



Sultantepe: Anglo-Turkish Joint Excavations, 1952

Seton Lloyd; Nur# Gokçe

Anatolian Studies, Vol. 3. (1953), pp. 27-47.

Stable URL:

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0066-1546%281953%293%3C27%3ASAJE1%3E2.0.CO%3B2-%23>

Anatolian Studies is currently published by British Institute at Ankara.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/about/terms.html>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/journals/biaa.html>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is an independent not-for-profit organization dedicated to and preserving a digital archive of scholarly journals. For more information regarding JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

SULTANTEPE

Anglo-Turkish Joint Excavations, 1952

By SETON LLOYD and NURI GÖKÇE

THE FIRST SEASON'S excavating at Sultantepe, occupying a period of four weeks in May-June 1951, has already received preliminary notices in *Anatolian Studies*, II, etc. The mound (see Figure 1), which is situated at a distance of 10 miles from Urfa on the road leading to the ruins of ancient Harran, is too conspicuous a landmark to have escaped the notice of travelling scholars in the past ; but no record of their visits has ever been published and its selection for excavations in 1951 was the result of a systematic investigation into the historical topography of the Harran region, initiated by the Institute in the summer of 1950 (cf. *Anatolian Studies*, I, pp. 77 ff.).

The excavations were resumed on 8th May 1952 and the second season's work lasted until 20th June. The field-directorship was again jointly in the hands of Bay Nuri Gökçe, Director of the Hittite Museum at Ankara, and Mr. Seton Lloyd, Director of the Institute. They were assisted on this occasion by Dr. O. R. Gurney, as epigraphist, Mr. J. D. Evans (Institute Fellow for 1951-52), and Bay Burhan Tozcan, as field-assistants, and Mr. G. R. H. Wright, as architect. The cleaning and recording of tablets and other objects was in the hands of Mrs. Ulrica Lloyd. The expedition was fortunate in being allowed the use of the Sultantepe Primary School building as headquarters. For this courtesy and much other help its thanks are due to Bay Şevket Sarıbeyler, Regional Director of Education, and to the Vali of Urfa. Funds for the excavations were again jointly supplied from the Institute's Special Excavation fund, to which most generous contributions were made by Sir David Russell and others, and the Turkish Ministry of National Education. Particular thanks are due to H.E. the Minister of National Education, Bay Tevfik İleri, for his interest in the work.

PROGRESS OF THE EXCAVATIONS

As may be gathered from the preliminary reports on our excavations in 1951 (see *Anatolian Studies*, Vol. I ; *Illustrated London News* of 1st September 1951), the inferences which we had made from surface indications during our early visits to the site were most sensationally confirmed by the end of our first season's work. From the newly accumulated evidence it was now possible to visualize the archaeological situation approximately as follows. During the late Assyrian period the summit of the mound, which had by then already reached a height of over 40 metres above the plain, and had a diameter of about 100 metres on its longest axis, had been used, presumably after some structural preparation, as an emplacement for one

or more public buildings. Parts of one such building had already been cleared at the north-western corner of the summit, and there were indications that it stood in a walled enclosure whose pavement-level descended, perhaps in terraces, towards the south-west. Here it was provided with a monumental entrance-portico or propylon, whose position had been easy to locate, even before excavations began, owing to the presence of huge basalt column-bases, partly projecting above the surface. The pretentious architecture which these suggested could be taken to indicate the importance of the buildings contained in the temenos or acropolis to which it gave access, and this indication was confirmed late in the first season by the discovery in one of them of a deposit of cuneiform tablets, having the character of a discarded temple library.

After the eventual destruction and abandonment of the acropolis the summit of the mound must have remained virtually unoccupied during a period corresponding to the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenian Persian empires ; for above the Assyrian ruins the first positive signs of building activity suggested an advanced stage of Hellenistic culture which could be dated to the middle of the 2nd century B.C. The summit had then continued to be occupied throughout the remainder of the Hellenistic and Roman periods, and it was the stratified remains of these times which constituted the final 7 metres or so of post-Assyrian debris. By the 2nd or 3rd century A.D. the settlement at Sultantepe must have been confined to the level ground at the base of the mound, and its summit finally abandoned.

Once the stratigraphical position of the major Assyrian remains had in this way been assessed and its implications considered, we recognised for the first time the central problem with which we were to be faced throughout the whole course of our excavations. This problem, which immediately resolved itself into a conflict between the exigencies of a restricted economy and the dictates of professional conscience, was one which excavators of an earlier generation might well have failed to regard as such. The discovery of Assyrian antiquities beneath a deep accumulation of unproductive later debris is a situation with which archaeologists have often before been confronted in Mesopotamia and elsewhere ; but the approach to them has usually been simplified by the availability of cheap labour, and not infrequently by the adoption of a " realist " attitude towards the ethics of recording. It should be said at once that, in the present case neither of these circumstances applied. The obligation which we felt throughout to keep adequate records of the post-Assyrian levels, both restricted the area and affected the disposal of our operations. The results are in fact reflected in the fragmentary character of the architectural plans which accompany this report.

The results, already summarised, of our first season's work were obtained first by approaching the Assyrian levels laterally at a point on the west side (C in Fig. 1), where the slope of the mound made the volume of later debris less formidable, and in the neighbourhood of the entrance gateway (D), where much of it had already been removed by a deep gully cut by the drainage of rain-water from the summit. After this a trench was

