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Roman Malta

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## ROMAN MALTA.

(Plates III–V).

By THOMAS ASHBY.

### I. HISTORY.

The Maltese islands, Malta, the ancient Melite, Gozo, the ancient Gaulus,<sup>1</sup> and three lesser islets,<sup>2</sup> lie in the centre of the Mediterranean in a significant position. They command the highway of sea-borne traffic between east and west, and they form a link between north and south, between Sicily and Tunis. They are small, indeed; their whole area is about four-fifths that of the Isle of Wight, but they are in their own fashion very fertile, their seas are rich in fish, and their coasts have many harbours. Naturally they have long been inhabited; they have a real and, for certain centuries, a stirring history. Their closest geographical kinship is with Sicily, which is less than sixty miles north of Gozo, and can easily be seen in clear weather from the higher parts of the islands. Hence, perhaps, it was that during seven centuries of the Roman period, just as during five centuries of the middle ages, they were connected especially with Sicily; but their relations with the more distant African coast and with the eastern and western waters of the Mediterranean are too strong to allow them to be called purely Sicilian or even purely European, and they have often owned other allegiance.

They have been inhabited from the earliest times. Faint traces of palaeolithic man have quite recently been discovered, and in the later neolithic age they seem to have had a considerable population, with which we may connect the important megalithic monuments still visible in them, monuments which find their parallels in Sardinia, Sicily, Spain, and elsewhere in the western Mediterranean.<sup>3</sup> The neolithic age seems to have lasted on relatively late in these islands, and it may have been cut short by the next discoverable civilisation, that of the Phoenicians. This was probably introduced somewhat after 1000 B.C. and was no doubt due to Phoenician emigrants passing from the Levant into the west. Later, in or before the fifth century, the islands came under the political dominion of the Phoenician colony of Carthage. Like neolithic man, the Phoenicians, too, have

<sup>1</sup> In later Latin, *Gaudus* or *Gaudisium*; Arabic, *Guds*, from which Gozo.

<sup>2</sup> For Comino, see p. 52. Cominotto, which is close to Comino, and Filfolà, to the south of Malta, are even smaller, almost mere rocks.

<sup>3</sup> These monuments have lately been explored, with the help of the government of Malta, by the British School at Rome: see a full account, by the present writer, R. Bradley, T. E. Peet, and N. Tagliaferro, in the *Papers of the British School at Rome*, vi, 1–126.

left many traces in Malta; we may assign to them many notable rock-tombs, and probably also some remarkable round towers.<sup>1</sup>

The Maltese islands first came within the range of Rome when wars broke out between Rome and Carthage. During the first Punic war Atilius Regulus appears to have plundered and temporarily occupied them in 257 or 256 B.C.<sup>2</sup> but they were soon recovered by Carthage. In the second Punic war they became permanently Roman. In 218 B.C. Sempronius Longus seized them on his way to Africa<sup>3</sup>; Livy's words, in describing the event, suggest that they were given up, perhaps by the natives, rather than taken by external force from the weak Carthaginian garrison. Hereafter they remained Roman. They were included in the province of Sicily, but they were not subjected to the unfavourable treatment accorded to most of that island; they held the privileged position of a 'civitas foederata' or 'libera atque immunis.' Such a position itself suggests that they took the side of Rome voluntarily.

It is possible, as Cluver suggested long ago, that this part of Maltese history may have been influenced by the incoming of a Greek element. Of such an element we have traces which date from 218 or only a very little after, and include Greek titles of municipal officials. The chief evidence is yielded by two bronze tablets, found in Rome about 1549. These bore copies of two plainly coeval decrees, written in Greek and passed in honour of one Demetrius of Syracuse, the one of them by the senate and assembly of Akragas in Sicily, and the other by the senate and assembly of Melite.<sup>4</sup> The latter decree cannot well be earlier than 218, while the decree of Akragas must be either earlier than 214 or later than 210, since the Carthaginians held Akragas between those years. As, moreover, the tablet gives 110 as the numbers of the senators of Akragas, while the constitution granted to that city by Scipio in 207 apparently provided an uneven number of senators,<sup>5</sup> the Akragas decree must be earlier than 207. We may conclude that both tablets belong to 218, or to the years immediately after it. The presence of the tablets at Rome implies that Demetrius himself resided there, and indeed the Akragas decree states that he had helped that city in negotiations with the Roman senate. Now both these decrees mention a 'hierothutes' as chief eponymous magistrate of the city concerned, with two 'archontes.' Akragas, we know, was the one Sicilian town where a 'hierothutes' held such a position, and it would appear that Melite had framed its constitution on that of its Greek neighbour. Other evidence of

<sup>1</sup> Albert Mayr, *Aus den phönizischen Nekropolen von Malta* (*Sitzungsber. der k. b. Akad. zu München*, 1905, 467 foll.) and *Die Insel Malta*, 1909, 65, 129; *Annual Reports of the Curator of the Valetta Museum* (1906, and foll.).

<sup>2</sup> Naevius in Bährens, *Fragm. poet. Rom.* p. 48; Orosius, iv, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Livy, xxi, 51.

<sup>4</sup> *I.G.* xiv, 952, 953.

<sup>5</sup> Cicero, *Verr.* ii, 2, 123.

Greek civilisation can be found in the Maltese coins which, during the earlier Roman period, bear Greek types and—for the most part, if not, indeed, entirely—Greek inscriptions.<sup>1</sup> One may note also, as generally dated to this age, a bilingual dedication to Melkarth-Herakles, written in Phoenician and Greek.<sup>2</sup> We may conclude that at the end of the third century B.C. a Greek element predominated in Malta, and further that this island was governed in Greek fashion by a city, presumably also called Melite, with magistrates bearing Greek titles. The same was doubtless true of Gozo, though as to this island evidence is lacking, save for Greek coins with the legend *TATAITON*.

During the Roman period, the Maltese islands, like so much of the Roman empire, have no history. At some time in the long life of Masinissa, one of his admirals landed in Malta and plundered, as Cicero tells us, an ancient and famous temple of Iuno which stood on a promontory close to the town, taking from thence certain elephants' tusks of enormous size. The king sent them back to the temple, carved with Punic inscriptions, stating that he had done so. These same tusks were afterwards carried off by Verres with much other temple treasure, including ivory statuettes of Victory, 'antiquo opere ac summa arte perfectae.'<sup>3</sup> Verres also fell upon a citizen of Melite, long resident at Lilybaeum, and tried to rob him of certain silver cups 'quae Thericlia nominantur, Mentoris manu summo artificio facta,' which he kept in a relative's house in Malta.<sup>4</sup>

Verres passed, and Malta disappears from written history for centuries. Ovid casually mentions it as fertile; other ancient writers speak of its cotton (which is still raised in the island) and the stuffs made from it, of its dogs, a small breed of long-haired terrier,<sup>5</sup> of the oil-presses, of which there are the ruins to-day, and of the skill of the Maltese mason in building houses and decorating them with carved cornices and with stucco, which skill, due, no doubt, to the admirable qualities of the easily quarried and quickly hardening Maltese stone, still distinguishes the island workman. Otherwise, apart from the unique incident of St. Paul's shipwreck, the annals of Malta till the end of the Roman period are non-existent.

Something is known, however, about the political position and administration of the islands. Although assigned in the first instance to the province of Sicily, they seem to have had under the empire a special government, like other of the smaller islands in the Mediterranean. Certainly we find a Maltese coin of about 35–27 B.C. bearing

<sup>1</sup> Mayr, *Antike Münzen der Inseln Malta, Gozo, und Pantellaria* (München, 1895). He now attributes to the Punic period the bronze coins bearing the head of the bearded Melkarth-Hercules.

<sup>2</sup> *I.G.* xiv, 600.

<sup>3</sup> Cic. *Verr.* ii, 4, 103.

<sup>4</sup> *Verr.* ii, 4, 39; for the class of cup, see Brunn, *Gesch. der griech. Künstler*, ii, 276; Welcker, *Kleine Schriften*, iii, 499.

<sup>5</sup> Strabo, vi, 277; Athenaeus, xii, 518; vase of about 500 B.C. (with the name 'Melitaeon') in *Ann. del Ist.* 1852, pl. 1; Otto Keller, *Antike Tierwelt*, i, 93, fig. 34.

the name of a propraetor of Sicily, and showing that the islands were then part of the Sicilian province,<sup>1</sup> while, later on, an imperial inscription records one Chrestion, *Augusti lib(ertus), proc(urator) insularum Melit. et Gaul.* who restored a temple of Proserpine in Malta, and was apparently in some way governor of the islands.<sup>2</sup> How far this special government supplemented or superseded the ordinary provincial administration is not very clear, nor do we know exactly when it was introduced.

More can be affirmed about the local government. Each island, Melite and Gaulus, had, as in earlier days, its one town, which bore its name, and each town had, in the period of the empire, a full Roman town-constitution with the rank of 'municipium.' Duumvirs and decurions are mentioned on the inscriptions, and the citizens of Gaulus seem to have been enrolled in the 'tribus Quirina'; as to the tribe of Melite, we have no direct information.<sup>3</sup> It is, however, uncertain when these privileges were granted. Generally, it has been said, as by Mayr, that the two islands received the citizenship along with Sicily in 44 B.C. Unfortunately, this grant of citizenship to Sicily is not itself quite clear and, if ever really made, seems to have been immediately cancelled. On the other hand, a Greek inscription of the age of Tiberius mentions one L. Castricius Prudens, of the Quirine tribe and of equestrian rank, as *πρώτος Μελιταίων καὶ πατρων, ἄρξας καὶ ἀμφιπολεύσας θεῷ Αὐγούστῳ . . .* These titles, as Mommsen observes, are not those of a Roman 'municipium.'<sup>4</sup> The title *πρώτος Μελιταίων* resembles that borne by the Publius who entertained St. Paul about A.D. 60, *ὁ πρώτος τῆς νήσου*,<sup>5</sup> and we have perhaps to put the enfranchisement of Melite later than this date. However, a second-century monument makes clear that in time at least the island gained municipal rank. It is equally uncertain when Gaulus attained this privilege. That it did so earlier than the end of the second

<sup>1</sup> Mionnet, i, 343, 26; Mommsen, *Münzwesen*, 374, note.

<sup>2</sup> *C.I.L.* x, 7494; compare Mommsen's note on 6785. The text (not in *I.G.*) runs as follows:

	ΤΙΕΡ ΤΗC	ΤΟΤ ΑΤΤΟ	
	ΚΡΑΤΟΡΟC ΚΑΙCΑΡΟC	ΤΙ· ΑΙΑΙΟ	ν
(sic)	ΑΡΙΑΝΟΤ	ΑΝΤΩΝΕΙΝΟΤ	CΕΒΑC
	CΕΒΟΤC	ΥΓΕΙΑC ΚΑΙ	ΑΙΩΝΙΟΤ
	ΝΗC ΟΛΟΤ	ΤΟΤ ΟΙΚΟΤ	ΑΤΤΟΤ ΚΑΙ
	ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ ΚΑΙ	ΙΕΡΑC	CHNKAH
	ΤΟΤ ΚΥΡΙΩΝ	ΔΗΜΟ	ϙ ΤΑΝ
			ἐθηκεν

In line 1 between the second and third words there is a garland supported by two dolphins. The provenance of the inscription is quite uncertain, and the interpretation of the last line as *Συριτων δῆμον υ(ι)ος* adopted by Garrucci and Caruana is doubtful.

<sup>3</sup> For the Quirine tribe at Gaulus, see *C.I.L.* x, 7501, 7508, etc. The only inscription which bears on Melite, a Greek inscription mentioned in the text, is, as Mommsen observes, not conclusive. It only names the tribus Quirina.

<sup>4</sup> *I.G.* xiv, 601; compare Mommsen's remark, *C.I.L.* x, p. 773. The Quirine tribe seems to

have been used for Greeks who obtained the Roman franchise individually, and this may have been the case with Castricius, or perhaps he may have sprung from Gaulus. No certainty can therefore be deduced from its mention.

<sup>5</sup> Acts, xxviii, 7.

century is quite certain,<sup>1</sup> and it may have done so before Melite : certainly its municipal records are a good deal fuller than those of Malta.

