CORINTH: TEMPLE E NORTHWEST PRELIMINARY REPORT, 1965

(PLATES 1-6)

THE EXCAVATION

IN July 1965 a party from the University of California at Berkeley undertook, at the kind invitation of Dr. Henry S. Robinson, a small excavation at the northwest corner of the enclosed precinct of Temple E at Corinth.¹

Excavations conducted in 1933 by Professor Sterling Dow revealed the marble-floored atrium of a large house of the Early Roman period lying outside the northwest corner of the peribolos around Temple E (Fig. 1). In 1953 Professor Dinsmoor discovered, at a point previously determined by calculation, rock cuttings marking the

¹ A short paper on the results of the excavation was read by Mrs. Yvonne Schwarz at the 1965 Meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America at Providence (A.J.A., LXX, 1966, p. 195).

Work was carried on with an average of sixteen men throughout July, and four men were employed in the first week of August in digging additional test trenches. Mrs. Louise Berge was surveyor and architect. Mrs. Yvonne Schwarz was in charge of inventory. Mrs. Marian Sagan, Mrs. Vivian Walter, Miss Joan Baker (now Mrs. Fry) and Mr. Borimir Jordan supervised trenches under the general direction of the writer. Mrs. Virginia Jordan was the excavation artist and helped Mrs. Berge with the plans (Figs. 2-3) and her husband in the final drawing of the sections (Figs. 4, 5, 6). Mrs. Fry added to her other duties those of Field Photographer and Secretary. Miss Jane Chitty spent a week with us at the beginning of the excavation, and saved us from many errors. The expenses of the excavation, including the travel and living expenses of the members of the University of California who took part in it, were met by grants from the National Science Foundation. Dr. Sanford S. Elberg, Dean of the Graduate Division at Berkeley, Dr. William B. Fretter, Dean of the College of Letters and Science, Mr. Edward L. Feder, and many other administrative officers of the Berkeley Campus helped us in every possible way. We are indebted to Professor Joseph Fontenrose, Chairman of the Department of Classics, Professor Sterling Dow, Sather Professor for 1965, Professor W. K. Pritchett and Professor and Mrs. Ronald Stroud for their encouragement and valuable advice. Dr. W. E. Gilfillan gave up many afternoons to teaching us the rudiments of surveying.

We received great kindness from Mr. S. Charitonides, the late Ephor of Antiquities for Corinth and the Argolid, and from the permanent staff of the American School at Athens, especially Dr. and Mrs. Robinson and Miss Judith Perlzweig. The members of the University of Texas Expedition, who were working at the same time on another part of the site, were most friendly and cooperative, and lent us the advice of their architect, Mr. W. B. Dinsmoor, Jr. who drew Figure 1. The interest taken in our work by Professor W. B. Dinsmoor, senior, was a constant source of encouragement.

Panayiotis Chrestou was our very capable foreman, and the finds were under the capable care of Nikolaos Didaskalou. Mr. George Kachros constantly placed at our disposal the fruits of his knowledge and experience of the antiquities of Corinth.

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position of the inner northwest corner of the peribolos. This peribolos was believed to consist of an inner colonnade, facing the temple, a central row of columns, and an outer wall.² The footings of the three most westerly columns of the central row on the northern side were discovered in their expected positions (Fig. 1; Pl. 1, a). Our task was to establish or disprove the existence of the outer north wall, which was conjectured to lie parallel to the central row of columns at a distance of about 4.50 m. to the north. We also hoped to find the east wall of the atrium and to clarify the relationship of the atrium house to the temple precinct.

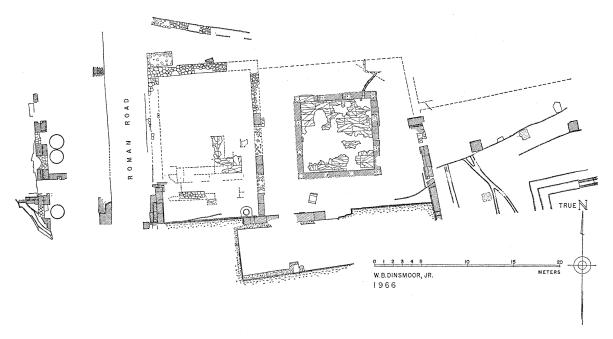


Fig. 1. Early Roman House and Northwest Corner of Peribolos of Temple E.

