

CHAPTER FOUR

PRE-HOUSE PERIOD I

(late 8th century to about 675 BC)

The area of Houses D/F (measuring about 15 × 20 m) is the highest, south-west part of the Borgo NW. It is located just below the slightly higher area called the *Spina*. Even though the north-west part slopes about 1.65 m from top to bottom, the south-east section is fairly flat and was suitable for building. The southern area was thus logically, as is also indicated by the finds, the first place on the Borgo NW where people lived. Later fills and constructions have obliterated only a part of the early evidence. A number of cuttings in the rock (Q15–Q22), the structures Hut, House F and *Cantina* G, and much early pottery, provide glimpses of life and activity on the spot before the erection of the Archaic Houses D and E of the late 7th and early 6th centuries. The early finds indicate that an increase of the population in the Acropolis caused a number of people to settle outside the Acropolis and, in the late 8th–early 7th century, on the less well defended Borgo.

The area of Houses D and F is thus less dramatic and more flat than the sloping northern parts of Borgo NW (see *Fig. 47*). This means that, for the archaeologist, the area was less complicated to excavate. The area was uncovered in 1956–1957, including parts of House D and House E. In 1961 the Diagonal trench (aligned north-west–south-east) was laid out from wall D1 to the area of bedrock at Q19/Q20 and wall H1. In 1962–1963, the areas called *Cantina* G and House A-Drain L were investigated. This area produced basically 4 or 5 strata in the east, and 5 or 6 strata in the lower slope in north-west. However, the special situation of *Cantina* G indicated 12 or 13 strata and 4 floors. In the south-eastern area the strata were thin above the rock, but they were thicker in the slope in the north-west, which is located at a level of c. 1.6 m lower.

The regrettably flimsy, albeit important, evidence of early constructions is strengthened by the large amount of early pottery, some well stratified (a total of 1,807 pieces). In the Borgo NW the development of the three house areas is quite different. Sherds of early material from the late 8th and 7th centuries can be divided into (a) Italo-Geometric, (b) Buccheroid Impasto, (c) Faliscanizing Impasto, (d) Brown Impasto, and (e) Coloured Advanced Impasto. In the area of *Cantina* G and House F in the south there are, roughly, 350 early fragments; in the closed, lower areas of Houses D and B there are about 90 pieces, while the area of House A produced only some 20–30 very early fragments. It is, then, quite clear that the flat area of *Cantina* G and House F and the slopes of Houses D and B were the first parts to be settled

at the Borgo NW. This is also the area enclosed by the evidence of the earliest palisade wall (canals Q1 and Q10). Here people could allow themselves the luxury of an Early Protocorinthian *kotyle* (Find group 61-113, *San Giovenale* V:2, 123, Ka2-1), the oldest imported vase found in the excavation of Borgo NW.

ROCK CUTTINGS Q1–Q27 (*Fig. 41*)

The area of Borgo NW contains various types of cuttings in the bedrock called Q. These rock cuttings are presented in this introductory chapter, because they date from several periods. The cuttings for the canal of an early palisade will be listed first. The majority of the other cuttings were meant to hold wooden posts or in some cases *dolia*, while some were traces of the extraction of blocks from Period 1. In the numerous Q cuttings and also on the vertical eastern rock surface TRe, it is still possible to study the different types of tools that the stone mason used for working the fairly soft tufa: the pick-axe and the point (with a sharp end), droves (broad chisels), as well as flat and curved chisels.

Palisade canals

Q1 (*Figs. 42–43*). Palisade canal. The canal is 12 m long, 0.30–0.44 m wide and 0.15–0.30 m deep. Uncut sections form small stops (looking like sluices) in the course of the canal, which means that it cannot have been a drain for water. The construction is earlier than Drain L of Period 1, and thus probably of Pre-House Period I.

