

SECTION Ω : 1969

EXCAVATION SUMMARY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Philosophical School C	p. 1
House D.....	p. 3
House G.....	p. 5

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EXCAVATION SUMMARY

Section Ω : 1969

(Nb. Ω XI, passim)

Excavations were carried out in Section Ω from July 8 to August 23 with six workmen. Work was done on the late Roman complex now known as Philosophical School C, and on House D, a private house of the 5th century B.C. which underlies the north half of the school. For an actual state plan of the area upon completion, cf. PD #1897.

PHILOSOPHICAL SCHOOL C

The main purpose of the season's work here was the recovery of the plan of the building, which had never been properly drawn. The building was first dug as House F by M. Crosby in 1938, and a preliminary plan was drawn up by J.T. in 1967 (PD #1756). In its main period the building has been associated with two similar structures - one in Section Φ, the other in Ψ - dated to the 5th century A.D. and identified as Philosophical Schools.

The main feature of the building is its massive south wall. It is of heavy concrete for some 18 m., joining an earlier wall of conglomerate blocks at the east. Excavating in the apse, at the west, we found the continuation of this wall, cut down to a low level, and it is clear that in its original form the south wall pre-dates the 5th century building. The purpose of this wall in its original period is something of a problem. Associated with it are two thin north-south walls. In the stretch between these two

walls there are the remains of three niches set into the south wall; a large central one 2.32 m. wide by 1.16 m. deep, flanked by two smaller ones ca. 1.04 m. wide and 0.67 m. deep. To the east, in what would be another room, there is a fourth niche, ca. 2.00 m. wide by 0.85 m. deep. The rest of the plan of this earlier building, if indeed it was one, has been lost, though perhaps the marble chip mosaic under the gutter of the peristyle is also to be associated with this early phase.

There is a second possible use of this wall in the early period. Its size and general construction closely resemble the huge mass of concrete which runs along the back wall of South Stoa II generally associated with the large Hadrianic aqueduct (Hesperia XXVIII, pp. 96-98; XXIX, pp. 348-9). A settling basin high up on the Panathenaic Way shows that in addition to the south branch, a second branch ran almost due west from the basin. This basin is ca. 73 m. from the large wall in Section Ω , and it seems very possible that the south wall in its original use was, in fact, the west branch of this large aqueduct of the second century A.D. Though there is no positive evidence from the wall itself, the levels and the general orientation both seem to favor this hypothesis. It is of course not impossible that the wall served both to carry the aqueduct and as the south wall of some building of the 2nd century A.D. Further excavation will perhaps shed additional light.

In its original use, the south wall was some 1.40 - 1.60 m. thick, but in the later period was cut back to a thickness of ca. 0.75 m.

25% COTTON

For the plan of the main period (5th century A.D.) various modifications were made to PD # 1756. These may best be seen on PD , and need no further comment here.

In the 7th century A.D., the room with the apse and the area immediately to the east were enclosed by rough rubble walls so as to form two rooms.

HOUSE D

Parts of House D were first uncovered by M. Crosby in 1938; the best accounts of her work are to be found in her excavation report for that year, and in her notebook summary (Ω VIII, pp. 1530 ff.; cf. also the plan in the back pocket.). Full correlation with her work has not yet been completed, but some preliminary findings may be noted.

In the northern part of the house we confirmed the existence of an early 5th century B.C. (Pre-Persian) phase of the building. Digging through the lowest floors in Rooms 3, 5a, and 5b, we found consistently early pottery. Furthermore, when we plotted most of the walls on a plan, taking into account style of construction, relative levels, and associated pottery, it is clear that the fullest possible restoration of the house is for this earliest phase (PD).

Particularly noteworthy is the east wall of the house, which is ca. 0.42 m. wide, preserved for a total of some 13 m. It is of very handsome polygonal masonry. Along it, outside of Room 5a, there runs a shallow TC water channel, U-shaped in section.

GILBERT BOND

Of special interest also is Room 5b, which this year was first excavated to its lowest floor level; here we found a mudbrick hearth measuring ca. 0.82 m. by 0.57 m., rising ca. 0.095 m. above the floor. In 1938, M. Crosby found an off-center door in the west wall of this room (p. 1539) since lost in the collapse of the cistern at $\Delta\Sigma/70$. Restoring a double door ca. 1.20 m. wide, five couches of standard size (1.90 m. x 0.70 m.) would then fit perfectly around the room with the hearth near the middle, providing a very suitable dining room.

The only other room whose function has been guessed at is Room 5, which seems to be in a reasonable position for the courtyard of the house.

The house was apparently remodelled extensively in the last quarter of the 5th century B.C. The south wall was rebuilt and set back several meters to the south, on a slightly different orientation. The lowest course of this wall remains, made of large blocks of porous limestone ca. 1.20 m. x 0.75 m. x 0.42. Rooms 1, 2, and 4 apparently followed much the same plan as the early phase, but what happened further north is not entirely clear. Much of the area was covered by a thick layer of crushed bedrock, full of late 5th century B.C. sherds. One or two walls of the early period clearly went out of use in this area in the last quarter of the 5th century. We found no walls that could be assigned with certainty to the second period, however, and it seems probable that some of the walls of the early period remained in use, with the floor levels raised considerably.

Also to be associated with this late 5th century B.C. phase of the house is the large stucco-lined tank at the southeast,

measuring 2.13m. x 1.32 m., with a minimum depth of 0.45 m.

Sometime in the second quarter of the 4th century B.C., the house was remodelled again. The south wall was partially rebuilt and extended ca. 1.75 m. to the west. The present southwest corner is made of field stones instead of the nice poros blocks of the late 5th century phase; furthermore, the stratification in this corner was disturbed by the rebuilding, and an early TC channel along the south wall was broken. This same slight shift in plan is visible also in the north wall of Room 4 (walls A + H) and in the east wall of Room 7.

To this phase also may be assigned the tiled area along the outside of the east wall of the house, north of the tank. This area was paved with large flat tiles ca. 0.51 m. x 0.51 m. x 0.04 m., with a small stucco catch-basin at the north end. This area would seem to supplement in some way the stucco tank to the south which remained in use, though their exact relationship and use is not clear.

As in the late 5th century phase, all traces of this third phase have disappeared further north, with the possible exception of a stone-lined well.

A final phase of the second half of the 4th century B.C. is represented only by the pebble mosaic floor which overlay the tiled area, and by the cistern at $\Lambda\Sigma\Gamma/70$, which went out of use in the 3rd century B.C.

HOUSE G

A second house of the classical period was discovered imme-

diately to the east of House D. Its west wall has been robbed out, but the plunder trench remained, its line preserved by the east edge of the tiled area. This tiled area was therefore probably an open courtyard between the two houses. Two rooms (A+B: plan) were partially cleared and one (B) was found to have a handsome marble chips mosaic floor. There is a design done in colored stones of a rosette pattern in white enclosed by a circle and trapezoids of red and black. The date of the mosaic is not known. From excavations under the floor of the adjacent room (A) it seems probable that House G itself is to be dated in the early 5th century B.C. Only slight digging was carried out, however, as the building should be studied as a unit and the bulk of it remains hidden under the large mass of undug fill to the east. Also to be dug is a bottle-shaped cistern in the northwest part of Room A.

J. McK. Camp II