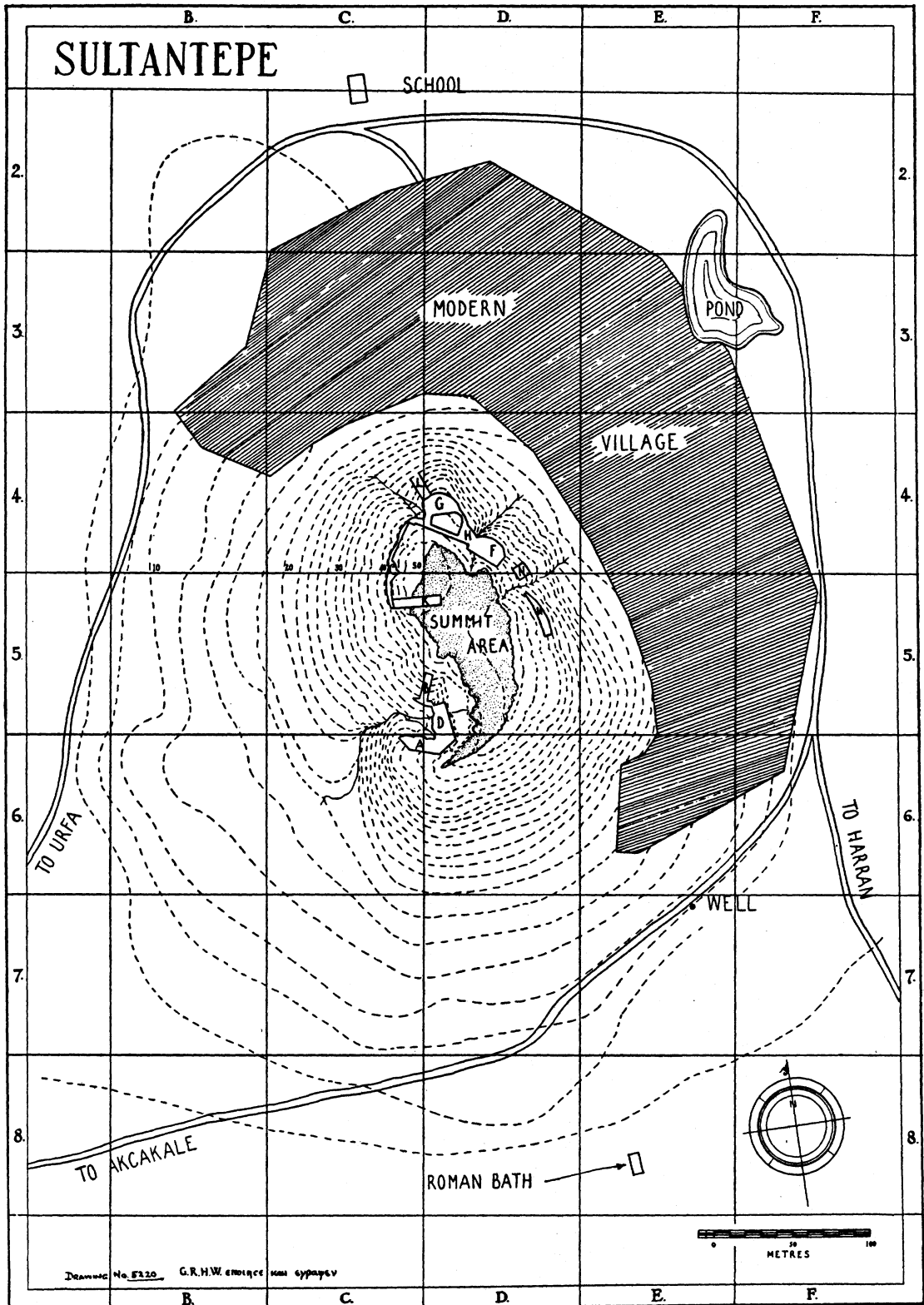


FIG. 1. Contoured plan of mound.

dug clean across the northern end of the summit itself (E), and eventually reached the Assyrian occupation in that area also. At the same time, as a further check on the Roman and Hellenistic strata penetrated by these soundings, a careful stratigraphical test was made by means of a stepped trench (B) passing through almost the whole range of post-Assyrian levels.

When the work was resumed in 1952 recollection of certain practical difficulties which we had encountered in Trench E led to a decision to continue the lateral approach by means of further cuts on the north and east sides of the mound. One of these (G in Fig. 2) was aimed at clearing the northernmost extremity of the building previously encountered in C; another (F) was intended to expose the setting of the hoard of tablets discovered just beneath the surface in the previous season, and still only partially removed; a third (H) was to provide the final link in the connection between the tablet-site and the building in C, already partially

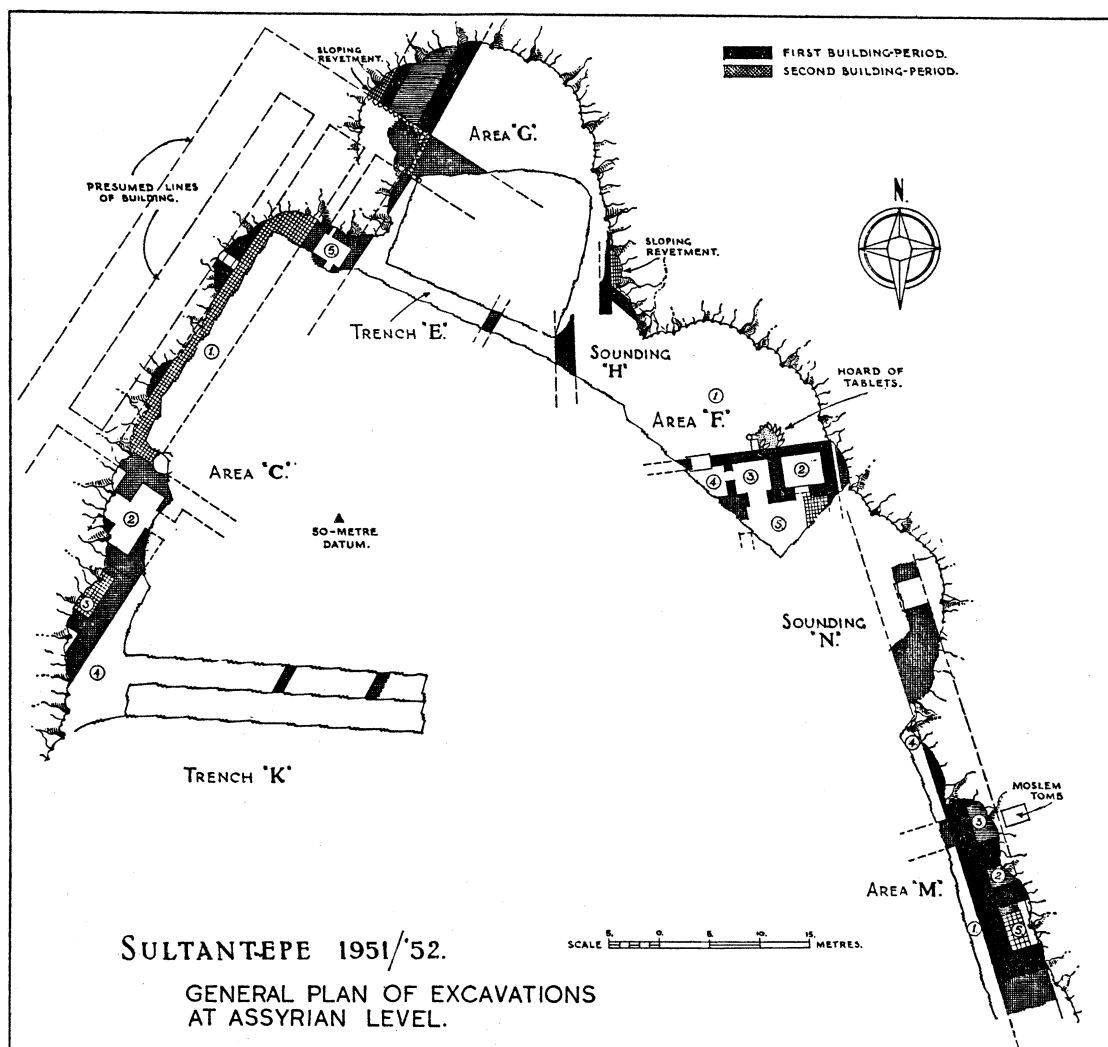


FIG. 2.

established by Trench E ; while a fourth (M) was to break new ground on the eastern flank of the acropolis. With these sections, it was found that the possibilities of a lateral approach were virtually exhausted, and towards the middle of the season it was decided that we must now resort to the more costly expedient of cutting a new trench (K) from west to east across the summit at almost the highest point. The practical difficulties which were to be encountered in so doing and their bearing on the prospect of future excavations at Sultantepe will presently be discussed.

The new light thrown on the character of the acropolis by the excavation of these five new major areas was considerable and satisfactory. It is now known that the emplacement provided by the levelled summit of the old mound was extended in area by platforms of baked brick supported by thick retaining walls, and that the sides of the mound itself were protected in places by sloping brick revetments. It was first revealed in Areas G and H that the building encountered in C was actually a secondary rebuilding of an earlier structure, whose remains probably survive beneath it, and evidence of these two separate building periods were later detected in other newly opened areas. In Area F, for instance, a building having the character of a private dwelling house, against whose outer wall the pile of tablets had been deposited, proved to belong to the secondary period though a similar building was shown to have existed previously. In Area M, on the eastern side of the acropolis, the denuded remains were exposed of a new public building standing upon the extended platform of the acropolis. It was here that a narrow chamber (M2) was found to contain a rich collection of objects, apparently representing the personal possessions of some priestess or other Assyrian lady, and amongst them a single cuneiform tablet, providing as it proved, an indispensable clue to the dating of our two building periods. For the group of objects among which the tablet was found was conclusively associated with the earlier of the two, and since the mention in its text of post-canonical *limmus* must place its date later than 648 B.C., the entire life of the acropolis must now fall within the period between that date and the fall of Assyria in 610 B.C.

