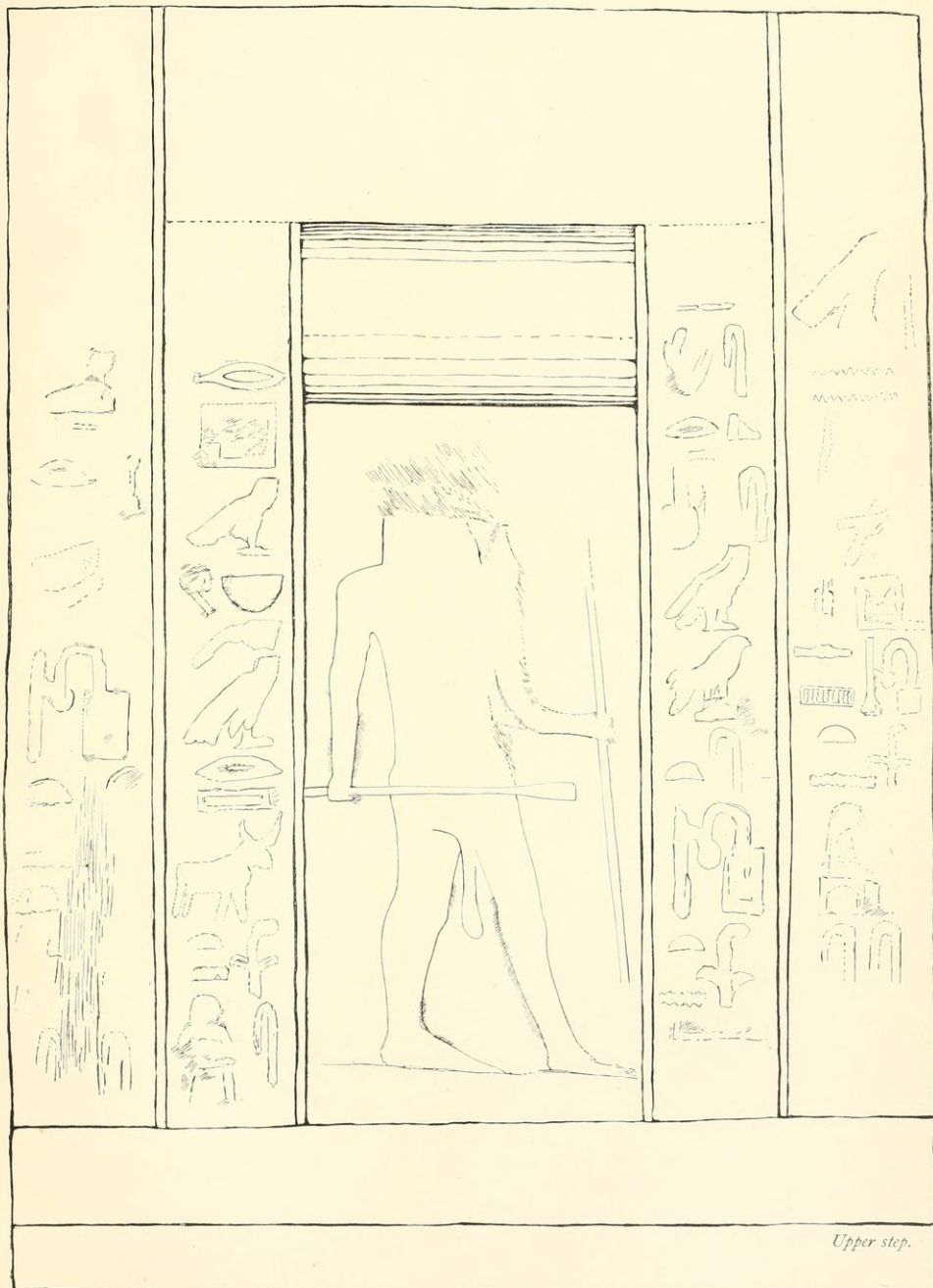


See  
HESPER

1:4 REQAQNAH: R 64. DECAYED WOODEN SHRINE OF SHEPSES: DIAGRAM. THIRD DYNASTY. XXIX

[See photos, Plates XXV, XXVIII.]

Here adjoins brick wall.



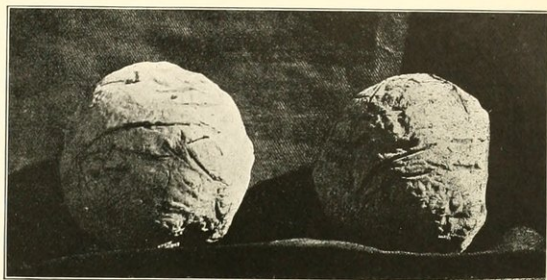
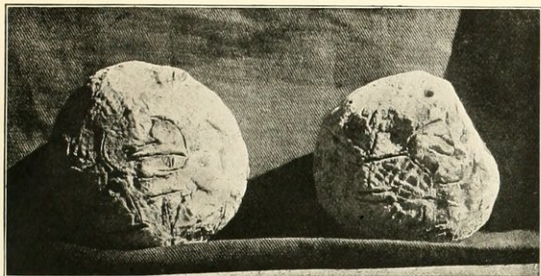
Here adjoins brick wall.

Upper step.

Lower step.



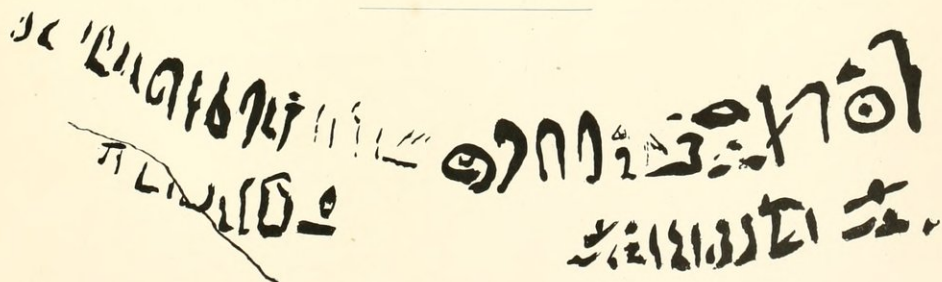




2:3. PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEWS OF TWO CLAY BALLS R50.



