KOMMOS EXCAVATIONS
1977
Trenches 12A1 (and 12A1/58) - 12A5

Supervisor

M.C. Shaw
NB from 1978

Room M now completely excavated.
See NB 21, 25.
Contents

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View of Trench 12A (balk) from SE

A-D: Balk (Trench 12A)
E: Wall 3 (Trench 4A)
F: Wall 2
G: Wall 1
H: Wall 4 (Trench 4B)
J: Area G
I: Area H
K: Wall 6C
L, M, N: Rooms A-C (Trench 4A)

Excavation starts today in Trench 12A. This is the balk (c. 1.60m E-W, 4.00m N-S) between trenches 4A to the East and 4B to the West, in last season's excavations. The top sand layer (level 1) has already been removed in connection with the adjacent trenches (see Pails 1 and 33).

Grid co-ordinates are at: 977.36 x 1216.62 at NE
973.38 x 1212.62 at SW.

Work starts with two workmen: Mydams MarGawrins and 'Andreia KoroucGawa, the former as pickman, the latter as shovelman.

Much sand has been blown into the trenches. This sand is now being removed from area G to the West of the balk and areas A-C to the east, in preparation for the actual digging (letter designations as given in M.Boots). The actual digging will commence on Monday. Detailed information about the adjacent areas can be found in M.Boots and in the supervisors' reports of the 1976 season (l. Nixon & M. Shaw), but here are a few general remarks and features:

Area G is defined by two N-S walls, wall 7 on the West and wall 5 on the East (the latter still partially under the balk), wall 5 is marked by a gap after which the southern section detours from a strict N-S orientation and has a NW slant. Both major walls (7 and 5) have their facades inwards in space G which, consequently, has been considered as an outdoors area. The pavement here (c. 1956/1864) is hard-packed, white clay.
Areas A-C (proceeding from S-N) to the east of the balks are what seem like three rooms, defined by a facade wall (#1) to the east, looking into a lime-pebble paved courtyard (area D) and two interior partition walls, one meeting wall #1 at right angles and another (#2) further north, projecting eastwards from our balks. The direction of wall 2 is not quite parallel to wall 3 and is also less wide.

Wall 3 does not continue all the way west to the balk but stops some 0.75m short of it. This is clearly a passage, a doorway to the central room B. Another doorway some 0.75m wide exists between walls 1 and 2. Both doorways are now blocked by fallen stones and slabs which have not yet been removed. Floor level was reached in space A and B (19.33/19.31m and 19.44m, respectively), but C is too narrow to allow excavation in depth.

Pottery from the latest occupation of area C dates to the LM III A-B, but from A-C (still on security evidence) to LM III AZ, or later.

The surface of the balk is not even or horizontal. Its east half is some 7-10cm higher in level than the west half, which was dug a little further down in connection with the clearing trench of 4A2. From the scarp of 4A it is clear that level 2 (hard sand) of the balk is 5-15 cm deep, while there is a layer to dig in the west half. There is also a gentle slope down towards the north. The first pair is assigned to the removal of level 2 of the balk.

B. M. 140 at 21.44 m

Sec: 1:50: Trench 12A (balk) and flanking areas (see also phot, p. 8)

2 phot: Black & white: Roll #2 35-36 from SE

1 m in colour
Pail 1  Level 2
Hard sand - From 2.05m
sherd - roof tile (Umayyad?); 55-59 sherd, mostly
other: shells
Inv.

The fill of Pail 1 is the typical one for
level 2. In this area: sand mixed with
earth, not too tightly packed, brownish in
colour, few sherd; a few small, rough
stones.

The fill becomes somewhat more compact
though the colour remains the same, perhaps
more reddish brown, very little, if any, sand
in the soil. This seems to match
the kind of fill found in area G in
level 3. Level 3 of areas A-C
was characterized by whitish earth, but
this is because of the extensive use of
white earth (asphaltum) used in the
construction of the stucco which was found
collapsed in all three rooms. (see phot. p.8)

Pail 2  Level 3  Under Pail 1
Brownish earth - From 2.04m
sherd:
other: bits of purple schist; stone queray; shells
Inv. 545: fragm. queray

In the fill and in the s. quarter of
the trench is found about half of one
an oval-shaped stone, flat on one
side, with a shallow cavity on the other
side. It is found upside down and
when removed a great number of shells
are found underneath it, some still in
the cavity mixed with the adhering earth.
To ensure a full recovery of shells, or
whatever else was under the bowl the
fill from this location is day-sieved.

Pail 2  Pottery: 1330 gms; coarse and fine, Ephesenean
globet, some 1/10 black glaze - Small, worn sherds

Fragm. limestone boll or queray with earth and shells
adhering to its interior

35 cm

25 cm
At a distance of c. 0.60 m from the S edge of the trench and at level 20.34 m is a fragmentary squared slab with two shallow circular cavities, some 3.5-4 cm in diameter. The slab is 19.5 x 23.5 cm max. pres. dimensions. Its thickness is c. 3.5 cm. Directly S of this is a large squared, deep cavity. It is still under the fill to the south with the two projecting sides being 0.50 x 0.67, as exposed. The thickness is c. 12 cm.