Of the building uncovered in Area M only a minor part had survived the gradual denudation of the mound. Yet, in spite of the great thickness of its walls it could almost certainly be identified as a minor structure, subsidiary to some more important building, which could be assumed to have provided the *raison d'être* for the acropolis. Up till now it had been considered that the impressive range of chambers discovered in Area C must belong to the latter, and it was with the intention of investigating the extent of these that the deep trench K was cut across the summit. Owing to shortcomings in our equipment, such as the absence of a light railway to remove the soil and the necessity already referred to of recording the rather impoverished later occupations level by level, the work on this trench became our main preoccupation for the last three weeks of the season. The results were in some sense disappointing. Two rather narrow walls, which were all that we eventually encountered at the Assyrian level, seemed hardly compatible with the hitherto presumed extension of the building

completely disappeared owing to the denudation of the mound. This inference was confirmed by the thickness of the wall (1.90 metres), which corresponded to that of partition walls elsewhere and clearly did not represent the limits of the building on this side. The threshold of the door was paved with large slabs of limestone, a circumstance nowhere else observed in the excavated parts of the building. The walls of the corridor, which were constructed of reddish sun-dried bricks ($40 \times 40 \times 8$ cm. and $40 \times 20 \times 8$ cm.), were founded on a bed of rather small rocks at a level directly beneath the pavement. The outermost row of pavement bricks ($33 \times 33 \times 8$ cm.) were raised a few centimetres above the rest, and at the base of the wall a half brick was set on edge against the wall-face to provide a "stop" for the mud plaster, which had about the same thickness.

Adjoining the southern end of the corridor was a room measuring 7.00 m. wide, of which only the north-east corner remained. A wide doorway (2.70 m.) in the centre of its east wall, however, led to a similar chamber, which remained completely intact (C.2). From this a somewhat smaller doorway again led eastwards. The walls, which showed traces of white paint on the mud plaster, remained standing in places to a height of more than 1.00 m. This room, which was packed with broken pottery and objects of no great value, showed signs of two distinct occupations. Associated with the original earth pavement (Level 42.25 m.) and lying carefully stacked in the south-east corner was a group of five small slabs of basaltic stone of a type with which we became increasingly familiar during the progress of excavations in the Assyrian levels, and a corresponding number of shallow bowls carved of the same material (group 42/43 Fig. 7, see Pl. I, 1). A secondary occupation of the room (Level c. 42.50 m.) appeared to have been by squatters after the building had fallen into ruin, for the west entrance had been partially blocked by a narrow stone wall and a bread-oven constructed in the doorway opposite. There was a rudimentary hearth in the centre of the floor and a great litter of pottery, all of the Assyrian type, including at least one intact wine-jar (Type No. 2, Fig. 7), and a large stone "duck-weight". It was at this level that four small cuneiform tablets appeared (AS, II, p. 26), though from the circumstances in which they were found they could well have survived from the original occupation.

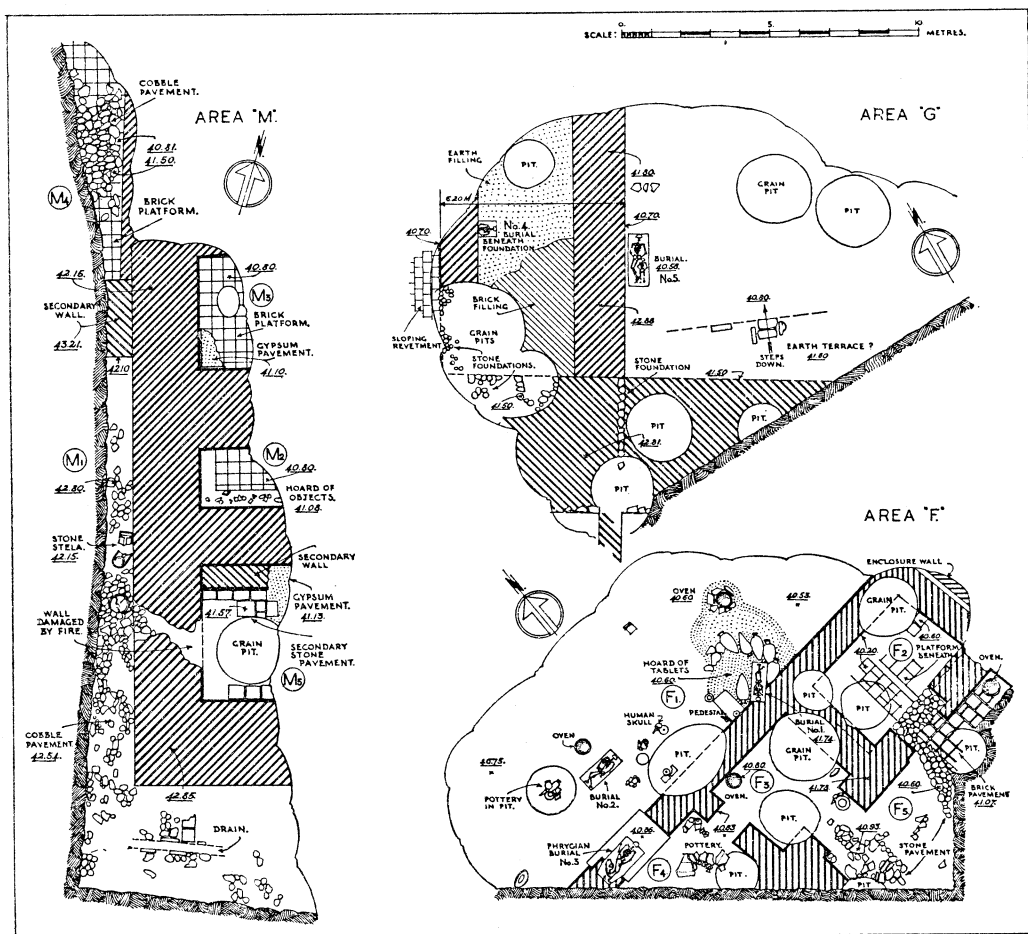
South of C2 there was again a chamber of which the greater part had disappeared (C3). It was paved with two courses of kiln-baked bricks of a rather soft consistency ($37 \times 37 \times 8$ cm.), and covered with a layer of bitumen. Above this pavement the room was filled to a depth of nearly 50 cm. with soft sand, the removal of which disclosed in the north-east corner two miniature potstands (Fig. 7, no. 47) and a large bone, possibly that of an elephant, unfortunately too much disintegrated to be preserved. A depression in the pavement created by the removal of several bricks could have provided an emplacement for some big jar or water-cooler. South of Room C3 a single corner survived of a further chamber, this time unpaved.

The chambers described above were separated by a wall 2 metres thick from a much larger apartment, which was also partially excavated (C4). It was from here that Trench K was cut eastwards into the mound, and its failure to encounter any further substantial walls at the Assyrian level led us to suppose that this must have been an open courtyard. The section excavated in 1951 (see Fig. 3) was much disturbed by the intrusion of circular grain-pits from the Hellenistic levels above, and at one point the wall was damaged by a huge sunken storage-jar, also a Hellenistic installation. But the undisturbed areas of pavement between these intrusions were covered, like that in Room C2, with a great profusion of Assyrian pottery, including several intact vessels (e.g. Fig. 7, no. 44).

At the northern end of Area C, separated from the paved corridor by a rather narrow wall (1.25 m.) was a small but interesting chamber, which had evidently served as a bathroom. The bitumen-covered baked bricks with which the floor was originally paved had been removed, but some of them were found among the debris with which the room was filled, and the bitumen-lined drain leading out through the north wall was still intact. The room was approached by a narrow door in the south wall. South of this there was evidently again an open courtyard, whose eastern limit was presumably represented by the cross-wall found in Trench E. This also corresponded to a sharp change of pavement-level (compare the section in Fig. 5).

(2) *Area G* (see Fig. 4). This area should perhaps be treated next, since it constituted an extension of Area C and provided a first clue to the architectural chronology of the acropolis. The meaning of the remains here at the Assyrian level required much careful study before it could be understood, partly owing to the destruction wrought by the ubiquitous grain-pits of Hellenistic times and partly on account of its unexpected character.