The inner northwest corner of the peribolos rested upon solid rock—a westward continuation of the outcrop from which the Fountain of Glauke was fashioned. The excavations of 1933 and 1953, and later ones conducted by Dr. Robinson to the west of the atrium, had shown that the north face of this rock was quarried during the Greek period. The quarry ended in a sheer face, perhaps some twenty feet high, and the Roman building operations necessitated the filling in of the quarry with a hard-packed mass of material, collected apparently from the ruins of the Greek city and containing fragments of architectural terracottas, votive figurines, and pottery of the archaic and classical periods. The foundation trenches of the Roman structures were

² Cf. Henry S. Robinson, Corinth: a Brief History of the City and a Guide to the Excavations, Athens, 1964, fig. 4, between pp. 6 and 7.

dug through this fill, down to solid rock at the bottom of the quarry. The inner corner of the peribolos and the second and third columns of the central colonnade on the north side rested upon the solid rock, but the westernmost column stood north of the quarry face, supported by a foundation of large rectangular limestone blocks, laid somewhat irregularly and without mortar. The atrium and the house to which it belonged also stood north of the quarry face, upon foundations of heavy rubble and mortar.

Our excavations were expected to lie wholly north of the quarry face and to reveal Early Roman fill, cut by foundation trenches (perhaps plundered) for the presumed north wall of the peribolos and east wall of the atrium. In view of our limited resources and the great depth of earth to be dug, we decided to restrict our efforts to an area of about 20 m. from east to west by 10 m. from north to south, lying immediately to the north of the 1953 excavation.

The whole surface of the excavated area had been buried to a depth of more than a meter by two successive deposits, perhaps to be associated with the building of the "Shear House" to the east and of the road that now overlies the atrium excavated in 1933. These deposits appeared to consist of material from past excavations. The true modern "habitation level," representing the ground surface early in the present century, was found at a level of about 86.50 m. above sea level in the south and 86.25 m. in the north. It was characterized by numerous fragments of blue and white china cups and saucers. There was no evidence for structures of this period but a large domestic rubbish pit was found at the south of the excavated area.

Immediately under this modern layer was a large house of the Frankish period, dating probably from the thirteenth century after Christ. This house lay below the whole western part of our excavation and extended beyond it to the west and north. We uncovered parts of three rooms (Fig. 2, I, III and IV) lying to the south and west of a court (Fig. 2, II; Pl. 1, b) paved with large irregular flagstones. This court was completely enclosed and may have been roofed over, to judge from the quantity of broken "Laconian" roof tiles in the fill immediately above it.

The southeastern room (Fig. 2, IV) was the only room completely excavated. It measured internally about 4.00 m. north to south by 2.50 m. east to west, and had a floor of packed earth at 86.12 m. above sea level. At its south end was a small hearth, made of thin broken marble slabs, probably veneer from the walls of a large building of the Early Roman period. A door at the southwest corner led into the adjacent Room III, which had been largely destroyed at the time of the 1933 excavation, and there was probably a second door between Room IV and the courtyard.

The northern and western limits of the northwest room (Fig. 2, I) lie outside our excavation. The part uncovered measured about 4.00 m. north to south by 3.00 m. east to west, and had in its northwest corner a large rectangular stone platform (Fig.

2, Wall 11), only partly uncovered, which may have been a support for some heavy piece of furniture or machinery.

The court (Fig. 2, II) measured about 4.00 m. each way. Its northern limit has not yet been ascertained. A large quantity of a crystalline substance, not yet certainly identified but believed to be mica, was found just inside its east wall.

