

Palace of Ashurbanipal throneroom panels M-17, M-18
(*Afo Beiheft 34, pp. 26; 87, Fig. 31*)

The lower registers of carving on panels M-17 and M-18 were excavated in reasonable condition and photographed in position. Their theme is an Assyrian campaign in Egypt. Panel M-17, which was on the left, mostly survives in the British Museum as BM 124928; only two small fragments of M-18 survive (in Marseilles and Yale), the rest being lost. Photographs of the surviving pieces and of the now deteriorated original photographic prints, together with a modern drawing made from the print of M-18, were published by R. D. Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh*, Plates XXXVI and LXXc. He did not republish engravings which had been made from the prints and published separately in *The Illustrated London News* (16 August 1856, p. 178; 15 November 1856, p. 502).

The extant height of M-17 is c. 114 cm, but c. 5 cm at the bottom is plain, leaving a carved surface of c. 109 cm. The highest preserved point is in the middle of M-17 but it is evident that the uppermost of three rows of people who appear on the right side of the panel must also have reached about the same height. The height reached by the uppermost of the same three rows of people visible on the left side of panel M-18 is also therefore c. 109 cm.

M-18 was preserved to a higher level than M-17. Therefore there was further detail preserved above the uppermost row of people on M-18, namely a line of hatched triangles which is a common convention for rough ground or hilly country. This shows in the engraving but not in the versions published by Barnett. The detail is hard to judge but the triangles seem about 12 cm high. If the hills frame the composition at the top, a normal kind of procedure, then the total height of the lower register was c. $109 + 12 = 121$ cm. This is similar to the height of the lower register when preserved on other panels in the same room, specifically on M-7 and M-13, which is entirely as expected. The row of hills, if it is the upper frame of the lower register of M-18, cannot be used to restrict, as I once supposed, the theme of the upper register, which is entirely missing.

I illustrated the situation in Fig. 31 of *Afo Beiheft 34* by juxtaposing the relevant engravings, with a brief explanation on page 26. I then failed to notice that, in the final proofs, the row of hills had vanished, which made the explanation vacuous. I am grateful to Michaela Weszeli for reproducing Fig. 31, as originally intended, below.

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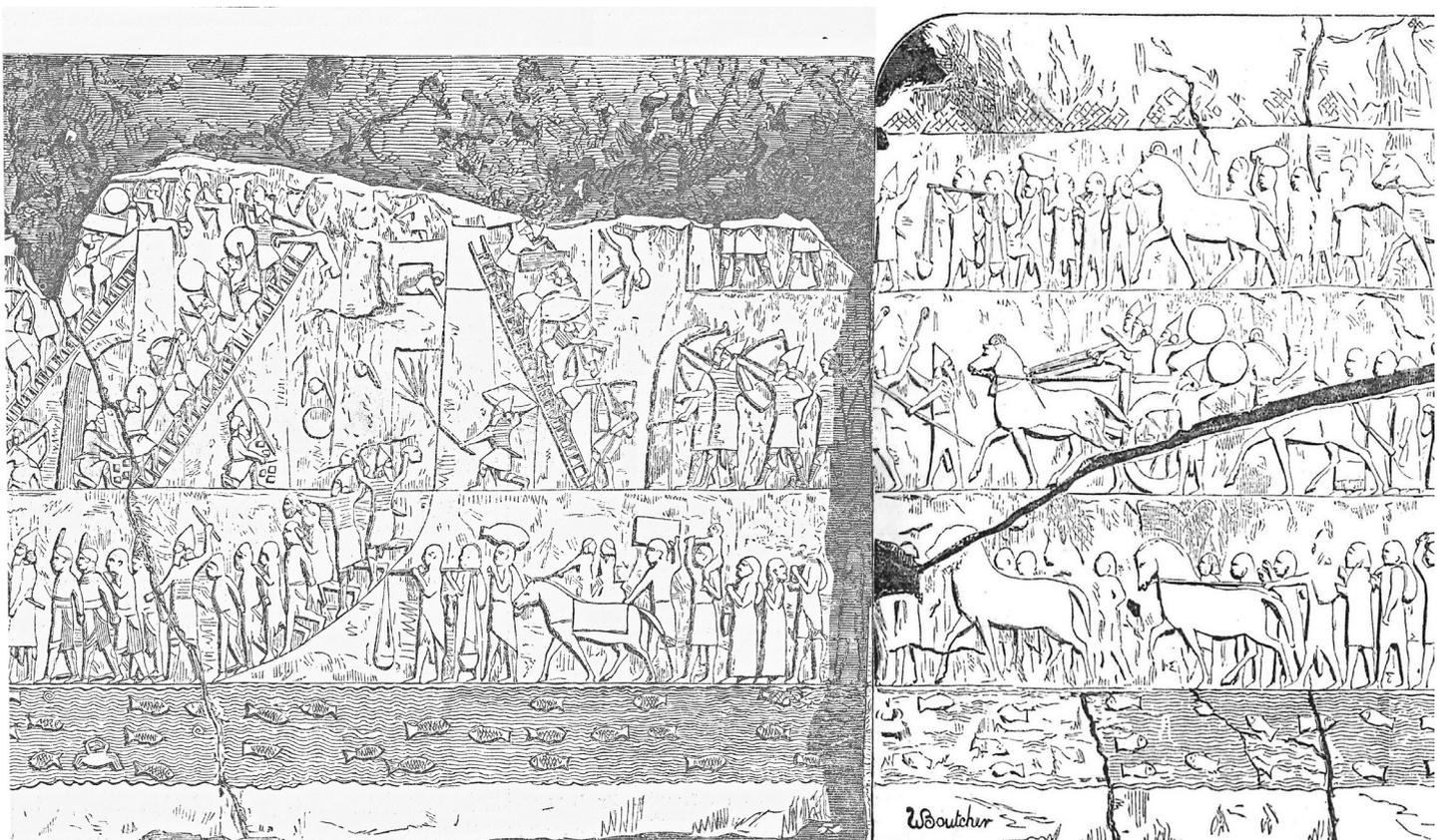


Fig. 31. Assault, possibly on Memphis (M-17, M-18). Engraved from photographs. *The Illustrated London News*, 16 August 1856, p. 178, 15 November 1856, p. 502.