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Preliminary tracings of the decoration of two mastaba chapels, g. 20972-20993 and g. 20977, made in 1975 were useful in preparing the final drawings and provided a basis for evaluating the changing conditions in the tombs. That expedition was directed by Prof. Simpson, and included staff members M. Ms. Daniel Bahl, David Bahl, Phillip Benson, Todd Ruff, Nicholas Thayer, and Dr. Timothy Kendall.

My work builds directly on the initial observations and interpretations made by the field staff of the Harvard University–Museum of Fine Arts excavations between 1936 and 1939. The director of the expedition, Prof. G. A. Reisner, despite his failing eyesight, played an active role in directing the excavations, assigning a number to each new mastaba and interpreting the finds. This is apparent from the drawings preserved in the records in Boston that were done in white ink on a black background to make them more visible to him. His
unpublished synthesis of the material was the starting point for my work.

Direct supervision of the excavation was the responsibility of Reis Mohammed Said Ahmed. His daily diary recorded the progress of the excavation and the appearance of the matrix that was removed from the mastabas and their shafts. This diary was translated by Mahmud Said Ahmed. To a great extent, the Egyptian staff that Reisner had trained seems to have carried out the excavations independently during these years, as can be seen in the description of the excavation of the serdab of g 2099 on p. 150. The professional staff included Mohammedani Ibrahim, photographer; Mahmud Said Ahmed, assistant publications secretary and translator; M. ohammad Sayed, surveyor; and Ahmed Effendi, conservator. Dahi Ahmed, Mohammed Salem, Rifa'i, M. ohammad, Salem Hassan, Haddad, M. uri, Bishuah, Sameh, Ahmed M. ahmoud, and Mustapha Abu el-Ham are grouped with several of these men in the expedition diary, and were thus probably also experienced men in supervisory or technical positions.


The non-Egyptian staff members mentioned in the records for the years during which the mastabas were excavated were Messrs. Francis O'cott Allen, Alexander Floroff, Hasammarth Anandrick, and William Stevenson Smith. The last-named was especially active in excavating serdabs and the more fragile finds, and with M. r. Allen was responsible for the preliminary reconstruction of the plaster fragments from g 2098. M. r. Floroff prepared the original plan of the mastabas. Drawings of the decoration in g 2091 were made by M. r. Norman de Garis Davies some years prior to the excavation of the other tombs in the cluster.

With the exception of the two corridor walls of g 2091, which were recorded by Davies, the final versions of the epigraphic drawings published here were prepared by Jeffrey Burden, Peter Der Maruarian, Lynn Holdon, Jennifer Houser, and myself. Michael Jones drew the revised plan and the north–south section of the cluster, and wrote a section for the introduction describing them and explaining their conventions. The plans and cross-sections of tomb shafts were taken from the Tomb Cards, which were probably prepared by M. ohammad Sayed, although the placement of the burial chamber plans in the bodies of the mastabas is my own approximation. Untranslated Arabic notations on the Tomb Cards were translated for me by Everett Rowson in consultation with Michael Jones.

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The personal debts I have incurred during the completion of this project are if anything more extensive than my scholarly and professional ones; however, I will, however, limit myself to mentioning my greatest creditor. Everett Rowson has my everlasting gratitude for his plentiful and enduring patience and support.