

S. 4260

The Roman Site at Westland, Yeovil

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INTRODUCTION

IT had long been recognized that the Roman branch road from Ilchester to Dorchester crossed the valley above West Hendford, and the Roman villas to the w. of Yeovil had been investigated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but the existence of a settlement at or near the town had not been suspected. In 1916, in the process of laying a water-main in the grass field to the w. of Seaton Road, a large hoard of coins, dating from the fourth century, was discovered, and an investigation by Mr. H. St. George Gray, F.S.A., showed that the site had been occupied in Roman times. In the following year, when this field was being used as allotments, the discovery of a tessellated pavement (that from Room 10) confirmed this evidence and suggested a settlement of a more extensive nature.

The purchase of a portion of this land by the Housing Committee of the Town Council in 1925 led to a more careful examination by Alderman Mitchelmore, which resulted in the excavation of the buildings forming the northern, eastern and part of the southern range of the house, the bath and the western road. These important discoveries had necessitated the withdrawal of a certain area s. of Westland Road from the housing scheme, and in 1926 the Town Council applied to the Society of Antiquaries for advice. Dr. R. E. Mortimer Wheeler, F.S.A., visited the site on behalf of the Society and, acting on his report, a Committee consisting of Aldermen Petter, Mitchel-

more and Stroud was formed, and I was invited to undertake the completion of the examination of the site.

This was done in two seasons, each of three weeks, the first part of the work in August 1927 being hampered by bad weather. The site withdrawn from the housing scheme consisted of about two acres, in shape an irregular quadrilateral with an extension at the *n.* end of the *w.* side, but unfortunately a large garden, which could not be searched, occupied part of the area and covered the southern rooms of the eastern range of the house. The excavations resulted in the discovery of the barn (Room 27) and the southern road, and demonstrated the relationship of the various buildings already uncovered. The work was carried out by means of trial trenches, as the lack of 'finds' did not warrant the expenditure necessary to uncover any large part of the site.

These trenches showed a consistent stratification. At a depth varying from 18 in. to 3 ft., the natural clay was found, and the Roman remains formed a layer between 6 in. and 1 ft. thick lying above this. Over the whole of the area the ground had been recently dug to a depth of at least 1 ft., and in many places pottery of the present century was found lying on the virgin clay, 18 in. or even 2 ft. below the surface. Disturbance had also been occasioned by the insertion of field drainage. Three large V-shaped trenches 3 ft. wide and 2 ft. deep had been cut into the subsoil and filled with stones, and much damage had been caused by one of them which ran diagonally across the northern range of the house. These must date from after 1800 as pottery of the early nineteenth century was found in the filling. In addition, a system of small red tile land drains had been laid on the surface of the subsoil at some time within the last 200 years. At an earlier date rough farm buildings or sheds had been erected over the *s.w.* corner of the house. In places the Roman walls had served as foundations, but where they could not be utilized for this purpose, they had been mercilessly robbed for the sake of the stone. The frequent disturbance of the soil rendered the elucidation of the plan of the buildings discovered a difficult task, as many of the walls could only be traced by the foundation trenches. But the absence of any evidence of structural rebuilding, the homo-

geneity of the finds and the discovery of typical coarse pottery, sealed beneath the floors in the northern range, prove that the remains belong to a single courtyard house, occupied during the third and fourth centuries.

The objects found during the excavations have been placed in the Municipal Museum at Yeovil, together with the two pavements (from Room 10 and the fragment from Room 2) which were taken up. A detailed plan showing the position of the trenches cut has also been placed in the museum. After the completion of the work in July 1928, the site was filled in and levelled, and it will probably be built over.

Before proceeding with the description of the remains, I wish to record my gratitude for the assistance which I received from many quarters. To Dr. Wheeler, who since his original report has followed the progress of the excavations with interest, I am indebted for much advice, particularly in the preparation of this report. Mr. St. George Gray visited the site during the course of the work, and kindly presented me with the lists of coins which he drew up in the course of the earlier investigations. At Yeovil itself, the assistance of Alderman Mitchelmore; who placed at my disposal the results of his own researches, was invaluable, and much of the information contained in this report is the result of his labours, and is based on consultations with him. Alderman Petter, who as treasurer of the Excavation Fund arranged for the necessary labour, Mr. Pryce, the Borough Surveyor, Messrs. Petter and Warren and Mr. Goodchild are among the many persons to whom I should like to express my thanks for their assistance in various ways. The excellent photographs of the site were taken by Mr. Rendell. Throughout both seasons I was fortunate in being able to obtain the services of G. Pilton as foreman, in which capacity he had previously worked for Mr. Mitchelmore.

DESCRIPTION OF THE REMAINS

The House

The house, which occupied the centre of the site, consisted of three structurally independent buildings, forming the sides of a paved courtyard, which measured about 200 by 170 ft. On

the w. a row of stone bases separated this yard from the road.

The frequent disturbances and the shallowness of the soil had caused much damage to the walls, which were preserved above floor level in only two places. Between Rooms 7 and 8, in the northern range, the three lowest courses were still standing. They were built of small rectangular blocks of Yeovil stone, roughly dressed and laid with wide joints in a sandy, fine-textured mortar, containing a small admixture of pounded brick. The width of the masonry was 1 ft. 9 in. with a slight offset at floor level, and that of the foundation varied from 1 ft. 10 in. to 2 ft. 2 in. (Pl. A, 1). In the s.w. corner the remains of the wall between Rooms 29 and 30, and of that to the E. of those rooms, were found. At floor level the foundation was completed by a single course of irregular blocks of stone, laid flat, and forming a slight offset. On this were similar stones laid obliquely, as in herringbone work, and above these was another flat course (Pl. A, 2). These walls were much rougher than that first described, only the surface of the stones which appeared on the face of the wall being dressed.

In other places only the foundations could be discovered. These consisted of one or more courses of rough undressed blocks of Yeovil stone, and averaged 2 ft. in width, their depth varying from 6 to 18 in. In the southern range they were less well built and shallower than in other parts of the building. It is possible that certain walls, where no stone remained and which could only be traced by the foundation trenches cut into the subsoil, may have been built in wood, but no definite evidence of this could be found.

The comparative ease with which the materials could be obtained explained the number of tessellated pavements found in this house. Local blue and white lias and less frequently red brick, cut into cubes of three different sizes, were the only materials employed. With the exception of Room 2, where the finer workmanship of the guilloche border may have surrounded a more ambitious subject, only angular geometrical designs were used, nor is there any suggestion of the elaborate figure scenes or of the variety of colours employed in the

neighbouring Coker mosaics. The removal of some of the more fragmentary pavements showed the following method of construction. Flat stones were set into the subsoil, so that they projected 1 in. above its surface. In Room 10 they were laid in two lines, like dwarf walls, at right angles to each other, but this is the only case in which any such arrangement could be traced. Elsewhere the stones were set irregularly with intervals of about 9 in. A layer of mortar 4 in. thick, and similar to, but rather softer than, that used in the walls, was then spread over the whole floor and formed the bedding for the tesserae.