The most conspicuous feature of the area was a section of a huge composite enclosure-wall, running approximately north-eastwards and having a total thickness of just over 6 metres. It consisted of an inner (1.25 m.) and an outer (1.75 m.) shell of crude brick, with a filling of rubble in between, and was founded (Level 40.70 m.) on a bed of small rocks. The base of the outer face corresponded to the sharply sloping flank of the mound, which was provided at this point with a revetment of flat mud-bricks. The whole south-western corner of the area was occupied by the remains of another huge wall built on the cross-axis; but whereas the "composite" retaining-wall showed mud-bricks of a distinctive grey-brown colour, those of which this cross-wall were composed were of the same rich red clay as those of the building in C, of which it obviously formed a part. Also the cross-wall was founded at the same level (42.20 m.) as the building in C, that is nearly 2 metres higher than the "composite" wall, and from the point where it intersected the latter it was provided with a stone foundation of its own nearly 50 cm. deep. When its thickness (4.60 m.) and position on the plan had been fixed, it was possible to see that here must be the outer wall, limiting the C building on the north-east side, and that the composite wall must belong to an earlier period.



It was hoped that the relations between these two structures might have been further elucidated by finds in the eastern part of the area. But here unfortunately great confusion was caused by intrusions from above. It was possible to reconstruct a terrace of earth running parallel to the later wall and approached by a rough flight of stone steps. But at both periods one was compelled to imagine this as a neglected corner of the enclosure, since large quantities of ashes and other rubbish had been deposited, while the double burial (No. 4, see Pl. I) of an adult and a child could be seen from its position in relation to the "composite" wall to be contemporary. A second burial (No. 5, see Pl. I) directly beneath the foundations of the outer "shell" seemed more likely to be of a ritual nature.

(3) *Area H* (see Fig. 3). The architectural remains exposed in this area were at first no less confusing than those just described. After removing some fragments of a very primitive stone fortification, dating evidently from the immediately post-Assyrian period, we encountered a stout retaining-wall (2.00 m.) built of the same grey-brown brick as the "composite" wall

in G, and undoubtedly belonging to the same building-period. This was oriented at an angle of approximately 45° to the building in C, but the remains on its west side of a baked brick pavement (Level 40.80 m.) laid upon a substantial crude-brick packing led us to infer that it represented the outer wall of a building of the earlier period, whose remains must lie beneath the latter. The corresponding pavement on its east side occurred at a level (39.90 m.) almost a metre deeper, a circumstance which came as no surprise, since discoveries in the tablet area to which reference will presently be made had led us to expect a terrace at this point. Here again the intrusion of grain-pits was considerable, but the pavement was distinguished by a heavy deposit of Assyrian pottery and other objects such as stone bowls, small stone "tiles" and baked bricks, corresponding in character and size to those inside the building.

At the north end of this area the eastern limit of the acropolis was marked by a sloping brick revetment similar to that observed in Area G, and behind it were some traces of a retaining-wall.

(4) *Area F* (see Fig. 4). The great hoard of cuneiform tablets found in the spring of 1951 was located directly beneath the surface at a point provisionally designated F on the north-east flank of the mound. During the ten days which remained of the season very little investigation of their setting was possible. One of our first tasks in 1952, therefore, was to enlarge the excavation at this point, and for this purpose a cutting with base-measurements of approximately 10.00×7.00 m. was made in the side of the mound. Again the remains of later periods were carefully recorded, and it was a matter of more than two weeks before the Assyrian level could finally be reached and the extraction of the tablets resumed.

It had already been observed that the tablets were stacked against a wall of mud-brick 1 metre thick, and beyond this, on its south side, a single chamber (F.2) had been cleared of a building to which the wall belonged. It was now found that all or part of three further rooms in this building fell within the limits of our new cutting. The remainder of the area appeared to be accounted for by some sort of open space or enclosure. The building itself (whose clearance was once more greatly complicated by the intrusion both of grain-pits and of burials dating from the immediately post-Assyrian period), could immediately be seen to have the character of a private dwelling-house. Owing to the frequent occurrence in the colophons appended to the tablets of a single Assyrian name, it came to be familiarly known to us as the "House of Qurdi Nergal". The part excavated consisted of what, from its stone and baked brick pavements, could be taken to be an open central court, and three small adjoining rooms. One of these (F.4) appeared to have served as an entrance vestibule, since it had a doorway with a raised sill by which it could be approached from outside, another led east into Room F.3. In its north-east corner some stones and the broken fragments of a large basalt bowl had formed an emplacement for a tall water-cooler whose broken fragments lay nearby. The outer door was much damaged by an intrusive burial, which could be dated by interesting features described elsewhere (No. 3, p. 46) to the time of the Scythians,

who assisted in the destruction of Harran (and perhaps of the acropolis at Sultantepe as well) in 610 B.C.

Rooms F₃ and F₄ were both much damaged by pits and showed few features of interest beyond a baking oven set against the north wall of the former and a great stone, hollowed out to receive water, which was for some reason set in the threshold of the doorway leading from it to Room F₅. The part of the central court (F₅) adjoining the doorway leading to Room F₂ was paved with baked brick and there was a second bread-oven in its north-east corner.

The Tablet Hoard in F.I. The earth pavement of the open space (F₁) to the north of Qurdi Nergal's House (Level 40.60 m.) was littered with groups of broken pottery and other objects such as stone bowls and basalt "tiles". Since at one point there lay an isolated human skull it was tempting to see in the general disarray evidence of some violence which was in progress at the time when the tablets were so carelessly deposited against the outer wall of the house (Pl. II, 1). At the point where they lay a small pedestal measuring 1.00 × .55 × .30 m. high projected from the wall. It was curiously constructed of concentric shells of mud around a small pottery vessel and resembled the offering-tables before small domestic shrines which are so common in Mesopotamian private houses (see Pl. II, 2). In the angle between this and the wall two large wine-jars had been laid (Type No. 2, Fig. 6) and five more jars were placed further out in an approximate semicircle, which, being completed with large stones, might have been intended as a sort of barrier behind which the tablets could be stacked under the "protection" of the shrine. But other objects, such as stone or pottery vessels and a carved offering-table had been added to the pile, which had overflowed the barrier, scattering the tablets widely over the pavement beyond (see Pl. II, 3). Some were even found among the ashes of a bread oven standing at a distance of over a metre from the wine-jars. For the rest, it will be seen from the plan (Fig. 4) through what good fortune the tablets had avoided destruction by any one of the numerous grain-pits excavated in their immediate neighbourhood, or by the burial (No. 1) in which the skeleton lay a few centimetres above the top of the pile.

The level of the pavement inside the house was raised about 20 cm. above that outside. Penetrating beneath it we found traces of a much earlier occupation, which evidently corresponded to the original construction of the house. It was now also ascertained that the walls corresponding to the secondary occupation varied slightly in plan from those of the earlier construction. The house must therefore be assumed to have been rebuilt. A further piece of evidence pointing in this direction proved interesting. In and adjoining the doorway leading from the central court (F₅) to Room F₂ we have already observed at the secondary occupation-level a neat pavement of baked brick. Twenty centimetres beneath this we now discovered a corresponding pavement of stones belonging to the earlier occupation. Between the two (and therefore accurately dated) was a deposit of fine pottery, including several examples of a new and interesting

ornamental ware (described on p.46). By investigating the original foundations of the house it was also now discovered that it rested partly upon the levelled debris of the old mound and partly upon an extension of it, artificially created by a filling of crude brick supported by a retaining-wall. This latter also provided a foundation for the enclosure-wall of the acropolis, against which the house had been built.

Two Building Periods. Some care was now devoted to tracing the stratigraphic connection between the two building-periods in F and those in H and C. The results are indicated diagrammatically in the cross-section in Fig. 5.

