

PLAN OF A MIGDOL.

By JOSEPH OFFORD, M.R.A.S.

By the courtesy of M. le Ministre de l'Instruction Publique, I have received the description by M. Jean Clédat—who for many years has explored and also followed up all accidental discoveries in the Suez Canal zone and the Eastern Delta—an account of the first discovery of one of the old Egyptian Migdol buildings. This is situated on the frontier between the Bitter Lakes and Suez upon a small plateau, thus commanding a long distance view. It is called by the Arabs Djebel Abou-Hassa, and lies between the Wadis Seyal and Abou-Hassa.

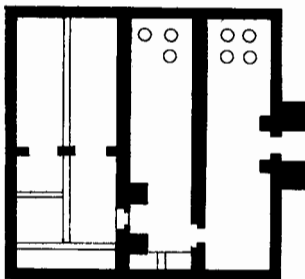
Unfortunately, although sufficient of the edifice remains to enable its plan to be given, it had been destroyed, or allowed to fall into decay, at some time previous to the Roman era, and then rebuilt. Originally the fort had been constructed before the time of Rameses II, because there are remains of earlier reliefs which must have borne the names of previous Pharaohs, beneath those of Rameses and his father Seti, which adorned the innermost of the three chambers into which the tower was divided.

M. Clédat says this edifice certainly is a specimen of one of the Migdol towers or forts in which the nomads of the frontier under Egyptian protection took refuge if menaced by advancing enemies.

It was a square tower surmounted by a crenellated wall, and would have had one or two windows to light its first storey. We know this from the pictures of such a building in the reliefs at Karnak illustrating Seti's campaign against the South Palestine, or Shasu, Syrians. This discovery now presents us with architectural particulars of the interior arrangement of the ground floor of a Migdol, and also of the exterior up to some part of its elevation.

It measured 14 cm. by 80 cm. upon each of its rectangular sides, and was entirely constructed of large blocks, two of which, closely fitted against each other, formed the average thickness of its walls. The size of these stones were not all similar, but the gaps caused by this were filled up with mortar and pieces of stone wedged in.

The door, of 1·15 m. width, was placed in the centre of the eastern wall. Outside to right and left, but fitted close up to this wall on each side of the entrance were two strong square buttresses, something like the pylons of an Egyptian temple. Upon the inner side of the wall were two much smaller supporting square columns or buttresses. No remains indicate the way by which access to the upper story was attained. The ground floor was divided by two walls into three portions, access to the third, or the one farthest from the door, as well as to the second, was by doorways well to the left of the entrance, doubtless to enable the space to the right of the door of the first and second halls to be used as a warehouse, because, sunk into the ground at that end of each hall were found, in one four and in the other three large amphorae for keeping grain.



Further description of this interesting building should not be given until M. Clédât publishes a more complete account, except to say that the inner room was utilised as a shrine for the frontier deities, Sutek (= Bael) and Hathor (= Antar or Astarte).

With the peculiar pertinacity of Egyptian priests to perpetuate any pious symbolism, although this shrine was inside the Migdol tower, its entrance was flanked by two mural pylons to imitate a temple, *en plein air*, and the hall was divided by three square columns as if it had been a real temple, or intended to copy a mastaba shrine, as though to support the superincumbent soil.

The decorative scenes and hieroglyphic texts were chiefly in the holy hall, and at Ismailiyeh there are over two hundred such from it, which when arranged and pieced together will tell us more of this Migdol which was certainly seen by the Hebrews either from near or afar soon after starting on their wanderings.

To a person unacquainted with old Egyptian and Semitic psychology, it may appear strange that part of a Migdol should form a shrine for two deities. To those early peoples, however, it would be peculiarly appropriate, and the god or goddess selected shows their thoughtful preparation to secure divine protection.

The tower formed the look-out post and at the same time the refuge for the frontier people, some of whom adored Hathor and Horus-Sutek. Others adored the latter as Sutek only, and Hathor as Anta or Anat. Any attack upon this border would probably be made by worshippers of the Semitic doubles of these deities, therefore the occupants of the place put themselves under the care of these duplicate members of the pantheon of both races. But it was an Egyptian "strong tower;" and its little garrison would be that country's frontiersmen, so its name was "Pa-Hathor."

Beneath the floor of the adytum were found two skeletons, probably a proof of the murder, for magical protective purposes, of two unfortunates who took part in the construction of the building. Such a means of preserving a bridge by the burial of a person was performed in Macedonia as late as the twelfth century; see also 1 Kings xvi, 34, and for similar barbarities in Ancient Egypt, Lefébure's *Rites Égyptiens—Construction et Protection des Edifices*.

SIGNET WITH OLD-HEBREW INSCRIPTION.

By E. J. PILCHER.

In the ruins of a house at Jerusalem an ancient seal has recently been discovered, and Signor S. Raffaeli has sent an impression of it for publication in the *Quarterly Statement*. The material of the seal is a hard green stone. It is of the usual scaraboid form, although in this case the face is almost circular. It is about three quarters of an inch long, and a hole is drilled from end to end to contain the rod of metal upon which it revolved when mounted in a finger ring. The face is cracked across one corner.

Unfortunately, the wax impression will not bear photographing, and therefore the following enlarged drawing has been made:—