The inscriptions further indicate that the usual worship of the emperor and the imperial house prevailed in these islands. Castricius Prudens, as we have seen above, was 'flamen divi Augusti' (or its equivalent) in Malta, while a Lutatia, C. f. 'sacerdos Augusti, and her husband, M. Livius Optatus, flamen Gaulitanorum, appear on a dedication to Livia, wife of Augustus, set up in the earlier part of the reign of Tiberius, before A.D. 29. We hear, too, at Gaulus of a flamen of Hadrian, who was also 'patron' of the municipium.<sup>2</sup>

In general, these dedications are in Latin, and it suits with this that members at least of the Gaulitane community occasionally obtained preferment of a sort in the empire. Thus, besides the Castricius Prudens noted above, one Marcus Vallius Rufus received the 'equus publicus,' i.e. equestrian rank, in the second century, from the emperor Pius, and was afterwards honoured by a public monument in his own town. On the other hand, Greek cannot have died out. A second-century dedication for the safety of Pius and his house and of the Roman people and senate is couched in Greek; and though we do not know whether it came from Malta or Gozo, it presumably belongs to the islands.<sup>3</sup>

## II. ROMAN REMAINS IN MALTA.<sup>4</sup>

### THE GRAND HARBOUR.

I pass on to describe the actual remains of Roman date which have been found, and in particular those which still survive, on the islands. I begin with what is now the chief harbour of Malta, a harbour which must always have been used a good deal, but which had not its present importance in ancient times. Here, the principal building seems to have been the temple of Iuno which has been mentioned above. This possibly was a survival of a shrine of Astarte; certainly Cicero avows that it was ancient and venerated. Ptolemy implies that it lay east of the town of Melite, in the same latitude. This would point to the promontory in the Grand Harbour on which Fort Sant' Angelo now stands, and here indeed sixteenth-

<sup>1</sup> For Melite see *C.I.L.* x, 7495, 8318; Mayr's idea that 'primus omnium' in 7495 is a title is pretty plainly wrong. For Gaulus, see *C.I.L.* x, 7502, foll. It might be argued from 7501 that the 'municipium' of Gaulus dated from before A.D. 29, but the argument would depend again on the occurrence of the tribe-name 'Quirina.'

<sup>2</sup> *C.I.L.* x, 7507.

<sup>3</sup> Garrucci, *Civiltà cattolica*, 17th Sept. 1881 (ser. iii, vol. vii, p. 731); compare Caruana, *Frammento Critico*, p. 297. The stone was in the Bonavita collection.

<sup>4</sup> I should perhaps here insert a warning that there is no standard orthography of local Maltese names. I have done the best I could to spell them with the help of Maltese friends and of the government map.

century writers place it, mentioning ruins spread over many acres and partly built out into the sea.<sup>1</sup> Naturally, there is now nothing visible.

Remains have also been found in the innermost south-western recess, now called the harbour extension, on the low shore of the Marsa at the foot of the Corradino hill, where much was discovered in 1766–1768. Here, too, nothing is visible now, but from older

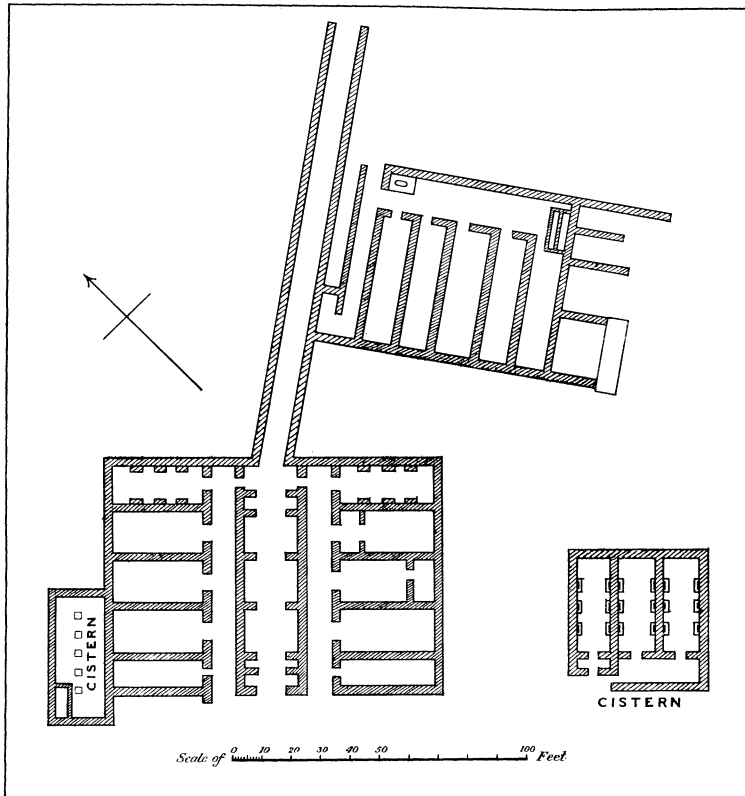


FIG. I. PLAN OF STORE-HOUSES, ETC. AT MARSA, GRAND HARBOUR, MALTA (p. 29).  
After Barbaro (1794).

descriptions<sup>2</sup> the buildings seem to have consisted of rows of rectangular chambers, opening on vaulted corridors and serving probably as stores, like some at Ostia illustrated in an earlier volume of

<sup>1</sup> Quintinus, *Descr. insulae Melite*, col. 2, cited by Mayr. Three reliefs in the Valetta museum which have been called ancient and assigned to this temple, really date from the renaissance (Caruana, *Report*, 114; Zammit, *Valetta Museum*, 41).

<sup>2</sup> Ciantar, *Malta Illustrata*, i, 3, 8, p. 153, and plate xx; Barbaro, *Degli avanzi d'alcuni antichissimi edifici scoperti in Malta l'anno 1768* (Malta 1794), compare Mayr, p. 133, who misplaces the site. My plan (fig. 1) is taken from Barbaro's plate i.

this *Journal*.<sup>1</sup> Cisterns hewn in the rock were found below these chambers, and also two rectangular rock-hewn reservoirs (fig. 1). In one of the chambers were found 260 entire amphorae, twenty-four of which bore Greek inscriptions scratched upon them, while one was marked with a cross which Mayr, perhaps rashly, takes to be Christian. He infers from the lettering generally that these graffiti belonged to the later empire, or even to the Byzantine age. The coins found here ranged from the third century B.C. to A.D. 829. Vases with cremated human bones were also found, but too few to suggest that the buildings had ever been used as tombs. A quay-wall of large stones was found on the south side of these remains, and roads seemed to lead from it and from other points on the shore to the store-houses.<sup>2</sup> Among smaller finds Barbaro figures a chrysoprasus, engraved with the twelve signs of the zodiac, Phoebus and Selene in the middle, and the seven planets or the stars of the great bear, and on the reverse a lion leaping over a bull's head. The piece has obvious analogies among the so-called Mithraic or quasi-Mithraic gems.<sup>3</sup>

In the harbour extension works of 1865 the workmen brought up, from a depth of 14 feet, two fragments of white marble columns, each 20 inches in diameter, and the torso of a statue of Artemis, smaller than life, all three now in the museum at Valetta; another fragment of a column was found here in 1877,<sup>4</sup> as well as a damaged female head (Valetta museum, no. 60). Baron Bali de Stadl<sup>5</sup> describes a Roman bath on the slope of the Jesuits' Hill to the north. On the hill itself tombs of the Christian period have been unearthed.<sup>6</sup> Near one of these, discovered in 1874, was found a sepulchral inscription, which is undoubtedly pagan.<sup>7</sup> There are remains, too, of a building attributable to the Phoenician or Roman period on the north-west side of the promontory now occupied by the town of La Valletta, in the Villa Frere at Pietà, in the innermost recess of the harbour of Marsa Muscetto.

Despite these finds just mentioned, however, it seems that the commanding site occupied by the modern town was not really used by the ancients. As far as I know, no antiquities whatever have been found there, though the fact that the rock is very near the

<sup>1</sup> ii, 185.

<sup>2</sup> Abela, *Malta Illustrata*, i, 1, p. 16 (Ciantar, 48, p. 79). Abela mentions at the same place a marble fragment with a mutilated inscription (... IN STATIONE ... MILLE ... QVINCENT. PASS ...); not even Mommsen could guess what this really means (*C.I.L.* x, 7496).

<sup>3</sup> Barbaro, pl. 6, reproduced by Caruana, *Report*, 122; a similar (or identical) gem is in the possession of Mr. L. Camilleri.

<sup>4</sup> Caruana, *Report*, 90, 113; Zammit, *Valletta Museum*, 113.

<sup>5</sup> Unpublished MS. in the Malta Public Library: see Caruana, *Report*, 92. This is the discovery referred to by Ciantar (i, 3, 7, p. 150): cf. Barbaro, op. cit. 9 f; 48, n. 4. Caruana is wrong in referring it to another building. Ciantar mentions that another round bath with mosaics had been found not long before his time.

<sup>6</sup> Becker, *Malta Sotterranea* (Strassburg, 1913), 62, foll.

<sup>7</sup> *C.I.L.* x, 8319; Becker, 132.



surface might account for the non-preservation of earlier buildings. In prehistoric times the heights of Corradino were occupied, and Hal-Saffieni, under the village of Casal Paula, was the burial-place of a large neolithic population, but it would seem as if the harbour of Malta served mainly for passing traders, while the islanders, probably for reasons of security, preferred an inland site.

#### NOTABILE AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.

The ancient city of Melite stood upon a flat-topped ridge, almost in the centre of the island. It commands a magnificent view of the whole of its eastern or larger half, but that of the western half is impeded by the Bengemma hills, which are of about the same elevation. The ridge runs ssw. and nne; a little to the south of the first houses of the suburb of Rabato, it is 700 feet above sea-level,<sup>1</sup> and slopes downwards a little to the extreme point of Città Vecchia.

The site of the ancient city was protected by steep cliffs on the east, north and north-west; and, on the south-west, was isolated from the rest of the high ground by a vast ditch, hewn in the rock, 82 feet wide and 12 feet deep, which was crossed at two gates. The church of St. Paul in Rabato lies actually in the ditch. Of the walls no trace is now visible, though Abela states that he saw blocks of stone six feet long and more, which belonged to the ancient walls; and Mayr, in 1898, saw what he believed to be a part of them on the north-west side. In any case there can be little doubt as to the line which they followed; their circuit was over two and a half miles in length.<sup>2</sup> The restriction of the city to the fortified area of Mdina, on the north extremity of the ridge, is probably to be ascribed to the Arabs, though the existing fortifications are due to the Knights, to whom it owes its present name of Notabile. It is also called Città Vecchia, while the southern suburb is called Rabato. Here, near the Benedictine monastery of S. Pietro,<sup>3</sup> was found in 1747 a fragmentary inscription of the second century after Christ in honour of a benefactor of the municipality, who had also decorated some temple with marbles, and dedicated in it a statue of Apollo<sup>4</sup>: there or elsewhere he had also erected four columns and the pilasters in the

<sup>1</sup> The highest ground in the island is about a mile to the ssw. near the village of Dingli (845 feet).

<sup>2</sup> Abela, i, 2, p. 30; Ciantar, i, p. 127; Caruana, *Ancient Tombs*, p. 85 and pl. XXI; Mayr, *Insel Malta*, 142. Caruana states, without details, that the foundations of one of the gates were found in 1890, and that part of the natural rock bridge of the other still remained. He also asserts the existence of a third gate, at the south-west angle of the site, but I am not inclined to agree with him. The carriage-road which enters the town on the east is of comparatively recent origin.

<sup>3</sup> At the bottom of a cistern in this monastery was found, according to Abela, the inscription *I.G.* xiv, 602, now lost.

<sup>4</sup> *C.I.L.* x, 7495. A fragment of the inscription was seen by Dessau in St. Paul's Square; the whole is now preserved in the Roman villa museum (Zammit, *Guide*, p. 21). Prof. Zammit has kindly sent me a squeeze of it, from which it appears that Ciantar gave the text correctly. Dr. Hülsen dates the stone to the second century, as he kindly tells me.

pronaos and the podium and the pavement, on all of which works he spent 110,798 sesterces : for this reason, and according to the wish of the people of Malta, a statue (?) was erected to him by public subscription, by decree of the decurions. An Ionic capital was discovered here, and two whole marble columns and fragments of architecture were unearthed near by<sup>1</sup> in 1710 and cut up for use in churches. Near here was also found a draped male torso, four feet high<sup>2</sup> (fig. 2). Another inscription of a more fragmentary character



FIG. 2. DRAPED MALE TORSO FOUND AT RABATO, MALTA : NOW IN THE ROMAN VILLA MUSEUM (no. 29).

came to light in 1868. It mentions a patron of the municipality and work which he executed in a temple.<sup>3</sup> From the language of

<sup>1</sup> Ciantar, i, 130 and pl. vii (which shows, however, not a capital, but a cornice—perhaps one which is now in the Roman villa museum) : cf. Caruana, *Report*, 89, who attributes to it three capitals in the Sant Fournier collection, in the Villa Sant at Casal Lia.

<sup>2</sup> Now preserved in the Roman villa museum (no. 29).