The walls of the house were of rubble packed with mud mortar, standing to a height of about 0.40 m. above the floors, which were of earth, except in the courtyard. Many of the stones were of considerable size, and some were worked stones, appar-

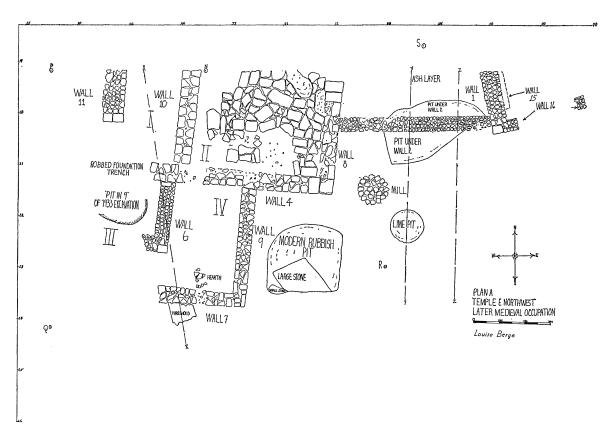


Fig. 2. Temple E Northwest, Later Mediaeval Occupation.

ently plundered from earlier buildings. Some care seems to have been taken to choose large squared stones for the corners. As work proceeded it became evident that the walls around the southwest angle of the courtyard (Fig. 2, Walls 10 and 4) rested in part on earlier walls of better construction, which later proved to belong to a vaulted tomb of the Late Roman period (Fig. 3).

Outside the southeast corner of the house a circular pit (Fig. 2, Mill) about 1.40 m. in diameter had been sunk from what seems to have been the ground level at the time of the occupation of the house (86.45 m. above sea level at this point)

to a depth of 0.86 m. This pit was packed with large rubble stones set in mud mortar and may have served as the support for a millstone or olive press. A Frankish coin, possibly of William I Villehardouin, found in the stone fill, establishes the date of the "mill" and by inference that of the house.

Southeast of the "mill" was a circular pit about 1.50 m. in diameter and 0.25 m. deep, which had apparently been used for slaking lime (Fig. 2, Lime Pit; Fig. 6, Section YY).

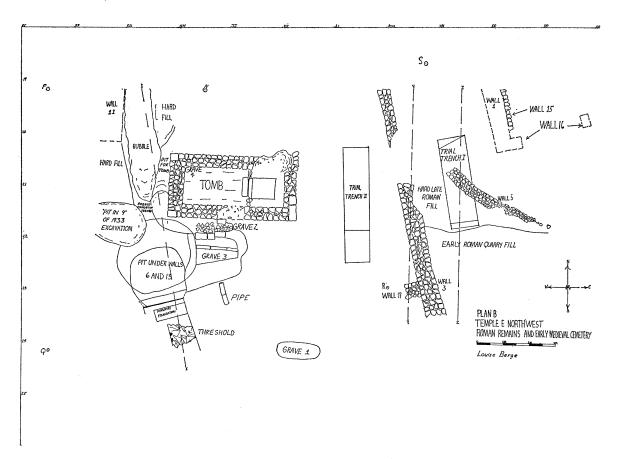
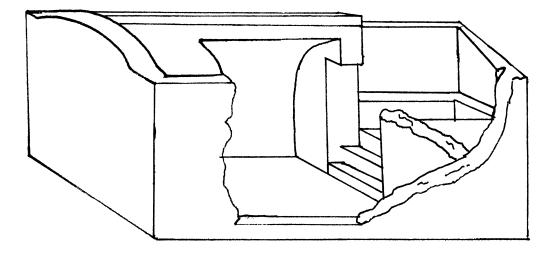


Fig. 3. Temple E Northwest, Roman Remains and Early Mediaeval Cemetery.

In the northeast corner of the excavated area the corner of a second house of the same period (Fig. 2, Walls 1 and 16) was uncovered. East of Wall 1 a test trench of the 1953 excavation had disturbed the ground. Between the two houses was the foundation of a wall of very light construction, small stones only one course high (Fig. 2, Wall 2; Fig. 6, sections YY, ZZ), which for part of its length overlies a large pit, 1.25 m. deep, filled with dark black earth containing numerous fragments of thirteenth-century pottery. More thirteenth-century pottery was found in a deep layer of ash (Fig. 2, Ash Layer) immediately north of this pit.