1:1 INSCRIPTIONS ON THREE CLAY BALLS R.50.



1:1 INSCRIPTION ON AMPHORA B107.





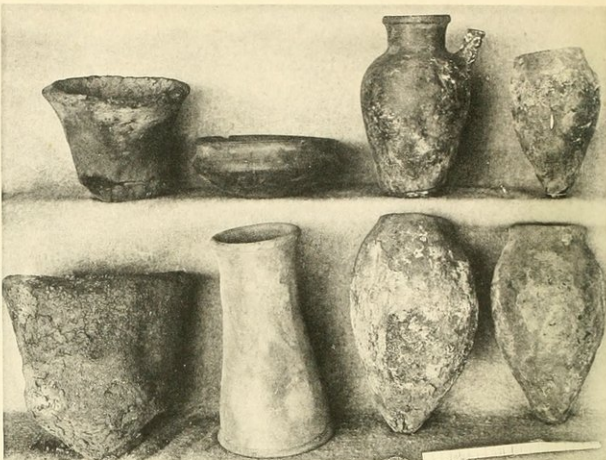




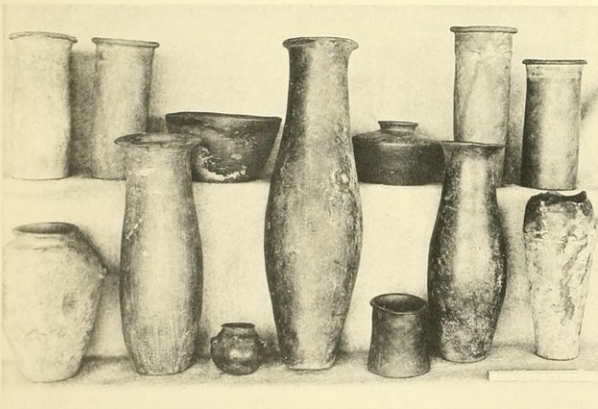


DEPOSIT OF PREDYNASTIC POTTERY.

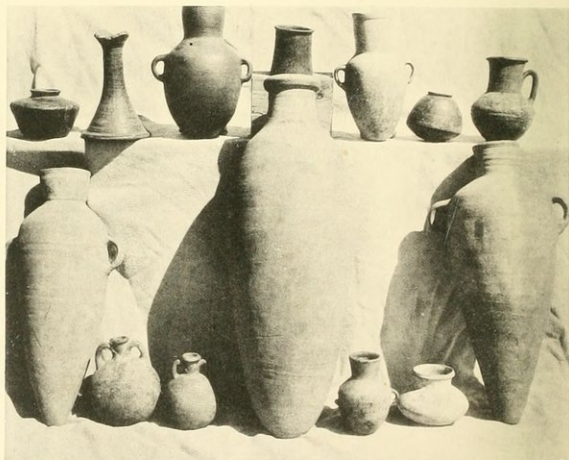
R 90.



TYPES OF POTTERY. IIIrd-IVth DYN.



1:8 PREDYNASTIC POTTERY, &c., BOUGHT AT REQAQNAH.

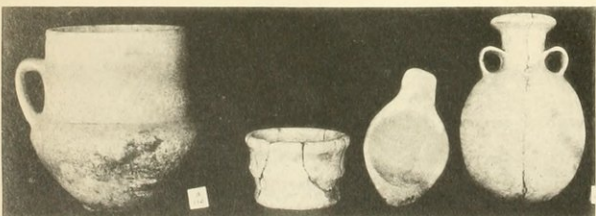


1:12 POTTERY, XXth-XXIth DYN., BOUGHT AT REQAQNAH.



VASES, WITH SEAL OF KHAFA. R 92.

BOWL. R 94.

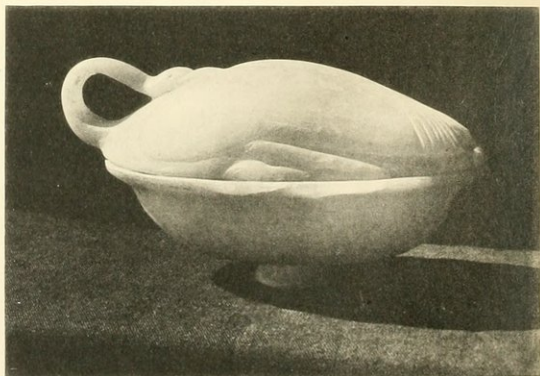


ALABASTER.

B 110.

VASES, &c.

B 103.



ALABASTER VASE, BOUGHT, LOCALITY UNCERTAIN



fortunately, the right column has been placed in the diagram a little too high: the photographs show that the two letters SS really end the inscription.]

(iii) The next plate, No. XXX, illustrates some of the deposit of inscribed clay balls of unusual character. They were found in a deep non-masoned hole in the north west corner of mastaba No. 50. The photographs show two of them, each from two points of view, at two-thirds of their natural size; and the diagrams below describe the incisions with which they are inscribed, necessarily distorted by the projection.

The substance of these balls is much harder and more tenacious than the clay made chiefly of Nile mud, from which bricks were familiarly made. There is noticeable on most of them a reticulated pattern, the interstices depressed, which is a conspicuous marking. Otherwise, the inscription is confined to incised scratchings, more or less uniform in general design as the drawings show. Possibly there may be made out, if indeed the inscription is hieroglyphic, the words *Seten rekh*; and the form of a crocodile is visible on all. They have greatly puzzled all who have seen them.

At the bottom of the plate is a cursive inscription written in ink upon a large two-handled jar of the Twenty-second Dynasty.

(iv) On Plate XXXI are shown some groups of pottery and stone vases. The deposit of pre-dynastic pottery is comprised of a number of vessels found together in the northerly mound of the necropolis. These are nearly all standing flat-bottomed tops with black tops assigned in Sequence Dates to the late pre-dynastic period. Near them were two vases of the tall polished forms swelling below the middle shown in the photograph below. Similar vessels and numerous fragments of them were found plentifully on the western portion of the site; and many

others had already been found and carried away by the villagers.