<sup>3</sup> *C.I.L.* x, 8318. Prof. Hülsen reads the text from a squeeze as follows :

. . . *CLAVDIVS IVSTVS Iiii vir et patro-*  
*NVS MVNICIP MELITENSIVM . . .*  
*MARMOREVM CVM SIMVLACRO*  
*ET OMNI SVO ORNATV PR . . . ob honorem*  
*DECVRIONATVS . . . AV*  
*SECVNDVM POLLICITATIONEM SVAM*  
*EXTRVXIT CONSECRAVITQVE . . . in*  
*QVOD OPVS AMPLIVS QVAM PRAMISERAT*  
*EROGAVIT HS . . .*

The stone is broken to the right and below : at the

the first inscription, one may doubt Mayr's correctness in supposing that the temple was that of Apollo, and that only one building is

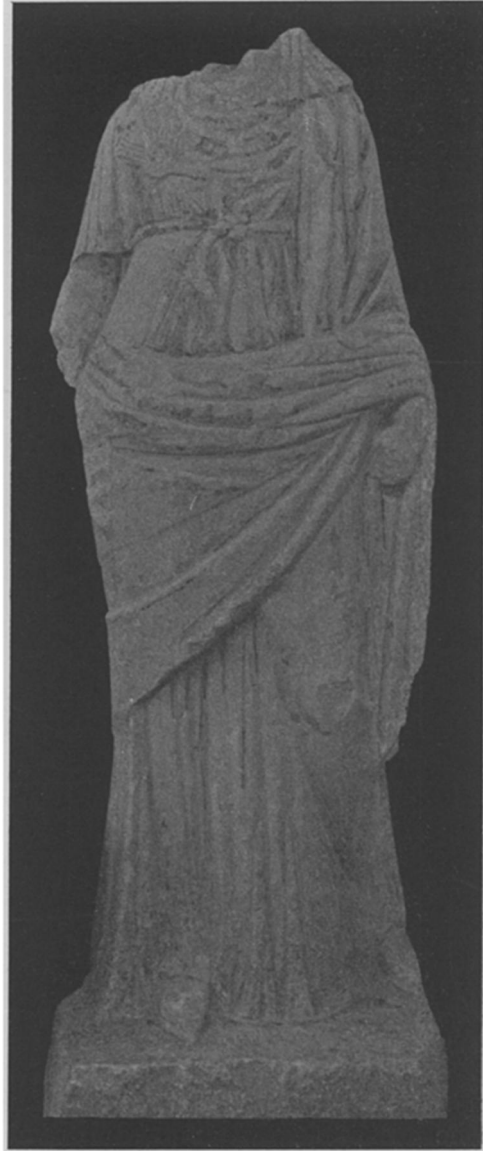


FIG. 3. STATUE REPRESENTING ASTARTE (?) FOUND AT NOTABILE, MALTA : NOW IN THE ROMAN VILLA MUSEUM (no. 26) (p. 33).

mentioned : but both inscriptions are so mutilated that certainty is impossible.

end the line over the numeral denoting the sum is still visible. There is no sign of any line having been lost before line 1. Prof. Hülsen dates the

inscription to the end of the first or the beginning of the second century. The stone is now in the possession of Dean Vassallo at Notabile.

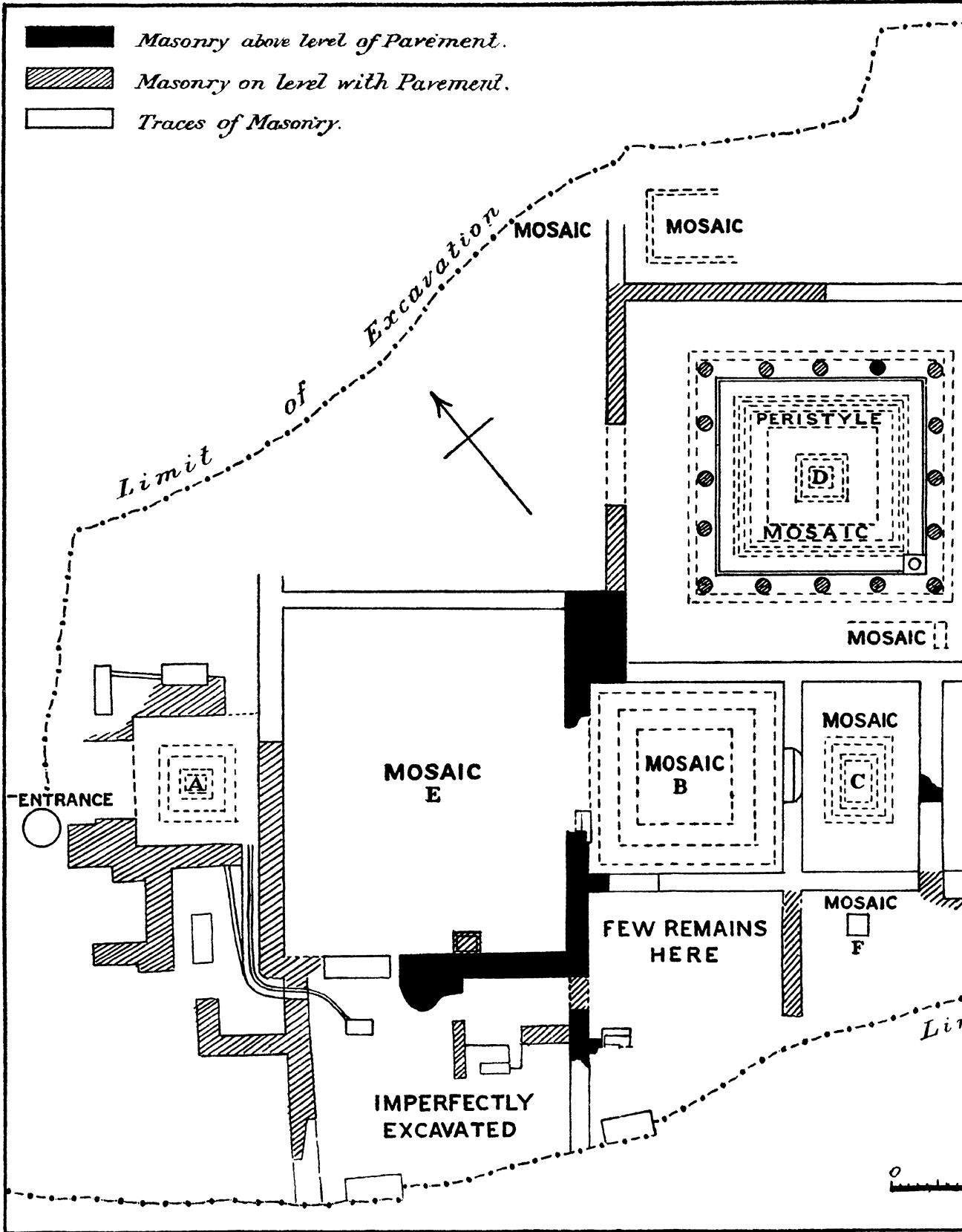


FIG. 4. ROMAN BUILDINGS AT RABATO, MALTA (p. 35).

A. Ante-room with mosaic of Sampson and Delilah (?)

B, C, D, now the museum.

E

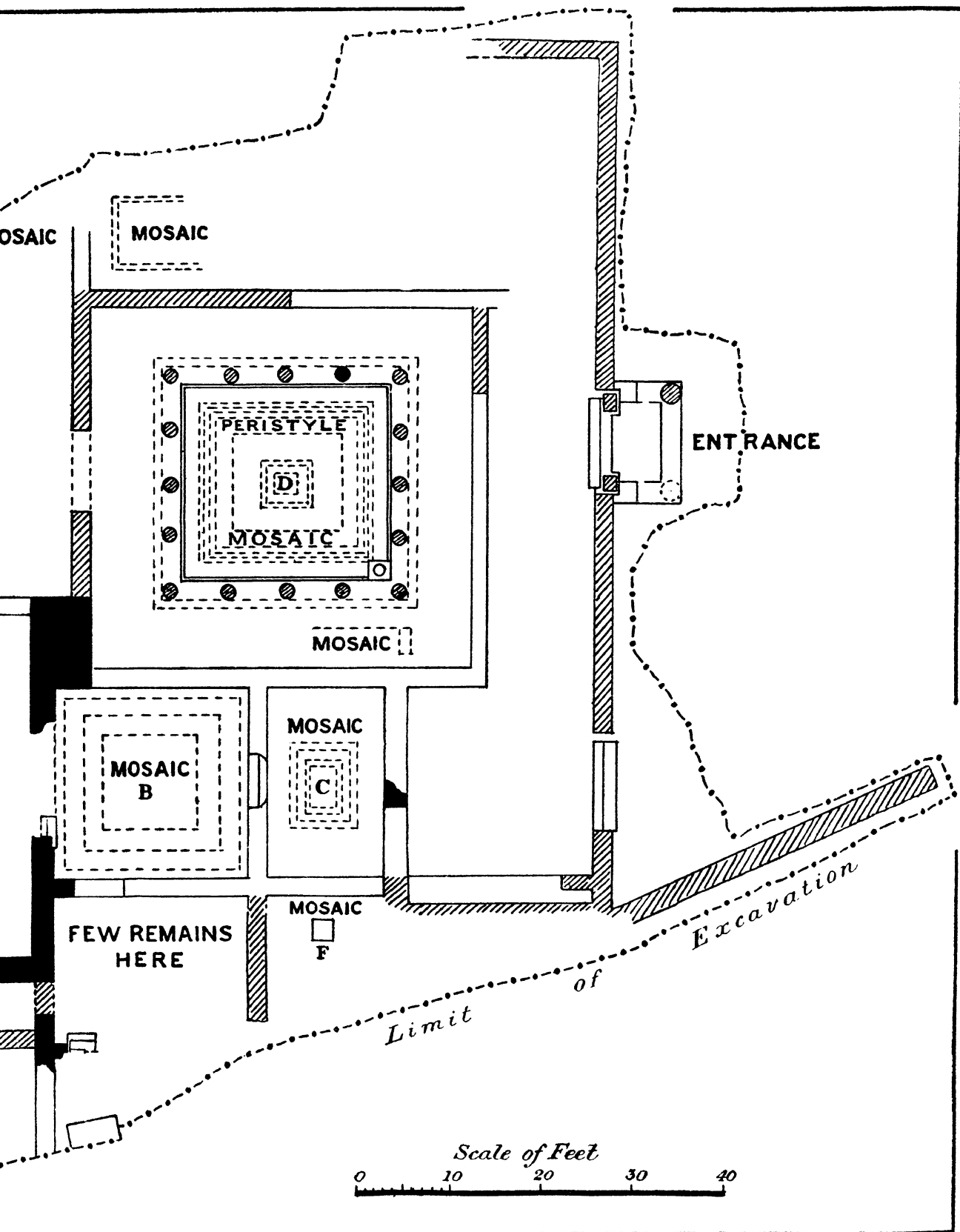


FIG. 4. ROMAN BUILDINGS AT RABATO, MALTA (p. 35).

and Delilah (?)

B, C, D, now the museum.

E. Mosaic.

F. Mosaic of Autumn.

Mayr conjectures that a second temple of Astarte existed in the town: he notes that the large statue which probably represents her (fig. 3) stood, in the seventeenth century, at one of the gates of Notabile, while four female statuettes, probably votive figures, were found near the cathedral, and may be supposed to have belonged to her temple.<sup>1</sup> The large statue in question<sup>2</sup> represents a draped female figure in Maltese hard stone, not marble. The drapery proves it to be a work of the Roman period; but the hair falling over the breast, shoulders, and back, and the numerous necklaces with which the figure is decorated show Phoenician influence; in the two upper rows of these latter are rosettes; in the lower, rams' heads in pairs. Over each breast is a bird, apparently a dove.

Abela, writing in 1647, notes the existence, in every street of Notabile, of marble columns, capitals, etc.<sup>3</sup> and both he and Houel<sup>4</sup> figure fragments of architecture which they saw there, belonging to various epochs of the Roman imperial period and probably to public buildings. Abela also speaks of the existence of ancient aqueducts, that is, probably drains.<sup>5</sup> Other discoveries have been made at various points within the area of the ancient city. Abela<sup>6</sup> saw a vaulted chamber in concrete in the garden of a certain Tomaso Zabar, and lead pipes and fragments of marble pavements had been found there; there was still, he says, a well of warm and slightly salt water.

Ciantar records the discovery, in 1720, of a hypocaust in the monastery of S. Pietro, and of a lead basin, weighing 150 lbs.; and, in 1723, a large room was found, under the pavement of which had been laid twenty-four amphorae to keep off the damp, together with a fine marble bust, which was given to the then Grand Master, Manoel de Vilhena.<sup>7</sup>

Caruana records the finding of mosaic pavements at various sites and periods,<sup>8</sup> but without adequate details. A pavement of small red, gray and yellow lozenge-shaped tiles was found in 1909 about ten feet below the surface of the strada S. Croce, in the yard

<sup>1</sup> He reproduces the statue on p. 126, fig. 31, and two of the statuettes, together with another in the Valetta museum (the provenance of which seems to be uncertain) on pp. 78-79, figs. 27-29. The earliest illustration of the large statue (Abela, p. 32, fig. 1 = Ciantar, pl. ii, fig. 1) shows it as already headless, and Houel, *Voyage des isles de Sicile, Lipari, et Malte*, iv, pl. 26, 1, gives it with a restored head.