In the rooms of the house modern intrusion was everywhere evident, including pottery obviously later than the mediaeval period and broken Turkish pipes. A fine copper coin of the later Venetian government of the Morea was found immediately above the flagstones in the eastern part of the courtyard. Mediaeval pottery fragments (none of them forming complete pots suggestive of "destruction debris") were mingled in great quantity with these later intruders. The principal occasion of this disturbance was revealed in the southern part of the courtyard, where the floor had been broken and some of the flagstones removed. A large pit had been dug under the floor, which led to the vestibule of a subterranean vaulted tomb of the Late Roman period (Figs. 3, 4; Pls. 1, b, 2, a, 3). The tomb had been completely plundered, and



SCALE: ca. 1:50

Fig. 4. Late Roman Vaulted Tomb.

then partly filled with broken stones and tiles such as we had encountered above the flagstones of the courtyard. Mixed with the debris were fragments of carved marble, both sculptural and architectural, and large fragments of pottery, including two almost complete jugs and a shallow basin, of nineteenth century date and rather later than the Turkish period, to which we had at first assigned the plundering of the tomb.

The few pottery fragments found under the floor of the tomb chamber and behind its west wall (Fig. 3, Pit for Tomb; cf. Fig. 5, Section XX, Tomb Pit) suggest that it may have been constructed in or after the sixth century after Christ. The area probably continued to be used as a cemetery for several centuries. Two graves (Fig. 3, Graves 2 and 3) were found directly under the floor of Room IV of the house. The bodies had been laid on their backs with their feet to the east, the

³ Cf. R. L. Scranton, Corinth, XVI, pp. 126-128.

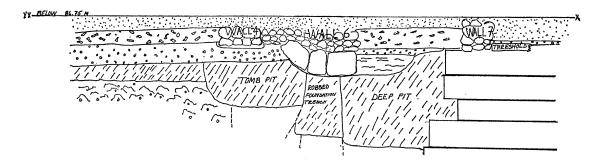
head of Grave 2 being cut away by the foundations of the wall (Fig. 2, Wall 6) between Rooms III and IV. Grave 2 was lined on the north and south with large stones and floored with small broken pieces of tile. In Grave 3 three "Laconian" pan tiles were laid to form a bed for the body, which was then covered with a sloping roof of pan tiles. Cover tiles were placed over the ridge of the roof and the opening at each end blocked with a broken piece of pan tile.

A third grave (Fig. 3, Grave 1) lay farther south, outside the area later occupied by the house. The skeleton, probably that of an adolescent, was laid on its back with its head to the west, in a grave without stone or tile lining. A few small rings and silver spangles found in the earth around the body may have been dress ornaments.

A fourth burial (Fig. 3, Grave 4) was above the roof of the tomb, in the angle formed by its north and west walls, which were carried to a height of 0.20 m. above the masonry of the vault. This contained only a skull and a few large bones, apparently roughly re-buried in a small hole.

Sherds found in the fill of these graves are of late Byzantine date, probably eleventh century. There is a gap of several centuries between them and the tomb, but no indication that the ground was used except as a cemetery during this period. The builders of the Frankish house showed no respect for the earlier graves, supported their foundations on the tomb wall where it suited them, and were not troubled by the bodies lying under the floor of what was probably their kitchen.

About 4.50 m. east of the tomb a wall (Fig. 3, Wall 3) ran right across the area from north to south. The south end of the wall rested upon the hard Early Roman quarry fill at a level of 85.70 m. above sea level. Farther north this quarry fill had been disturbed in the Late Roman period, apparently by the digging of a very wide trench or pit, which was then filled in again, before the building of Wall 3. Wall 3 was constructed with large roughly dressed stones presenting more or less regular faces on either side, the space between being packed with mud and rubble. It stood to a height of roughly 0.80 m., its top being below the ground level (about 86.45 m. above sea level in the south of the excavation and 86.10 in the north) associated with the occupation of the mediaeval house. Part of Wall 3 lay directly under the lime pit (Fig. 6, section YY). Wall 3 was cut by the mediaeval rubbish pit under Wall 2, but continued again farther north. The fill against the west face of Wall 3 was comparatively soft and contained a mixture of both Late and Early Roman sherds. East of Wall 3 the fill was much harder. The southern part of the east face of the wall was set in a cutting in the hard Early Roman quarry fill. The large Late Roman trench already mentioned (Fig. 6, Section ZZ), cut this hard fill farther north, but when it was refilled quantities of tile and stone were packed tight to give a hard surface above it. A weak foundation (Fig. 3, Wall 5) of small stones one course deep rested upon part of this hard fill: its purpose was not apparent. The end of another slight wall abutted against the west face of Wall 3 at its south end



