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COLCHESTER

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Excavations on the South Side of the Temple Precinct at Colchester, 1964

by Max Hebditch

with contributions by David T-D. Clarke, John Cross and G. B. Dannell

Excavation took place under the auspices of the Colchester Excavation Committee on a site at 98-99 High Street, Colchester (N. G. R. TL 99842523) prior to its re-development by Messrs. Atlas Insurance Ltd. Their co-operation and that of their contractors, Messrs. W. A. Hills & Son, was most valuable. The area available for excavation was known to be astride the line of the south wall of the precinct surrounding the Temple of Claudius,¹ between the discoveries made in 1933 and 1953 (*Hull*, 1958, 169 & 171; 1955, 24-61 (see plan, fig. 1).

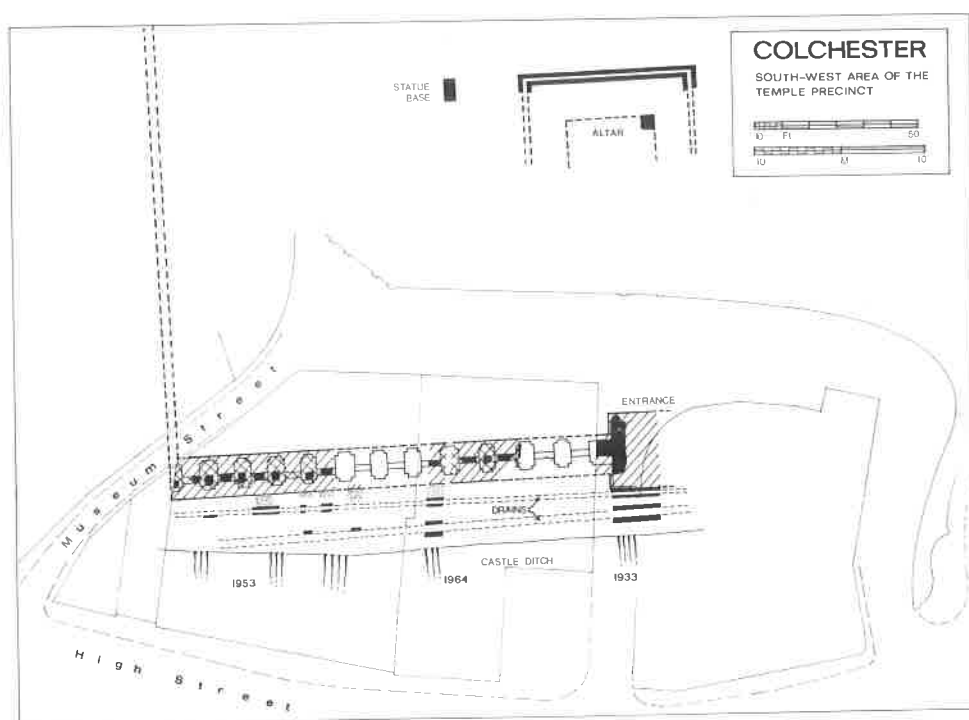


Fig. 1. Plan of South-West Area of the Temple Precinct.

The earlier observations, which had taken place during construction work, had revealed a massive stone foundation 4.57 metres (15 feet) wide forming the platform for an arcade pierced by a gateway at a point almost opposite the temple facade. The arcade had been blocked to make an unbroken wall. South

of this screen wall were observed two drains. The present excavation provided the first opportunity of examining the stratigraphical relationship of these features.

PROGRESS OF THE EXCAVATION

Excavation took place between 14th April and 13th May, 1964. Trench I (see plan, fig. 2) consisted of a cutting six feet wide across the stone foundation platform and extending to 9.75 metres (32 feet) further South, enabling a section through all deposits to be observed. On completion this trench was refilled and Trench II excavated down to the level of the top of the foundation platform. Altogether almost 12.20 metres (40 feet) of the top of the foundation platform was exposed. In the interests of speed (construction work had already started

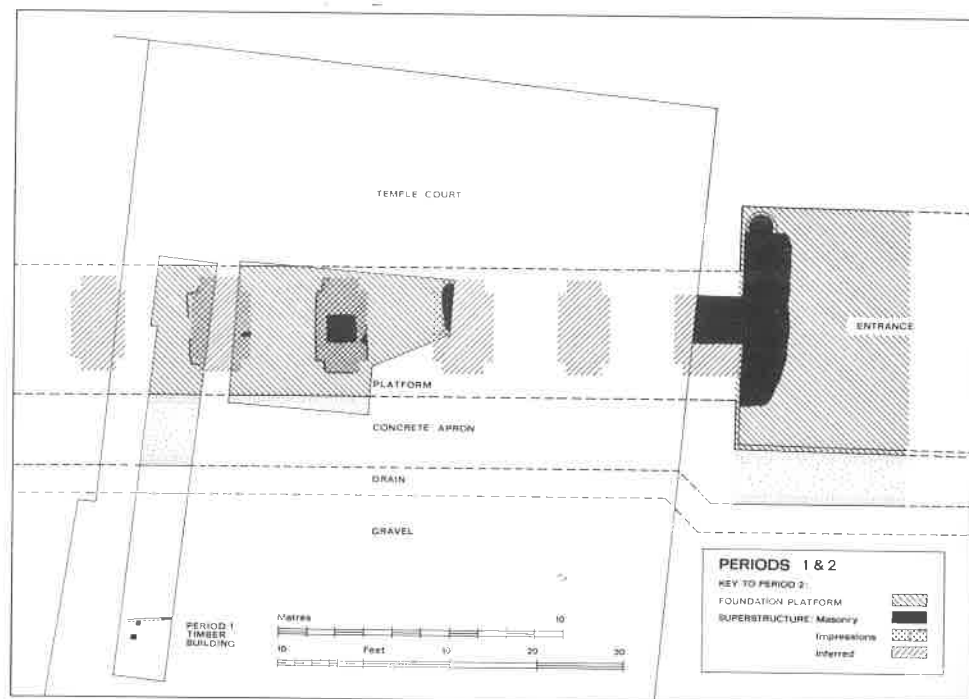


Fig. 2. Plan — Periods 1 and 2.

on the site) mechanical aid was used to remove the upper layers in both trenches. In Trench II the excavator was used down to a point just above the surface of the foundation platform. In Trench I the 19th century building debris and the upper fill of the Norman ditch were similarly removed. The remainder of the work was done by volunteers. The author is glad to acknowledge the assistance of all who took part, particularly Mr. M. Gribble.