<sup>2</sup> Now in the Roman villa museum, no. 26, six feet high, including base; forearms and head missing. The work is very shallow, the back being practically unworked. The figure wears pointed shoes. The left hand, which comes out below the drapery, across the body, held some object, signs of which still remain on the left thigh, with a small hole beneath, with traces of a metal fastening.

<sup>3</sup> p. 32 = Ciantar, tab. xiv.

<sup>4</sup> *Voyage, etc.* iv, pl. 261, d, etc. The seated figure to the right of n in a shell-niche, was, however, seen by him at the Grand Harbour.

<sup>5</sup> p. 31; Ciantar, i, 128.

<sup>6</sup> p. 33; Ciantar, i, 145.

<sup>7</sup> i, 135, 150; for two small gems, cf. i, 666, pl. 11, xii.

<sup>8</sup> *Recent discoveries at Notabile*, 13; *Report*, p. 91, *Ancient Pottery*, 57, in 1747 (not in Ciantar); between 1830 and 1858 at Rabato and at Mtarfa; in 1860, 1863, and 1867 (floors in monochrome tessellation, generally red, under the foundations of houses at Bir-il-liun, in Rabato, and of the hospital of S. Spirito); cf. *Report*, p. 116, for a statuette found in 1880, which has now disappeared.

of the house of marchese G. de Piro ; specimens are in the Valetta museum. In 1910 some ordinary Roman pottery was found in a deep well at the south extremity of Rabato.<sup>1</sup>

THE VILLA AT RABATO.

An important private house of the Roman period was found

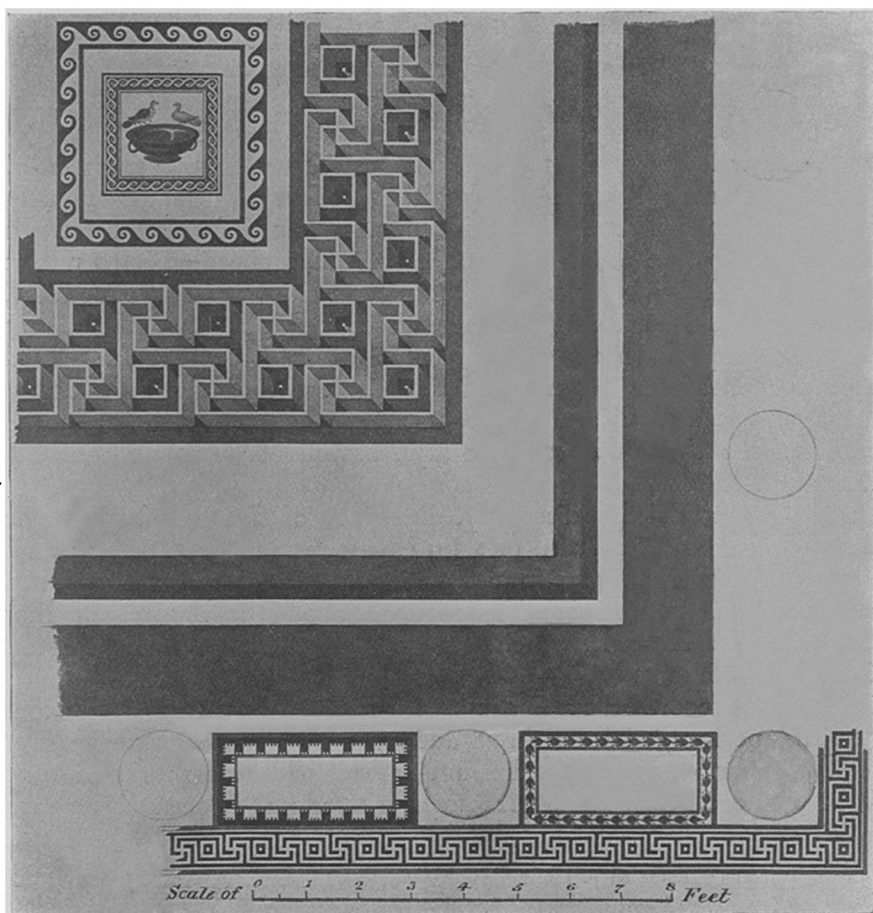


FIG. 5. MOSAIC IN PERISTYLE OF ROMAN VILLA AT RABATO, MALTA (p. 35).

From a drawing.

in 1881 in the Sakkaja square between Notabile and Rabato, on the north-west side of the hill, with a fine view over towards Mtarfa

<sup>1</sup> T. Zammit in *Annual Report*, 1909-10, p. 13 ; 1910-11, p. 10. I was told by Col. MacKean, C.M.G. that a wall of large blocks of stone had been found several years before under the Casa d'Amico Inguanez, running due north, towards the north-west corner of the cathedral square, where a similar

wall (possibly its continuation) had been found more recently in drainage works, close to the house of Baron Gourgion. He also showed me a fluted column of hard stone,  $14\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter, which was said to belong to the ancient theatre.

(fig. 4). It has not been completely excavated; but there is only a small depth of soil overlying the rock, and it seems doubtful whether much more is preserved. The greater part of the building (rooms B, C, and peristyle) is now enclosed, and a small museum has been built over it.<sup>1</sup> The entrance was on the south-east. In front of the door was a porch, supported by two columns, leading into a passage running from north-east to south-west: underneath was a rock-cut tank, to take the rain-water from the roof of the peristyle. Crossing this, one entered the peristyle, once supported by sixteen columns of limestone coated with stucco, with a Doric epistyle; one bay has been restored from the fragments found. The area enclosed by this peristyle (22 feet 4 inches by 21 feet 4 inches), from the character of the mosaics which adorn it, seems to have been roofed with glass. The pavement is an elaborate geometrical pattern (fig. 5) with a panel representing two doves on the edge of a bowl, in colours on a white ground. The well-known mosaic of the doves in the Capitoline museum (Sala delle Colombe, 13A) has four doves; and it corresponds more closely to Pliny's description<sup>2</sup> than does ours.

The passage mentioned above ran round the north-east side of the peristyle, and appears to have widened out considerably: this may be inferred from the traces of a mosaic border, found at its north-west end, resembling that of room B. There was probably another range of rooms on the north-east, as remains of a pavement were found to the north again: but the excavations were not carried further in this direction. Much harm has, no doubt, been done by later burials, obviously those of Arabs. On the north-west nothing more of the building has yet been discovered; on the south-west are rectangular rooms not directly accessible from the peristyle, which probably belong to a part of the house entered from the north-west, perhaps the principal part, as the entrance on the south-east can hardly have been the main entrance.<sup>3</sup>

Room A, entered from the north-west, looks like an ante-room: it had a decorative panel in the threshold, in black and white, with a red border; then came another panel, with triangles of yellow, green, white and black; then a white scroll on a red, yellow, and green ground, surrounding a small panel of very fine mosaic. The border is formed by a garland of flowers, with comic masks at each corner and tragic masks in the centre of each side. The picture in the centre (24 by 25 inches) is inlaid on a slab of marble, and is very remarkable (plate III). It represents a nude male figure of Herculean

<sup>1</sup> Caruana, *Recent discoveries at Notabile* (Malta, 1881), a somewhat inadequate account. Copies extra-illustrated with photographs from drawings (some of which are reproduced in our text) are to be met with secondhand: cf. also Zammit, *Guide to the Roman Villa Museum at Rabat* (Malta, 1908).

<sup>2</sup> *N.H.* xxxvi, 184.

<sup>3</sup> Another argument, as Caruana points out, is the fact that the mosaic in the peristyle does not face the porch, but looks north-west.



build, with his hands tied behind his back, struggling with two women, who hold him fast; one grasps the hair of his head from behind, while the other, with a pair of scissors in her right, grips his beard in her left hand.<sup>1</sup> The subject was believed, by Caruana, to be Hercules and Omphale; a better interpretation is to be found

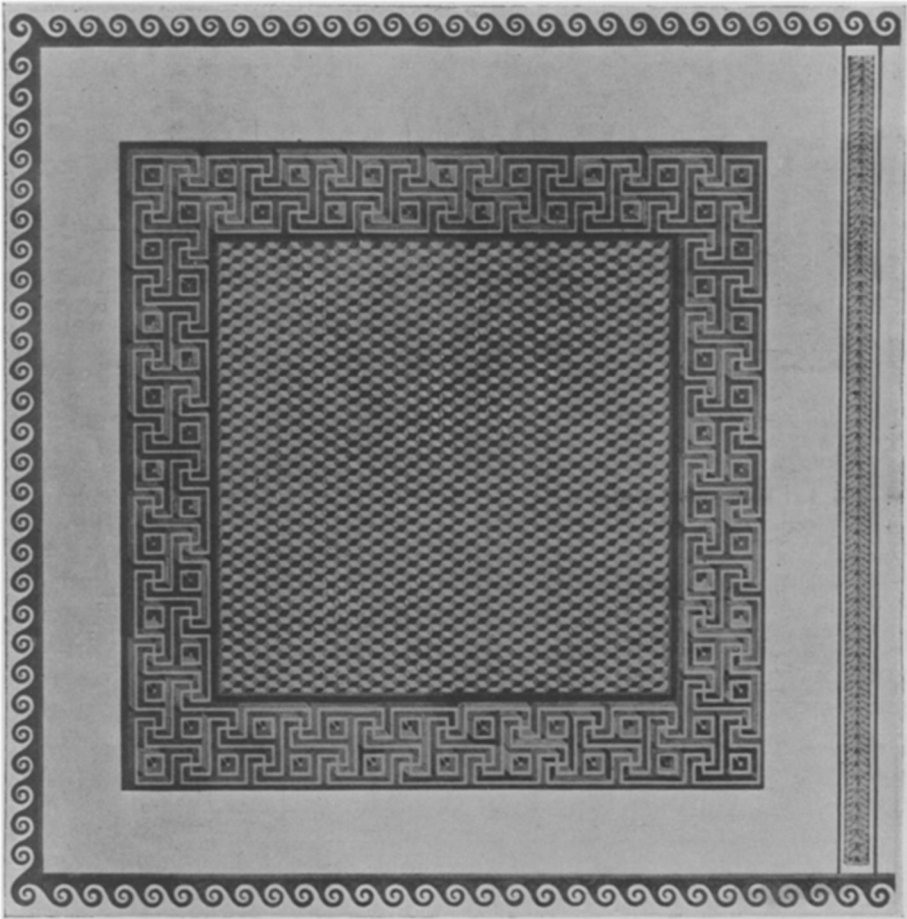


FIG. 6. MOSAIC IN ROOM E OF ROMAN VILLA AT RABATO (p. 38).

From a drawing.

in the tale of Samson and Delilah.<sup>2</sup> It may be asked how such a subject found its way into the decorations of a house presumably belonging to a pagan of the first century after Christ. It may have

<sup>1</sup> See note on the subject of this mosaic by Mr. G. McN. Rushforth, printed on p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> In the Biblical narrative, however, Delilah

shore Samson's head, not his beard, and did it while he was asleep, not by binding his hands (Judges, xvi). We should perhaps seek a non-biblical explanation (see p. 79).—F. H.]

been this doubt which prevented Mayr from accepting any explanation.<sup>1</sup> But a painting taken to be the Judgment of Solomon has been found at Pompeii, as well as in the house discovered near the Farnesina and a columbarium of the Villa Pamfili, and there is no reason why we should not find the subject of Samson and Delilah

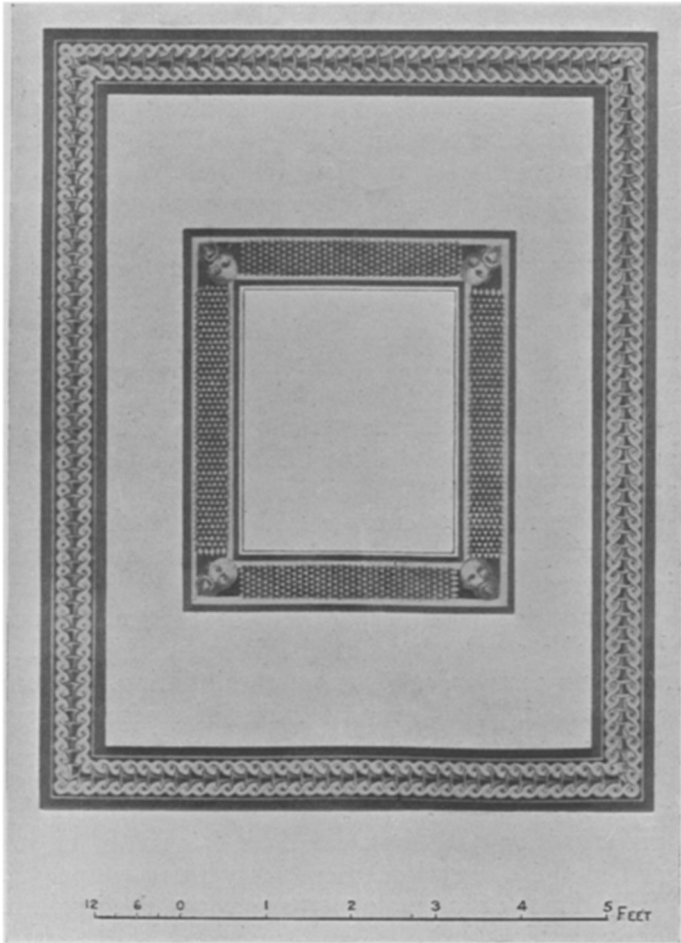


FIG. 7. MOSAIC IN ROOM C OF ROMAN VILLA AT RABATO (p. 38).  
From a drawing.

depicted here. Becker<sup>2</sup> not unjustifiably points out that the mosaic is probably too fine to be of local manufacture; he considers it a product of Alexandrine art, into which elements not only of Semitic but of Greek mythology have been worked, from the stories of Heracles and Nisus. The technique of the mosaic is very good. The smallest

<sup>1</sup> *Insel Malta*, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> 77, fol: cf. taf. xxv, 2; xxvi.

mosaic cubes are only 0·2 cm. square, the largest about 0·5 by 0·4 cm. The colouring is extremely fine, and the shading clearly done, and the light falling on the limbs of the male figure is singularly well treated.