The flat slabs of Keinton Mandeville stone, found among the rubbish covering the buildings, showed that the northern, eastern and part of the southern range were roofed with these slates. But the large barn (Room 27) and possibly other parts of the southern range were probably thatched, as none were found in that area.

The source, from which the house obtained its water supply could not be determined. There was no trace of a well, though it is possible that one may exist within the courtyard, which was not wholly uncovered. The water channel, found at two points outside the N.E. corner, may have served for this purpose, but its Roman date could not be proved, and a long course would have been necessary in order to take a supply from the stream.

The central courtyard of the house measured 207 ft. from E. to W. and 169 ft. from N. to S., except in the N.E. corner, where the northern range projected 8 ft. It was paved with small irregular blocks of Yeovil stone, set into the clay subsoil, the surface being finished with a layer of gravel, traces of which could be seen in many places. Much of this pavement had been destroyed, but the discovery of modern pottery lying on the surface of the virgin clay shows that this damage is comparatively recent. A much worn coin of Faustina and a 'third brass' of Magnentius were found on the surface, and some pottery, including fragments of nos. 16, 18 and 21 (Pl. G), was lying under the stones.

At the northern end of the W. side, and on the edge of the road, was a line of five bases of Ham Hill stone (Pl. B, 1).

They measured 2 ft. square by 1 ft. deep, the lowest 4 in. being set into the subsoil, and the next four covered by the paving. The two most southerly were separated by a double interval, but the place where the missing stone should have been could not be examined. Between the northernmost and the wall of the house there was room for two other stones, but the first would have lain under the garden to the w. of the site, and the second must have been removed when the nineteenth-century drain was dug.

The purpose of these stone bases could not be ascertained. That they supported wooden columns seemed likely, but there was no evidence to show to what type of building they belonged. It is possible that they formed the side of a room or barn, similar to that in the southern range of the villa at Brading,¹ but no trace of its other walls could be found. That the building was roofed was proved by the discovery of many slates mixed with builders' rubbish and covered with traces of heavy burning, lying round and over the stone bases. The recession of the westernmost room of the house (3) may mark the position of the eastern wall, in which case the external width would have been 18 ft. Its limits to the s. could not be defined, and the further possibility that this row of bases continued as far as the southern range and formed part of a covered corridor, closing the western side of the courtyard, must not be dismissed. But the whole of this area, including the road, was disturbed by one of the seventeenth-century stone robbers' trenches. The building material then found was undoubtedly used in the rough farm sheds, and the presence of fragments of Ham Hill stone in these suggests that the line of bases continued further to the s.

Access to the courtyard could be gained by an entrance near the middle of the southern range, and it seems certain that there was another near the centre of the western side, where the greater thickness of the paving and the presence of a drain approximately mark its position, though no structural remains were found.

The surface drainage of the courtyard was carried off by two

¹ *V.C.H., Hants*, i, 313. (Room XXXV).

channels passing through the supposed western entrance and the south-eastern angle. There were also traces of a third, running along the E. side of the southern entrance. The first consisted of two rows of flat stones 6 in. high, set into the soil between 6 and 8 in. apart. The drain was then covered by flat stones, the tops of which were level with the pitching. It ran into the large open ditch which marked the W. edge of the road. The other drain could be traced along the eastern end of the inner wall of the southern range. It was formed by two rows of flat stones set V-shaped into the subsoil and covered by a third, laid flat. Its outlet had been destroyed, but there is no doubt that it continued straight on, to empty itself into the open drain from the bath (Room 21).

The northern side of the courtyard was occupied by a dwelling house. A stone-flagged passage (Room 5) divided the building into two parts. To the W. lay a large chamber (Room 2) with two smaller rooms (3 and 4) in front, and another (1) at the back. Beyond the passage was a long corridor (Room 9), out of which opened three further rooms (6, 7 and 8). The exact relationship of Room 10 to this block was uncertain, as the intervening ground could not be investigated, but it seems probable that they were connected by an extension of the corridor. Further to the E. the foundation trench of the wall bounding the yard was found, but there was no evidence to prove that there was another corridor forming a connection between the northern and eastern ranges.

In Room 1 were the remains of a pavement of large white tesserae. The bedding of a large stone, 4 ft. long and 2 ft. wide, which could be traced 7 ft. from the W. end of the S. wall, probably indicated the site of a door leading into the larger room.

From Room 2 came the pavement with the guilloche border, part of which is now in the museum. Within the S.E. angle of this border was a confused and much broken triangular design, which suggested that the centre was occupied by a circle or octagon.

The pavement in Room 3 was of large white tesserae, of which very few remained *in situ*. Underneath the mortar in which they were laid some pottery was found, including frag-

ments of nos. 16 and 18 (Pl. G). In Room 4 the floor showed a double fret design in blue and white, surrounded by a white border. Its outer wall had been entirely destroyed by the nineteenth-century drain.

Room 5 was paved with flat slabs of Yeovil stone, 2 ft. square. The heavily burnt external face of the masonry on either side of the gap in the northern wall suggested that there was a furnace at that point. A large amount of rubble and broken flue tiles was found immediately outside the wall, but the ground had been so much disturbed that no structural remains could be discovered. As there was no trace of any door leading to Rooms 2 or 6 it is possible that this passage contained a staircase, to carry which the side walls were thickened.

The pavement in Room 6 had been very little damaged. The design consisted of a Maltese cross, surrounded by a continuous fret, the whole being enclosed in a white border (Pl. C, 1). The central figure was worked out in small, the fret in medium-sized, and the border in large tesserae. In the middle of the N. wall was a structure of rough masonry, faced with plaster, probably the remains of a stone bench. It measured 9 ft. in length and projected 3 ft. from the face of the wall, being preserved in places to a height of 1 ft. above floor level.

The next two rooms had plain white pavements. The oval depression in Room 7 was 18 in. deep, the sides being roughly walled. A fountain basin would not be unlikely in such a position, but the clay bottom showed no trace of the pipes by which it would have been fed. The apse in the eastern wall of Room 8 was 6 to 8 in. above the general floor level, and although much ruined there were still traces of a central foundation, which may mark the position of an altar or statue base. These three rooms did not connect with each other, and they could only be entered from the corridor in front.