Q5 (*Figs. 36 and 63*). Extension of palisade canal. It begins as a narrow cutting, 0.15 m wide, runs somewhat obliquely and steeply down into a broader and deeper canal, 0.25 m wide, which then runs along the slope in a roughly east–west direction parallel to Area A constructions. Pre-House Period II.

Q6 (*Fig. 36*). Extension of palisade canal. It is a broad, first 0.60 m, then 0.70 m wide, very well-cut canal with a carefully flattened bottom, running for some 3.70 m down the slope in 6 steps (1.20, 1.10, 0.40, 0.40 and 0.60 m long, respectively) until a

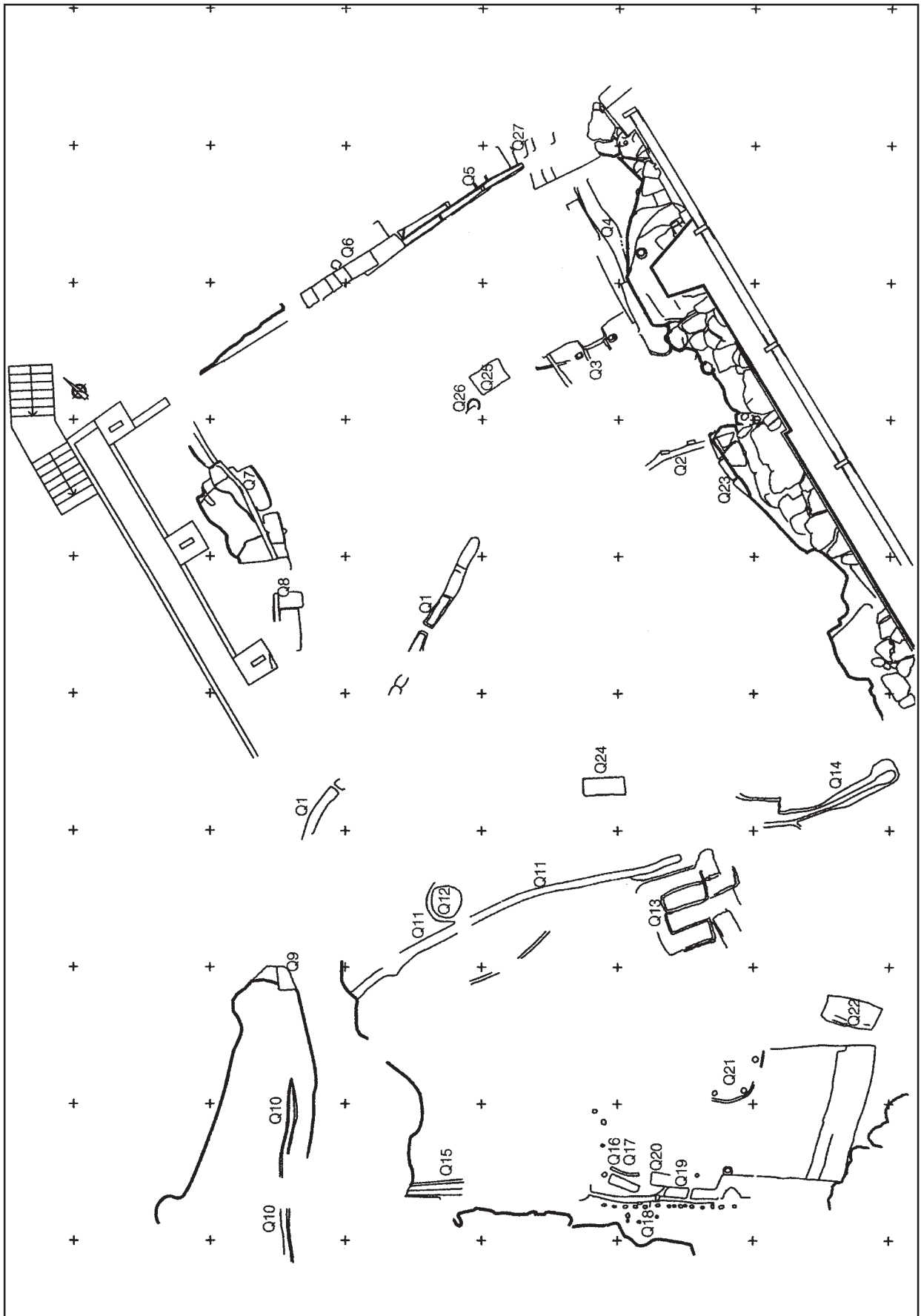


Fig. 41. Plan over Borgo NW with rock cuttings and canals Q1–Q27. Plan by A. Bizzarro and G. Tilia.



Fig. 42. Rock cutting Q1 towards the north-east and wall L1. Photograph by B. Blomé.

broad earthquake crack apparently at Na has destroyed its further course. A straight vertical cutting in continuous line with its south side indicates some kind of continuation further down the slope towards west. Pre-House Period I.

Q7 (Fig. 44). Extension of palisade canal, under fortification wall Mb, is 0.05–0.20 m deep. Pre-House Period II.

Q8 (Fig. 44). Extension of palisade canal, 0.20 m wide and 0.20–0.30 m deep. Pre-House Period II.

Q10. Palisade canal (0.30–0.50 m deep) under fortification wall Md, Pre-House Period I.