MODERN DISTURBANCE

MEDIEVAL OCCUPATION DEBRIS WITH MODERN DISTURBANCE

MEDIEVAL OCCUPATION

FILL PIT FILL

SOFT LATE ROMAN FILL

ZZZZ MEDIUM LATE ROMAN FILL

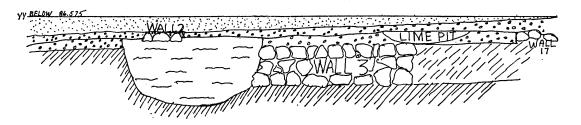
HARD LATE ROMAN FILL

冒引IATE ROMAN STONE AND TILE LAYER

HARD EARLY ROMAN FILL

EMENT RUBBLE

Fig. 5. Section XX of Figs. 2 and 3.



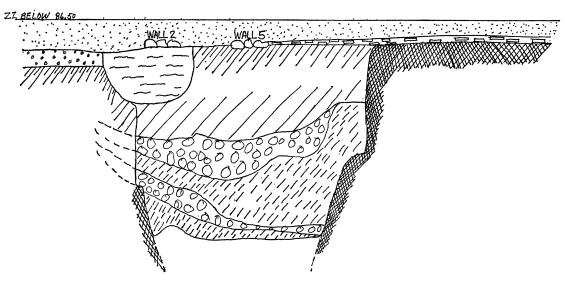


Fig. 6. Sections YY and ZZ of Figs. 2 and 3.

(Fig. 3, Wall 17; Fig. 6, Section YY). This consisted of a single course of small stones set in mud mortar on the same level as the top of Wall 3. Its continuation was apparently destroyed during the 1953 excavation.

It is possible that the hard fill east of Wall 3 represents the surface of a Late Roman road running north and south across the cemetery, but further excavation north of the mediaeval rubbish pit under Wall 2 is necessary to determine this.

We believed that the Late Roman disturbance of the Early Roman quarry fill might indicate the plundered foundation trench of the north wall of the peribolos, and accordingly sank two deep test trenches (Fig. 3, Trial Trench I and Trial Trench II; Fig. 6, Section ZZ) in order to pick up the line of the foundation. We found that a trench about 3.00 m. wide had been cut into the Early Roman quarry fill and filled in in the Late Roman period, before the building of Wall 3. We dug to a level of 83.24 m. above sea level in Trial Trench I and 83.58 in Trial Trench II without reaching the bottom of the Late Roman disturbance, or establishing the line of the trench that it represents. It does not appear to lie parallel to the central colonnade of the peribolos and further deep excavation over the whole area is needed to clear up the question of the north wall.

With the east wall of the atrium we were more successful. Wall 7, the south wall of Room IV (Fig. 2 and Fig. 5, Section XX) rested in part upon a foundation of very large limestone blocks, laid without mortar in a foundation trench cut through the hard Early Roman quarry fill (Fig. 3, Masonry Foundation). We uncovered the top four courses, from a level of 86.09 to 84.20 m. above sea level, and presume that the foundation rests upon solid rock at the bottom of the quarry (Pl. 3, a, b). Upon the topmost course, just south of the mediaeval Wall 7, by which it was broken, was part of the threshold of a large door (Fig. 3, Threshold; Pls. 2, b, 3, b). This consisted of a large block of hard stone, cracked but still in situ, with a square hole cut in its upper surface, which may have been intended to receive a bolt securing the middle of a double door communicating between the atrium and the peribolos. Some evidence for the south jamb of this door was discovered in 1953. The north jamb, and the foundation upon which it rested, disappeared in the Late Roman period, when the masonry foundation was destroyed at a point about 5.00 m. north of the quarry face by a deep pit, 2.50 m. in diameter (Fig. 3; Fig. 5, Section XX, Deep Pit). The area was further disturbed by the foundations of the mediaeval house, whose builders were evidently worried about building over the soft fill of the Late Roman pit. They dug a wider pit, 0.50 m. deep (Fig. 3, Pit under Walls 6 and 13) in which they laid very large stones to support their walls (Fig. 5).