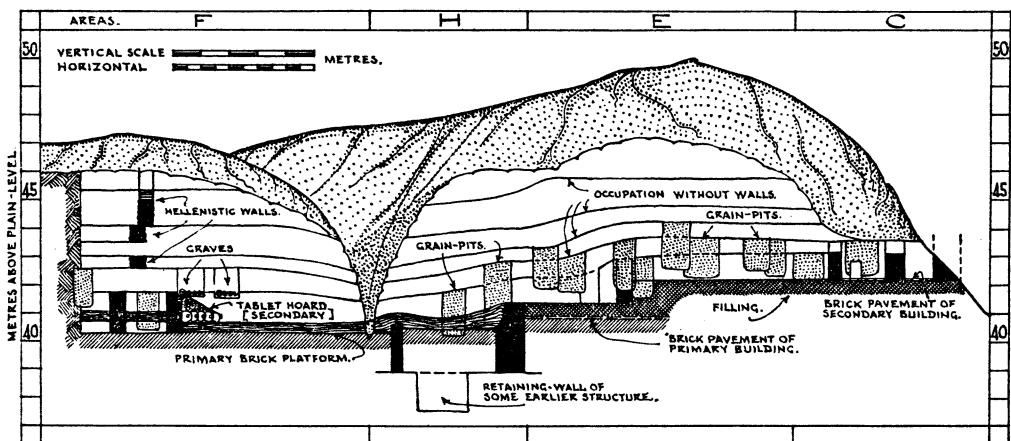


FIG. 5. Diagrammatic section through Areas F, H, E and C.

The original pavement in F, corresponding to the surface of the platform, on which the foundations of the house were first laid, could easily be identified with that already mentioned, abutting at a low level against the east side of the "terrace" wall in H, and corresponding to the much higher brick pavement in the primary building beyond. Above this was a deep accumulation of debris, trodden into horizontal strata, cutting into the face of, and eventually covering the stump of, the old "terrace" wall which must by now have been in ruins. The upper surface of this layer corresponded to the secondary pavement in F, on which the tablets lay. This could also be traced westwards as far as the cross-wall in Trench E, which now replaced the old "terrace" wall, and it could so be connected with the paved chambers in C. Now, therefore, the latter could be conclusively associated in time with the tablet deposit in F and the secondary occupation of the adjoining house; while the original foundation of the house must be correlated with the first construction of the acropolis and the primary structures in H and G.

(5) *Area M* (see Fig. 4). The building discovered in this area further testified to the very considerable denudation of the mound's summit which

has taken place in the course of two and a half millennia. Only a single range of chamber (M2, 3 and 5) had survived, and there was consequently little to be learnt about its plan or architectural character (see Pl. III, 1). After tracing the western face of the outer wall in M1 its breadth was ascertained by the usual process of scraping the surface and the same process continued over the filling of the chamber beyond. At this point a single movement of the shovel disinterred (unfortunately with some violence) a beautiful carved ivory palette (Plate V, 1), and the important hoard of objects in Room M2 was thus located.

The breadth of the room itself was a little under 2 metres and its greatest surviving length less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ metres, so that a large proportion of its contents must in the course of time have been washed out of their setting. Nevertheless the richness of what remained was most impressive (Pls. V–VIII). Around the base of the wall on the south and west sides a brick shelf was raised a few centimetres above the earth pavement of the room, and on or near this the majority of the objects lay among a litter of glass beads, coloured pebbles and sea-shells, such as might be collected by a child. Everything, indeed, seemed to be small in scale, and the miniature vessels of stone, alabaster, faience and glass could hardly have served any other purpose than to contain toilet preparations. Their extraction was an extremely delicate affair and became even more so when among them a large object was encountered composed entirely of minute frit beads. This was the bead bag or purse illustrated in Pl. V, 2, and its eventual removal revealed a scatter of gold and lapis inlay-pieces from two objects upon which it had been lying. In both cases a thin line of such inlay could now be seen simply bedded between layers of earth, since the matrix or backing upon which it was originally set had completely perished. Obviously neither could be cleared *in situ*, and the whole lump of earth in which they were embedded had consequently to be removed to the camp for treatment. The process there adopted was successful, and the exquisite examples of Egyptian craftsmanship, illustrated in Pls. V–VI were thus revealed. Other fragments of ivory, such as a miniature head of a goddess inlaid with gold (Pl. V, 3) and the mutilated animal figure further emphasised the richness of the original collection, whose interest was augmented by the inclusion of a stamp-seal bearing the symbol of “Sin of Harran” and a cylinder-seal.

It was now possible to see that the building of which this chamber formed part was founded directly upon a platform of mud-brick, precisely like that beneath the outer part of Qurdi Nergal's House in Area F. The floor in Room F2 was separated from this by 20 cm. of packed earth. The same applied to the two chambers (M3 and M5) adjoining M2 to the north and south respectively, but in these two cases the earth of which the pavement was composed was given an improved consistency by the admixture of some crushed gypsum (see Pl. III, 2). Neither chamber contained any objects; but in M5 it could be observed that some structural alteration had taken place at a secondary period of occupation. On the northern side of the room 75 cm. of brick filling had been inserted, increasing

the thickness of the wall by that amount and correspondingly reducing the breadth of the chamber to exactly that of Room M₃. At the same time, at a level 44 cm. above the old floor, it had been repaved with large regular slabs of worked limestone. The thick mud-plaster of the original wall-face remained intact behind the filling. It could also be observed that the west wall of this chamber had been much damaged by fire ; but since no traces of fire were to be seen elsewhere in the building we concluded that this had taken place after it was already in ruins. The breach in the wall thus created was filled with a random pile of large stones, amongst which stood an almost intact water-cooler. A metre or so to the north of the pile and at a similar level, we came upon two major fragments of a stone stela measuring 48×36 and 43×36 cm. in breadth and a thickness of

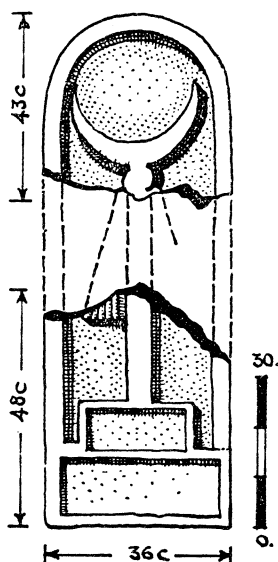


FIG. 6. Carved stela.

10–12 cm., carved in relief with the symbol of “Sin of Harran” (Pl. IV, 1, Fig. 6). This stela makes an interesting comparison with that found at Aşağı Yarımcı in 1949 and published by C. J. Gadd, Esq., in *AS*, I, p. 108, where the symbolism is also discussed.

The area (M₁) to the west and south of the building was paved with stone “cobbles” at a level (42·17 m.) somewhat above the internal pavements. There were traces of a rain-water channel running eastwards near the southern face of the building. This area (M₁) was limited by a wall, 2·60 m. thick, abutting against the side of the building. There was a “straight joint” between the two, and the cross-wall being built upon a stone foundation at a high level (42·10 m.) could be attributed to a secondary period. Beyond this, to the north, there was again a cobbled pavement, and here, in the crevices between the paving stones, was found a profusion of small objects such as glass beads and other small trinkets,

matching in character those in Room M2. Beneath, we again encountered the regular brick packing of the platform.

Dating. Further evidence that the three chambers and their contents belonged to the primary building-period of the acropolis was provided by the fact that at a secondary period they themselves had been filled in solid with reddish mud-brick, presumably in order to provide a foundation for a new enclosure wall, and this was projected southwards beyond the southern limit of the building (cf. Fig. 4). A sounding, designated N, on the hillside to the north, proved its continuation in that direction also. Here again then, in Area M a reconstruction of the acropolis had taken place at a period subsequent to its original foundation, and this could easily be correlated elsewhere with the rebuilt house in F, against whose wall the tablets lay, and with the major building in C.