In the conduct of the excavation and preparation of the Report, the author has benefitted from the advice and criticism of Mr. Bryan Blake, Mr. D. T-D. Clarke, Miss R. Dunnett, Mr. M. R. Hull and Prof. S. S. Frere.

Structural Sequence

(figures in brackets refer to the section, Fig. 4)

PERIOD 1

The earliest building on the site was a timber structure found at the southern end of Trench I (see plan, Fig. 2). The remains (F13) consisted of a beam impression, 7 cms wide, on an alignment approximately the same as that of the later arcade of the temple court (Period 2). Adjoining the beam impression on the south side was a posthole (approximately 15 cms. square) filled with gravel. It seems reasonable to assume that this was the north wall of a building the greater part of which will have been destroyed by the Norman ditch (Period 7). The gravel fill of the posthole suggests dismantling of the building at the time of the deposition of the metalling above (17). A further posthole of the same size was found slightly further South filled with mortar rubble, beneath a mortar spread (23). The mortar was not an original floor as at its thicker (southern) end it included part of a moulding, probably from the junction of a floor and wall. On the evidence available it is not clear whether the southern posthole and the mortar spread belonged to a still earlier building or formed an internal partition, later removed. Slight traces of burning were found immediately beneath the mortar spread.

PERIOD 2

The foundation platform supporting an arcade which formed the southern boundary of the temple court (see plans, Figs. 1 and 2), was constructed in this period.

(a) *The foundation trench.* This was dug approximately 1 metre (3 feet) into natural sand. In the limited area examined it appeared that the upcast material was spread inside the temple court (13) raising the level by about 40 cms (16 inches). Incorporated with the upcast were patches of mortar derived from construction work on the foundation. The upcast was also used to fill a hollow (27) South of the foundation platform.

(b) *The foundation platform* was 4.57 metres (15 feet) wide, and 1.6 metres (5 feet 3 inches) deep. The lower 60 cms (2 feet), below the original ground surface, consisted of loose rubble and concrete, poorly mixed, poured straight into the trench. The upper part was faced with random rubble, roughly coursed in squared-off septaria (Plate IIIa). Broken pieces of septaria formed a layer of rubble (22) resting on natural sand and filling the top of the foundation trench (F17). The timber building of Period I was still standing at this time as layers 22 and 18 both stop at the beam-impression (F13). No traces survived of any plastering on the exposed portion of the south face of the foundation platform and, as none was found sealed behind the second concrete apron (25), it may be assumed that none was applied. The surface of the foundation platform had mostly been destroyed by later Roman activity, but where it was preserved beneath the blocking walls inserted between the arches in Period 3, it was found to have been originally finished with white mortar over a mortary sand. A fragment of a limestone slab found *in situ* sealed by the first plastering of the west blocking wall may indicate that the platform was originally paved. If so, then it had lost these pavers before the blocking walls were inserted.

(c) *The arcade.* Standing on and contemporary with the foundation platform was an arcade of which the impressions of three pier-bases were found (Plate I).

Although the mortar mix for the core of the centre pier differed from that used for the foundation (see below page 128), it was quite clear that there was no break in construction. The core of each pier was built of septaria rubble with a few brick fragments. Each was originally faced with limestone, of which only two small fragments survived the Norman robbing (one fragment can be seen in Plate II (a) above the pointed end of the ranging pole). The overall dimensions of each pier excavated were:

East Pier: not completely excavated

Centre Pier: 3.35 metres (11 feet) north-south by 1.82 metres (6 feet)

West Pier:² 3.35 metres (11 feet) north-south by 2.13 metres (7 feet)

The differing alternate widths seem to be confirmed by the published plan of the Kent, Blaxill site observed in 1953 (*Hull 1955*, fig. 2). As may be seen from Plate II (a) there was a projection in front and behind each pier forming a plinth for a plastered brick half-engaged column (diameter 51 cms; 20 inches) fragments of which were found in the rubble at the north end of Trench I. The span of each arch was approximately 2.43 metres (8 feet).

(d) *Contemporary features.* Very soon after the construction of the foundation platform, and probably as part of the same job, a concrete apron (26), 2.43 metres (8 feet) wide was laid alongside it. The surface was pink and broken septaria formed a hard-core base. The apron sloped into a drain (F16), which judging from the rectangular section was originally lined with timber. Layer 18, which overlies the construction layer associated with the foundation platform, may be derived from the digging of this feature. The fill of F16 was grey silt and a certain amount of gravel from the adjoining layer of metalling (17) which overlay the remains of the Period I house. The concrete apron was disturbed by the digging of the shallow depression (F15) which became filled with gravel. Later a new concrete apron (25) was laid, perhaps to raise the level to that of a new layer of metalling to the South (16). Drain F16 may have collapsed as the outer edge of 25 had broken away and the water course became clogged with gravel (21) containing, at a low level, a fragment of Claudian/Neronian Samian (see below; page 126). Street metalling eventually buried the concrete apron. Finally a new drain (F12) was constructed, also probably timber lined. Of the surfacing of the temple precinct no evidence was found but it presumably rested on the upcast from the foundation trench (13) which included patches of mortar.

PERIOD 3

At some time after drain F12 had largely filled with gravel, a quantity of building debris was deposited on the outer edge (19). The debris, which included roofing tiles and antefixes (fig. 5, nos. 9, 10), showed signs of fire and one roofing tile was so hot that sand had fused to it.