The masonry foundation did not continue north of the Late Roman pit, but its line was continued by a foundation of heavy rubble and concrete, set in a foundation trench 1.35 m. wide, cut through the Early Roman quarry fill. The southern end of this trench had been robbed, probably by the diggers of the Late Roman Deep Pit (Fig. 3, Rubble, and Robbed Foundation Trench; Fig. 5, Section XX).

The excavation for the foundation of the vaulted tomb (Figs. 3, 4, Tomb Pit) cut into the rubble foundation and its trench at a rather later date.

It is unfortunate that these disturbances destroyed the junction between the masonry and rubble foundations. The different methods of construction may indicate that there were two separate building phases within the Early Roman period, and we would suggest as a provisional hypothesis that the peribolos may have been built first, upon the masonry foundation where it was not supported by solid rock, and the atrium house, with its rubble concrete foundation, added later as an annex of some kind.

Two sections of water pipe (Fig. 3, Pipe; Pl. 3, b) resting on the hard Early Roman fill, 1.70 m. east of the Threshold and at a level of 85.72 m. above sea level, provide an unsolved mystery. They appeared to be *in situ* when found, but the most careful excavation of the area all round them produce no evidence that their line had ever been continued southwards to link up with certain rock-cut channels which had been discovered in 1953 (Fig. 1). To the north, the Early Roman fill had been disturbed and the pipe-line cut in the Late Roman period. A coin of Constantius II, found in the fill just north of the pipes, suggests a late fourth century date for this disturbance, which may possibly be connected with that noted in Trial Trenches I and II. Here again, further excavation is needed.

THE FINDS

As was to be expected from the nature of the site, the finds were all fragmentary and detached from their original contexts. They cannot therefore be fully evaluated until the area has been fully cleared and studied as a whole. But in the mean time some individual pieces deserve mention and illustration.

Sculpture

The most interesting and enigmatic piece from the excavation is a female head, half life size, in marble (S2776; Pl. 4, a-d; preserved height 0.20 m.; width ear to ear 0.109 m.). This was found in the northern part of the disturbed fill above the flagstones in the courtyard (Fig. 2, Room II). The rough workmanship and barbaric style (rendered still more crude by the present battered condition of the head, which has lost its nose and part of its chin) connect this piece with the few sculptures of the Frankish period that are already known, and its relationship to them must be carefully studied. Unfortunately its context does not establish its date. The debris above the flagstones showed clear signs of modern disturbance, and the robbers whose traces were so clearly marked in the southern part of Room II and in the tomb that lay below it may have abandoned this head as being without market value.⁴

⁴ Some battered fragments of Roman date, notably S2774, the thighs and lower part of the body of a small nude male figure, may also be the robbers' rejects.

Several marble fragments (A551, S2782, 2783, 2784; Pl. 4, e-h) decorated with a guilloche pattern were recognized by Mrs. Schwarz and Mr. Kachros as pieces of the drapery of a colossal marble statue of the Roman period for which evidence had been found in 1933. The new fragments are from the disturbed area on the edge of that excavation.

ARCHITECTURAL FRAGMENTS

Part of a marble Corinthian capital (A561; Pl. 5, c) came from the Late Roman fill under Room IV of the house. Mrs. Schwarz notes that, though this piece comes from a capital of similar proportions to those of Temple E, its workmanship does not correspond exactly. There are close resemblances between it and unpublished fragments, ASW 71a, 71b.