Up till now the only considerable evidence suggesting an actual date for the acropolis generally were *limmus* mentioned in the colophons of two contract-tablets found in Room C2, corresponding respectively to the years 674 and 684 B.C. These had been in use, or at least in existence, during the secondary occupation, and a considerably earlier date was accordingly estimated for the original foundation (cf. *AS*, II, p. 26). These implications were, however, now refuted by the discovery of a single tablet among the hoard of objects in Room M2 dated, as has already been mentioned, by post-canonical *limmus*, to some time later than 648 B.C. With this date so conclusively attributed to the original foundation it became only possible to think of the C2 tablets as survivals.

Having thus established a *terminus post quem* for the beginning of the acropolis it remained only to speculate about the date of its final destruction. Here the evidence was too strong to permit of much doubt. Reference to contemporary history shows that in 610 B.C. Harran (which is only 15 miles from Sultantepe) was finally destroyed by the Scythians and Babylonians, thus terminating the very existence of an Assyrian state. Archaeological evidence now showed that the buildings on the acropolis at Sultantepe had met their end under violent conditions and that their destruction had been followed by a long period during which the only traces of occupation on the mound were a number of burials, one of them undoubtedly Scythian. It was not therefore difficult to conclude that the Sultantepe acropolis had shared the fate of Harran in 610 B.C.

(6) *Area D* (see Fig. 3). The clearance of the area around the exposed column-bases in the bed of the south-western gully was the first task undertaken in 1951 season. It provided our first experience of the devastation caused among the Assyrian ruins by the excavation in classical times of circular pits for the storage of grain. The mound at this point was honey-combed with them, and since much destruction had also been caused by the continual drainage of rainwater from the summit the surviving traces of the Assyrian portico proved to be extremely fragmentary. In the tentative reconstruction of the plan, which we have superimposed over our record of these remains (Fig. 3), it will be seen that though only three column-bases are to-day actually visible the existence of a fourth had to be

assumed in order to avoid the architectural anomaly of a shaft occurring on the central axis.¹ For the rest, our inferences are self-explanatory, save perhaps for the tower or enclosed gate-chamber which we have imagined on the north side of the colonnade. This was suggested by a surviving fragment of the enclosure wall at this point, which terminated some distance short of the column-bases in a "straight face".

The column-bases themselves, of which the southernmost remained completely intact (Pl. IV, 2) were carved from some coarse-grained igneous stone in the basalt category.² They measured $2.10 \times 1.60 \times 60$ m., with a circular seating 1.00 m. in diameter, raised 28 cm. above the upper surface. This again had in its centre a circular recess 50 cm. in diameter and 12 cm. deep. From parallels in contemporary architecture it is possible to conclude that such a base was intended to support a wooden shaft with a base-diameter of approximately 1 metre. (Compare textual references to columns of cedar-wood in "E.Hul.Hul" at Harran.) Two small undecorated orthostats, one discovered just beneath the surface in Area A a little to the west, and the other in a gully on the eastern flank of the mount, were of the same stone as the column-bases and should also perhaps be associated with the entrance portico.

The pavement-level in the portico area (35.40 m.) should be noted. It is more than 5 metres lower than the levelled summit of the mound to the north upon which the major buildings are founded. It would, indeed, have been necessary to consider the possibility of its belonging to an earlier period, had it not been for the unmistakably Assyrian character of the surviving masonry, and the even more significant fact that a structure of the Hellenistic period lay directly above it. As it is, one should perhaps assume that inside the portico the approach to the main buildings was continued by a flight of steps.

Conclusion. Much more remains to be learnt about the Assyrian acropolis at Sultantepe than would have been the case if its ruins had been accessible directly beneath the surface, rather than buried beneath the deeply accumulated debris of classical times. Facts, however, which have become increasingly evident and conclusions to be drawn from them are as follows.

At a date somewhat later than 648 B.C. the summit of the mound was expensively prepared for the accommodation of a group of public buildings.

¹ Most pertinent to the attempted restoration of this portico is a recent article by Frankfort on "The Origin of the Bit Hilani" (*Iraq*, XIV, Part 2). In some instances of the true North Syrian *hilani*, such as that at Tell Halaf, a central support to the portico does occur. But here it is understandable, since the supports, with their sculptured figures, are themselves architectural features of some individuality. But Frankfort distinguishes these from the Assyrian colonnades which, as for instance at Arslantaş, could be used "to connect two courts", and he quotes the famous reference in an inscription of Sargon II to a *hilani* portico, composed of four cedar columns and placed "in front of the gates of the palace". An even number of columns, in fact, seems to have been the rule with Assyrian architects.

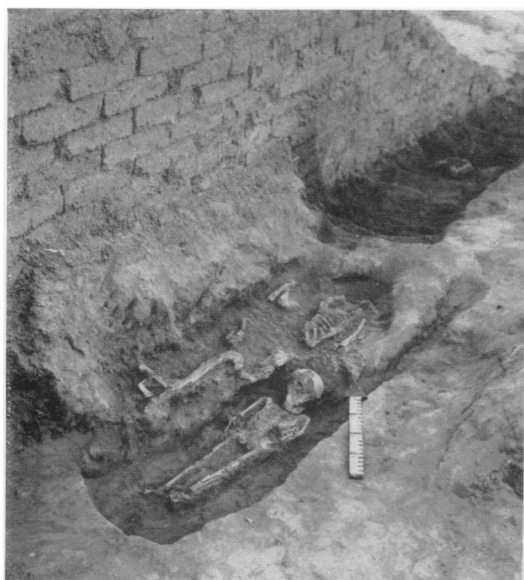
² An outcrop of this stone occurs at Anas Hüyük (ancient Dora), on the east bank of the Culab river, some 13 m.iles east of Urfa.



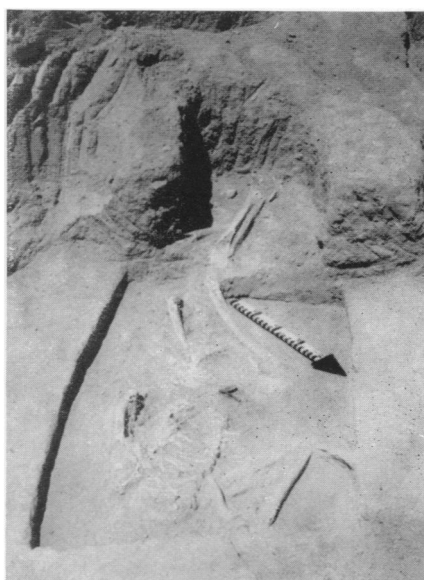
1. Bowls and "tiles" of basaltic stone in the south-east corner of room C2. White paint may be seen still adhering to the plastered wall face behind.



2. Burial (No. 5), possibly of a ritual character, beneath the outer shell of the "composite" retaining-wall in "G".



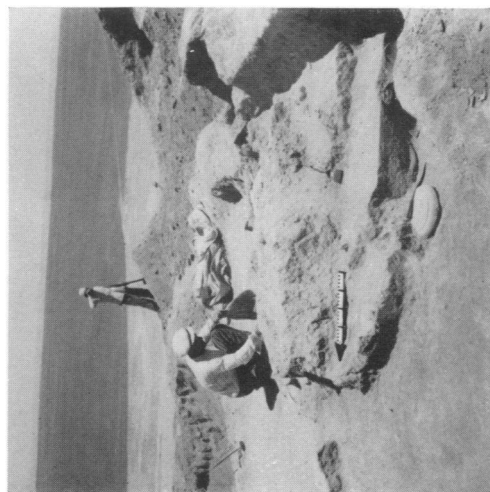
3. Double burial (No. 4) of adult and child beside the foundation of the great "composite" enclosure wall in "G".



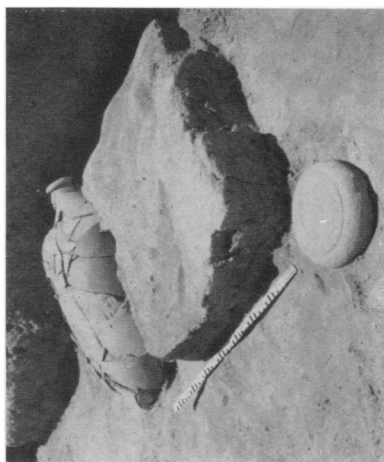
4. Burial (No. 3) in doorway between F1 and F4.