Room 9 had been much destroyed by the modern drain, which cut diagonally across it. Fragments of a pavement of large white tesserae were found *in situ*, at a level about 4 in. lower than that of the last three rooms. The pottery found under the mortar bedding of this pavement included bowls like no. 18 (Pl. G). The front wall cannot have been very substantial,

as its foundation was only 6 in. deep, suggesting that this corridor was a verandah with an arcaded front and lean-to roof.¹ From Room 10 came the pavement, now laid in the floor of the museum. The design shows white squares on a red background, enclosed in a red and white border (Pl. C, 2). There were no remains of stone walls, but the foundation trenches, 2 ft. wide and 9 in. deep, could be traced.

The eastern range was occupied by another dwelling-house, consisting of a series of small rooms, grouped around a large hall (Room 18), in front of which ran a long verandah, opening on to the courtyard. The southern part could not be examined, but it seemed probable that it extended as far s. as Room 21, in which case it probably contained other baths. Owing to the lesser depth of the soil, this building was in a worse condition than that first described. No walls were standing above floor level and the pavements were badly damaged.

Room 12 was warmed by a channelled hypocaust (Pl. B, 2), of which the furnace was situated in the chamber behind (13). This consisted of two short walls, 6 ft. long, parallel to the northern wall, and 9 ft. apart. Their eastern ends were connected by a line of heavily burnt rubble and clay debris, which appeared to represent a collapsed arch.

A trial trench dug across Room 11 revealed little. The w. wall was only traceable by a shallow foundation trench. As similar trenches were found separating rooms 11, 14 and 17, they have been marked as distinct, but these dividing walls are very indefinite, and one would rather have expected to find a single verandah running along the whole side of the house. Rooms 14, 15 and 16 were crossed by a modern water main, and could not be examined, but traces of the mortar bedding and loose tesserae found in the second suggested that it had a tessellated pavement.

Room 17 seemed to have been a verandah similar to that in the northern range, for the foundation of the front wall, which was only 6 in. deep, could not have carried a heavy superstructure. Part of a pavement with a fragmentary geometrical design was found *in situ*. Room 18 was the central hall,

¹ Cf. The reconstruction of the Spoonley Villa, *Archæologia*, lii, 656.



Fig. 1. Wall in Northern Range

Photographed by W. S. Rendell, Yeovil



Fig. 2. Wall in S.W. angle of House
ROMAN SITE AT WESTLAND, YEOVIL



Fig. 1. Stone Bases west of Courtyard



Fig. 2. Hypocaust in Room 11
ROMAN SITE AT WESTLAND, YEOVIL

Photographs by W. S. Rendell, Yeovil



Fig. 1. Mosaic Pavement in Room 6

Photographed by W. S. Rendell, Yeovil



Fig. 2. Mosaic Pavement in Room 10. (Found 1923)

Photographed by Whitcomb & Son, Yeovil



Fig. 1. Bath, Room 21

Photographed by W. S. Rendell, Yeovil



Fig. 2. New Forest ware. Scale $\frac{1}{2}$
ROMAN SITE AT WESTLAND, YEOVIL

around which this house was planned. Rooms 19 and 20 were small chambers, each with a tessellated floor. The former, though nearly perfect, was of little interest, and the latter had been much smashed.

Beyond the garden, 71 ft. s. of the point to which the eastern block could be followed, lay a small bath (Room 21, Pl. D, 1). The walls were rubble-built and about 2 ft. thick, plastered on the inner face. Those on the N. and E. could only be traced by the line of the edge of the floor, but the others were better preserved, standing in places 18 in. high. The exact depth to which the bath was sunk could not be ascertained, but the highest portions at present remaining appear to have been below the Roman ground level, as the exterior of the walls was rough built against the face of the excavation. In the N.W. corner were two steps, each 8 in. high. The junction of the floor and the walls was marked by a round moulding. The whole interior surface was finished with a fine grey cement, into which minute particles of pounded brick had been mixed, giving it a pinkish hue. The drain lay in the centre of the apse, and discharged into an open ditch, which could be traced southwards as far as the boundary of the site.

On the southern side of the courtyard was a single row of buildings with no connecting corridor. The foundations of the walls were shallower (1 ft. instead of 18 in.) and less well built than those of the two dwelling-houses, and the rough herringbone masonry of the only surviving walls presents a great contrast to the careful work in the northern range. Through the centre ran a passage, 15 ft. wide, leading from the courtyard to the southern road. On the E. of this was a series of rooms, and on the W. a large barn or shed with smaller chambers beyond. The rough paving of the courtyard continued along the W. of the entrance passage, but on the other side it had been destroyed.

At the E. end of this range was an area of irregular stone paving, partly set in Roman, and partly in more modern mortar. The character of these remains made it impossible to attempt any reconstruction of the plan of this part of the house, but there were indications that the yard had been bounded in this corner by a wall, similar to that at the N.E. angle.

The pavement of Room 22 consisted of large white tesserae, but that of the next room (23) had a design of hollow squares, alternately blue and white. Rooms 24 and 25 were floored with a hard yellow cement. Room 26 was a pit, 7 ft. deep. The walls were of rubble masonry, built against the face of the excavation, the floor being paved. The pit was filled with stones, rubbish and broken fragments of wall plaster. Mr. Mitchelmore tells me that, when it was first opened, traces of steps could be seen against the southern wall.

The thatched barn or shed (Room 27) to the w. of the entrance had a beaten clay floor. The trial-trenches, which were cut across this room, disclosed three rough stone hearths. A foundation, 3 ft. wide, probably the remains of a stone bench similar to that in Room 6 was found, following the inside of the southern wall. The s.w. corner of the house was occupied by two small rooms (29 and 30), which were separated from the barn by a narrow passage (28). Traces of the mortar bedding and the presence of many loose tesserae suggested that the more northerly had a tessellated pavement. Comparatively modern farm-sheds had been built over this corner of the house, and it seemed that the walls still remaining were only preserved on account of their inclusion in the work of that date. Where this had not happened the whole Roman stratum was honeycombed with the trenches of the later stone robbers, which contained only useless fragments of building material and scraps of seventeenth century and earlier rubbish.

The finds made during the excavations include all the commoner articles of Romano-British civilization. Fragments of window glass were found over the whole site. Flue-tiles were plentiful, especially in the neighbourhood of the two furnaces; and fragments of plaster, coloured red, white and green, were discovered in most of the rooms.

In the absence of any definite evidence that the inhabitants were engaged in some local industry, one can only suppose that the builder of this house was one of the larger landowners of the neighbourhood. Comfort rather than extreme luxury seems to have been his aim. Neither the mosaics nor the smaller objects found were of any particular merit. The greater part of the pottery consists of a coarse black ware, probably of

local manufacture, and the other finds include only the ordinary articles of Romano-British life, which have been found even in the poor villages of the native peasantry.