The blocking walls (see plan, fig. 3 and Plate I) are described under this period as they clearly antedate the gravel layers (10 and 11), mortar surface (8) and drain (F9) ascribed to period 4. Their exact relationship to the stratigraphical sequence cannot be established with any certainty. The walls were laid on the original mortar finish of the foundation platform; the east blocking wall sealed an area of original mortar surface which had become burnt red; it was uncertain whether this had resulted from heat penetrating through the supposed paving or had occurred after the paving had been removed. The construction of the blocking walls (from the base up) was as follows:

- West wall: 2 courses of septaria
 4 courses of tiles, including re-used roofing and building material
 2 courses of septaria
- Centre wall: 2 courses of septaria
 5 courses of tile, including re-used roofing material
 2 courses of septaria
 1 course of tile interrupted by a possible post socket
- East wall: 2 courses of septaria
 6 courses of tiles, including re-used material
 2 courses of septaria
 1 course of tile
 1 course of septaria } interrupted by a post socket

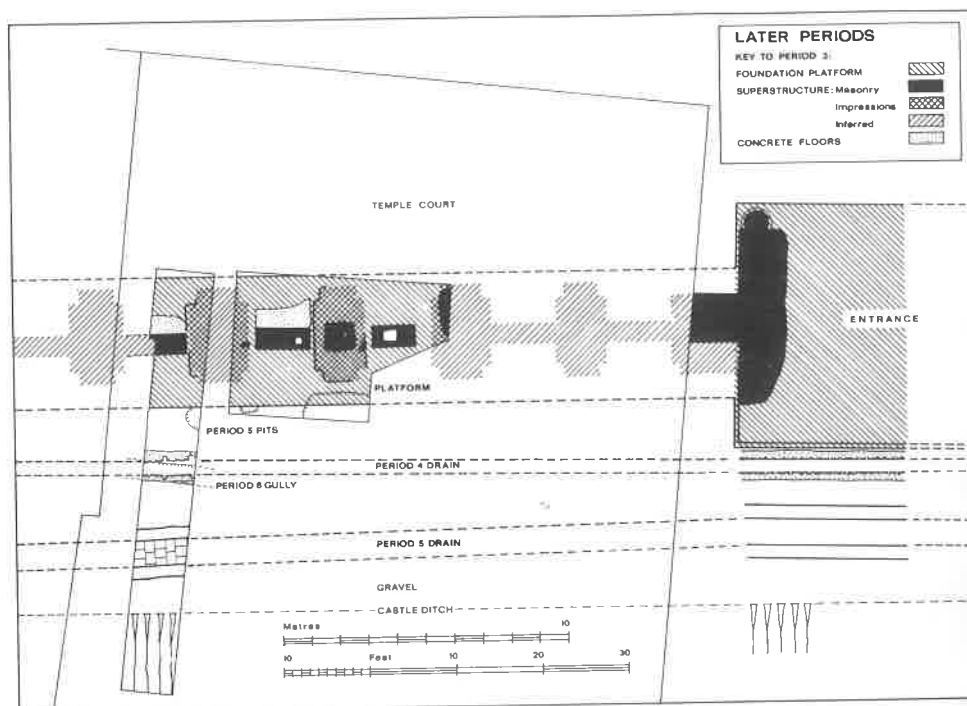


Fig. 3. Plan — Later Periods.

Between each type of building material was a small offset. The mortar (see below page 128) is quite different from the arcade piers; it resembles most closely that used for the concrete apron (26). The post sockets suggest that the upper part of each wall was timber framed. Both faces of the wall were plastered and this was clearly contemporary with a new mortar surface on the south side of the foundation platform and a concrete floor on the north side founded on rubble and broken tiles.

PERIOD 4

During this period the distinction between the foundation platform and the metalling to the South disappeared. Layers of gravel (10 and 11) sealed by a mortar surface (8) finally buried the platform. The blocking walls were re-plastered twice while this surface was in use.

A new stone lined drain (F9; see plan, fig. 3 and plate IIIb) was constructed in the final sandy fill of F12 to carry surface water away eastwards. It was 45 cms. (18 inches) wide internally and floored in pink concrete; the sides were of re-used ashlar with a single course of thin purbeck marble facing above. In the upper surfaces of the sides were sockets 4 cms (1½ inches) wide and there was a post socket or entry for water from a smaller drain at the north-east end. The sockets may have supported cross beams for a timber lid of planks laid lengthways. Drain F9 silted up and in its last phase (by which time the wooden lid must have been removed) further marble slabs (visible in Plate IIIb) were laid on either side in order to guide the water along its channel.

PERIOD 5

Drain F6 was constructed to replace the silted and ineffective F9. It probably relates to a higher level than the mortar surface (8) associated with period 4 as tiles have been displaced from the upper parts of the side walls of the new drain. The surface to which it relates has been worn away but it may connect with the thin mortar spread (8a) adjoining the blocking wall. This was associated with the third re-plastering of this blocking wall. Drain F6 was magnificently constructed of tiles and 90 cms (3 feet) wide internally. A comparison of level with the portion of this drain found on the Kent, Blaxill site (Hull 1955, fig. 3) shows that, like F9, it drained to the East. This drain silted up (Plate IIb) and broken tiles from its walls became embedded in the surface of the silt, on which was a coin of Constans (337-40) (32.1964/1; see below; page 125). From this time dirt (6) began to accumulate over the metalling producing 4 coins and a small group of pottery (see below; page 126). Also belonging to this period were a number of pits and depressions cut into the area adjoining the arcade. Of these only F10 and F11 were excavated. The former contained pink loose mortar in the upper part of a gravel fill; it was probably filled quickly and the pink mortar may have come from layer 26 into which the pit penetrated. F11, which was cut through to the surface of the foundation platforms had a certain amount of rubble thrown in, after which it was left open to accumulate occupation dirt similar to layer 6. The purpose of these pits is unknown – unless they are late Roman trial pits dug to locate the foundation platform. F23 and F24 were not excavated but the fill of F23 looked water laid and it may have been a drain. None can be considered postholes. The final re-plastering of the blocking walls was associated with the surface of the occupation layer (6). A *terminus post quem* for this re-plastering is provided by a coin of Valens (364-7) from (6).