Two pieces of porphyry revetment, carved in low flat relief with lotus and palmette chains and acanthus leaves, probably come from a large building of the Early Roman period (A559, 560; Pl. 5, a, b).

The soft Late Roman fill west of Wall 3 contained numerous fragments of architectural terracottas, including parts of lions' heads from simae and palmette antefixes. One example of each is illustrated (FS977; Pl. 5, d 5; FA480; Pl. 5, e). From the lower levels of Trial Trench II comes the fragment of a handsomely decorated eaves' tile of the Greek period, which was presumably mixed with the debris thrown into the quarry in the Early Roman period (FT 197; Pl. 5, f).

Inscriptions

Packed into the upper part of the hard Late Roman fill east of Wall 3 were many marble fragments, some (I 2647, 2648; Pl. 6, a, b) bearing parts of well-cut Latin letters, perhaps from an official inscription of the Early Imperial period. The material is so fragmentary that not even a complete syllable, let alone a word, can be read, but perhaps more pieces may come to light from adjacent areas. One inscription earlier than the Roman period, I 2649, seems to give the beginning of a list of names in regular, non-stoichedon Greek letters. It is to be studied by Mr. Jordan, and is therefore not illustrated here.

STAMPED TILES

Several fragments of stamped tiles were found in different contexts. These include FP 206 (Pl. 6, c), two joining fragments from the hard fill east of Wall 3, giving a complete stamp, presumably of pre-Roman date, reading ΠΟΛΕΩΣ ΚΟΡ<ΙΝΘΟΥ>

⁵ Cf. Corinth, IV, i, pp. 34-36.

⁶ Cf. Corinth, IV, i, p. 27, fig. 28; p. 37, fig. 41, nos. T. 110, T. 124; p. 102, no. T. 18.

⁷ Cf. also I 2645, 2646.

ΔHMOC⟨IOC⟩, retrograde. FP 212 (Pl. 6, d), from the mixed to Late Roman fill under Room IV of the mediaeval house, reads (as far as it is preserved) L·COR in Latin letters.⁸

MISCELLANEOUS

Several fragmentary terracotta figurines of pre-Roman date probably reached this area in the Early Roman quarry fill. MF 12201 (Pl. 6, e), the head and shoulders of a late archaic female figurine (preserved height, 0.050 m.) came from the lowest level in Trial Trench II. From the same context came a fragment of a Middle Corinthian column crater, with the hindquarters of a ridden horse and part of the head of a second one (C-65-212; Pl. 6, f).

A carnelian sealstone (MF 12171; Pl. 6, g; greatest length 0.010 m.) was found in the upper levels of the modern deposit. It is engraved with a horse galloping to the left beneath a palm branch.

Finally, the debris in the mouth of the tomb produced several fragments, some joining, of a terracotta oven door, perhaps of Late Roman date (MF 12198; greatest preserved height 0.275 m.). The curved upper edge of the outside is decorated with a "pie crust" pattern, and the surface is decorated with irregularly spaced impressions made with a circular stamp, 0.002 m. in diameter. There are two vertical handles. On both sides the marks left by grass stems impressed at random before the door was fired are clearly visible.

Coins

About a hundred coins, mainly from disturbed contexts, await full study. Those provisionally identified for dating purposes have been noted in the text.

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 $^{^8\,\}mathrm{Also}$ FP 207, 208, 213, 214, and stamped amphora handles C-65-202, C-65-203, and part of a stamped rim, C-65-190.



a. East End of Excavations from North, showing Rock Cuttings for Inner Corner of Peribolos and Bases of Central Colonnade.



b. Courtyard of Mediaeval House from North, with Opening into Late Roman Tomb.