The evidence of the pottery and of the coin series, taken together, suggests that the occupation lasted about 200 years (*circa* 180–370 A.D.). This may be compared with the Keynsham house, where a coin series of thirty from Victorinus to Valentinian I and a stamp of the Antonine potter BELLATVLLVS gives a similar date.¹

The Yeovil house belongs to the Romano-British courtyard type, of which it is one of the largest known.² But the independence of the three buildings, and the absence of the corridor in front of the southern range and its interruption at the N.E. corner, differentiate the plan from those of the more symmetrically laid out buildings of this type. Perhaps the nearest parallels to these features may be seen in the villas at Brading, Isle of Wight,³ and Pitney, Somerset.⁴

The Roads (see Section, page 134)

The w. and s. walls of the house were bounded by roads. The former had been much broken up, at the northern end by the building of a small medieval furnace, and in other places by stone robbery. In the best preserved part, the pitching of flat slabs of Yeovil stone about 8 in. thick was covered by a dressing of small stones and gravel. The road was slightly cambered, with a thickness of about 1 ft. in the centre. On the w. side, along which ran an open ditch, there was a kerb, substantially built of blocks of stone (*see* Section A–B). The construction of the southern road was similar, but the stones employed were smaller and less well set (*see* Section C–D). It is possible that it was only a side road affording access to the southern entrance to the courtyard, and possibly to other buildings to the s. Beyond the line of these roads, the only

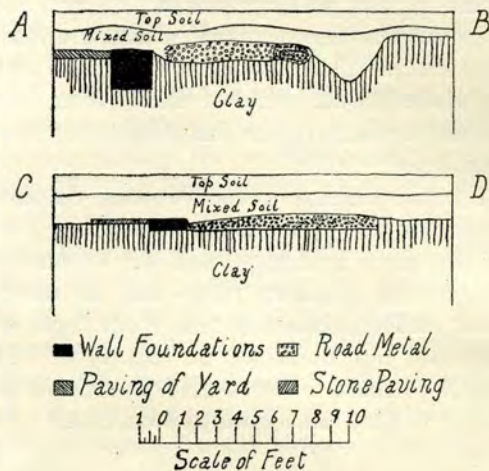
¹ *Archæologia*, lxxv, 132.

² *Cf.* the dimensions in *Archæologia*, lxxv, 135. To these may be added Bignor, Sussex, about 200 by 115 ft., and Pitney, Somerset, 200 by 148 ft.

³ *V.C.H., Hants*, i, 313.

⁴ *V.C.H., Somerset*, i, 326, fig. 83.

discoveries were a small piece of rough walling near the southern boundary of the site, and a stone hearth in the n.w. corner.



The Iron Age Remains

Under the pavement of Room 23 a rough stone hearth was uncovered, together with three iron arrow-heads (Pl. G, 16-8), several flint flakes and some late Roman and Iron Age pottery. The arrow-heads belong to a type found on pre-Roman sites in Somerset, and the remains, which had been much disturbed by the Roman occupation, seem to have belonged to a hut of the Early Iron Age. The earliest pottery is a fragment of soapy surfaced ware, like Hengistbury Class C, which seems to have been common in the second and early first centuries B.C. (Pl. G, 22). There were also parts of three or four hand-made bead-rim bowls (Pl. G, 23). These are generally found in deposits of the late first century B.C. and the first century A.D., and should belong to a different culture. But the Yeovil fragments have little in common with this later pottery, of which Hengistbury Class J and Oare¹ may be taken as typical for the south-western area, and the nearest parallel that can be

¹ *Wilts Arch. Mag.*, xxxvi, 136.

quoted comes from Worthy Down,¹ where it was found in association with the earlier currency-bar culture, to which No. 22 might also belong. It seems probable that all the remains are from a settlement of about 100 B.C., but the find was not stratified, and the presence of late Roman pottery shows that the possibility of the pottery belonging to two different periods of the Iron Age must not be excluded.

Other Discoveries near the Site

While the foundations of the new houses at Westland were being laid, walls and other remains were found at several points (5 on sketch map, Pl. J). The area over which they have been recorded covers about 13 acres, being bounded on the E. and S. by Seaton Road and Horse Lane. On the W. it extends as far as the supposed line of the Roman road and traces have also been found to the N. of Westland Road. They were scattered and could not be systematically investigated, but there was no sign of any other large building, and it seems probable that they represent nothing more than a few dwellings of a poorer class, surrounding the large house.

Previous Discoveries in the Neighbourhood

The settlement lay on a slight ridge, surrounded on three sides by streams. The Roman road from Ilchester to Dorchester crossed the ridge at a point less than 300 yards to the W. of the house. Its exact course across the valley from Larkhill Quarry, where a section was obtained some years ago,² until it rejoins the modern road opposite Aldon Lodge, has never been traced, but there seems little reason to doubt that the course suggested in the above note is substantially correct, and it has been indicated on the sketch map (Pl. J).

Chance finds in recent years have produced several groups of late Roman pottery of the same type as the coarse ware from the site (Pl. G, 16, 18 and 21). One came from Larkhill Quarry, near to where the section of the Roman road was obtained (1 on sketch map). Another, associated with a coin

¹ Unpublished. Winchester Museum.

² *Som. & Dor. Notes and Queries*, xi, 345.

of Constantine II, was discovered on the Preston housing site (2 on sketch map). Two further groups from near St. Michael's Church and Pen Mill (3 and 4 on sketch map) belong to the E. end of the town, and two others were found on the top of the ridge, which the modern road to Crewkerne follows (7 and 8 on sketch map). That nearest to Aldon Lodge (No. 7) was investigated by Mr. Mitchelmore, who uncovered part of the circular wall of the hut. In the other cases there is no record of any associated structures, but all these groups probably represent the rubbish from huts of the later Roman period. The first and second centuries are a blank, but a similar group of Iron Age pottery (like Pl. G, 23) together with animal bones and ashes was found near Aldon Lodge (6 on sketch map).

Occupation on a more important scale is represented by the two villas at East and West Coker,¹ which the mosaics and small finds show to have been wealthy country-houses. The records are not so detailed as could be desired, but they prove that both were occupied at the same time as the Yeovil settlement and that they did not survive beyond the reign of Valens.

SUMMARY

All these settlements were inhabited in the fourth century, and the three more important seem to have begun at the end of the second and continued until the third quarter of the fourth century, with a more intensive occupation in the latter part of that period. The coin series of the villas at East and West Coker do not extend beyond Valens, and the single later coin recorded at Yeovil may well have been dropped by travellers passing along the Roman road. These facts agree with those from other parts of Britain. All over the province the third and more particularly the early fourth centuries appear to have been an age of prosperity, until disaster overtook the rural dwellings about 370 A.D.² The historical reason

¹ *V.C.H., Somerset*, i, 329 and 331.