Q27. Extension of palisade canal above area Af, possibly Pre-House Period II.

Other bedrock cuttings

Q2. (a) Two post-holes (0.26 × 0.70 m, depth 0.13 m and 0.27 × 0.12 m, depth 0.90–0.12 m). They are possibly cuttings for



Fig. 43. Rock cutting Q1 towards the south-west and wall B5. Photograph by B. Blomé.



Fig. 44. View of canals Q7-Q8 and wall Mc, seen from the south.



Fig. 45. Rock cutting Q13. Photograph by B. Blomé.

door-posts in area Ah1/Ad, Period I; (b) Canal cutting at the beginning of Drain L, Period I.

Q3 (Fig. 87). Two post-holes measuring in width 0.20 and 0.24 m, and in depth 0.30 and 0.36 m. A cut for a threshold measuring 0.90×0.95 m in area Ad/Ac, Period I.

Q4. A water canal measuring 0.30 m in width and 0.15 m in depth, located in niche Af and running to cistern Ae, Period I.

Q9. Cut (probably) for block at TRw, possibly part of the fortification Md, Period I.

Q11. Long water canal, measuring about 11 m and running from the Nc-area into the House D. Probably Pre-House Period II.

Q12. Cistern, related to canal Q11, measuring 1.30 m in length and 0.50 m in depth, filled with roof-tile fragments and pottery, probably Pre-House Period II.



Fig. 46. Cutting marks Q13. Photograph by B. Blomé.



Fig. 47. The canal Q18 and the oval-rectangular holes Q19 for a light fence from Pre-House Period I and a fissure in the rock, seen from the east.