The next room, E, is of considerable size ; traces were found in it of a key-pattern pavement with a white maeander, similar to that in room B. It was adjoined on the south-west by a room which has not been completely excavated, and on the north-west by room B. The latter contained a pavement with an ornamental geometric design (fig. 6), which had, in later times, been repaired in places with tiles and irregular pieces of marble. A door, near the west angle of this room, led to another room, of which little was found ; another door, in the south-west side, gave access to room C.

This, too, had an elaborate mosaic floor of geometrical pattern, scrolls, triangles and the like : at the angles are four bearded heads (fig. 7). In the centre was probably a mosaic panel : indeed, a slab of local limestone, similar to that enclosing the figure of Autumn (see below), was discovered somewhere near, but the mosaic which it had contained was entirely destroyed.

South-west of this room there must have been another with a mosaic floor. Here was found a fine but damaged picture in coloured mosaic (plate IV), mounted upon a slab of limestone 1 foot 10 inches by 2 feet, representing a curly-haired boy (? Autumn) with a bunch of grapes in one hand, and in the other perhaps a pomegranate : a dove flies towards the grapes, and a duck fills the left-hand of the picture. Beyond this room are others of no great moment (see fig. 4). From the south angle of the house a thick wall, possibly a terrace, runs on eastwards. Outside the building, at a spot which cannot be identified,<sup>1</sup> were found remains of coarser flooring of tile concrete with pieces of white marble encrusted in it : it was laid on a damp-course of large amphorae bedded in mortar.

The objects found within the house are of considerable interest, and are preserved on the spot. Besides fragments of stucco and marble, used in the decoration, there are various sculptures. These include : (1) Part of a male figure with the paludamentum on the right shoulder (4 feet 6 inches high) : head, arms and legs are missing ; the right arm was outstretched. (2) The lower half of a draped female figure, from the waist downwards (no. 25, fig. 8), measuring 4 feet 9 inches in height. The figure is represented as advancing, the right leg drawn back and off the ground. The drapery is very carefully treated, and the knees are visible through it. (3) A headless, erect female statue (5 feet high) with long chiton and himation which must have veiled the head. The work is mediocre but the preservation is good : left hand and right forearm are missing

<sup>1</sup> Caruana, p. 6 ; Zammit, p. 12.

(no. 27, fig. 9). (4) A fine portrait bust in close-grained white marble, 1 foot 8 inches high, of the type of Agrippina the younger (no. 37, fig. 10). The bust, the nose, and part of the left ear are



FIG. 8. DRAPED FEMALE FIGURE FROM THE ROMAN VILLA AT RABATO (p. 38).

broken and restored. The crown of the head was broken in antiquity and a piece fastened on with bronze. The hair is waved back and gathered into a knot behind: the small curls on the forehead are

treated in a very shallow manner. The eyes are flat, and the ears badly rendered. (5) A male portrait-head in Luna marble, 1 foot high, of a member of the Julian (?) house (no. 28): the work and preservation are both good, but the nose is broken. The hair is worked in layers, in separate strands.<sup>1</sup> (6) Statue of a boy in a toga,

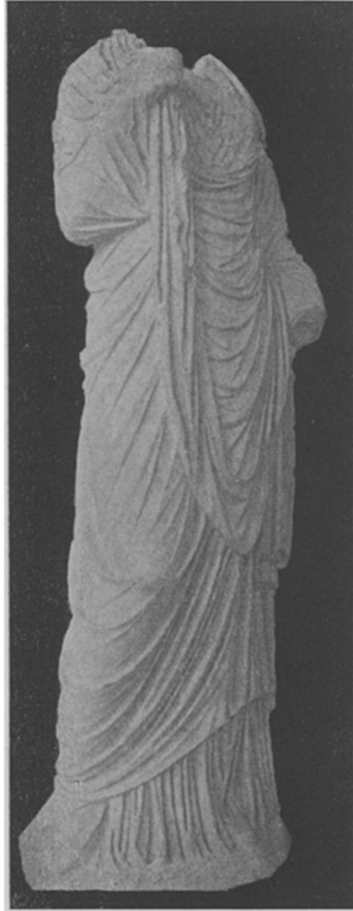


FIG. 9. DRAPED FEMALE FIGURE FROM THE ROMAN VILLA AT RABATO (p. 39).

in Luna (?) marble (no. 30, fig. 11) 3 feet 9 inches high as preserved, lacking the head, both arms from the elbow, and both feet: the left arm (bent) was attached. And lastly (7) fragments of two colossal marble statues, including two hands (one with a signet ring on the third finger), a leg, and a foot, also the pedestals and feet of three smaller male statues, each with a 'scrinium' by the left foot: the

[Judging from a photograph in Caruana, *Report*, a characteristic portrait of the emperor Claudius may be the companion-portrait of Agrippina. —G. McN. Rushforth.]

feet are encased in shoes. Fragments of three inscriptions<sup>1</sup> were found, but they do not tell much : the longest (fig. 12) contains the letters DECVR and mentions a decurion. The coins range from Gordian to Constantine Junior. There is also much pottery, and utensils of bronze, lead and iron.

It should be added that the museum contains objects which have nothing to do with the villa, but were discovered in or near Rabato or Notabile ; for instance, the headless Phoenician statue from the main city gate (fig. 3), architectural fragments attributed to the temples of Proserpine and Iuno, pottery from Phoenician tombs,

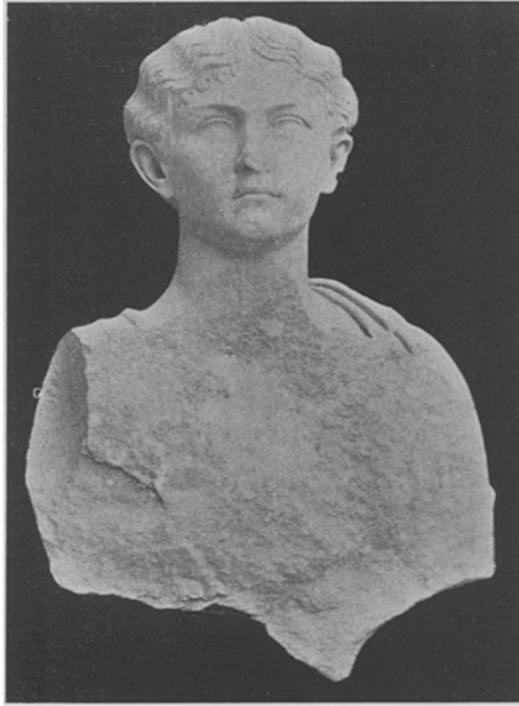


FIG. 10. PORTRAIT-BUST OF THE TYPE OF AGRIPPINA FROM THE ROMAN VILLA AT RABATO (p. 39).

some still earlier specimens of painted pottery resembling the fragment figured by Mayr,<sup>2</sup> and the fragments of a Corinthian bowl (Mayr wrongly calls it the lid of a pyxis), which, even if found in the villa, must have come originally from a Punic tomb.<sup>3</sup> Two female torsi, representing Amazons or attendants of Diana, obviously formed a

<sup>1</sup> The first fragment is alluded to by Caruana, *Frammento Critico*, 297. We may also note the amphora stamp SOPAT·F·A' on the side of an amphora below the handle.

<sup>2</sup> *Insel Malta*, p. 55, fig. 22 c.

<sup>3</sup> Mayr, 'Aus den phönikischen Nekropolen von Malta,' in *Münchener Sitzungsberichte*, 1905, p. 493, fig. 7 ; Peet in *J.H.S.* xxxii (1912), p. 97, fig. 3.

pair : each has one breast bare, and the other arm uplifted. They were found near the Roman villa, in cutting the road leading to the railway-station. They are in soft Malta building-stone. One wears a fine chiton with a border, and a nebris. Lastly, a fountain-statue, 15 inches high as preserved, without head, arms, or legs below the knees, was found 'near Notabile' in 1837. It represents a standing



FIG. 11. STATUE OF A BOY FROM THE ROMAN VILLA AT RABATO (p. 40).

female figure, the upper part of which is nude, with a long curl hanging on either shoulder ; she holds a shell before her through which flowed water. The work is very poor, and the material is inferior Italian marble.

The earth forming the glacis which bounds the city walls of the mediaeval Notabile on the south was examined by Prof. Zammit

in 1909-1910.<sup>1</sup> A shaft was dug down to the rock bottom, which was reached at a depth of about 20 feet. In it was found a hewn-out elliptical water-tank (about 14 by 11 feet, 8 feet deep), and in that lay numerous fragments of large Roman amphorae. The earth forming the glacis contained fragments of pottery of every kind, archaic, Punic, and Roman, and building rubbish.

Two of the most important temples of Melite were situated outside the town. One, a sanctuary of Baal-Chamman, which lay to the south, does not concern us here, as we have no evidence of the continuance of the cult into Roman times. The other, a temple of Proserpine, lay on the hill of Mtarfa, to the west, separated from the hill of Mdina by the Ghariexem valley, and apparently at its NNE. end. Here was found, in 1613, the inscription<sup>5</sup> recording

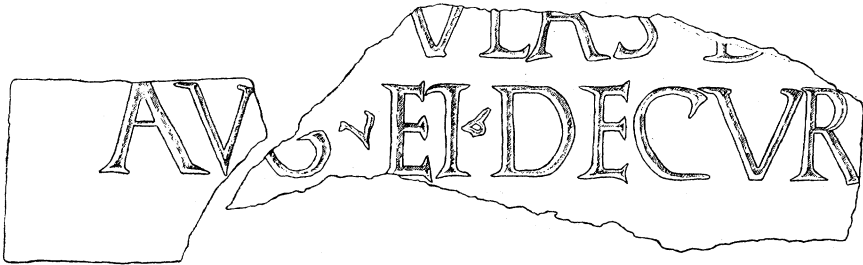


FIG. 12. FRAGMENT OF INSCRIPTION FROM RABATO (p. 41).

the restoration undertaken by Chrestion, the imperial procurator mentioned above, who 'columnas cum fastigiis et parietibus templi deae Proserpinae vetustate in ruinam imminentis restituit, simul et pilam inauravit.' Some architectural fragments, which in Abela's time were to be seen at Città Vecchia and Rabato, were ascribed by him to this temple. They are now in the Roman villa museum<sup>3</sup> (nos. 38-42, fig. 13).

The necropolis of the earlier Phoenician period extended to the south of the town<sup>4</sup>; other Punic cemeteries existed on the hill of Mtarfa to the north-west, and at Kligha, on the slopes of the

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report*, 15.

<sup>2</sup> *C.I.L.* x, 7494.

<sup>3</sup> Abela, p. 209, 220 = Ciantar, pl. xiv (also pl. vii, 1 (r)). Caruana (*Report*, p. 88) attributes to the temple some architectural fragments used in the Auberge d'Italie and in the Castellania at Valetta, and some fragments in the Sant Fournier collection; also three Corinthian capitals, two of which are in the Roman villa museum, the other at Mtarfa barracks (*Frammento Critico*, 281, 282).

In his visit to the site before the construction of the barracks, he (*Report*, pp. 88, 94) noticed nothing but some holes hewn in the rock like those at Birzebbugia (*P.B.S.R.* vi, p. 7, n. 1), though his statements are somewhat inconsistent with one another.

<sup>4</sup> Mayr, *op. cit.* 103, 147: cf. his special article on the Phoenician cemeteries of Malta, already cited, and *Annual Report*, 1907-8, p. 2; 1908-9, p. 5; 1910-11, p. 5; 1912-13, p. 9.