PERIOD 6

Above layer 6, dark soil accumulated interspersed with layers of rubble as the adjoining masonry of the arcade fell into decay. During this time two gullies, both filled with rubble, were made parallel with the arcade. One (F19) on the north side of the arcade is later than the occupation material (3) of Period 5. That to the South of the arcade was dug later than a fall of rubble (4). Both clearly belong to the end of the Roman period or Saxon times. Coins found in these layers go down to Valentinian II (383-92)

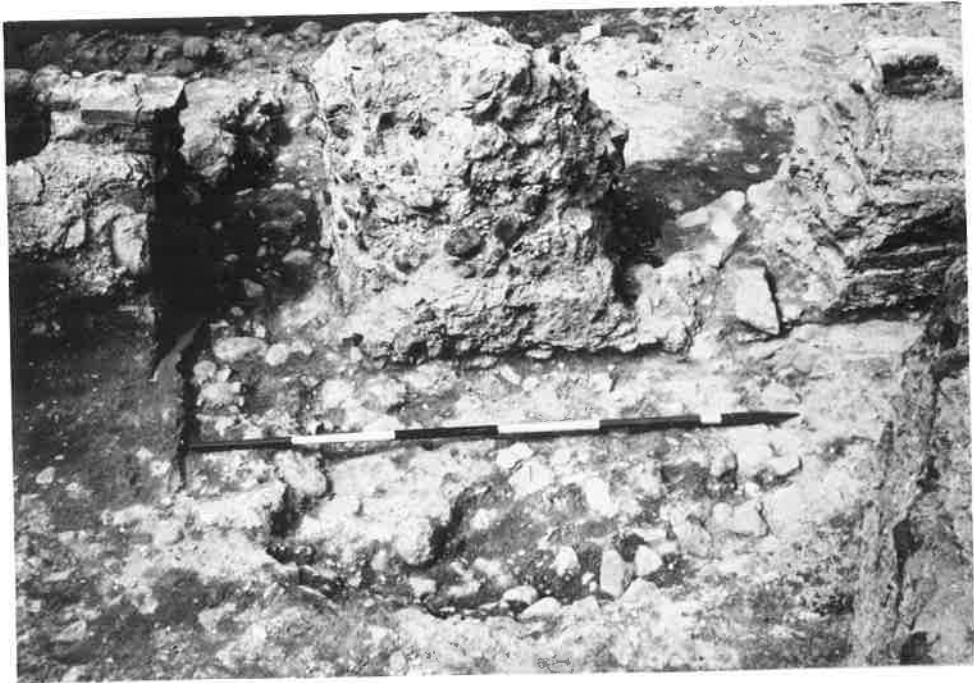


Plate IIa Arcade Piers, showing Limestone Facing



Plate IIb The Silted-up Drain

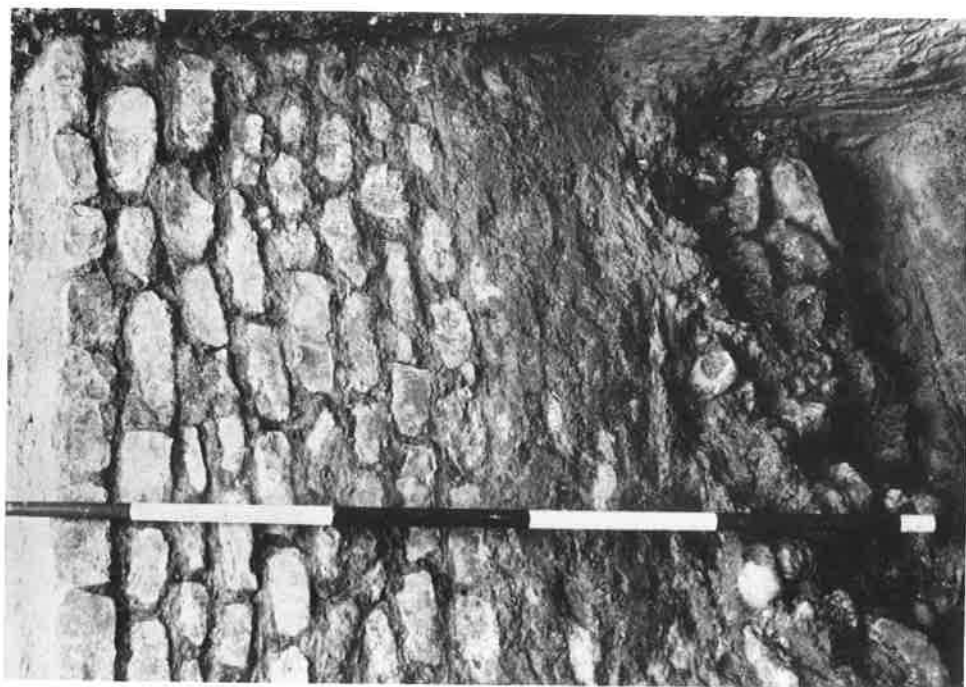


Plate IIIa Foundation Platform of South Arcade

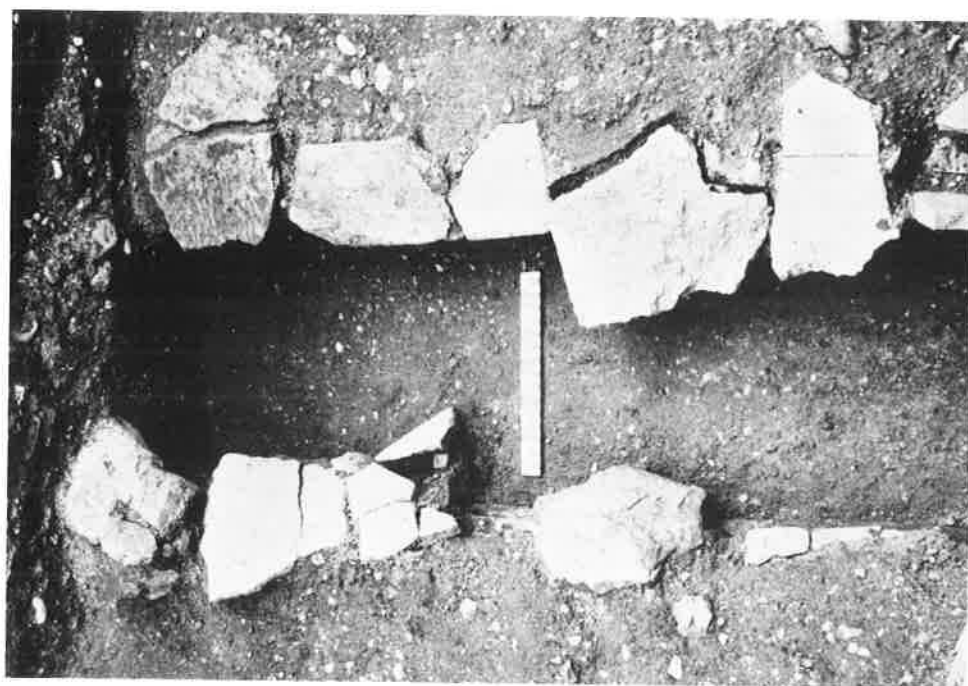


Plate IIIb Period 4, Stone-lined Drain

PERIOD 7

It has already been noted that the early levels in the southern part of the site were destroyed by the construction of the ditch (F3) of the Norman defences enclosing the castle erected on the podium of the temple. At this time the piers of the arcade were robbed for their limestone facings, although the rubble cores and blocking walls were ignored. The arcade foundation served as a base for the rampart. Levelling of the site for the shops which preceded the present construction work on the site had destroyed most of the rampart levels except for a small patch of re-deposited gravel metalling at the east end of the site (not shown on the section). No traces were found of any defensive walls on the edge of the ditch which was filled about 1683 (Hull 1955, 39). Cut into the edge were two post-medieval rubbish pits.

Discussion

PERIOD 1

These excavations recognised, for the first time, the existence of buildings antedating the construction of the arcade and the associated levelling of the temple court and deposition of a gravelled street or courtyard south of the arcade. No direct evidence was found on this site to date the timber buildings, but evidence from nearby sites must be considered. Not surprisingly, in a desperate rescue situation, no structural traces of a timber building of this period was found in the 1953 excavations on the adjoining Kent, Blaxill site. A layer of grey clay stained with charcoal, which could be a floor of a building of this period was noticed at the southern edge of the site immediately below the metalling shown on the section³ (Hull 1955, fig. 3) between R and V. On this site no trace was found of layers TU regarded as a layer deposited to raise the ground level; if this layer is not natural, then, if our interpretation of the grey clay is correct, it would appear to be a levelling layer deposited before the timber buildings of this period and not connected with the construction of the foundation platform. It is recorded that two sherds (base of Colchester Form 140 and rim of Form 266) were found in or on this layer (Hull 1955, 56-7). The former is dated c. 50 and the latter Claudius/Nero, but the area is described as disturbed and is thus shown on the section at S. Comparison of the Kent, Blaxill section with our own (fig. 4) shows this disturbance to be the sequence of early timber-lined drains found on the present site. The Kent, Blaxill finds cannot be regarded, therefore, as dating the deposition of layers R and V.