² Cf. Dr. Cyril Fox, *Archæology of the Cambridge Region*, 232, who shows that the coins series of the rural settlements in that area come to an end about 350-370, only that of the Ridgewell villa, on the great road to Colchester, surviving to a later period; and Haverfield, *Roman Occupation of Britain*, 220, 264.

for this end is known. The raids of the Scots had already begun during the reign of Constans, and the year 367 saw a double disaster to the Roman armies in the province. Geographically Somerset lies open to invaders from Ireland, and even though there was no actual sack of the settlements the burial of the Yeovil hoard about 350 and the cessation of the coin series about 370 reflect the growing sense of insecurity. Threatened by these raiders, the more wealthy inhabitants preferred the shelter of walled towns or other places of safety and left their country houses, doubtless cherishing the vain hope of an eventual return when the troubled period should have passed.

THE SMALL FINDS

The Coins

This list of coins comprises all those discovered on the site in the course of the recent investigations, together with a few from the neighbouring gardens. The earlier summaries published by Mr. Gray have been included (*Antiquaries Journal*, iv, 427, and v, 167). A large hoard, found in 1916, first drew attention to the Roman remains at Westland. Of these, 852 were listed by Mr. Gray (*Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.* lxii, 86). They all belonged to the first half of the fourth century, ranging from Constantine the Great to Constans and Constantius II, and were deposited during the reign of the last. It is possible that the proportion of coins of this period in the following list has been exaggerated by strays from that hoard, but the evidence of the pottery also shows that the occupation of the site was most intensive during this period. The coins of the first and second centuries were badly worn.

Vespasian (A.D. 69-79)	.	.	.	.	1
Ælius Caesar	.	.	.	.	1
Antoninus Pius (A.D. 138-61)	.	.	.	.	1
Faustina senior (<i>d.</i> A.D. 141)	.	.	.	.	2
First or second century, illegible	.	.	.	.	1
Gordian III (A.D. 238-44)	.	.	.	.	2
Victorinus (? A.D. 268-70)	.	.	.	.	1
Tetricus I (? A.D. 270-3)	.	.	.	.	2

Tetricus II (? A.D. 270-3)	1
Aurelian (A.D. 270-5)	1
Probus (A.D. 276-82)	1
Carausius (A.D. 287-93)	1
Radiate crowns, illegible	4
Constantius I (Caesar A.D. 292 ; Augustus A.D. 305-6)	1
Helena (wife of Constantius, <i>d.</i> A.D. 328)	9
Theodora (second wife of Constantius)	4
Constantine I (Caesar A.D. 306 ; Augustus A.D. 307-37)	12
Constantinopolis	4
Urbs Roma	4
Crispus (Caesar A.D. 317-26)	1
Constantine II (Caesar A.D. 317 ; Augustus A.D. 337-40)	17
Constantius II (Caesar A.D. 323 ; Augustus A.D. 337-61)	27
Constans (Caesar A.D. 333 ; Augustus A.D. 337-50)	46
Magnentius (A.D. 350-3)	2
House of Constantine	9
Valentinian I (A.D. 364-75)	4
Valens (A.D. 364-78)	1
Gratian (A.D. 367-83)	1

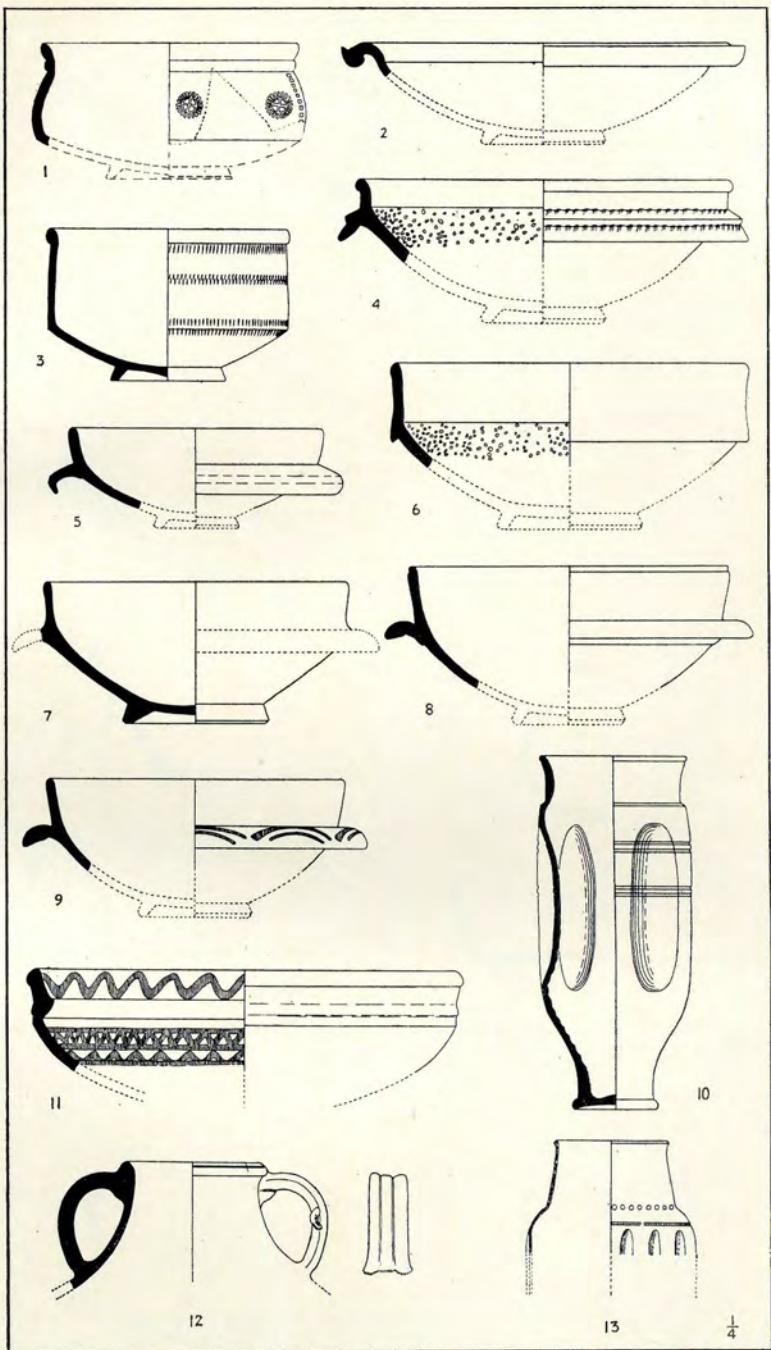
Total 161

The Pottery

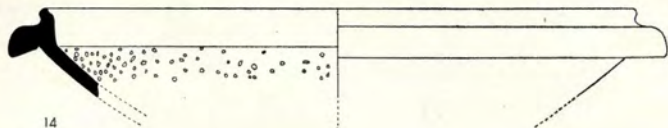
A large quantity of pottery was found during the excavations. Samian was rare, only about two dozen pieces being recovered, including forms 37, 31 and 36. Late red colour coated ware was more common (Pl. F, 1-9), and Mr. Heywood Sumner, to whom a typical fragment was submitted, was of the opinion that it came from the New Forest potteries. Pl. F, 10, 11, and possibly 12 may also have come from that area. Most of the pottery was of a coarse black clay, in which three shapes were very common (Pl. G, 16, 18 and 21). The close resemblance of this clay to that of the Iron Age pottery suggests that the ware was a local product. The discovery of these three types in deposits under the floors of the northern range or under the paving of the courtyard proves that they were already in use when the house was built. They are known to