The right hand photograph illustrates some of the characteristic types of pottery of the closing Third Dynasty. The two central pieces of the upper row are of polished red ware (56B and 53); below, the tall stand is from tomb R 80. The remaining five specimens illustrate the rough character of the familiar forms numbered 2, 4, 11, 12, 22, on Plate XIII. Below is a group of later pottery, probably from the necropolis lying between the Shawahin and Sarawah (sites B and S), mostly of the Nineteenth to the Twenty-second Dynasties.

At the bottom is a photograph (to two-thirds scale) of an exquisite vase of alabaster worked to translucency. It is of oval section, and the body of the vessel rests upon a central leg. The lid is shaped to the form of a swan, with returned neck. This object was bought from dealers from Abydos visiting the camp, and hence its locality is uncertain. It was said to come from the vicinity of Assiout. In date it cannot be earlier than the Eighteenth Dynasty. It is now in the MacGregor collection.

To the left of the latter is a small group of vases, with seal of Khafra, from tomb R 92, the description of which has already been given in Chapter IX. The objects include two small standing vases of alabaster, and a well finished dish of diorite. The inscription on this small cylindrical seal is reproduced on the next plate. Adjoining is seen a well worked bowl of diorite, with somewhat unusual character of form at the rim, which is quite plain. This is probably of the early Fourth Dynasty, from tomb R 94. Below are shown four objects of alabaster from site B, chiefly of the Nineteenth Dynasty. Many tombs were opened and examined in this site B, and some other objects found within them, for which see Plate XXXIII; but the details of this excavation yielded few results of special interest.



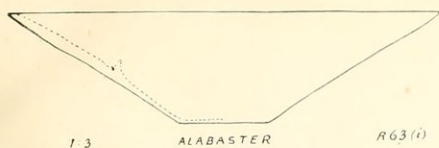
(v) On the next plate, No. XXXII, are given the outlines of various forms of special character. This includes the whole of the group to R 63, of the Third-Fourth Dynasties, which has been separately described in connexion with Plate XXIII in Chapter IX. The feature of most interest is the form of the alabaster dish No. (i), seemingly made, as has been mentioned, in imitation of copper forms. The small breccia vase No. (iii) is also uncommon. The group of polished pottery includes the outlines of three pieces, numbered 1-3, bought in the locality. Nos. 5, 6, have been seen in the photograph on the preceding plate. It is impossible not to see in these somewhat rare examples a direct survival of the method of burnishing employed in the prehistoric times. Lower down in the plate are copies on an enlarged scale of the graffito inscription of *Seten biti Seneferu*, from within the bowl R 64, and of the *Ra-Kha-ef, neteru mer* on the small glazed seal of group R 92.

The last object to be mentioned is the wooden head-rest from tomb and burial R 72, which was found in a decayed condition. Being probably of the Third or Fourth Dynasty in date, it must rank as one of the earliest examples of the fluted column, and also shows the use to have been familiar at this period.

Inventory of (c) This chapter closes with an Tomb Deposits. appendix giving the grouping of pottery and other objects found in the smaller tombs. This list excludes the great tombs Nos. 1, 2, 40, 50, 70, 75, for which see the special description and plates. The forms of pottery

occur mostly on Plate XIII, and the stone vases on Plate XXXII.

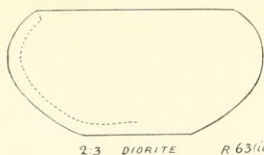
- 53 Pottery form XIII, 2. Polished standing pot with spout, XXXI. Fragments of polished red pottery with black tops.
- 54 Chamber, pottery form XIII, 2.
- 55A large pottery vessel; pottery form XIII, 3.
- 55B As 55A.
- 56B Pottery type XXXII, 5.
- 57 Pottery form XIII, 12.
- 61 Pottery forms XIII, 12 (6 pieces), XIII, 2.
- 62 Fragments of form XIII, 1, or XXXII, 5.
- 63 Vases of alabaster, diorite, breccia, alabaster table, shells, bracelet; XXIV, XXXII (i-vi).
- 64 Table and bowl of alabaster, XXV.
- 67 Pottery form XIII, 15; XIII, 12.
- 68 Pottery form XIII, 11 (more than 40 pieces).
- 70A Large pottery vessel.
- 80 Pottery forms XIII, 14; XIII, 11, 12; fragments XXXII, 5, and black topped.
- 81 Fragments XIII, 12; fragments black topped red pottery.
- 82 Pottery form XIII, 11, 12; some fragments of blacked topped pottery.
- 83 Excavation not completed.
- 84 Pottery form XIII, 12; fragments.
- 86 Pottery forms XIII, 4, 12; and fragments of XIII, 1; or XXXII, 5.
- 87 Large pottery vessel.
- 88A Pottery forms, XIII, 3. Stela, Plate XXVIII (i).
- 88B Fragments of pottery form XXXII, 5.
- 89 Pottery form XIII, 12.
- 90 Deposit of black topped standing pottery vases XXXI, (i).
- 91 Pottery forms XIII, 3, 11.
- 92 Pottery form XIII, 2. Vases of alabaster, and diorite, XXXI. Seal of Khafra, XXXI-XXXII.
- 93 Excavation not completed.
- 94 Pottery form XIII, 21. Bowl of diorite, XXXI.
- 95 Pottery forms XIII, 12, XIII, 2.
- 96 Pottery forms XIII, 3, 11, 12.
- 97 Pottery forms XIII, 2.
- 98 Pottery forms XIII, 12.
- 210 Fragments of pottery forms XIII, 1; XXII, 6; XIII, 11.
- 250 Large pottery vessel; form XIII, 3.