Bengemma hills, to the north-west again.<sup>1</sup> The last-named of these cemeteries continued in use until the Roman period. The old form of Phoenician tomb, a shaft communicating with one or two chambers,<sup>2</sup> persisted into Roman days, and the pottery maintained its Phoenician character. Professor Zammit assures me that he can draw no distinction of date between cremation tombs and inhumation tombs. Cremation was certainly practised in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C.<sup>3</sup> In the oldest part of the necropolis of Motya (seventh to sixth century), cremation is exclusively present, though the pottery, save for numerous small proto-Corinthian vases, is purely Phoenician in character. This is



FIG. 13. ARCHITECTURAL FRAGMENT IN THE ROMAN VILLA MUSEUM, RABATO (p. 43).

contrary, it is true, to what is observed elsewhere. At Carthage itself inhumation preceded cremation, which only came in at quite a late period under Greek influence. At the Phoenician city of Nora, in Sardinia, an inhumation necropolis<sup>4</sup> of the end of the sixth or beginning of the fifth century B.C. has been discovered, but inhumation tombs, probably earlier than the seventh century, have also been found there.

Few tombs can be certainly attributed to the Roman period at Melite, and even among these, earlier tombs were often made use

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report*, 1906-7, p. 2; 1907-8, p. 7; 1910-11, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Annual Report*, 1910-11, p. 5, fol. and plates.

<sup>3</sup> T. E. Peet in *J.H.S.* xxxii (1912), 96.

<sup>4</sup> *Mon. Ant.* xiv, 157, 171.

of; thus, an inhumation tomb of the late Roman period found in 1912 contained clear traces of an earlier cremation burial,<sup>1</sup> though Ciantar<sup>2</sup> notes the discovery in 1710 of three large vases full of ashes, which may fairly be called Roman<sup>3</sup>; and there was an extensive Punic and Roman, and even Christian necropolis in the field called Tac-cghaki, west of Rabato,<sup>4</sup> while in one of the tombs at Kligha a coin of Traianus Decius came to light.<sup>5</sup>

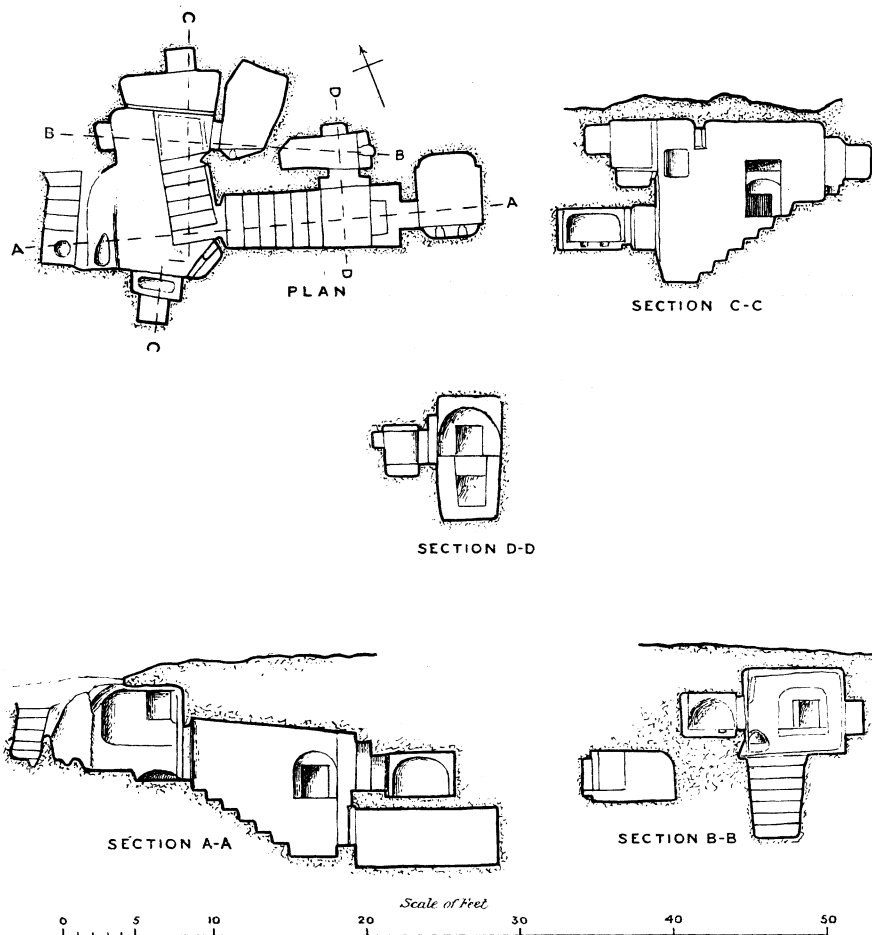


FIG. 14. PLAN AND SECTIONS OF FAMILY TOMB, OF ROMAN PERIOD (?), NEAR RABATO (p. 46).

During the Christian period extensive catacombs were constructed in the island.<sup>6</sup> The most important series are situated

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report*, 1908-9, p. 2; 1911-12, sec. 5; 1912-13, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *i*, 135.

<sup>3</sup> cf. also *E.E.* viii, p. 221, no. 906; supra, p. 29, n. 3.

<sup>4</sup> See above, note 1 on this page.

<sup>5</sup> *Annual Report*, 1907-8, p. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Becker's *Malta Sotterranea*; *Annual Report*, 1912-13, p. 6.

in the neighbourhood of Città Vecchia, and bear the two names of St. Paul and St. Agatha, neither of which has any warrant. The latter are in part Jewish, as Becker has for the first time recognised from the presence of the seven-branched candlestick.<sup>1</sup> These catacombs are composed of small independent groups of chambers, not connected together as is the case with the Roman catacombs. Other catacombs lie further to the south-west, near the road to Boschetto. The plan and sections of one, discovered in 1907 by Prof. Zammit in the field of Tac-caghki, have already been published,<sup>2</sup> but may be repeated here as a type of the rest (fig. 14).

Two chief features are the irregularity of the plan and the gradual growth of the catacomb as need served. Thus, it is clear that the two graves shown in the upper portion of section c-c, on the left, were hewn before the steps leading down were made. The typical plan, with its several small chambers, may be also clearly distinguished; this is characteristic of the Maltese catacombs, which probably derived their form from that of the Phoenician graves, with their one, two, or three chambers approached by a shaft, while in the Roman catacombs long corridors, with long, narrow recesses or 'loculi' for bodies, are the rule. In Malta, the recesses for the bodies are more like sarcophagi, with a small space for the head. They are sometimes roofed with a kind of canopy, and hence are called 'baldacchino-graves,' a form also found in eastern Sicily; but the commonest forms are arcosolia and window-graves, small cells approached by a window-like opening, with room for one or two bodies. Rock-hewn sarcophagi are sometimes found, in the central space, in groups, but not singly.

The interiors of the Maltese catacombs are very simple: paintings are extremely scanty,<sup>3</sup> and sculpture in relief almost equally rare; and any attempt at decoration is generally limited to the imitation of architectural forms. As Becker remarks, it is surprising that so little use was made of the possibilities of the fine, easily-cut stone of which the island is composed. A small catacomb, found between Gudia and Luca in 1912, is another of the few exceptions to this rule, the arch of one of the arcosolia being decorated with a rough representation of the Creation cut in relief on the rock,<sup>4</sup> and at another point are two pelicans feeding their young. Inscriptions are also very rare, and some of those which have been considered Christian are not really so.<sup>5</sup> There are, on the other hand, a number of Christian lamps.

The other catacombs in the island, so far as is known at present, are almost entirely limited to the eastern portion. None have been

<sup>1</sup> op. cit. 9, fol; 70, fol.

<sup>2</sup> Becker, op. cit. 52, and pl. v, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Prof. Zammit remarks that 'on the stuccoed walls red linear ornaments are common. Near the

*basilica* in the catacomb of St. Paul red designs of flower-baskets and birds can still be seen.

<sup>4</sup> *Annual Report*, 1912-13, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Becker, 130, fol.

recorded from the north or north-east of the Bengemma hills, except one near St. Paul Milkghi<sup>1</sup> and another near Naxaro.<sup>2</sup> They consist of small groups; none deserves particular mention here.<sup>3</sup> On the island of Gozo only one catacomb has so far been discovered; it is surprising that, while pagan inscriptions are fairly plentiful, the traces of Christianity should be so much more scanty.

## OTHER ROMAN REMAINS IN MALTA.

The eastern portion of the island slopes gently down from Notabile towards Marsa Scirocco. The western half is much more

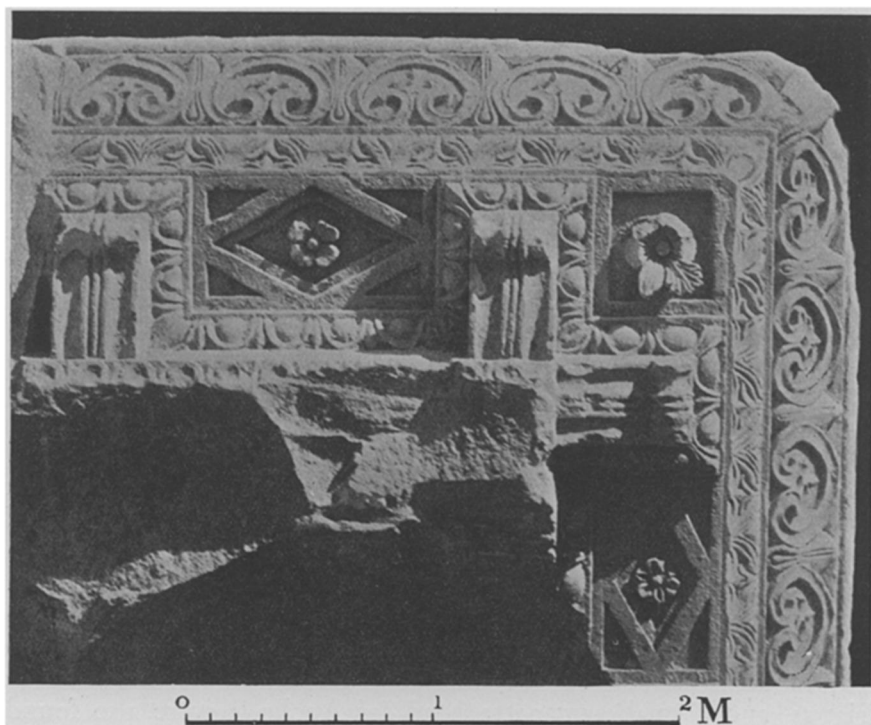


FIG. 15. CORNICE SLAB FOUND AT GNIEN-IS-SULTAN, MALTA (p. 48).

hilly; it was less thickly populated even in ancient times. No prehistoric buildings or settlements are so far known further north-west than Bahria, while in the middle ages it was entirely uninhabited, with the exception of the village of Mellicha. We may first deal with this western half.

<sup>1</sup> The name means 'St. Paul welcomed.'

<sup>2</sup> The Bengemma catacombs are, I think, clearly Christian. I have elsewhere dealt with the question as to whether any prehistoric graves should be recognised there (*P.B.S.R.* vi, 8, n. 2), and have

little hesitation in answering in the negative. Becker's scepticism as to the Christian character of the whole necropolis (p. 58) is, I think, quite misplaced.

<sup>3</sup> Becker, 59, fol.

Traces of habitation in Phoenician times have been found on the hill of Kligha, to the north of Mtarfa.<sup>1</sup> Close to the modern pumping-station on the road going northward from Notabile to Fiddien, between Ghain-clieb and Gnien-Fieres, there is a shallow open circular reservoir (34 ft. 2 ins. diam.), lined with rough blocks of stone; its age is quite uncertain. In the valley to the east, however, Prof. Zammit has found traces of a Roman building, a drain or aqueduct channel, a stone wall, and the débris of a mosaic pavement. Remains of a Roman building were also discovered to the north-west of Notabile, in a field known as Ix-xghara, in the district called Gnien-is-sultan. They included foundations of walls, the remains of a large water-tank (one side of concrete), fragments of pottery, tiles, marble and mosaic, and three beautiful cornice slabs of Malta stone<sup>2</sup> (fig. 15). At Tal Bidni, north-west of the village of Musta, the stone troughs of a (Roman ?) oil-press were discovered in 1911-12, and also a large stone, probably used as a crusher; traces of foundation-walls are visible, and tiles and potsherds are plentiful.<sup>3</sup>

This is the quarter which has been oftenest connected with St. Paul. Local tradition places the site of his landing at a bay in the north-east portion of Malta which now bears his name.<sup>4</sup> On the high ground to the south of the bay, and beyond Tal Bidni, is the church of St. Paul Milkghi, and here tradition, not unnaturally, though without any certain foundation, places the site of the house of Publius, the governor of the island.