Recent work by Miss R. Dunnett on the Sainsbury site (published elsewhere in these *Transactions*) has shown the existence of timber buildings with plastered walls and plaster mouldings pre-dating the construction of a large public building in the *Insula* south of the temple court. These timber buildings were destroyed in the Boudiccan fire of A.D. 61. It seems highly probable that these remains are equivalent to our own timber building, which showed similar signs of destruction.

It remains to assess the purpose of the timber remains which are characterised by three main features; (i) the building is undoubtedly of Roman type; (ii) although the short length exposed makes certainty impossible, it appears that the axis of the timber building is the same as that of the foundation platform; (iii) no street bounds the North side of the building. They may relate in some way to the military phase of the site before AD 50; evidence of the occupation of the area by an army unit has been found in North Hill (Dunnett 1966, 29-30), but the size of the fort or fortress is still unknown. More likely perhaps is the possibility (propounded by Miss Dunnett elsewhere in these *Transactions*) that the timber remains represent the first buildings to be erected surrounding the

temple. On the Sainsbury site, it was thought that these buildings were incomplete at the time of their destruction by Boudicca. From the present site there was supporting evidence of incompleteness in the lack of any street or courtyard surface associated with the timber building. The relationship of the temple and its associated buildings with the probable *Colonia* is discussed in *Dunnett 1968*.

PERIOD 2

If our interpretation of Period 1 is correct, the construction of the open arcade dividing the temple court from the buildings to the south must have formed part of the programme of reconstruction following the Boudiccan sack of the city. (*Hull 1955*, 60) used evidence of the re-used material in the blocking walls to support this interpretation, but the present excavation has demonstrated that they are secondary to the open arcade. The character of the arcade is described in *Hull 1955*. Suffice it to say that it was originally on a raised platform, open, with half engaged columns on the front and back of each pier, and free standing. The lower courses (to a height of about 1 metre; see *Hull*, 1958, fig. 86), were of limestone; the plinths for the half-engaged columns were probably this height also. The columns and arches were of brick (*Hull 1955*, 41) presumably rendered. There is no certain evidence that the arcade was coated with marble, of which fragments were found re-used in the Period 4 drain and in the debris. Larger quantities were found on the Kent, Blaxill site (extensively reported upon with the other building stones; *Hull 1955*, 45-50).