1-3

ALABASTER

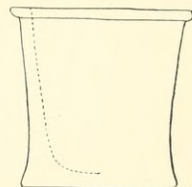
R 63 (i)



2-3

DIORITE

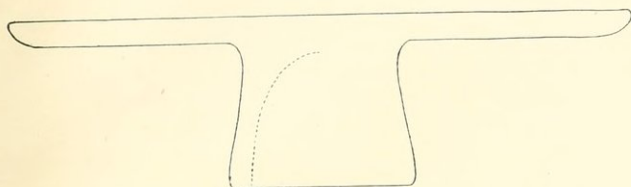
R 63 (ii)



1-3

ALABASTER

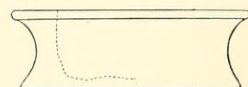
R 63 (iii)



1-3

ALABASTER

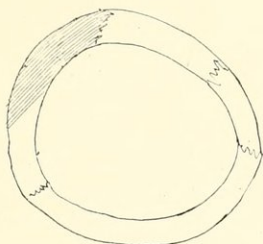
R 63 (iv)



2-3

BRECCIA

R 63 (v)

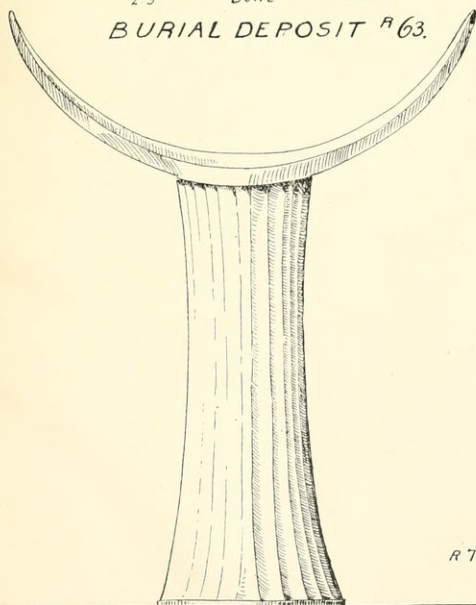


2-3

BONE

R 63 (vi)

BURIAL DEPOSIT R 63.



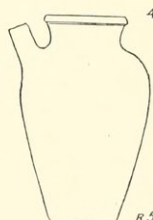
R 72.



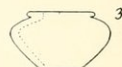
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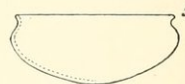
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4



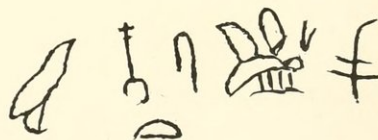
3



5

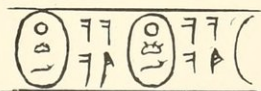
R 53

1-4 TYPES OF POLISHED POTTERY R 53.



3:2

GRAFFITO OF SENEFERU. R 64.



3:2

SEAL OF KAFRA

R 92

2-3

WOODEN HEAD-REST





## CHAPTER XII

### ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE THIRD DYNASTY : A SUMMARY.

**Historical Aspect.** THE Third Dynasty lies historically in a lull between two waves of national progress. It follows the first influx that attended the foundation of the Egyptian monarchy, tending to fall back to its earlier level even while being gathered by newer forces to rise to the height of the Pyramid Age. Its archaeology is fully accordant with its place in history. In all forms of art and technical skill, so far as they can be separated, the earlier styles prevail, not, indeed, much decadent and degraded, but become in some manner conventionalized and shorn of the freshness of original motive. Yet a newer spirit is sensibly growing up, as yet without power; not foreign, but arising from the old, yet imbued with so much individuality that it seems almost to be stimulated by an extraneous influence. The motive which largely underlies this early development, itself arising also from naturalistic origins, namely, the striving after grandeur of effect, is now emerging with new vigour and character, as may be seen from the elaboration and adornment bestowed even at this early period upon the abodes of the dead. The first lesson which this archaeology enforces is that of continuity in development. Just as modern investigations all tend to show that the civilization which attended the earliest monarchy evolved naturally from the prehistoric conditions, so now it is clearly seen that the Third Dynasty links naturally, if unassumingly, the spontaneous culture of the early dynasties with the more determined character of the Old

Empire. It might have seemed otherwise, that the builders of the pyramids must have been as a race of giants compared with those who made round holes in the earth wherein to double up the bodies of their dead. This was indeed an old view which recent investigation has done much to dispel.

**Character.** The culture of the Third Dynasty is that of the proto-dynastic period in general. The characteristics of a stone age remain strongly marked, evidenced by the numerous and often beautiful vases of stone and the other monuments. Flint implements, too, survive, though retained probably for special uses of a religious character. One special form of flint, shaped like a crescent, seems to have been common.<sup>1</sup> But side by side with these usages there appears a perfect familiarity with the working of copper. At first, in the earliest pre-dynastic period, a scarcity of specimens suggests that this was an incipient art, but the objects of the early

**Metal and Stone.** dynasties, though not numerous, attest by their quality that the use must have been more known than practised. Of the Third Dynasty there are large copper vessels like buckets, with riveted handles; smaller vessels with riveted spouts, as well as a knife and spoons; while the imitations of the metal forms in the stone working of the period<sup>2</sup> shows that it was probably only the comparative scarcity of material

<sup>1</sup> G.M.K., Plate 15.

See Plate XXXII.



that accounts for the rarity of existing examples. As a word indicating the mergence of two strains of culture, this metal-stone age has been defined not altogether satisfactorily by the term *calcolithic*.

**Pottery.** In Egypt pottery making never attained during dynastic times a high standard as an art. Probably the difficulty of obtaining a suitable clay is the natural explanation.

**Inscriptions.** Inscribed objects of the Third Dynasty are not common. The doorway of glazed tiles from the step-pyramid of Sakkara, now at Berlin, is thought by some to belong to this period. If the surmise be correct this must rank as the finest example, but it is not at all characteristic.

**On Stone** From the funeral stela, and portions of others that have been found, it would seem that the style of the period, as before and after, was in low relief both for hieroglyphs and figures. The stela of Se-mery (now at the Ashmolean), taken from a small tomb (R 88), suggests an archaic, or primitive, rather than a decadent style; but some fragments taken from a large mastaba (R 50) of slightly later date, are finely carved, and show traces of paint. Some fragments from the tomb of Neter-Khet are of uncertain association, though similar in general character.