Roman remains have, however, come to light here. The church is certainly built on the remains of a Roman villa, which extended also under the surrounding fields, locally called Bur-Marrôd. Excavations were made in 1879, and the building was found to have been constructed of large squared stones and bricks. Remains of columns, some painted plaster, red and yellow in colour, some small tiles belonging to pavements, some oil-mills and presses and vats, came to light.<sup>5</sup> A fragment of a statue, perhaps representing Priapus, and a small terracotta head (of Apollo ?) were also found, but no proper account or plan was made, and the excavations were soon covered up again.<sup>6</sup> Under the church there is a cistern (not a catacomb, as local tradition has hitherto asserted). It consists of two bell-shaped cavities, accessible by shafts from above, and connected by a short gallery, while a gallery (over 40 feet long)

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report*, 1906-7, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Annual Report*, 1909-10, p. 14. Caruana, *Frammento Critico*, 28, alludes vaguely to discoveries in 1892.

<sup>3</sup> *Annual Report*, 1911-12, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> The pedestal with the *triquetra* figured by Abela, p. 210 = Ciantar, i, 572, pl. xiii, was found

in St. Paul's bay; it is now in the Valetta museum. (Caruana, *Report*, p. 115).

<sup>5</sup> Zammit, *Guide*, p. 40. One of the stone oil-troughs is now in the Valetta museum.

<sup>6</sup> M. A. M. Mizzi, *L'Abitazione di Campagna di S. Publio* (from the *Voce della Verità*), Rome, 1879; Caruana, *Report*, p. 90; *A. J. A.* v, 453; *Ancient Pottery*, 49; Mayr, *Insel Malta*, 135, 138.

exists on the north, with an exit into a field.<sup>1</sup> The site would, doubtless, repay further and more scientific investigation.

Mellieha, with its saltworks, which may date from ancient times,<sup>2</sup> lies to the south-east of the peninsula, forming the north-western extremity of Malta. It is, no doubt, the Chersonesos named by Ptolemy as lying north-west of the town of Melita. One manuscript adds the word *πόλις*, but it is unlikely that a city existed in ancient times upon this lonely promontory, nor have any discoveries been made which justify the supposition. Mellieha is indeed the only village in the district north-west of Notabile and Musta.

We may now turn to the eastern portion of the island, and first to Diar Handul, which lies immediately to the south of the village of Dingli, due south of Rabato, on high ground overlooking the sea. Abela mentions remains of ancient baths here<sup>3</sup> in which pavements of small rhomboidal bricks, and of cement with small pieces of marble set in it, had been found, together with lead pipes, marble and stone troughs, marble columns, etc. A similar building was discovered in the Sant Fournier property at Ta-Baldu in 1869, about a mile south of the village, consisting of a circular chamber hewn in the rock, to which spring water was brought by lead pipes.<sup>4</sup>

East of Dingli we find no Roman remains for over five miles, though this high-lying portion of the island, rocky and barren as it now is, appears to have been the seat of a considerable population in neolithic times. But at Zurrico, east of Krendi, are the remains of a pre-Roman building, probably a country-house of the Phoenician period: they consist of several rectangular rooms, one of which has the form of a tower, and is still preserved to the height of about 25 feet, with an Egyptian plain cornice at the top.<sup>5</sup> A smaller cornice, drawn by Houel, seems to bring us down into Roman times, and shows that the building was then still in use.

At the north-west end of the village, towards Krendi, Houel<sup>6</sup> notes the existence of a finely-built wall of 'opus quadratum,' some 60 feet in length, with three courses preserved, and two cisterns covered with slabs. At the north-east end of the village, along the road to Safi, a wall is still preserved<sup>7</sup> which answers to Houel's description, though the particulars of orientation are confused in his text. The internal level is higher than the external. A farmhouse which probably belonged to, or at any rate survived into the Roman period, was found in 1888 between the villages of Mkabba

<sup>1</sup> Zammit, *Annual Report*, 1910-11, p. 10; Becker, *op. cit.* 46.

<sup>2</sup> Some cave-dwellings near it belong to the Byzantine period (Mayr, *op. cit.* 139).

<sup>3</sup> p. 36 = Ciantar, i, 149.

<sup>4</sup> Caruana, *Report*, p. 92.

<sup>5</sup> Houel, iv, 97, pl. 259; Mayr, 89, 90, fig. 30. The antiquity of the other rooms which do not lie symmetrically with the tower seems doubtful.

<sup>6</sup> Houel, iv, 98; Mayr, 136.

<sup>7</sup> Some of the blocks are as much as 8½ feet long, and vary in height from 1 foot 3 inches to 1 foot 6½ inches.

and Luca.<sup>1</sup> It probably consisted of a courtyard, in the centre of which are two cisterns constructed in a similar manner to that described below (p. 64), and rooms round it; but only those on the west and north sides could be planned, as the investigations were unscientific, and the remains were damaged by peasants. Two oil-mills, one of them with several troughs for refining the oil, and a vat for storage, were found in situ. To the east of Safi are three of the round towers which, though hitherto regarded as prehistoric, I believe should be assigned to the Phoenician period.<sup>2</sup>

Besides the temple of Hera, Ptolemy mentions another in Malta, that of Heracles, lying south of the city and upon the same meridian. Earlier writers have attempted to identify this temple with the ruins of Borg-en-Nadur, near the harbour of Marsa Scirocco; these are, however, undoubtedly prehistoric.<sup>3</sup> Some four or five hundred yards to the south-west are the remains of a large villa which will be described in detail immediately. Mayr, however,<sup>4</sup> draws attention to the fact that, some 720 yards north-east of Marsa Scirocco, near the chapel of S. Maria tas-Silg (or ad Nives), the lowest course of a wall in 'opus quadratum,' about 100 feet in length, may still be seen, running from east to west. Houel saw it<sup>5</sup> when four courses of it were still preserved. I should myself consider that the extent of the building was probably even greater, for the foundations seem to me to be traceable along the roadside for a total length of about 40 or 50 yards: very little is, however, preserved in situ. At one point there are traces of a cement floor. There is, too, a similar wall running north and south for a length of about 8 yards in a field to the north, and serving, like the wall on the road-side, as an embankment to the field. The blocks are 2 feet or more in length, and some are as much as 2½ feet in height. Among the architectural fragments which Mayr<sup>6</sup> saw lying round about these foundations was a small frieze

<sup>1</sup> Caruana, *Remains of an ancient Greek building, etc.* (Malta, 1888) = *A. J. A.* iv (1888), 450.

<sup>2</sup> *P. B. S. R.* vi, 123. Roman remains were noted by Houel (iv, 93) some 300 yards west of the tower of Tal-Gauhar, the northernmost of the group, lying a mile south of the village of Gudia, near the church of S. Anton, including the foundation-walls of a building 59 feet by 33 feet, and a cistern about 9 feet wide and 23 feet deep, roofed with slabs and carried on three flat arches. Houel also notices the discovery of a hoard of Roman coins then in the Barbaro collection. Mayr (op. cit. 135) saw here a fragment of a cornice of Graeco-Roman work, and noticed old foundations and an inhumation necropolis 250 paces south-east. Further north, at Tal-Liebru, are similar tombs.

<sup>3</sup> Still Ciantar, i, p. 461, saw pavements here, one made of slabs of hard Malta stone, the other of concrete with fragments of brick in it; he also saw fragments of columns. These, of course, belonged to some later building; they were seen again in 1881: cf. Mayr, *Prehistoric Malta*, 65.

A marble statuette of Heracles with the club, formerly in the Abela collection and now in the Valetta museum, is said to have been discovered here, but it is probably renaissance work (Abela, p. 156; Ciantar, pl. ix; Caruana, *Report*, 112).

<sup>4</sup> *Insel Malta*, 130.

<sup>5</sup> iv, 92 and pl. 255: cf. Caruana, *Report*, p. 18.

<sup>6</sup> Similar fragments were apparently seen at Borg-en-Nadur by John Peter Gandy (afterwards Deering); in a letter of 30th Dec. 1811, to Joseph Gandy, he mentions 'two fragments of a frieze and architecture, very small, the triglyphs only 8 inches wide, but somewhat peculiar. . . . Mr. Bedford in his drawing of it differed very much from me, but as he well knew the correctness of mine, he has sent mine to England. . . . You must know that the fragments were found in a wall with an Indian fig growing before them.' The letter was kindly shown me by Mr. Walter Spiers, curator of the Soane museum.

with triglyphs, and a piece of a small relief in white marble, now in the museum at Valetta, shows the lowest part of a seated (?) female figure in the archaic style. It would be too much to affirm that this is the actual temple, though it is not impossible.

On the south-west of the bay of Marsa Scirocco, on the promontory of Benghisa, are remains of another wall in good 'opus quadratum,' 26 feet long, of which two courses are preserved, attributed by Mayr<sup>1</sup> to a tower or bastion. Further to the north-



FIG. 16. BURIAL UNDER THE SPLIT HALVES OF TWO AMPHORAE FOUND ON THE ISLAND OF COMINO (p. 52).

east, on a promontory projecting from the east coast of the island, near St. Paul's church, called Xorb-il-Ghargin, Roman coins have been discovered by Prof. Zammit<sup>2</sup>; and on the promontory on the north of St. Thomas' bay, to the south of the fort, some remains of Roman baths and an important catacomb were found.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> p. 90. If it still exists, it is enclosed within the modern fortifications.

<sup>2</sup> The site was originally occupied by a megalithic

sanctuary of the neolithic period, which was excavated in December, 1914 and in May, 1915.

<sup>3</sup> Becker, pp. 8, n. and 62.



I may mention here the islet of Comino, which lies between Malta and Gozo. Barren though it now is, it must have been inhabited from prehistoric days onwards; and in 1912 a burial under the split halves of two amphorae was found near the shores of the bay of Santa Maria (fig. 16).<sup>1</sup>

VILLA NEAR BORG-EN-NADUR (BIRZEBBUGIA).

On one of the rock-terraces which form the south-west side of the Wied-Dalam, opposite to the cave of Ghar-Dalam, and some four to five hundred yards north-west of the prehistoric ruins of Borg-en-Nadur, are the remains of a large Roman country house (plate v, fig. 17).<sup>2</sup> They had already been to some extent explored, but their excavation was completed in May, 1915, under my direction, with the assistance of Prof. T. Zammit and his colleagues. The funds for the purpose were in great part provided by Sir Rennell Rodd, our ambassador in Rome, and by Mrs. A. W. Van Buren (Miss E. M. Douglas), a student of the British School, who was present during the whole of the excavation, and undertook the sorting and description of the pottery.

These remains may be identical with the ruins described by Ciantar, and the discovery among them of a coin of Ciantar's contemporary, the grand master Pinto (1741-1773) lends colour to this supposition. The greater part of them bear evidence of having been excavated previously, but the central portion had been covered by an enormous stone-heap, the removal of which proved very expensive to us. The date of the first excavations is uncertain, but the greater part of the peristyle seems to have been cleared then. Further work appears to have been done in 1881, since manuscript plans of the upper and lower portions of the building, of the cistern and of another building,<sup>3</sup> executed by the late Dr. F. Vassallo, were discovered by Prof. T. Zammit among his papers. The stone-heap, however, was already there, and no attempt had been made to remove it. When we did so, it was obvious that the excavation of the central portion had not been very thorough. The south-west and north-east sides of the peristyle and the rooms round them had been cleared down to the floor-level in 1881, but the other sides of the court, which had been robbed of their stones, perhaps many centuries before, had not been excavated since, nor had the rooms on the north-west.

The present building is not the first to occupy the site. It is

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report*, 1911-12, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> This plan is the work of Prof. R. V. Galea, to whom I am much indebted.

<sup>3</sup> I do not believe that this building really formed part of the villa, though I have no idea where it was situated, nor does the drawing give any indication.

