

The Step Pyramid itself was built within an enclosure of some 37 acres bounded by a niched limestone wall 10.5 m (34 ft) high. Like the Sed Chapels, these were dummy buildings, however, and thus of purely symbolic significance. Beyond the Heb-Sed Court are the larger Houses of the North and South, so-named as they are believed to represent the archaic shrines of Upper and Lower Egypt at Hierakonpolis and Buto due to the heraldic floral images of the lily and papyrus carved on the capitals of their respective engaged columns. Those to the southwest of the pyramid were of special importance as they were associated with the celebration of the Sed festival the king's royal jubilee of renewal celebrated during his reign and evidently intended to be continued in this mortuary complex throughout his afterlife. The false chapels which surrounded the Heb-Sed Court are among the most famous structures within the compound, for those on the east were given the narrow elevation and curved roof of the canonical shrine of Lower Egypt and most of those on the west were formed to reflect the shrine of Upper Egypt. shafts and galleries and, to the south, the large open area known as the South Court which was adjoined by several complex suites of functional and dummy buildings.