**On Wood.** A false door, or shrine of wood, enclosing a panel from the tomb of a royal scribe (R 64), was carved in similar fashion. The hieroglyphs were in relief, and though much decayed showed traces of clean cutting; the text is naturally of the earliest style. The figure of the scribe was also in low relief: he is represented as clad with a skin, holding staff and baton.

**Miscellaneous.** In addition to these excavated objects, there are others known which have been described in published works. Among them a certain number of scarabs bear

the names of kings of this period, but they are not contemporary. The names of kings (chiefly Seneferu) occur also as graffiti on bowls of stone.

As in the case of the earlier dynasties, the impressions of seals rolled upon the mud caps of pottery and stone seals, are the most fruitful source of contemporary inscriptions. From those found at Bêt Khallâf the following names and titles are collected, chiefly from the researches of Professor Sethe:—

#### NAMES OF GODS.

**Divine Personages.** A goddess in human form, holding the symbol of life and of happiness in her hand, appears on a sealing of Neter-Khet.

*Hor*, "Horus."

*Horakti*, "Horus of the horizon."

*Up-ua*, the name of the jackal god, applied as title to a priest.

#### NAME OF A WINE.

*Arep-Dua-Hor-Khenti-pet*, name of a wine from King Neter-Khet's vineyard; found as late as the Nineteenth Dynasty in the temple of Abydos.

#### NAMES OF PERSONS.

**Personal Names.** *Anpu-hotep*, a name appearing on fragments of seals.

*Ary-sen*, name of a private individual.

*Hapi-n-maat*, see *Ne-maat-Hap*.

*Hotep-(uy)-n*, "We are satisfied," which expresses the feelings of the parents. Name of a scribe.

*Mentu-em-sa-cf*, or *Ahy-em-sa-cf*, "The god Neter-Khet is his protection (cursive writing)."

*Mery-ab*, name of a scribe.

*Mery-Sekhmet-maat*, "Sekhmet loves truth," or *Mery-her-en-Sekhmet*, "Loved is the face of Sekhmet."

*Ne-ankh-Sekhmet*, "Life belongs to Sekhmet," apparently the meaning of a seal in archaic writing giving the name of a scribe.

*Nekht*, "strong," the last two signs of an inscription giving a Horus-name hitherto unknown. The first sign is destroyed, and may be either "*hen*" or "*sa*." If the latter, which is more probable, the name would be *Nekht-sa-es*, "Strong is her (i.e. the mother's) protection." Probably the name of one of Zeser's immediate successors, perhaps that of King Neb-ka.

*Ne-maat-Hap*, "Truth belongs to the Apis." The name of a Queen.

*Neter-Khet*, the Horus name of King Zeser (?); on sealings.

*Nezemankh*, "sweet life," name of a priest.

*Nez-neteru*, name of an official.

*Ra-khuf*, name of an official.

*Rudet*, a woman's name meaning "sound" (cursive writing).



*Sa-ef*, a rare personal name or part of a name like *Sebek-m-sa-ef*.

*Sebety-hez*, "Scribe of the Memphite nome," connected with Ne-anekh-Sekhmet.

... *aru-ef*, probably the end of a name (cursive writing).

*Se-mery*, name of a royal *uab*. (Stela, Reqaqnah.)

*Shespes*, name of a royal scribe (wooden shrine).

#### NAMES OF PLACES AND VINEYARDS.

**Place** *Amentiu*, "the western Nomes," of the **Names**. Delta; on a sealing of Neter-Khet.

*As-zefau*, "provision office," to which the public vineyards were subject.

*Dua-Hor-khenti-pet*, the name of a vineyard of King Neter-Khet, meaning "Praised be Horus who is in the front of heaven."

*Het-nub*, name of the place near which were the alabaster quarries; E. mid-Egypt.

*Kanu*, vineyards; of two public vineyards.

*Neru-tawi*, "The terror of the two lands." Name of a fortress of Neter-Khet.

*Per-ab-a*, either a place name or the name of a building connected with King *Per-ab-sen*.

*Per-seten per-deshor kanu*, "king's house, red house, vineyard," the name of a government vineyard.

*Sebety-hezu*, old name of Memphis; in cursive writing.

*Senpu* (?), probable name of a place; also Second Dynasty.

*Sen-Dua-Hor-khenty-pet*, the fellow vineyard to that named *Dua-Hor-khenty-pet*.

*Zert*, "wall," where the public vineyards were situated.

#### TITLES.

**Titles.** *Amy ab*, "favourite," connected with *Neru-tawi* as a title of official.

*Ary Nekhem*, guardian of Hierakonpolis. Title of Nezem Ankh.

*Ary-pe*, guardian of Buto. Title of Nezem Ankh.

*Da-ef ankh*, *uas*, *dedet*, "he gives, life, happiness, and stability." Title of the god Horakhti.

*Dua neter ra neb*, "he who praises (or thanks) the god (or king) every day." Title of official.

*En seshem upt* ... *ny*? Unexplained titles on official seal bearing Horus name of King Neter-Khet three times. Probably titles of an official.

*Er-neb-ary*, a sign from an unexplained sealing.

*Hen shenut Nebka*, "servant of King Nebka's granaries," a title on seal of King Sa-nekht.

*Hety-a* "prince," and *ary Nekhen*, "guardian of Hierakonpolis. Titles of priest Nezem Ankh.

*Hotep-(uy)n*.

*Hur*, "small, little, weak," a fragment of cursive writing. *Nanu*, "young men, adolescents," also a fragment of cursive writing.

*Kha*, "to appear," "to rise," "to be crowned as king," "festival," or "crown," and the word *shems*, "to accompany, to follow," appears in seal of Sa-nekht.

*Kher-heb*, "lector-priest," and *nezer*? or *akeh*? *ams*, an obscure title of which only the word *ams*, "sceptre," is known. A title applied to the priest Nezem Ankh.

*Kherp Shemsu*, "leader of the servants," a title following an obscure title on seal of Zoser.