At this level the fill becomes very stony. Most stones are low lying, a few slab fragments appear just next to the large cavity. In thickness they resemble the floor slabs found fallen in room A-C of trench 4A last year. The two cavities and the 1 slab found today may well be material from either fallen on or originally forming that collapsed floor.

As we dig down the following features begin to appear:

a) A western extension of wall 2 which must eventually meet with wall 5

b) The beginning of a N-S wall starting from wall 2 at 1.37 m from its east end and extending northwards towards the scarp. We shall number this as wall 15.

c) At a distance of 1.37 m from the S scarp appears a line of stones which might be part of a staircase leading S. The top surface of this line is roughly at 20.15 m.

d) Between the 1st stairway step and wall 2 there is a debris of fallen stones, medium to small size, with a concentration of slabs in the north quarter, resting against the S face of wall 2. These slabs are on top of more slabs which were left protecting the western scarp of Trench 4A.
we change wall which will represent now just fill from around and directly under the stones. We expect to find directly under fallen stones once they are removed. These surfaces, a very irregular one, because of the stones, slope down slightly towards the north. Levels 20.15 - 20.10.

Pail 3 Level 3
Under pail 2 - From 20.15/20.10
Brownish earth

As we clear around the stones and remove some of the smaller ones the "step" turns out to be a wall aligning with wall 3 of Trench 4A and of roughly the same thickness. This will be designated as Wall 16.
In the area North of this "step/wall and South of wall 2 there is a fragmentary stone quern among the fallen stones.

North of wall 16 further clearing exposes a possible N return to the west end of wall 2 and parallel to wall 15.
At the corner of this new wall and the scarp, i.e. at the very NW corner of the back, is found a stone object of purplish-colored stone (see sketch on p. 16). A broken upright slab is set against the N face of wall 2 forming a small compart.

Photographs taken of the trench at this level (see p. 16).# Between N return of the west end of wall 2. It is 0.45 m wide (E-W). It is here that the stone object was found. We might have another compartment, east of the first one and somewhat wider.
At this point (see photogr. platt. on p. 18) excavation continues only in the area between well H and the step/wall (B) former South. Small and loose stones are being removed and the earth around and under them still excavated in connection with Pail 3. This area can be referred to as Room B (continuing Room B in 4A).

More slabs are exposed, still mostly in the NE quarter of the area being excavated, but a few further W as well. The slabs are canted, often one on top of another in a domino effect. They are projecting some 0.20 – 0.25 m above the level of each reached so far around them (Level 20.00/20.06). We decide to change pail starting at this level (see p. 25).

Pail 4 Level 3 From 20.00/20.06m Under pail 3
Brownish earth (occasional asphochara) in
Sherd: 1,370 gms. MI III bowl, AM III cup, bowl, MIII/III
Other: shell R MIII B bowl, see p. 20.

Inex:

Small fragmented slabs are and stones are removed but the big slabs are left in order to study their configuration. Some of the better preserved ones reach the dimensions of 0.45 X 0.70m. The thickness is of an average of 0.04 m, occasionally 0.05 m. The top surface is flat, the underside somewhat irregular. Along the east edge of the balk there is much admixture of asphochara, further west the fill is still brownish but a little more whitish than it was higher up. The earth gets progressively whiter as we dig down.

Digging down without removing the slabs has been pursued as much as possible. It is decided to record the position...
Fallen slabs in Room B
From south - walls as numbered

1:1

Fael A: ? LM III A-B sherd
Frag. from same pot in Fael 14 (Fr. 49)

While the drawing is being made the
workmen will clean the northern part of
Trench 5B, in preparation for the digging
of the next trench, another balk between
4A2 and 5B.
Trench 12A1 at level of hard sand
973.38 x 1212.62 y at NE
970.86 x 1211.12 y at SW

June 17, 1977

While a plan is being made and levels taken of the remains in balk 12A at the level reached yesterday work starts in a new trench 12A1.

Trench 12A1 is at grid co-ordinates 970.86 x 1211.12 y. Between trenches 4A2 to the north and 5B to the south. This balk is an irregular rectangle. Its N-S dimension are 1.45 m. at the west end, 1.60 m. at the east end. Its W-E dimension is 5.25 m. Level 1 (top sand) of the balk has already been removed in connection with the excavation of the adjacent trenches, last year (Pail 33 in Trench 4A2 and Pail 1 in 5B). The next layer is of hard sand and, to judge from the exposed south scarp, it is some 0.10 - 0.35 m thick. The following pail is assigned to this layer. The surface slopes steeply down from W to E at c. 970.86 - 973.38

Pail 5
Level 2 from 970.86/20.55 under Pail 33 (Tr 4A2) & Pail 1 (Tr 5B)
Hard sand
sherd's 8,380 grs.; latest LM III (?)
other: shell
Inv.

Photographs are taken of the south scarp including views of the north half of Trench 5B.
It is decided that Bench Mark P140 be removed from its present location and transferred to one of the exposed walls along the same line so that the earth under it can be excavated in connection with Trench 12A1.

Once the layer of level 2 is removed excavation stops here and we move back to 12A...