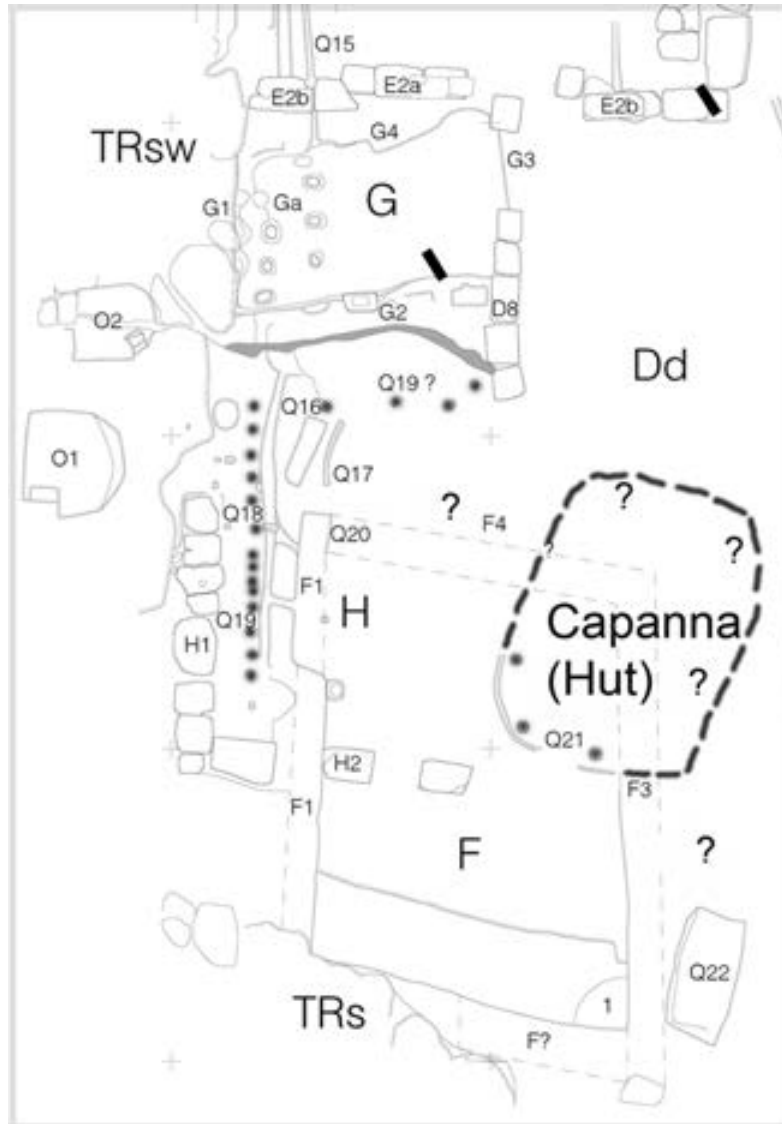


Fig. 48. Plan with the oval Hut cuttings Q21, *Cantina* G, canal Q18 and holes Q19 from Pre-House Period I.

Q13 (Figs. 45–46). Little quarry with several cuttings for blocks in (and for?) House D. Early Period I. It is the tufa bedrock in Q13 (House D), which best illustrates such extensive quarrying. Here cuttings from the extraction of nine blocks can be seen, of which six are almost completely preserved. Clearly the rock was worked at every possible point for the extraction of blocks, whether big or small. The rock was worked with pick-axes with variously-sized edges, from narrow, slightly rounded (or worn) ones, about 3 cm wide, to broad ones, about 5–6 cm wide. The procedure was fairly simple: deep channels on three or four sides were cut with the pick-axes to isolate the block, after which one of the trenches was partly broadened to allow some room for the block being split off from its rock base by means of metal wedges or swelling wood inserted along its long side.⁶² There are variations in block length from about 1 to 1.60 m while a width of about 0.50–0.60 m seems to have been preferred. The average thickness of a wall block was 0.45 m. There are remains of similar, albeit less well preserved, extractions in Lane K (Q24), House A (Q25) and occasional traces elsewhere.

⁶² This simple, timeless procedure is found still today in the *cave di tufo* in the neighbouring area of Blera and other places.