3. Unbaked tablets still in the ground.



1. The tablet-hoard in Fr with the mud pedestal over which they lay just appearing.



2. Pedestal beneath tablet-hoard, after removal of all save one wine-jar and an inverted stone bowl.



1. The denuded building in sounding " M " from the south.



2. Brickwork of the acropolis platform beneath the pavement of Room No. M3.



1. Fragmentary stela discovered in " M₁ ".



2. A basalt column-base of the Assyrian gateway.

These were protected by an enclosure-wall and the temenos thus formed was provided with a monumental entrance whose architectural pretensions testified to their importance. By analogy with other Assyrian sites the major building, providing a *raison d'être* for such an acropolis, would either be a royal palace like those discovered nearby at Arslantaş and Til-Barsip (Tell Ahmar), or a temple (subsidiary in all probability to the famous Temple of Sin at Harran, 15 miles away). Such a major building seemed to be represented by the chambers discovered in area C. These, however, contained little evidence of its identity and their excavation could not for the moment be extended further. Evidence obtained from minor buildings elsewhere in the acropolis area was more illuminating. Tablets discovered in Area F appeared to be the contents of a *temple*-library or, as has more recently been suggested, that of a school for scribes employed in a temple. Their colophons suggested that the collection had been made by a *priest*, possibly resident in the dwelling-house near which they were found. A woman's private possessions, found in a chamber of a minor public building in Area M, included her seals, one of which bore the emblems of "*Sin of Harran*". A tablet in the same context listed routine offerings to a *temple*, and spoke significantly of calves—"brought *up from the city* to be sacrificed to *Sin*" (cf. *AS*, II, p. 35). A broken stone stela, found in the vicinity of the same building, was of a type ordinarily erected in a *temple* and bore the symbol of "*Sin of Harran*". Further evidence of this sort will doubtless be forthcoming if the excavation of the main building is continued. But already it would hardly be reasonable to doubt its identity; while the probability that, as a temple, it shared in 610 B.C. the fate of its more famous counterpart at Harran is unlikely to be disputed.

Indications pointing to the richness or importance of the shrine, if such it be, at Sultantepe, are less equivocal. Written documents were apparently plentiful, but the tablets were with a single exception unbaked. Stone orthostats were used, but no fragment was discovered of a sculptured relief. The only trace of painted frescoes was found when a sounding (occupying a few hours only), on the south-east slope of the mound, revealed a single small chamber whose ceiling had apparently been ornamented in this way; yet costly objects of foreign workmanship were owned by some occupants of the acropolis. The balance of this evidence, by comparison with other corresponding sites, leaves some impression of provinciality.

POST-ASSYRIAN OCCUPATIONS

General. None of our soundings, penetrating the Roman and Hellenistic occupation-levels, encountered any kind of public building. In the Hellenistic levels architectural remains seemed to be everywhere those of modest private houses, while in the Roman levels above certain areas (notably Trench E) showed no signs of walls at all. The existence, in their absence, of bread-ovens suggested the camp or temporary quarters of a military garrison. It is known that in Roman times a city of some pretensions, even to luxury, occupied the level ground at the foot of the mound (compare notes on the excavation of a Roman bath in preliminary reports),

so its summit may well have been devoted to military purposes. Our finds, therefore, in these upper levels were limited to pottery, coins and the small objects of bone or copper which one has come to expect in such a setting. Plans were made in each area at every level where fragments of walls occurred. But the disposition and character of the latter was afterwards found to be so completely without significance that we have hesitated at the expense of reproducing them in this context. They will naturally be available for practical purposes when the work is resumed. Some details of finds at classical levels in the various areas are as follows.

(1) *Trench B* (see Fig. 1). This sounding was aimed exclusively at a stratigraphic analysis of the post-Assyrian levels, and the conclusions drawn from it have already been summarised in a preliminary report. Levels I–IV were Roman: Level V could be considered transitional; Levels VI–VIII represented the Hellenistic occupation, for which the pottery suggested a duration from the early 2nd century B.C. until the Christian era. In each level there were the remains of undressed stone walls, averaging about 40 cm. in thickness, and during both historical periods these had usually provided a foundation, less than a metre high, for an upper structure of sun-dried brick. Tamped earth floors, pivot-stones for doors, circular bread-ovens and buried storage-jars were other normal features.

(2) *Area D* (see Fig. 3). Walls belonging to five different periods of occupation were recognised in this area; but since at certain of these periods steeply sloping lanes forming the approach to the summit of the mound had occupied a great part of the area and at others it had been honeycombed with grain-pits, the stratification was quite unreliable. Roman pottery seemed to be lying directly above the Assyrian remains, while a group of vessels of unmistakably Hellenistic date was found at what had been provisionally designated Level I. Amongst the latter was the well-preserved bronze snaffle-bit of a horse's bridle, one of the few objects of any value found in the post-Assyrian levels.

(3) *Area G* (see Fig. 2). There were stone walls at each of the four later levels in this area, foundations for the earliest of these being cut down into the Assyrian enclosure-wall beneath. Levels II–IV represented Hellenistic occupation.

(4) *Trench E* (see Fig. 2). Here again five post-Assyrian levels were distinguished (compare section, Fig. 5), but only in the earliest of these detached fragments of wall appear in the intervals between the grain-pits. As has already been mentioned the multiplicity of bread-ovens in the upper levels suggested a military camp.

(5) *Area H* (see Fig. 2). Fragmentary remains here of a stone fortress-wall at the immediately post-Assyrian level (42·14 m.) have already been referred to. It was oriented approximately east-west and had an overall width of 3·00 m., consisting of an inner and an outer shell connected by narrow cross-walls. Only the lowest stones of the foundations, however, remained in place. Associated with these, a stamp-seal of an Anatolian type was found.

(6) *Area F* (see Fig. 2). The same five post-Assyrian occupations as have been referred to in Trench E could also be recognised in Area F (compare section, Fig. 5), with an intermediate building-period between Levels II and III. At Level II (44.00 m.) there were remains of a substantially built private house having undressed stone walls 90 cm. thick. These remained standing to a height of 1.20 m. and their upper structure of sun-dried brick survived to a height of about eight courses. The pottery here at first left some doubt as to whether a transitional period between Hellenistic and Roman was not represented, but the preponderance of sherds exactly corresponding to the Hellenistic "moulded bowls" found at Tarsus (cf. Part II) eventually pointed to a date earlier than the Christian era. A small hoard of Hellenistic coins was found beneath the floor. In Levels III-V stone and mud-brick walls occurred with equal frequency.

(7) *Trench K* (see Fig. 2). The first 2 metres in this trench (49.00 to 47.00 m.) consisted of sterile, almost unstratified debris, containing little more than small sherds of Roman and Parthian pottery. The first stone walls (Level II) were fragmentary and incoherent, and the sounding descended a further two metres before any substantial structure was encountered (Level III, 45.15 m.). This appeared to be the outer wall of a private house, but its thickness was hardly more than 50 cm. and the area around it was still too disturbed by pockets of rubbish to distinguish the historical period. Blocks of ashlar masonry found at the outer end of the trench at this level seemed to be in secondary use, and were probably of Assyrian origin. After a fourth building-level had been cleared, and again only fragmentary walls encountered, large areas of displaced Assyrian brickwork began to appear, and a little lower down the tops of two mud-brick walls, each about a metre thick, crossing the trench at an angle corresponding to that of the Assyrian building in Area C. These remained standing to a height of nearly 1.50 m. and their survival appeared to be due to the fact that the area between them had been used as a dump for ashes and other rubbish. The Assyrian pavement beneath (42.20 m.) consisted merely of trodden earth and produced no objects save for a single cylinder-seal.