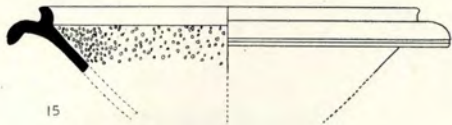
Pottery of the Roman Period. Scale $\frac{1}{2}$
ROMAN SITE AT WESTLAND, YEOVIL



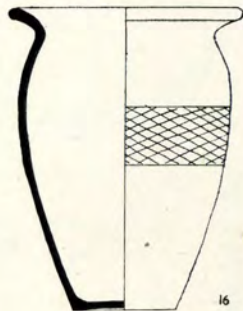
Pottery of the Roman Period
 ROMAN SITE AT WESTLAND, YEOVIL



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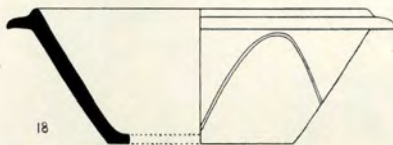
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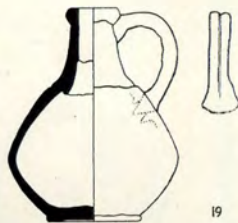
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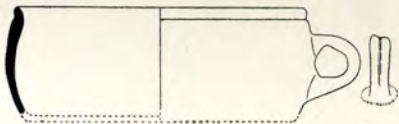
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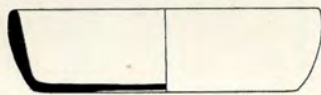
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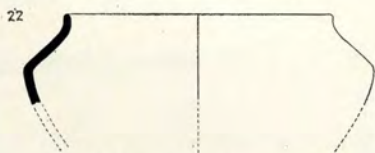
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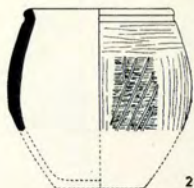
21

COARSE POTTERY

$\frac{1}{4}$



22



23

$\frac{1}{4}$

IRON AGE POTTERY

Pottery of the Iron Age and Roman Period
ROMAN SITE AT WESTLAND, YEOVIL

be common in the late third and fourth centuries, but their occurrence at Old Sloden and Rough Piece, Linwood, which Mr. Sumner ascribes to the earliest period of the New Forest potteries, suggests that they were already evolved in the early years of the third century. The proportion in which the various wares were found was No. 16 44%, No. 18, 32%, No. 21, 14%, colour coated and other fine wares 10%.

I have to thank Dr. Davies Pryce, F.S.A., for the note on the piece of decorated Samian, and Mr. Heywood Sumner, F.S.A., for assistance about the New Forest ware.

In the following list parallels are cited from the New Forest, Richborough and Mildenhall. The references to the first are all given to Heywood Sumner's *Excavations in New Forest Roman Pottery Sites*. Of these Old Sloden and Rough Piece, Linwood belong to the early, Sloden Enclosure to the middle, and Ashley Rails to the late period of production. The parallels cited from Richborough belong to the late third and fourth centuries, with the exception of a few from more exactly dated deposits, which are noted. The Mildenhall pottery referred to is that from a late well, filled in about 375 A.D. (*Wilts Arch. Mag.*, xli, 159-66).

Pl. E, 5. Decorated Samian.¹ Form 37. Fair glaze and workmanship. Part of a large medallion, bordered by vertical rows of large beads. In the medallion, a prone gladiator (cf. *Déchelette* 616) as used by the Hadrian-Antonine potter CATVSSA. Beneath, a dog with a 'serrated' tail (*Déchelette* 934, CINNAMVS, PATERNVS). A similar type occurs at Balmuilty (Miller, *The Roman Fort at Balmuilty*, Pl. XXXV, 57) and Old Kilpatrick (Miller, *The Roman Fort at Old Kilpatrick*, Pl. XIV, 39-41) on the Antonine vallum, where the effective Roman occupation was not prolonged beyond 182 A.D. Diamond-shaped ornament in the field, as frequently seen on Antonine sigillata (cf. *Déchelette*, i, Pl. XII, 1, and his type 1179, by BASSVS of Lezoux). Period Antonine, circa 160-70 A.D.

Pl. E, 2. Part of a rouletted Samian beaker.

Pl. E, 1. Fragment of vessel with scale decoration. Same clay as Pl. F, 1. This decoration is occasionally found on late

¹ The following note is by Dr. T. Davies Pryce, F.S.A.

ware, but it does not seem to be common. A piece occurred at Mildenhall (*Wilts. Arch. Mag.* xli, 159. New Forest Ware).

Pl. D, 2. Fragments of two beakers. Very hard cream clay, with purple brown slightly metallic slip and decoration in white paint. The first is part of a bulbous beaker. *Cf.* Ashley Rails, Pl. III, 3 and 4. The second is part of an indented beaker. *Cf.* Armsley, near Ashley Rails, Pl. XXXV, 1.

Pl. E, 3 and 4, and Pl. F, 1. Small bowl with carinated side, and stamped decoration. Fine well-prepared red clay, colour coated with a darker red slip. *Cf.* Mildenhall, Pl. II, 2.

PLATE F

2. Lip of an open bowl, imitating form 36. Same ware as last. *Cf.* Ashley Rails, Pl. VII, 1, and *Richborough*, i, Pl. XXVIII, 114, and ii, Pl. XXXII, 175.

3. Small bowl with carinated side and bands of roulette stamped decoration. Same ware as last. *Cf.* Ashley Rails, Pl. IV, 1-2, and V, 10-1; *Richborough*, i, Pl. XXVIII, 113 (mid fourth century); and Mildenhall, Pl. I, 3.