J. K. Anderson: Corinth, Temple E Northwest, Preliminary Report 1965



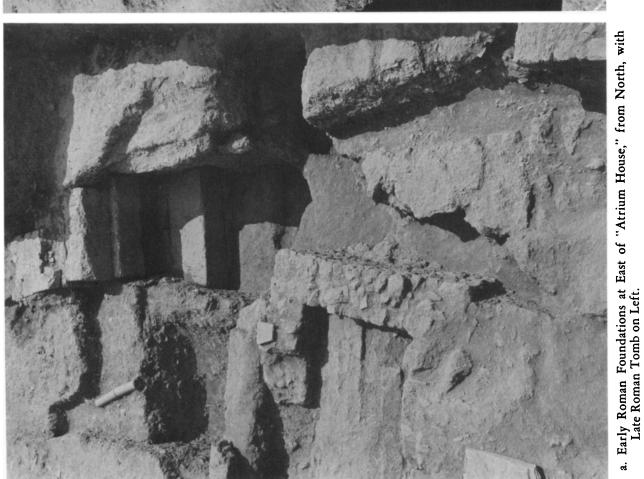
a. General View of Mediaeval House from Northeast.



b. Threshold of Roman "Atrium House" from South, showing Socket for Bolt.

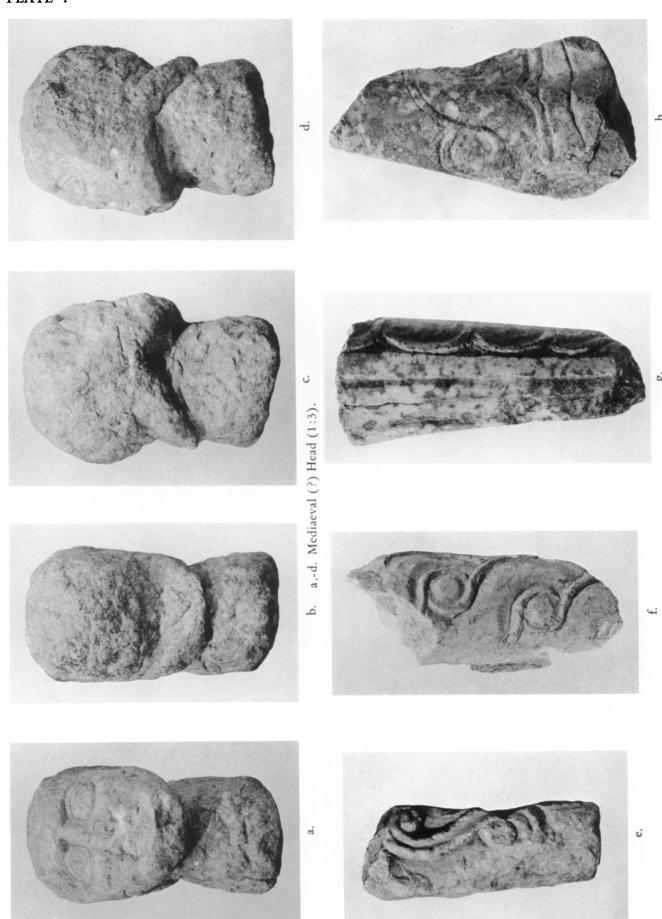
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PLATE 4



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e.-h. Fragments of Drapery of Colossal Roman Statue (e. 1:3, f.-h. 1:2).





a., b. Fragments of Roman Porphyry Revetment (1:2).



c. Fragment of Corinthian Capital (1:3).



d. Fragment of Terracotta Sima (1:2).



e. Terracotta Antefix (1:3).



f. Fragment of Eaves' Tile (1:3).

J. K. Anderson: Corinth, Temple E Northwest, Preliminary Report 1965

PLATE 6





a., b. Fragments of Marble Inscription (1:3).

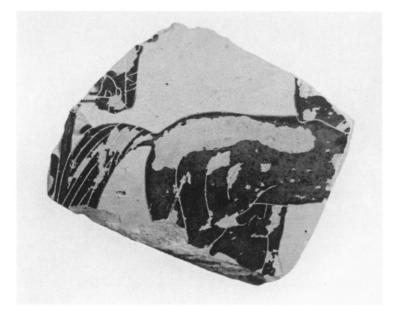




c., d. Fragments of Stamped Tiles (1:3).



e. Head of Archaic Votive Figurine (1:1).



f. Fragment of Middle Corinthian Column Krater (1:1).



g. Carnelian Sealstone (2:1).

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