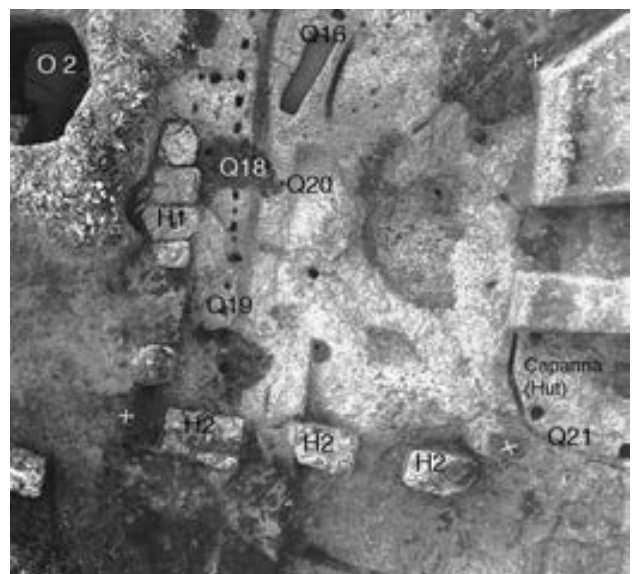


Fig. 49. Oval Hut, cuttings for House F, canal Q18 and Q19 holes for a fence from Pre-House Period I. Photograph by B. Blomé.

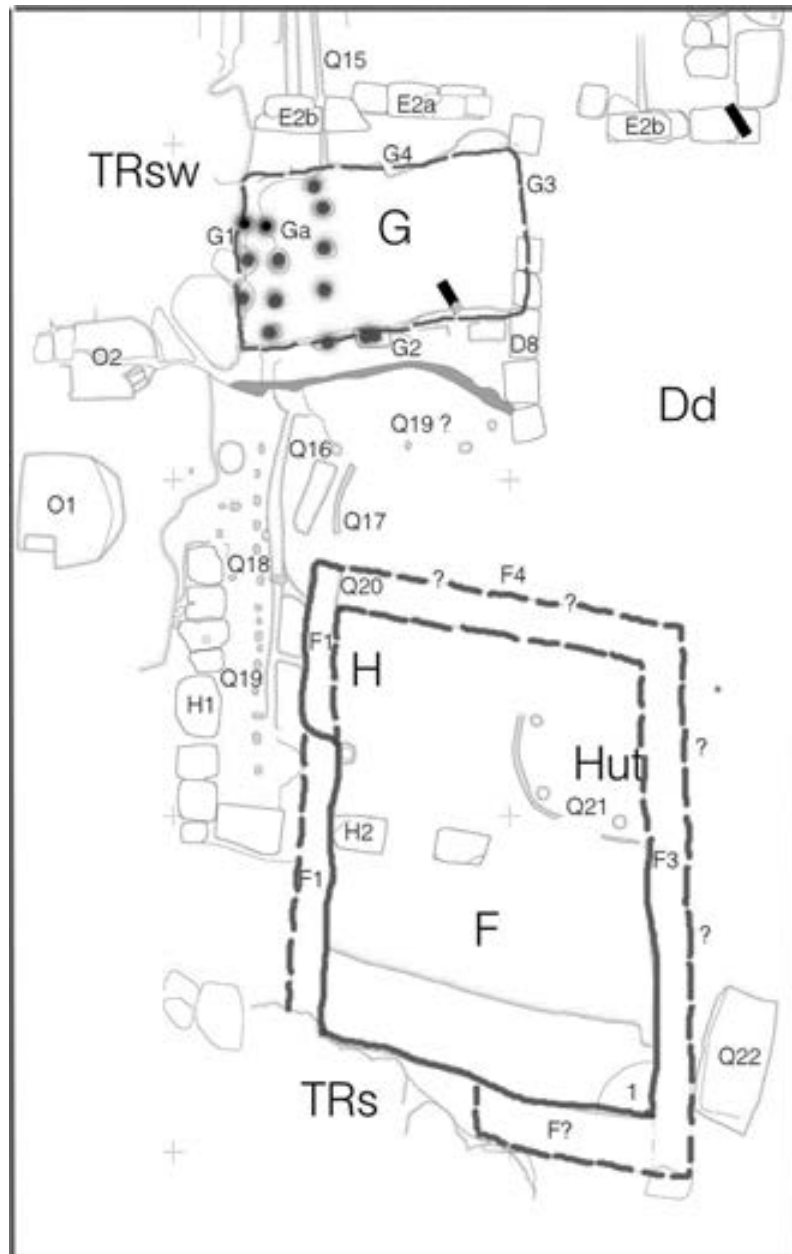


Fig. 50. Plan with *Cantina* G and stone supports Ga, House F and oval Hut Q21.