*Khery-a*, "assistant." Title of priest and of official.

*Khet-ekh*, unexplained sign on official seal of King Neter Khet.

*Mer shent Anpu* "chief of the shent (hundred?) of Anubis, found on fragment of seal of Anpu-hotep.

*Mery-seten*, "beloved of the King." Title of official.

*Mut mesu siten*, "mother of the King's children." Title of Queen Ne-maat-Hap.

*Mut-seten-bati*, "mother of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt." Title applied to Queen Ne-maat-Hap.

*Nebti*, a title of Neter Khet signifying his identity with the "two mistresses" of the united double Kingdom, the vulture goddess El Kab and the uræus goddess of Buto.

*Nefr ankh*, "good in life, a god in commanding," applied to the official Nezm-neteru.

*Nefr medu ma*, "truly beautiful of speech." Title of private man, "Ary-sen."

*Nekht khem*, "strong of voice," a title frequently borne in the Old Kingdom by officials of the granaries; occurs in seal of Sa-nekht.

*Neter uz nefr ankh*, "a god in commanding, good in life." A title of Anpu-hotep.

*Nezem*, "pleasant," with an illegible termination. In seal of King Neter-Khet.

*Neza*, a form of verb, "nez," to ask advice, used in conjunction with "Ren nezem" to imply "a pleasant teacher when asked for advice." Title of official Nezm-neteru.

*Nub* "gold," a title of Neter-Khet, but as his name is placed over the Nub-sign it may mean "Neter-Khet who has conquered the god (Set of Ombos).

*The hieroglyph r* which may fit on to the fragment *nekht khem*, or to the incomplete title *T - - - sh*, both found in the seal of Sa-nekht.

*Rekh-seten*, "acquaintance of the King," applied to Neter-Khet's acquaintance "Mery-sekhmet-maat."

*Ren nezem*, "pleasant teacher," title of official Nezm-neteru.

*Rennu*, "teacher," applied to Ary-sen, a private individual.

*Sa*, "guard," on a seal with Horus name of King Neter-Khet.

*Sam*, a title applied to the priest as "the high priest of Upuat." Later, "sam" was only the title of the high priest of Memphis, and in the Third Dynasty it was more widely applied as "high priest of the temple of Anubis."

*Sam*, "high priest," and *ary Pe*, "guardian of Buto." Titles of Nezem Ankh.

*Senzen zed*, "delighting by saying," epithet of "Ary-sen," a private individual.

*Sesh*, "scribe." Applied to official Nezm-neteru.

*Sesh*, "scribe." Title of Ne-anekh-Sekhmet.

*Sesh sent*, "scribe of the desert," a title of official Ra-khuf.



*Sesh*, or *Sesh sent*, "scribe," or "scribe of the desert." Title of Hotep-(uy) n.

*Sesh*, "scribe," or *sesh sh* (a) "scribe of the lake," a title of Mery-ab.

*Seteny bati*, "King of Upper and Lower Egypt." Title of Neter-Khet.

*Setep-sa zed ra-neb*, "to make the body guard of the king every day," probably refers to an official of King Neter-Khet.

*Seten-bati nebti*, a royal title from an official sealing.

*Uty*, "he of the town of Ut," a title of Anubis, also a priestly title, and may mean "Uty priest of Anubis." Applied to official.

*Za-her*, "to turn the face towards," i.e. "an overseer," with reference to Dua-Hor-khenti-pet, the vineyard of King Neter-Khet.

*Zedet akhet nebt ary-n-s*, "if she says anything, it is done for her." Title of Queen Ne-maat-Hap.

*Unexplained titles* having some connexion with the ornaments and clothing of the king. Applied to official Ra-khuf.

*An injured title* of Queen Ne-maat-Hap, which might either be completed as *Khct-Hor*, "servant of Horus," or as *Mat Hor-Set*, "she who sees Horus-Set.

*Seten rekh*, a royal friend, title of an unknown (inscribed stone, R 50).

*Seten sesh*, royal scribe, title of Shepses (R 64).

*Seten Uab*, royal "uab," title of Se Mery (R 79).

#### Localities.

At the present time only this one site has been identified as definitely pertaining to the Third Dynasty. Here at Bêt Khallâf are five great tombs, the burial places of two kings whose names are Neter-Khet and Sa-Nekht, and of three great personages, one of whom was a prince by name Nezem Ankh. In the vicinity at Regaqnah (some two miles to the north) is a considerable necropolis of the period. It comprises a number of tombs similar in character to those of Bêt Khallâf, three of which are of sufficient importance to justify a surmise that they belonged to persons of considerable rank. The greater number of the tombs are small, and presumably represent private burial places. Amongst them, however, are the tombs of a royal scribe (Shepses) and of a royal uab (Se-Mery). The same group includes three mastâba tombs of great size, one of which was the tomb of a *seten-rekh*, a man ranking among the royal acquaintances. At Sakkara, the step pyramid has been re-

garded, since the exploration of Minutoli, as the work of King Neter-Khet; but there is no present evidence of any contemporary burial within. It seems to have been much used for interment in later times.

In many other sites of wider range tombs are now readily to be identified as belonging to this period. Chief among those of which accounts have been published is El Kab, which presents many analogies. Other tombs have been found at Naga-Der, eastward from Girga, and in the vicinity of the early pyramids.

#### Industries.

It is curious to notice that the earliest efforts of the pre-dynastic people were directed to producing a specially good class of pottery, which was indeed never equalled or excelled at any period before the New Empire. But the natural influences of the country prevailed, and though now and then a trace of the old art re-appears, yet the study of pottery-making, even before dynastic times, is found to have been gradually laid aside in favour of stone working, so that the feature characteristic of the early dynasties is rather the variety of vases carved from the different qualities and colours of stone in which the country abounded.