4. Flanged mortarium. Same ware as last, studded on the inside with grit. *Cf.* Ashley Rails, Pl. XA, 11-3.

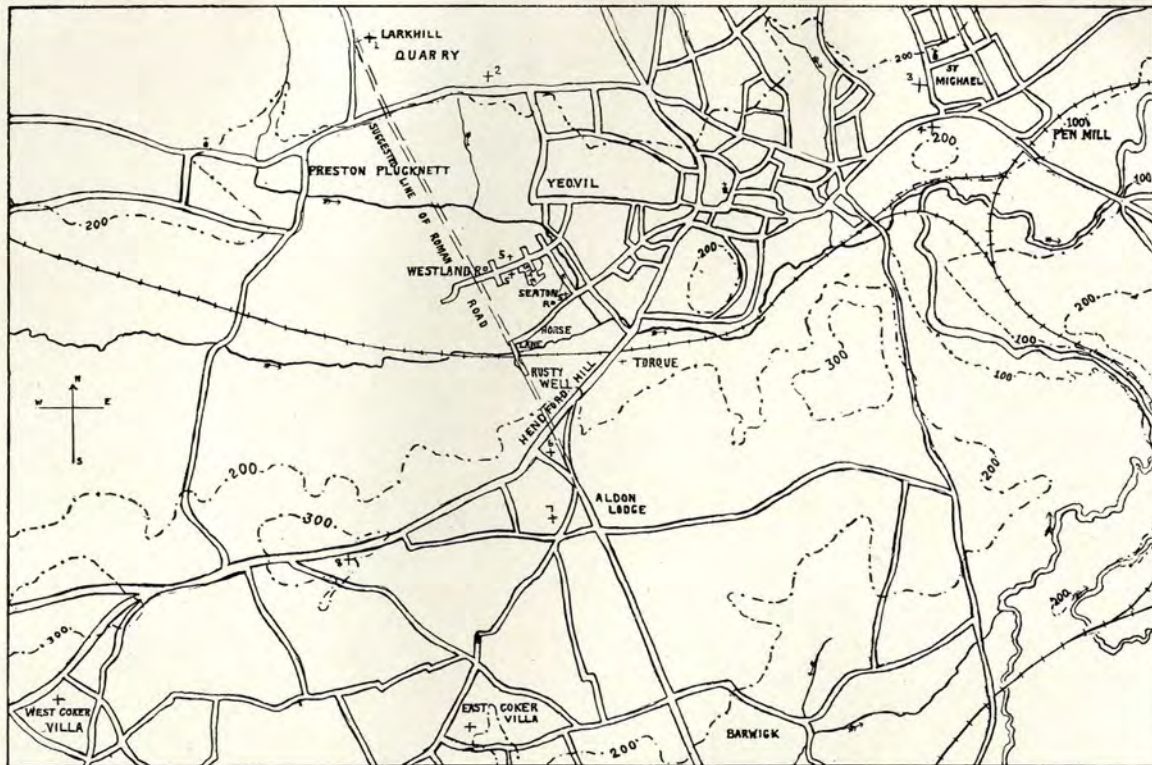
5. Flanged bowl, imitating form 38. Same ware as last. *Cf.* Linwood, Pl. XXIV, 2; Ashley Rails, Pl. VII, 7-10; *Richborough*, i, Pl. XXVIII, 109-12 (mid fourth and fourth century); and Mildenhall, Pl. I, 1.

6. Straight-sided mortarium. Same clay as last, studded on the inside with grit. The occurrence of this form at Ashley Rails, Pl. XA, 21; and *Richborough*, i, Pl. XXVIII, 107 (mid fourth century) proves that it was in use as late as 350 A.D., but its close relationship to Samian forms 43 and 45 suggests that it originated in the previous century.

7. Flanged bowl. Same ware as last. See No. 5.

8. Flanged bowl. Hard gritty clay, grey at the centre and red on the surface. Slight traces of the red colour coating can be seen. See No. 5.

9. Flanged bowl. Hard red clay with darker red slip and painted decoration on the flange. This now shows as red slip on the body of the clay, but traces of the white paint prove



SKETCH MAP OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF YEOVIL

Scale 2 in. = 1 mile. + Site of Roman or Prehistoric Find

that it was originally this colour, and that the presence of the paint preserved the slip which it covered.

10. Indented beaker. Light brown clay with dark grey slip. Fragments of several were found. A very similar beaker from Hengistbury (Pl. XXV, 8) was thought to come from the New Forest potteries. This is the usual type of beaker in that area, where it is common on all sites, except Linwood and Old Sloden.

11. Wide-mouthed bowl with internal flange. Very hard gritty clay, white to parchment-coloured throughout, with painted decoration in red ochre. Mr. Heywood Sumner writes that this type of bowl with some variation in profile was largely produced at the late New Forest pottery sites (Pl. VIII, 1-4, XXXI, 4-11, XXXII, 4-9, and XXXIII, 9-14), but that it has not been found at Linwood and only very rarely at Sloden.

12. Flagon neck and handle. Hard grey clay with darker grey slip. The 'stuck on' handle is characteristic of Sloden and Linwood (Pl. XVII, 1-3, XVIII, 7-9, and XXI, 2) but at the later New Forest sites the tanged handle is usual (p. 33).

13. Bulbous beaker with slight indentations. Fine hard red clay, with purple metallic slip and decoration in white paint. Cf. Ashley Rails, Pl. III, 3, but the thin ware does not seem to belong to the New Forest potteries.

PLATE G.

14. Flanged mortarium. Hard coarse pink clay, the inner surface studded with grit. Cf. *Richborough*, i, Pl. XXVIII, 99-101, and *Mildenhall*, Pl. I, 9.

15. Flanged mortarium. Fine hard red clay, the inner surface studded with grit. Traces of the buff slip still remain. Cf. *Sloden*, Pl. XXI, 4-6; *Richborough*, i, Pl. XXVIII, 97; and *Ashley Rails*, Pl. XA, 8.

16. Cooking pot with overhanging rim. Coarse black clay with a narrow band of lattice pattern. Cf. *Rough Piece*, *Linwood*, Pl. XXVII, 1, and *Wroxeter*, ii, fig. 19, 67, where a fourth-century date is suggested. Fragments of cooking pots approaching the second-century form, which had a more pronounced bulge and a more upright rim, were also found. Cf. *Wroxeter*, ii, fig. 19, 66.

17. Flanged mortarium. Coarse white clay throughout, the inner surface studded with grit. See No. 15.

18. Straight-sided flanged bowl, with grooved pattern on the outside. The type is common in the third and fourth centuries. Cf. Old Sloden, Pl. XIV, 7-8; Black Heath Meadow, Pl. XXII, 19-21; Ashley Rails, Pl. XII, 10-5; and *Richborough*, i, Pl. XXIX, 19-21.

19. Toy flagon. Coarse black clay. Cf. the toy vessels found in the New Forest (*Sumner Excavations*, p. 104), where parallels to the tanged handle can also be found. (*Ibid.*, p. 33.)

20. Shallow dish with handle. Coarse black clay.

21. Shallow dish. Coarse black clay with much grit. This type was in use in the third and fourth centuries Cf. Old Sloden, Pl. XIV, 16; Sloden Enclosure, Pl. XVII, 9; and *Richborough*, i, Pl. XXVIII, 105-6.

Iron Age Pottery.