Only a very small part of the area within the temple precinct was examined but it seems probable that the upcast layer (13) spread within the court formed the bedding for a more durable surface in the same manner as the temple at Bath (*Cunliffe*, 1969, Plate XLVb). Bricks (and later roof tiles) were found on Joslin's site on the west side of the temple court (information from Miss R. Dunnett).

The destruction caused by the Norman ditch prevented any assessment of the character of the buildings to the South of the arcade. However, a street or courtyard surface was laid down as part of the same programme of construction as the arcade, from which it was separated by a concrete apron (also noticed in front of the entrance arch; *Hull 1958*, fig. 86). The laying of this metalling involved the dismantling of such of the Period 1 timber buildings as remained.

Miss Dunnett's observations on the Sainsbury site (reported elsewhere in this volume) have revealed the existence of the massive foundations for public buildings in this *Insula*, cut through the debris from the Boudiccan destruction of the timber buildings. It seems highly probable that these formed part of buildings surrounding a courtyard south of the arcade of which the surface was the gravel metalling found in the present excavation.

PERIOD 3

The blocking walls are an addition to the original design (disposing of the theories concerning their purpose in *Hull 1955*, 60). They can only be relatively dated within very broad limits in that they were inserted after the original construction and before the laying of a new mortar floor (8) and drain (F9) in Period 4 which covered the bottom of the blocking walls. However, the re-used building materials incorporated in the blocking walls and the area of burning found beneath the eastern one may tentatively be linked with the fire debris found on the outer slope of ditch F12,* which replaced drain F16 (containing

*Against this must be set the similarity of the mortar used in the blocking walls to that from the lower concrete apron (26) (below p. 128) but the samples are not comparing like with like and the resemblance is probably fortuitous.

first century pottery, (below page 126) probably not earlier than c. A.D. 100. Since the arcade itself can have contained little combustible material, it is likely that the fire debris on the edge of F12 and the re-used building material in the blocking walls came from buildings surrounding the courtyard south of the arcade. Evidence of the destruction of one such building was recorded by Miss Dunnett on the Sainsbury site; here fire gutted a large public building at a date probably late in the second century. Thus it seems probable that after the late second century fire a permanent division was created between the temple precinct and the courtyard by inserting blocking walls in the arcade. Such a move implies a change in use of the southern part of the complex; the temple precinct must have continued under the control of the provincial council, but the courtyard to the south may have assumed more local functions. Certainly the public buildings surrounding the courtyard were not rebuilt and new small scale developments filled the area (Dunnett, this *Transactions*).

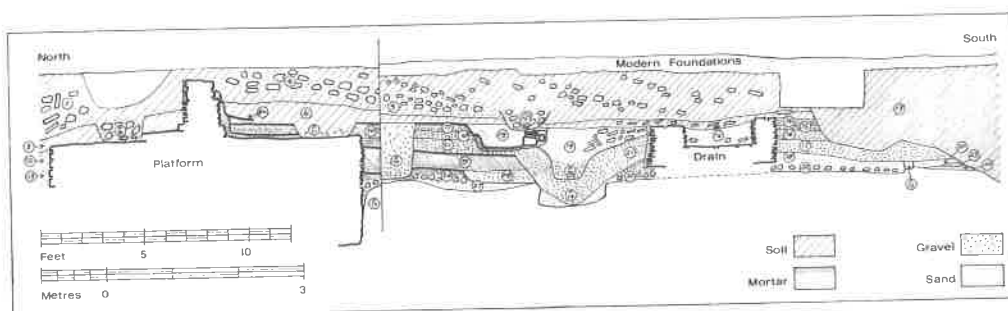


Fig. 4. Section, showing Structural Sequences.

PERIOD 4

The principle feature of this period, drain F9, incorporated re-used material some of which (on the Kent, Blaxill site), had been damaged by fire (*Hull 1955, 37*). Re-used Purbeck marble facings were also incorporated. The stratigraphical position of this drain clearly dissociates the re-used material from the Boudiccan fire suggested by (*Hull 1955, 37*) though it may still be making use of re-usable materials from the late 2nd century fire. If so the new mortar surface north of the drain (which seals the first plastering of the Period 3 blocking walls) may have been laid within a few years of their construction. It is not certain that the arcade was faced in marble and the occurrence of this material in the construction of the drain may result from clearance of buildings to the south following the fire already postulated. The results of the mortar analysis (page 128) although to be regarded cautiously, suggest a possible link between the mortar of the blocking walls and drain F9. Periods 3 and 4, therefore, may well be two phases of one programme of rebuilding and re-organisation in the second half of the 2nd century.

PERIOD 5

The construction of the brick-lined drain represented a major improvement to this area, though the date of this work can only be guessed at. If it is reckoned

to have gone out of use after A.D. 340 when the coin was lost on the surface of the silt, then a construction date in the first half of the 3rd century would seem possible. It is only now, in the second half of the 4th century, that dirt is allowed to accumulate in the area inside and outside the temple court. However, the continued importance of the temple precinct, though presumably not as a centre of the imperial cult, is shown by the replastering of the blocking walls for the fifth time; the fillet at the base of the wall is level with the top of layer 6 from which the latest coin dates 364-7. The re-plastering might form part of reconstruction work following the barbarian raids of 367. However, the general shortage of coins in the late fourth century could mean that the work was undertaken much later.

PERIODS 6 & 7

The absence of major quantities of rubble suggests that the arcade continued to stand, becoming steadily more ruinous until in the 11th century it was demolished to provide material for the Norman castle and the foundation of the outer bank. The remains of the rampart bank were not here excavated but were recorded on the Kent, Blaxill site (*Hull 1955*, 39-40).