Q14. Canal measuring 7 m in length, running from area De/Ib towards blocks K2-K3, Period 3.

Q15. Canal (0.10 m and *c.* 3 m) from rock G4 to House E and area Nc. Period 1.

Q16. Cutting for water (1.12 × 0.28–0.33 m and with a varying depth of 0.24–0.32 m), Pre-House Period I/II.

Q17. Canal/hut wall section. It is 1 m long, and 0.10 m deep, Pre-House Period I/II.

Q18 (Figs. 47–48). Canal in a westerly direction, measuring 4.40 m in length and 0.15–0.20 m in width, Pre-House Period I/II.

Q19 (Figs. 47–49). 15 or 18 oval-rectangular holes, measuring 0.15–0.10 m in width and 0.12–0.15 m in depth. These holes were part of a light fence running in a roughly east–west direction. Perhaps a north–south line of three more holes, at roughly right angles, may have belonged to the same fence. Pre-House Period I/II.

Q20. A rock-cut, 0.45 m wide, for the now missing south blocks of House F, Pre-House Period II.

Q21. Hut (Figs. 48–50). Rock cuttings in area Dd are the remains of an oval hut with part of a narrow channel and three holes for supporting wooden posts. Later activities in the area have erased evidence that can be associated with these cuttings. However, six

fragments of clay revetment, one of which with a deep and large imprint of a tree branch, were found in the floor fill in its follower House F and, no doubt, once belonged to the hut walls.

Q22. A cutting north of House F measures $0.85 \times 1.43 \times 1.05 \times 1.70$ m. It is very shallow, cut sloppily with a pick. It was not a cutting for the extraction of a block. The function cannot be explained. Pre-House Period II.

Q23. Cutting in the rock face with enigmatic function, Period 3.

Q24. A little quarry for a block, measuring 1.40 m in length, 0.50 m in width and 0.30 m in depth, located in Lane K, Period 1.

Q25. A little quarry for a block in room Aa, Period 1.

Q26. A round rock-cut for the placing of a water jug in room Aa, Period 1.

In addition there are four major rock-cut structures, viz. *Cantina* G and House F, Lane K and niche Ah, which are described in the following chapters.

HUT (Figs. 48–50)

Under the later yard Dd was found evidence of an oval Hut (Q21), consisting partly of a narrow channel cut in the bedrock and three holes for supporting wooden posts. The rest of the building was not found, probably because of the sloping bedrock and therefore the rest of the hut was built on earth. In addition, later activities in the area did not allow any particular material to be safely associated with these cuttings. However, six fragments of daub, i.e. clay infilling from a wattle-and-daub wall, were found in the floor fill (stratum 4) of its replacement House F. One of these daub fragments had a deep and large impression of a tree branch.

It is probable that other cuttings in the immediate neighbourhood, above all Q18 and Q19, and possibly Q16 and Q17, functioned in relation with the Hut. Of particular interest is Q19, which consists of a series of 15 (or even 18) oval-rectangular holes, measuring 0.15×0.10 m with a depth of 0.12–0.15 m, positioned in a straight line, in and along the slightly higher southwest *Spina* rock. These holes were part of a light fence running in a roughly east–west direction, and, perhaps, a north–south line of three more holes at roughly right angles, may have belonged to the same fence. Q16 is a rectangular cutting (1.12×0.28 – 0.33 m with a depth of c. 0.24–0.32 m). Q18 is a short and narrow, slightly curved channel (1 m long–0.10 m deep).

Even if no pottery was directly connected with the remains of the Hut, we may be quite sure that most of the early pottery of the late 8th to the early 7th century around House D, in stratum 4, and in the slope of Houses D and B, belonged to people living in and around the Hut.