In other miscellaneous industries there is not much character apparent. Glazed objects of this period are extremely rare. In recent excavation only a few very small beads from a chamber in the tomb of Neter Khet attest definitely to the usage. But if it is to be believed that the doorway of glazed tiles from the pyramid of Sakkara, now in the museum at Berlin, is really the contemporary work of the Third Dynasty, then there is a new element of evidence to be considered in this connexion. Certainly a precedent holds out the possibility, for glazed objects seem to have been found both of the First and Second Dynasties at Abydos and at Hierakonpolis respectively. Cloth making has also a few examples. Some fragments found within the tomb of Neter-Khet, probably the remains of sacks in

which grain was stored inside the galleries, are of coarse texture. One piece, the finest, has 37 wefts and 29 warps to the inch.

*Architecture.* The architecture of the Third

Dynasty is known solely from the tomb structures of the period. The large solid superstructure of the tomb of King Neter Khet, and the adjoining stepped mastaba of Sa-Nekht, are direct links in form with the first of the pyramids, the step pyramid of Sakkara which belongs to the same time. These great buildings developed naturally from the earlier forms of tombs in the effort to secure a safe abiding place for the dead. The characteristic tombs of the period are of the stairway type, advanced to a stage where the superstructure was claiming an increasing elaboration, and so leading on directly to later tombs of the well-

known mastaba type. The necropolis of Reqâqnah discloses a number of tombs in definite arrangement, with narrow ways between the rows, a method not characteristic of later burying places. The smaller tombs are of elementary character, allied with earlier and later examples. They are of varying character, some being a vaulted recess, others a shaft with underground chamber enclosed by a surface building. Some methods of burial are employed less usual or more simple, among which the mode of interment under a large pottery vessel is perhaps the most remarkable.

In general there is little elaboration of design or architectural adornment observable. The use of the arch, the most important feature of the period, seems to develop from a constructional necessity, not as an embellishment.



# APPENDIX 'A.

NOTE ON SOME OF THE OBJECTS OF LATER DATE.

With Plates XXXI and XXXIII.

Plate XXXI. **S**OME objects are figured in the illustrations which do not otherwise enter into the general problem of this book. Of them, the alabaster vase from uncertain locality, shown on Plate XXXI, is of unusual character. In horizontal section it is oval, and the base rests upon a single short pedestal in the centre. The lid is fashioned in the form of a sleeping swan, the bill is in the favourite position under the wing, and the long neck coming back provides the handle to the vessel. The work is fine, and the finish good. The thinness to which the stone is worked gives a general translucency to the object itself which provides it with a noticeable delicacy of appearance. It is now in the MacGregor collection.

Plate XXXIII. Turning to the last of the plates of illustrations, the most interesting of the stone objects pictured is a great stela of Se-Ra, a sculptor or engraver, dated to about the Twelfth Dynasty. The workmanship is good, the hieroglyphs and figures sharply incised, and the surface of the stone well dressed. The parentage of Se-Ra is not quite clear. He was born of Hetepu; his wife was Set-Khent-Khety. But in Scene 2 his father (Atef) is called Tehuti; whereas in Scene 3, and on the back, his father (also Atef) is named Khent-Khety-em-hat, and his wife Hetepu. Doubtless there is some ambiguity or a double dedication.

The stone itself is so perfect that it may be of interest to print the following details, due to Mr. P. E. Newberry—

Rows 1-3: Adoration of Osiris by Se-Ra and his relatives. The names (3) are: (i) Sa-Ra; (ii) Tehuti; (iii) Khent-Khety-em-hat, his father; (iv) Sebek-Khety; (v) Se-Ra;

(vi) Khety; (vii) Khent-Khety-em-hat; (viii) Khent-Khety-hetep; (ix) Khent-Khety-hetep.

ROWS 4-5: Prayer to Osiris, Up-uat and Anubis for funeral offering for Se-Ra.

UPPER SCENE. *Left.* Se-Ra seated with his wife [name not inserted]. "His brother, Khent-Khety-hetepu" offers before him.

*Right.* "His [Sa-Ra's] brother Sebek-hetep" seated with his wife Sat-sen-mera. "His brother, Sen-mera," offers before him.

LINE 6. Prayer to Osiris for benefit of Tehuti said by "his son who makes to have his name, the engraver Sa-Ra."

SECOND SCENE. *Left.* Tehuti seated with "his daughter Sat-sen-mera and his mother Hetepu" receives offerings from [*right*] "his son Sen-mera, his son Khety, his daughter Sa-sen-mera and his brother Antef."

LINE 7. Prayer to Upuat for benefit of Khent-Khety-em-hat said by "his (sic) son who makes to have his name, the engraver Sa-Ra."

THIRD SCENE. *Left.* "His father Khent-Khety-em-hat and his wife Hetepu and his daughter Sat-Khent-Khety" receive offerings from [*right*] "his son Khent-Khety-em-hat, his daughter Sat-Tehuti, his daughter Hor-sek-hat and his sister Mern-es."

LINE 8. *Left.* Prayer to Anubis Upuat for benefit of Sa-Ra made "by the son of his son who makes to live his name Sa-Ra."

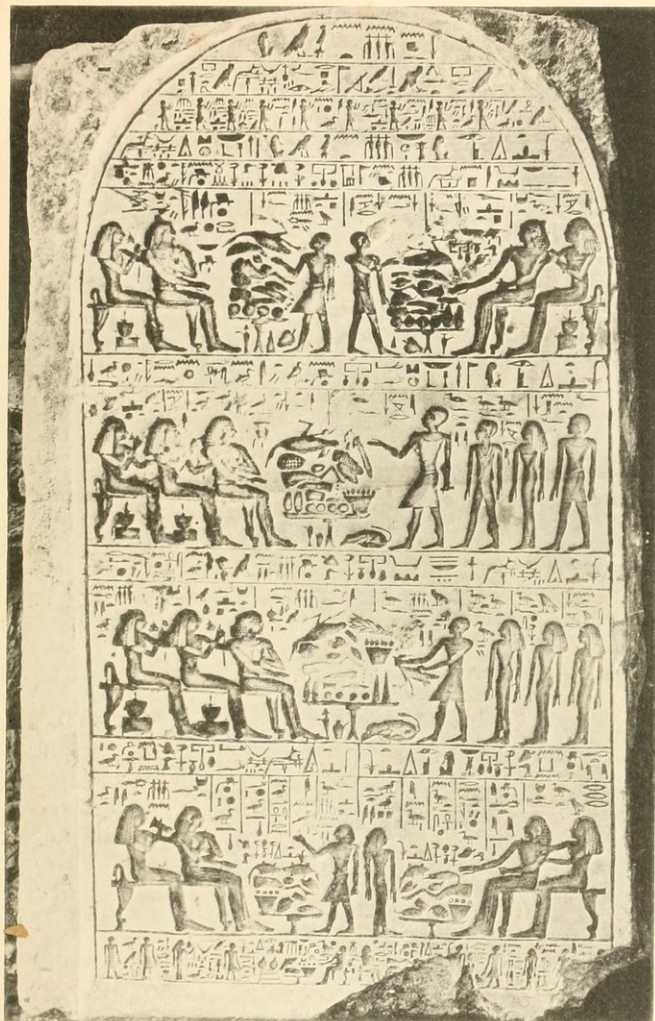
FOURTH SCENE. *Left.* Sa-Ra (grandson) and "his wife Sat-Khent-Khety" receive offerings from his son Khent-Khety-hetep.