The Finds

The Coins

by D. T-D. Clarke

Unstratified

- 32.1964/9 Obv. DN GR(ATIANVS . . . Bust r.
Rev. GLORIA NOVI SAECVLI Emperor facing, head r., holding
labarum in r. hand and resting l. on shield. Possibly Arelate.
Gratian (367-75). Probably LRBC 525. From robbing pit F20.
- 32.1964/17 Obv. DN GR . . . Bust r.
Rev. GLORIA NOVI SAECVLI as 32.1964/9. mm illegible.
Gratian (367-75).

From the debris accumulation over the structure. Period 6

- 32.1964/3 Obv. DN VALENTI-ANVS PF AVG Bust draped r.
Rev. VICTORIA AVGG Victory l. holding wreath and palm
|
ASIS
Siscia. Valentinian II (382-92). LRBC 1575.
From layer 2.
- 32.1964/15 Obv. head
Rev. star.
Minim. fourth century.

32.1964/16 Obv. DN VALEN-S PF AVG Bust draped r.
Rev. SECV)RITAS REIPVBLICAE Victory standing l. holding
wreath.
Valens (c. 365-78).

32.1964/18 Obv. bust 1.
Rev. VO TIS XX Globe on altar
Constantine I (c. 313-37)
All three from layer 34.

From the latest occupation level over the street and platform. Period 5.

32.1964/2 Obv. CONSTANTINVS IVN NOB C Bust cuirassed r.
Rev. GLOR-IA EXERC-ITVS 2 legionaries, 2 standards

PLG

Lugdunum. Constantine II (330-35). LRBC 181.
From layer 6.

32.1964/10 Obv. DN CONSTAN-TINVS . . . AVG Bust draped r.
Rev. Quadriga ascending to r.
(Probably 337-41)
From layer 36.

32.1964/11 Obv. CONSTANTINVS IVN NOB C Bust r.
Rev. PROVIDEN-TIAE CAESS Gateway

PLON

London. Constantine II (324-325/6). LRBC 5.
From layer 37.

32.1964/13 Obv. . . . VA)LEN-S PF AVG Bust draped r.
Rev. SECV)RITAS REI(PUBLICAE Pax, standing l., holding
wreath and palm

OFI

CON

Arelate Valens (364-7). LRBC 492.

From the surface of the silted drain F6 below the latest occupation level. Period 5

32.1964/1 Obv. CONSTAN)S PF AVG Bust r.
Rev. Illegible
Constans (337-40)

The Glass (FIG. 5)

From the latest occupation level over the street and platform. Period 5.

11. Fragment of a cone beaker in pale green glass; undecorated but with wheel-cut spiral striations in the glass; the rim is left unfinished. This is a common form of the second half of the fourth century (*Isings* 1957, form 106b).
From layer 3.

The Samian

by G. B. Dannell

From the metalling filling drain F.16. Period 2.

32.1964/8 Form 30. Tapered double-bordered ovolo with tongue against left side, ending in a 7-pointed rosette. Panel decoration, with pairs of fine wreathed arcades separated by upright trifid-leaf wreaths from "St. Andrew's Cross" motifs. These are composed of opposed bunches of three pomegranate stalks, with the tendrils ending in stipule buds, and serrated leaves. The tendrils and wavy line junctions are bound together by large and small rosettes. In the right hand surviving arcade is the figure of Penelope, O.925. Claudius-Nero.

From layer 21. The fragment was in fresh, unrolled condition. For the interpretation of this deposit see the coarse pottery report (see below).

The Coarse Pottery (FIG. 5)

From the latest occupation level over the street and platform. Period 5

2. Calcite gritted fabric with buff exterior and grey core.
3. Mortarium in buff fabric. A late type; cf. *Jewry Wall* fig. 18 nos. 24-5 (type J).
4. Hard red self coloured fabric with a burnished surface.
5. Colour coated beaker; grey fabric with very dark olive green "metallic" slip.
6. Burnished dark grey fabric.
7. Grey fabric bowl with a slight bead rim.

All the above from layers 3, 6, 36, 37.

As may be expected, these vessels compare closely with those from similar layers on the Kent, Blaxill site (*Hull 1955*, 57-8); e.g. No. 4 with fig. 4, no. 3 (New Forest ware); no. 3 with fig. 4, no. 21; no. 2 with the gritted wares fig. 5, 34. This group of pottery from here and the adjoining Kent, Blaxill site is given a *terminus post quem* by the coin of Constans dated 337-40 (32.1964/1) found on the surface on which this level accumulated. All on this site were deposited before structural decay began in Period 6.

From the metalling filling drain F16 Period 2.

1. Pale buff fabric. Miss R. Dunnett writes: "The sherd has not got many close parallels in the *Colonia*. The nearest dateable example I have found came from a layer dating c. AD 60-70 in *Insula 9*, in a fine grey fabric. The fabric of this piece is not common either, but there are several pots in similar ware from Kelvedon dating to the second and third centuries (excavated 1968; unpublished)".

51

The loose gravel road metalling which formed the filling of this timber lined drain also contained a sherd of Samian (32. 1964/8) of Claudian-Neronian date. Although this is nicely consonant with the earlier date suggested by Miss Dunnett the fabric may indicate at least a second century date for the silting of this drain after the collapse of the timber sides. The Claudian-Neronia Samian piece may well have been incorporated early in the silting of this drain, which possibly continued into the second century.

