

GS 79
SPHINX
June 23, 1979

NOTES:

NS/S/NE/R9/3a - Granite Piece

Photoed the largest granite piece from locus 3a in R9 of last year (Ns 78). This was drawn in a subsidiary section, and photoed. It rested almost or actually on the surface of 3b with tumbled limestone large rocks, against the in situ block of the N wall of the Sphinx Temple. After cleaning it, it looks like it could be a fragment of a worked side. This was salvaged from the trench of R9 before it was refilled.

R5: Balk under cbC - "excavation line"

Cleaned the balk under cbC in R5, now fallen in and under to some extent. But the excavation line (4b in section) still shows although it looks like it could be more of an interface as is now. But the same cut line in the fill under the N side of cbC and the S side of cbB convinces me that it was interpreted correctly in the designing of the section of R5 last year. Viz. packed concentrated gravelly sand (4a) interrupts the limestone rubble ((5), and tan clay-like packed sand (5a). This was photoed again today in color and BW,

R2: E balk section - Large Alabaster piece

Retrimmed (although not straight) R2 East Balk section. After the balk collapsed back from being open all year, a large alabaster boulder-like piece shows resting on, or nearly on the bottom rubble (t.O.K.) layer (5). The packed hard tan clay-like sand (4), (4a), butts up to this alabaster piece on N side, but it seems S.H. excavations cleared to its S face where now locus (2) runs up to its S face. This alabaster piece, then, seems to have been left "in situ" resting on or almost on the rubble layer of locus (5) and/or set into the packed tan clay-like sand locus (4a). Its significance relates to how this large alabaster piece was left in the presumably working debris (?) where the quarry work ended (ledge W side of trench R2), and why, if that working debris relates to the extension of the court of the Sphinx Temple, as per Ricke.

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June 23, 1979 (cont.)

R2, Locus (4), Tan clay-like mudbrick?

At the N end of R2 the tan clay-like packed locus (4) in Ns 78 section, now seems clearly to be mudbrick with the individual bricks showing demarcated by thin grey mud lines and fill. *
Question: why was mudbrick work set into an interruption of the bottom rubble (5) "working debris", and when? It has been assumed that (4) and (4a) in R2 related to the tan clay like sand deposits associated with O.K. sherds in R10 and R9 and under the cb's in R5 and R11A. Does this indicate that in R2 this is a later addition set into the working rubble?

* STRAW temper showing in at least 1 brick.
Photoed w. macro close-up.

R2, Locus (5), Iron Fragment

While recleaning the balk section of R2 I pulled from the bottom, tentatively O.K. rubble layer (5) a small corroded piece of iron (definitely embedded in the balk). How does this relate to the iron fragments taken from R2 during its first clearing in 78, when it was thought that the iron fragments came from the missed pit of (3) in R2 while the flint blade came from (5). Compare also the iron flat nail apparently from (5) compact tan clay-like sand under cbC, N balk, R11A in 78. (Because one would not assume iron in what otherwise seems to be an O.K. deposit, this was questioned as contamination when found in the plastic bag of sherds from this narrowly defined deposit in R11A, extension of the N balk (cleared by Reis Mohammed - but only after all other deposits were cleared and their inclusions bagged and sealed shut)).

Fact that the trench of R2 was left open for a year, however, lowers the reliability of this iron coming from locus 5 in R2. Conceivably it could have become embedded in the balk during the trashing-up of the trench and the collapsed of the rubble of its upper layers. But it did seem to be securely embedded in the rubble fill of (5).

R2; Gypsum (?) Patch on the floor.

A round patch of gypsum, not more than a cm. thick at its fullest extent, was found on the smooth part of the floor in R2, near center (see section Gs 79), only faintly distinguishable from the smoothed bedrock. This was removed with a knife, being hard packed, off-white to yellowish, grainy, sandy when dried. The patch was called a depression feature (Fdl) and quadranted, with a one quarter section taken out, and photoed as such. It runs into the balk under the rubble locus (5) and will appear in the new R2 section in preparation. Significance: Why was the floor smoothed with gypsum if the rubble layer of (5) is the abandoned working debris from the unfinished quarrying, leaving the ledge forming the W side of trench R2?