22. High-shouldered pot with sharply carinated and slightly curved sides. Brown soapy clay containing white grit, the exterior surface polished, the interior rough and slightly pitted. Cf. *Hengistbury*, Pl. XVI, 5.

23. Hand-made bead rim bowl with panels of roughly scored decoration. Brown rather coarse clay, the exterior polished, the interior rough. Four or five of these bowls were found together.

Small objects in Bronze, Iron, etc.

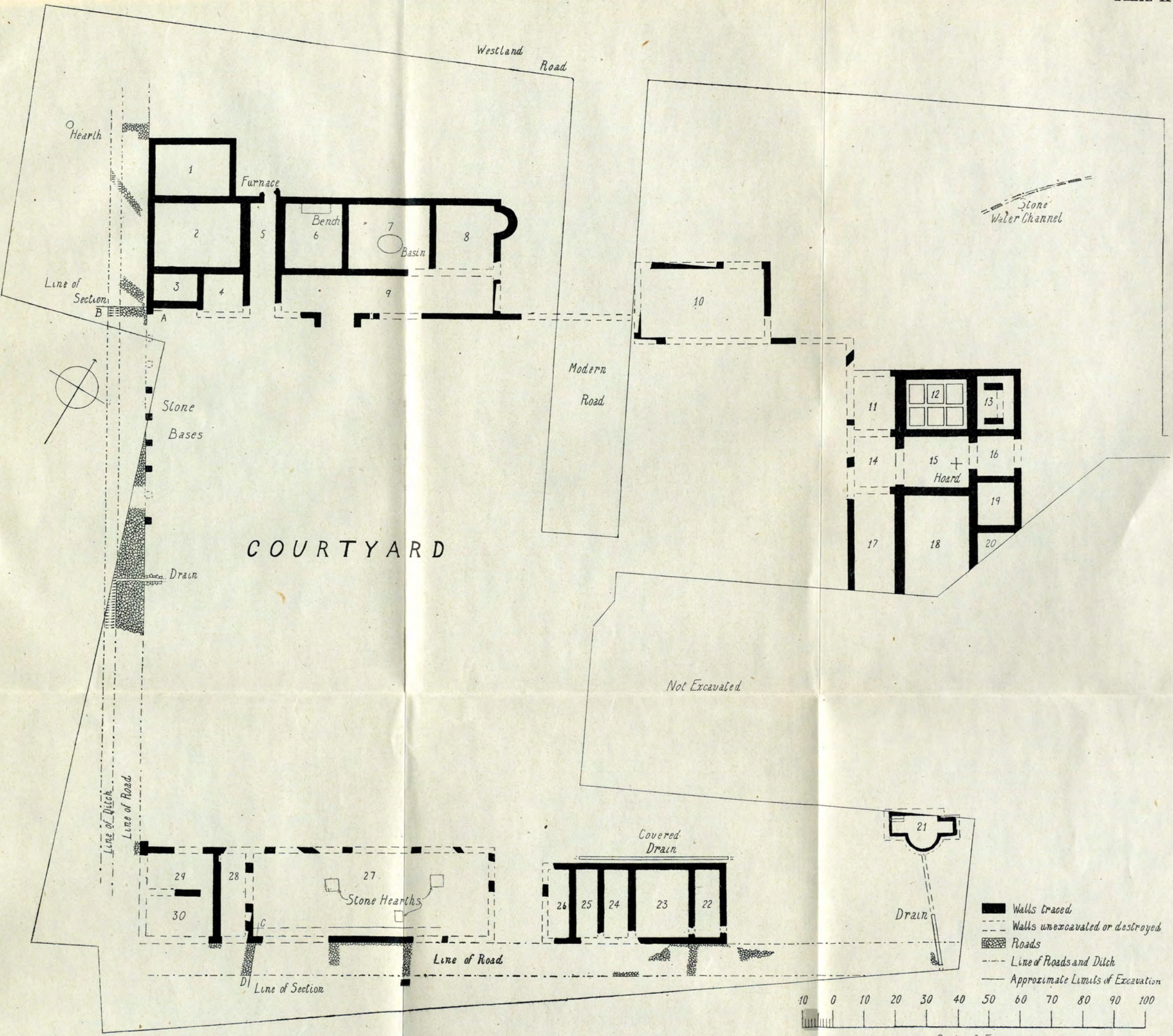
PLATE H

1. Part of a bronze bracelet. The decoration is unusually elaborate. This type of bracelet seems to belong to the later Roman period. Cf. *Richborough*, ii, Pl. XX, 40, and XXI, 51.

2. Bronze bracelet, cast so as to imitate earlier examples, which were of twisted wire.

3. Flattened strip of ornamented bronze, probably part of a bracelet.

4. Part of a bronze bracelet. The hole belongs to a hook and eye fastening, similar to that of No. 2. This was the



usual type of clasp in Roman bracelets. Cf. *Brit. Mus. Guide, Roman Britain*, p. 67.

5. Bronze finger-ring. The central ornament is formed by the ends of the metal twisted round each other.

6. Bronze penannular brooch with folded back terminals. The twisted pin, which was found with the brooch, is shown alongside.

7. Bronze stylus, the head of which forms an eraser.

8. Bronze finger-ring with traces of silvering. The stone with which it was set is missing. These angular shouldered rings belong to the later Roman period. Dated examples in the British Museum are those from Sully Moors (deposited 306-10 A.D.) and Grovely Wood (*circa* 395 A.D.). Another fine ring of this type is that found at Ilchester, the bezel of which is a gold coin of Severus Alexander (222-35 A.D.). *Brit. Mus. Guide, Roman Britain*, p. 65-6.

9. Bronze penannular brooch with folded back terminals. These brooches occur throughout the Roman period, and the commoner types are not closely datable. Cf. *Richborough*, ii, Pl. XVI, 7.

10. Broken bone pin with ornamental head. Several of these pins with plain circular or faceted heads were also found.

11. Part of a vessel of dull white glass. The exterior surface is decorated with small raised ribs and knobs.

12. Spindle-whorl of Kimmeridge shale. Several fragmentary objects in this material were found.

13. Graffito. MARTINVS, scratched on the base of a beaker. Very hard pink clay with red to brown slip. A complete vessel of this type has been illustrated from Mildenhall. *Wilts. Arch. Mag.* xli, Pl. I, 6, *circa* 375 A.D. The provenance of this ware is doubtful, as these beakers do not seem to be found in the New Forest.

14. Incomplete iron stylus.

15. Iron key.

16-18. Iron arrow-heads with hammered over sockets. These may be compared with that from a cremated burial on Ham Hill. (*Antiq. Journ.* iii, 149. Dated to *circa* 250 B.C.) Other arrow-heads of this period were found in the Celtic levels of Wookey Hole. (*Archæologia*, lxii, 575.)