Further reference should perhaps be made at this point to the "economics" of Trench K, since it reflects upon any plan for the continuation of the work at Sultantepe. As in Trench E, some difficulty in removing the earth was here experienced, owing to the lack of a light railway. The sounding, which had an initial breadth of 6 metres, had continually to be reduced by "terraces" until at Assyrian level it hardly amounted to 3 metres, and its usefulness was thus greatly impaired. Its cost, however, in labour was little short of TL2,000. If, as we now consider to be the case, the possibilities of a lateral approach to the Assyrian acropolis are virtually exhausted, any continued investigation of it must consist of further vertical clearances of this sort on a much larger scale, and their cost would be quite incompatible with the average budget of which our own expedition has hitherto disposed.

BURIALS (all dating from Assyrian or immediately post-Assyrian period)

- No. 1. F1 ; above tablet hoard. Adult. Partly contracted. Orientation S.W. No furniture. See Fig. 4.
- No. 2. F1 ; N.W. of tablets. Adult. Partly contracted. Orientation S.W. No furniture. See Fig. 4.
- No. 3. In doorway between F1 and F4. Adult nearly 6 feet tall. Orientation E. Partly contracted. Iron belt-buckle lying upon pelvis. Two iron arrow-heads near shoulder ; tri-lobate in section with cylindrical tang. Burial accompanied by lower jaw and some other bones of a horse. See Fig. 4 and Pl. I, 3, in which horse bones have been removed from space where arrow lies.
- No. 4. Double burial of adult and child beside foundation of Assyrian enclosure-wall in G. Both bodies extended. Child wearing two or more plain iron bracelets below elbow on each arm. Orientation N. See Fig. 4 and Pl. IV.
- No. 5. Adult burial beneath lowest course of "composite" enclosure-wall in G. Only pelvis and upper parts of skeleton projecting. Ritual burial ? See Fig. 4 and Pl. I, 5.

ASSYRIAN POTTERY

The great majority of pottery belonging to the period of the Assyrian acropolis was homely in character and technically undistinguished. No painted wares were represented and the only three vessels with any pretention to ornament (found in a group beneath the secondary pavement in F(VI)5) seemed to be quite exceptional.

The most common larger vessel was a tall ovoid wine-jar with a narrow neck, moulded rim, rounded base and occasionally a single handle from rim to shoulder (e.g. Fig. 7, No. 2). The barrier behind which the tablets were stacked in F(VI)1 was formed of these vessels, and there were many variations of the same shape on a smaller scale. There was a wide range of simple bowls with a singly- or doubly-moulded rim and an occasional slight carination just beneath it (Fig. 7, Nos. 14-29), the only intact example having a ring-base (No. 22). Deep bowls with a wide, flattened rim (Nos. 37-9) were also characteristic. Simple pot-stands were plentiful (Nos. 45, 46 and 48) and varied in size from those which would take a wine-jar (Fig. 7, No. 6) to the miniature found in C3 (No. 47, Fig. 7). A neater vessel was a small flask with a single handle from neck to shoulder and a flattened base (No. 44, Fig. 7). All these types were to be found in a buff or pinkish clay with some grit tempering and usually a wet-smoothed finish. The bowls in particular were equally characteristic of the later pre-acropolis levels in H and L, from which some of the examples illustrated are derived. A higher class of ware was the thin bowl with everted rims and raised horizontal bands on the outside (Nos. 30-6), made of a much finer clay, usually buff in colour and finished with a cream slip.

In the group from F(VI)5 the finest specimen was No. 1 in Fig. 7. This is a jar with a cylindrical neck, moulded rim and two strap-handles from neck to shoulder. It was made of very fine buff clay and covered outside with a warm red slip, burnished apparently while spinning on a wheel. The decoration consisted first of groups of incised channels on the rounded bottom and sides, then of bands of stamped rosettes between bands of raised cut ornament. Another almost identical vessel was covered with what is better described as a dark red *wash*, and again burnished on a wheel. The group was completed by a finely made miniature jar (Fig. 7, No. 2) showing exactly the same technique as the first vessel described. We know of no parallel to this rather elegant ware.

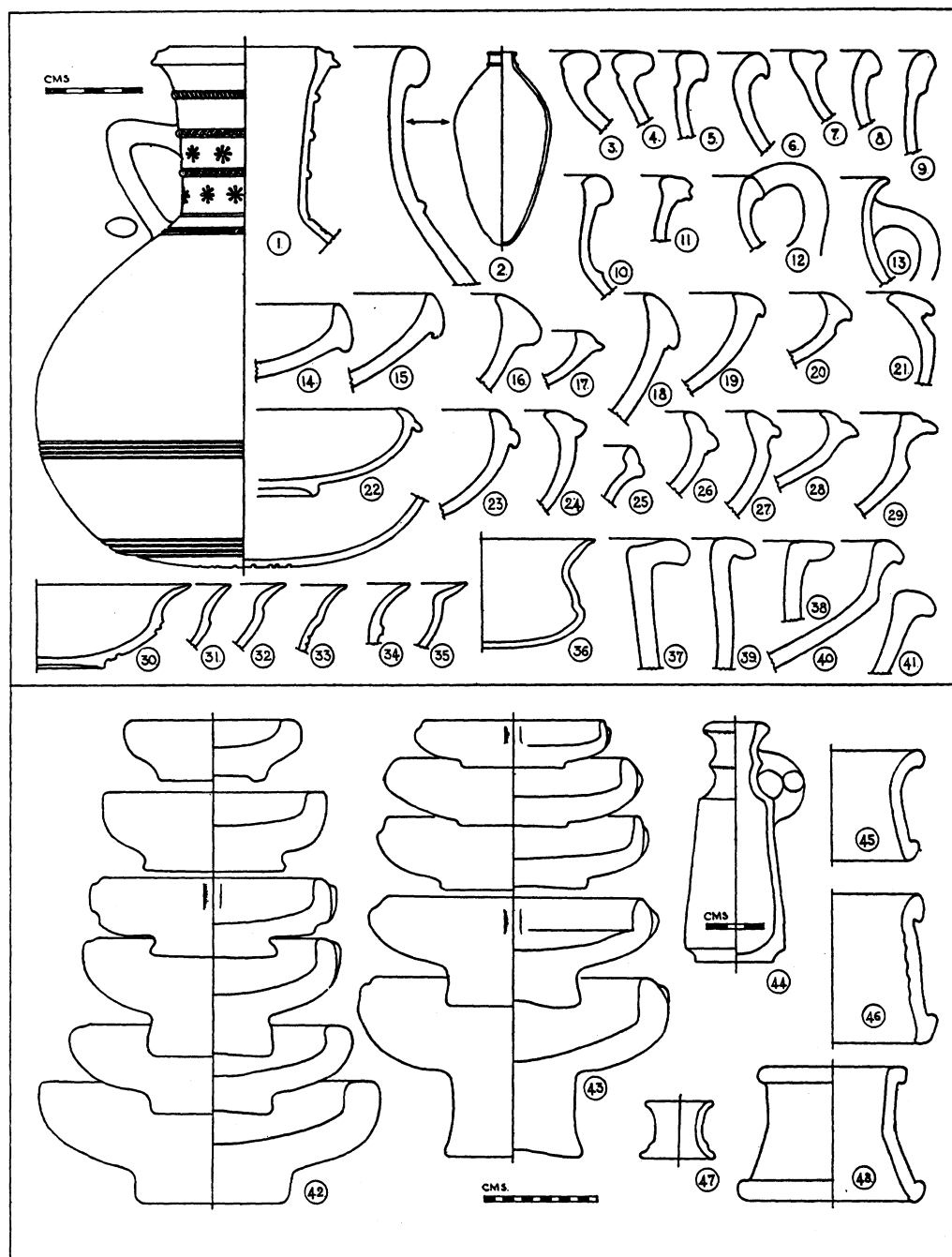


FIG. 6.