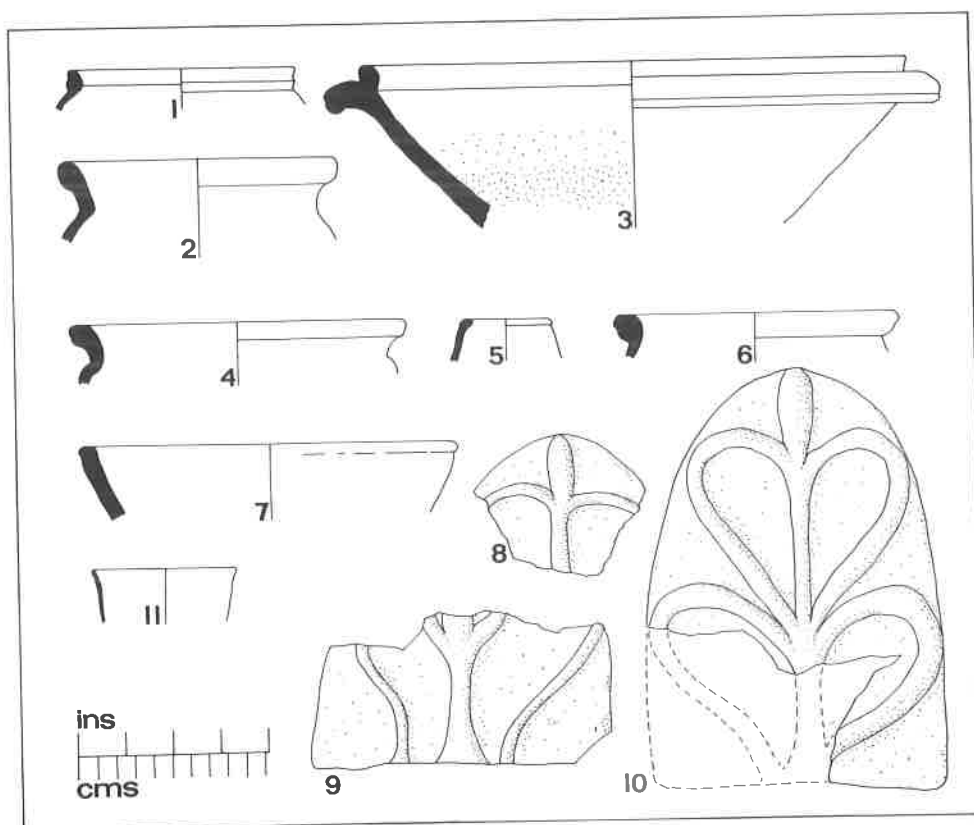


Fig. 5. The Pottery Finds.

The Tile Antefixes (FIG. 5)

From the building debris on the edge of drain F12. Period 3.

9, 10. Fragments of two antefixes of similar design in a sandy red fabric. There were also fragments of roofing tile in this deposit which showed traces of burning. From layer 19.

Another example of the same design (no. 8) was found in layer 6 (period 5) but probably derived from this deposit. This design of antefix seems only to have been found in the temple area.

The Mortar Samples

by John Cross

<i>Location</i>	<i>Average percentage weight of soluble material⁴</i>	<i>Inclusions</i>
Centre pier core	20.5	Large pieces of chalk (excluded from sample) and coarse sand. No brick.
Platform	28.4	Much sand and large pieces of quartz. No brick. Poorly mixed.
West blocking wall	31.3	Small lumps of chalk with iron staining around them, ground down brick.
Fragment of mortar from layer 18	32.6	Brick material and (?) flint.
Fragment of mortar from layer 19 (building debris on edge of drain F12; Period 3)	34.4	Fine brick material.
Mortar spread of timber building. Layer 23. Period 1	35.3	Fine brick material.
Lower concrete pavement. Layer 26. Period 2	31.8	Chalk, flint and brick.
Upper concrete pavement. Layer 25. Period 2	36.8 (inconsistent results)	Coarse sand.
Brick drain F6. Period 5	34.7	Fine brick and ferrous material.
Small drain F9. Period 4	31.8 (inconsistent results)	Fine brick material and chalk.

Excavator's note. The difficulty in dating the blocking walls is described in the main body of this report. The main object of this sampling was to discover whether any mortar comparable to that in the blocking walls was found in a stratified context. The nearest comparison would appear to be with the concrete pavement (layer 26). The only other comparable feature would appear to be the drain (F9), regarded as of a later date than the blocking wall. The small number of samples analysed could have produced misleading results.

Conclusions

Although the excavation did not provide exact dating evidence, it did disentangle for the first time the various structural features of the South side of the temple court which had been observed in the earlier excavations. The sequence of events and tentative interpretations may be summarised as follows:

<i>Period</i>	<i>Structural evidence</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
1.	Post sockets, plaster and plaster mouldings.	Wooden buildings probably belonging to the original structure bounding the temple precinct. Destroyed when still incomplete in the Boudiccan sack of A.D. 61.
2.	Open arcade, concrete apron, timber drain and metalling to South.	Arcade dividing the temple precinct from the courtyard with its large public buildings. Probably constructed after A.D. 61. Later the drain was re-cut.
3.	Insertion of blocking walls with re-used building materials. Deposition of fire debris.	Possibly representing fire damage from the conflagration of the second half of the second century. The use of the courtyard South of the arcade changes and the temple precinct is permanently separated.
4.	Small stone drain with re-used building materials including purbeck marble.	Possibly a later phase of clearing damaged buildings releasing quantities of marble facing.
5.	Large brick drain.	Perhaps first half of the third century. Cleaning of the metalling stops in the mid-fourth century and dirt is allowed to accumulate.
	Replastering of arcade	Late fourth century.
6.	Progressive ruin of the arcade.	Saxon Period.
7.	Rampart and ditch.	Norman Period.

Notes

- 1 For the most recent plan of Roman Colchester showing the relationship of the temple to other remains in the town, the reader is referred to that compiled by Miss R. Dunnett in these *Transactions*, facing page 2, fig. 3.
- 2 The two halves of the west pier were excavated separately; it was never seen as a unity.
- 3 All further references to layers on the Kent, Blaxill site refer to this section.
The samples were taken and weighed dry. To the samples were added dilute acids to dissolve all soluble material. After the resulting chemical reactions had been completed, the undigested material was taken and dried. The samples were then re-weighed and the resultant calculations made to find the percentage weight of soluble material. Six samples were taken from each type of mortar in the main structure and three from the remaining samples.
- 4 Further samples were taken and ground to leave the fillers intact. These were examined microscopically and chemically to give the results.

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