LINE 8. *Right.* Prayer to Osiris for benefit of Khety made "by the son of his daughter who makes to live his name, the engraver Sa-Ra."

FOURTH SCENE. *Right.* Khety and wife Sat-rereru receive offerings from his daughter Satpepy.

Below are two scenes. *Left.* Sa-Ra seated, before him (1) "his brother Antef," (2) "his mother Sat-upuat" (?), (3) his brother Unen . . . , (4) and Sa-hor-sekhat. *Right.* Sa-Ra seated, before him (1) . . . (2) his brother Khent-Khety-em-hat, (3) his sister Sat-Khent-Khety, (4) . . .





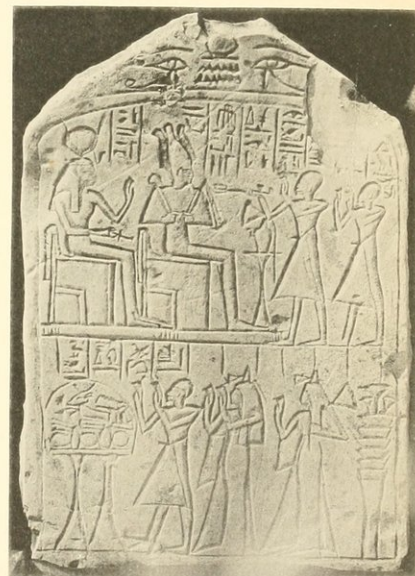
STELA OF SE-RA, SCULPTOR.

D 1.



BACK OF STELA

D 1.



1:5

STELA OF P PA-AHA.

B 103.



1:7

PYRAMIDION (NEB. MERTU. EF) & OBELISK.

B 101.



TABLES AND INSCRIPTIONS OF LATE PERIOD.

R





The small stela from site B, near Bêt Khallâf, in a necropolis of the Nineteenth Dynasty, from tomb No. 103, speaks of a "*sedem-ash* of Anhur" whose name is destroyed. In a lower row the same title recurs with the name Pa-Aha," which is probably that of the deceased. The stela is rather small and the workmanship conventional.

From the same series of Nineteenth Dynasty tombs comes the pyramidion numbered 101. It bears the name "Neb-Mertu-Ef, scribe of the granaries of the Divine Offerings of Anhur." On another side is the name "Riy." The obelisk, which is

partly broken away, speaks of another *Sedem-ash* of Anhur" whose name seems to end in *hu* (? Sa - - hu). The name of the chief lady is destroyed: her daughter was "- - - pa - drt," and another daughter "Rennut."

The tables of offerings and inscription of late period were bought in Reqâqnah, and call for little comment. They probably come from some late tombs with vault and well found interspersed with the stairway tombs of the Third Dynasty among which they had been placed.

## APPENDIX B.

## CRANIOMETRICAL ANALYSIS OF THIRD DYNASTY SKULLS FROM REQAQNAH.

Supplied by Mr. Randall-MacIver.

Tomb	Sex	Glabello-occipital length	Ophryo-occipital length	Basi-bregmatic height	Vertical index	Greatest breadth	Cephalic index	Basi-nasal length	Basi-alveolar length	Alveolar index	Interzygomatic breadth	Naso-alveolar height	Upper facial index	Nasal height	Nasal width	Nasal index
R 50 .	Male . .	196	193	142	724	135	689	102	100	98	129	75	58	52	25	48
R 54 .	Female .	172	171	128	744	137	797	94	94	100	—	68	—	47	26	55
R 55a .	Female .	171	171	120	762	127	743	92	94	102	119	62	52	45	25	56
R 55b .	Male . .	182	178	139	764	140	769	103	95	92	132	74	56	56	26	46
R 56a .	Male . .	197	191	144	731	144	731	104	98	94	132	79	60	54	28	52
R 61 .	Male . .	185	182	136	735	142	768	103	94	91	132	72	55	53	27	51
R 66 .	Male . .	184	180	136	739	139	755	101	96	95	126	77	61	55	23½	43
R 68 .	Male . .	187	184	132	706	134	717	104	93	89	127	69	54	52	29	56
R 71 .	Female .	170	168	124	729	132	776	100	85	85	—	64	—	48	21	44
R 72 .	Male . .	183	181	140	765	132	721	98	92	94	123	67	54	48	25	52
R 80 .	Female .	181	178	137	757	145	801	93	85	91	127	74	58	52	22	42
R 82 .	Male . .	184	180	132	717	141	766	96	90	94	124	76	61	52	27	52
R 88 .	Doubtful	178	177	126	708	131	736	95	90	95	121	65	54	46	26	57
R 89 .	Male . .	196	193	134	684	140	714	103	101	98	139	87	63	59	29	49
R 200 .	Male . .	190	188	135	710	142	747	99	91	92	125	69	55	49	26	53
R 202 .	Male . .	177	174	130	734	135	763	99	101	102	121	68	56	44	24	55





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