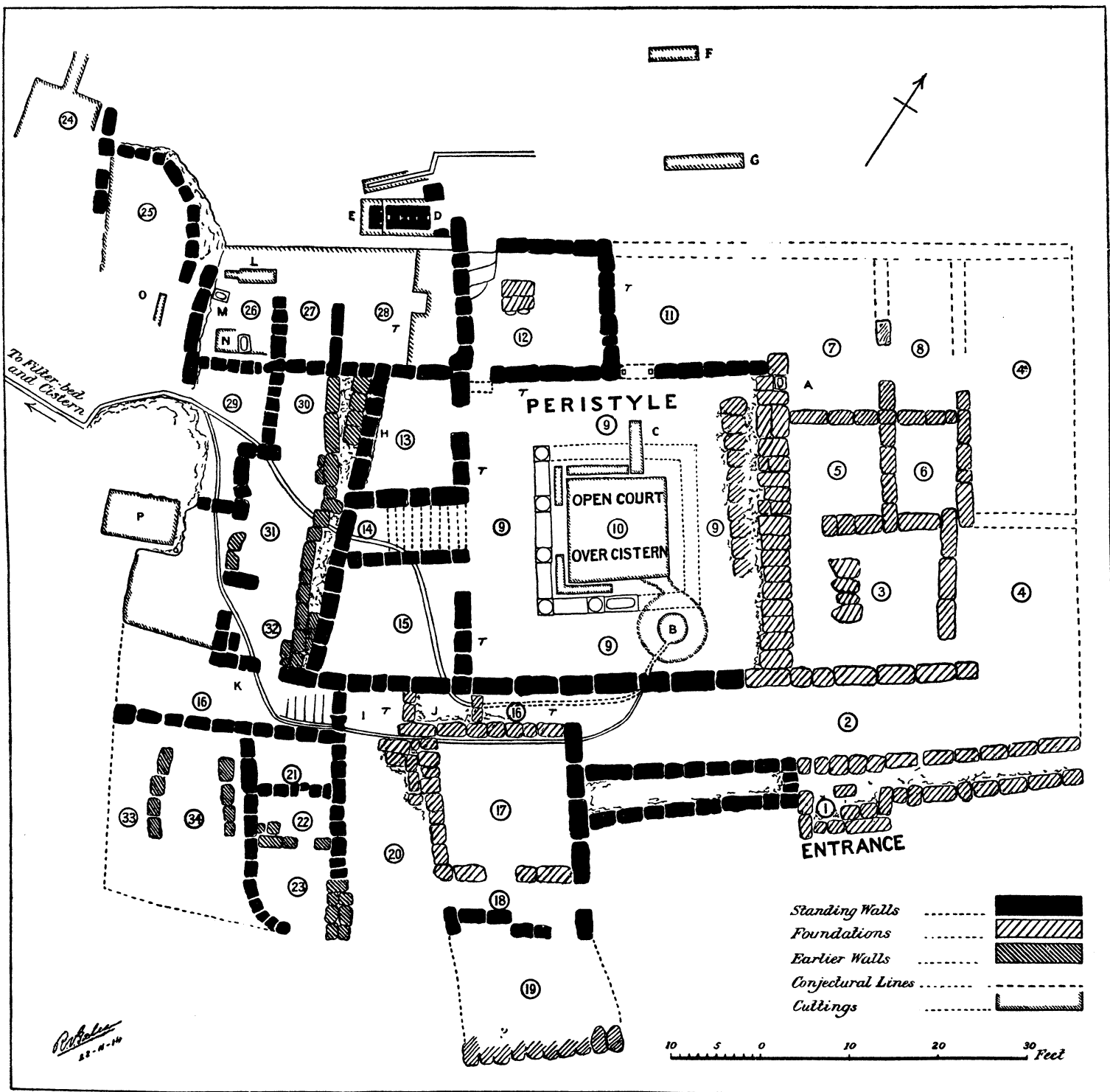


FIG. 17. PLAN OF ROMAN VILLA NEAR BIRZEBUGGIA (p. 52).

constructed entirely of local stone, in blocks laid horizontally in the style usual during the Phoenician and Roman periods, but there are remains of an earlier edifice, built in the manner so familiar to us in the Maltese neolithic period. In the walls stones are placed vertically like pillars, and in the partition-wall between nos. 22 and 23 on fig. 17 there is a doorway formed of such stones. The remains are too scanty to allow us to determine the plan of this earlier building; its period is uncertain, and no prehistoric pottery was found on the site. The use of pillar-stones would no doubt point to that period, but in Phoenician construction, as at Motya and at Carthage, pillar-stones were frequently used for the framework of a wall, the intervening spaces being filled in with lighter material.

The existence of an earlier concrete floor 6 inches thick on the south-west side of room 13 at H shows that the original building lay at a higher level, and that the rock was cut away to a depth of about three feet in order to construct the peristyle. We note a not infrequent use of stones belonging to a period when rectangular masonry was in vogue, which, from dowel-holes and other indications, cannot be supposed to occupy their original position. This shows that it is not the first edifice to be erected here even during the Phoenician and Roman periods. And to the earlier edifice we may attribute the doorway (κ) built of very small stones on the north-west side of the corridor 16, and the steps cut in the rock in this corridor, which must have been modified at a later period.

The building with which we now have to deal no doubt faced north-east, so as to command the view over the valley, for the ground rises sharply to the south-west, but the natural way of access to it is on the south-east side, coming up the valley from the bay of Birzebbugia: On this side was the main entrance. The foundations of a porch (1) have been discovered: its architectural arrangement and the decoration are lost, but the double wall on each side seems to point to elaborate treatment. This entrance led into a corridor (2) communicating directly with the upper part of the house and with the central peristyle (9), round the four sides of which are grouped the main rooms. To the south-west are other rooms at higher levels and of a different orientation. Of the corridor and rooms on the north-east (1-8) little is preserved, and, indeed, the plan is here in some measure conjectural.

The probable line of the original north-east wall is marked by a considerable drop in the ground, and excavation on the terrace below failed to reveal any trace of construction; the wall itself had entirely disappeared, a modern field-wall marking its position. Some of the cross walls too, notably that between nos. 7 and 8, and the whole north-west wall of this part of the building, had been partly or entirely removed in quarrying. The rooms themselves also had been cleared down to the rock by previous excavators, so that no traces

of floors were found, except in room II where the stone threshold-block, and portions of the 'torba' (limestone-concrete) floor were preserved.<sup>1</sup> At A in no. 7 a small trough hollowed in one of the blocks shows that the dividing wall was not carried up higher at this point.

The lower portion of the peristyle has suffered similarly from seekers after building material. Originally it must have had twelve columns, four on each side (fig. 18). Some fragments have been found among the contents of the stone heap, but none in situ; the blocks on which they stood, however, are to be seen on the south-west, together with one of those on the south-east. These columns are of

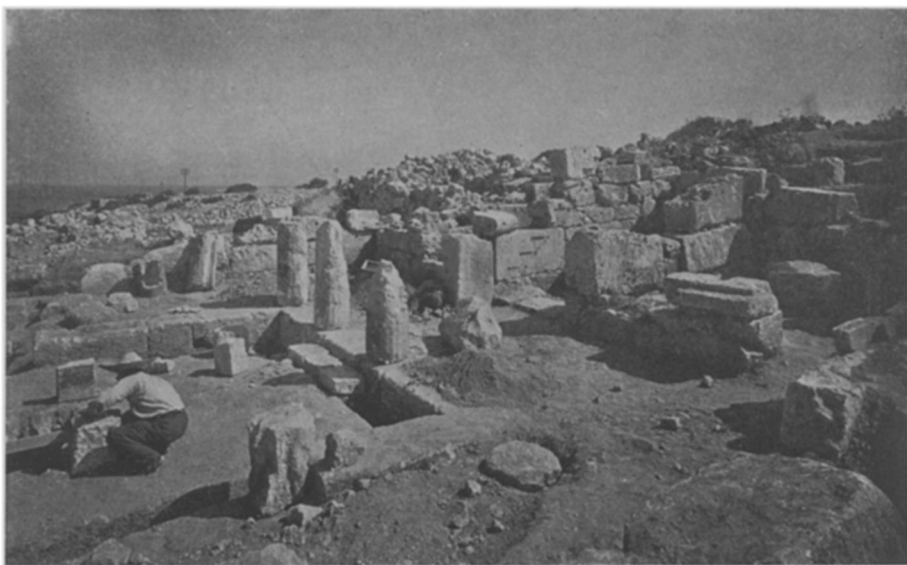


FIG. 18. PERISTYLE OF ROMAN VILLA NEAR BIRZEBBUGIA, MALTA, FROM NORTH-WEST.

Malta hard stone, 1 foot 6 inches in lower diameter; they have twenty flat flutes<sup>2</sup> in the lower portion, channelled fluting beginning at 3 feet from the bottom<sup>2</sup>; and their height may be estimated at 10 feet 6 inches. They had no bases, it seems, and no fragments of capitals have been found. Pieces of the cornice, however, which is of the same material, have come to light; one was broken just before our arrival by some modern vandal.<sup>3</sup> The blocks supporting these columns measure 1 foot 8 inches in front measurement, and 1 foot 9 inches in width; they vary in height from 10 inches to 1 foot

<sup>1</sup> Where remains of this flooring are present, they are marked  $\tau$  on the plan.

<sup>2</sup> The flat flutes are 3 inches wide, and the rounded ones  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches, so that the girth must have diminished rapidly.

<sup>3</sup> The first block from the south angle going north-west has the two diameters intersecting at right angles scratched upon it, by which the circle for the bottom of the column was set out.

8 inches, according to the level of the rock on which they rest. Between them are other blocks 4 feet long, so that the columns are 4 feet apart, and 5 feet 8 inches from centre to centre.

Immediately inside the open area surrounded by the colonnade

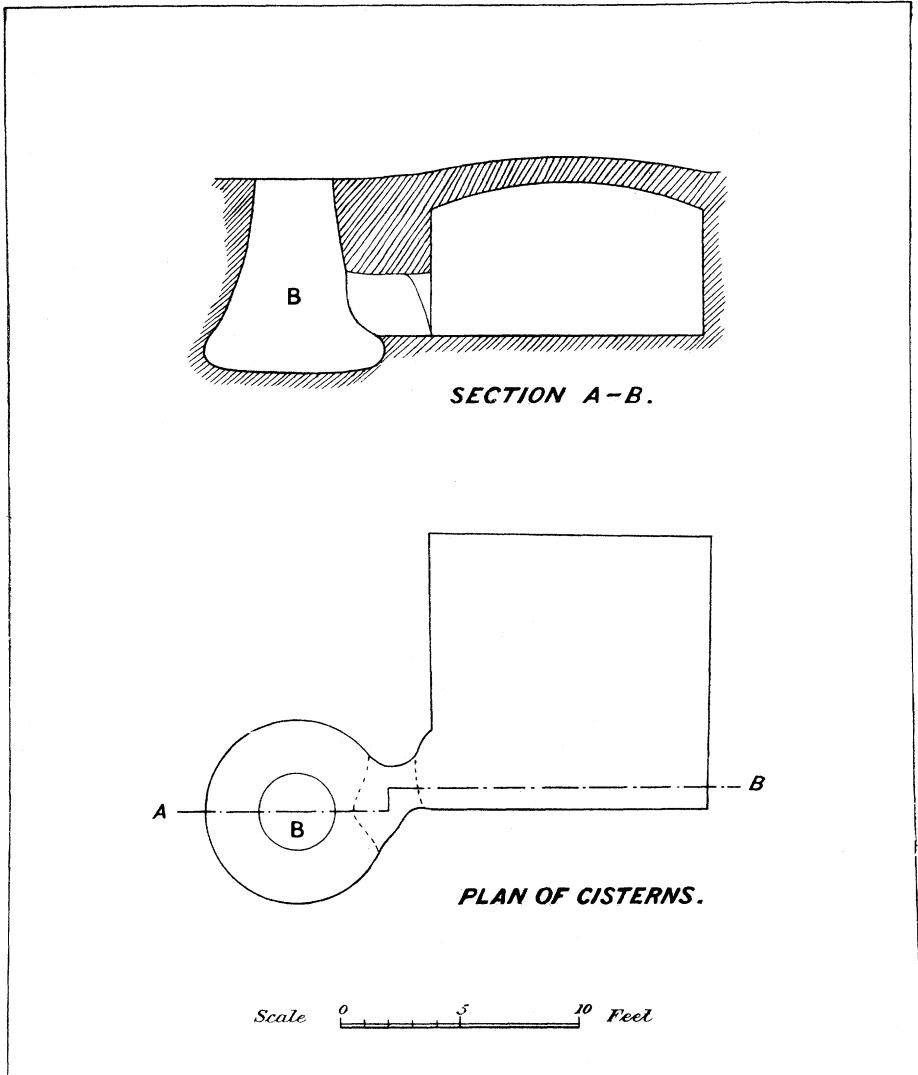


FIG. 19. ROMAN VILLA NEAR BIRZEBBUGIA : PLAN AND SECTION OF CISTERNS (p. 56).

is a trench cut in the rock, one foot wide ; the bottom being 2 feet 8 inches below the top of the blocks supporting the columns. The channel is not continuous, for the rock has been left unexcavated for a distance of 5 feet 8 inches opposite the central opening on the south-west side, which corresponds to the stairs leading to the upper

portion of the house, so as to give access to the centre of the peristyle. Again in the middle of the south-east side and at the beginning of the north-west side, a narrow partition of rock has been left, so as to interrupt the channel at these points. On the north-west the channel gradually diminishes in size, and 1 foot 6 inches beyond the pit (c) it ceases; while on the north-east it seems never to have existed. The breaks in its continuity show that it did not serve for drainage. Professor Zammit suggests that it may have been used to contain plants.

Under the remainder of the court is a rectangular rock-cut cistern (10) measuring 12 feet by 11 feet 9 inches, and from 5 feet 4 inches to 6 feet 6 inches in depth (fig. 19). It is roofed with rough stones slightly arched and set in mortar. That they did not yield under the weight of the huge stone-heap above is a testimony to their strength. Internally the roof is lined with white cement, laid on a framework of canes, the impression of which can still clearly be seen. This framework was supported on seven beams, for which mortise-holes were cut in the rock, at the south-west and north-east ends of the cistern. When discovered it was filled with stones and earth to within two feet of the roof. The floor of this cistern is sloped from north-west to south-east, and at its east angle it received water by an irregular hole, through which a man can crawl, from the overflow of a bell-shaped cistern (B), the bottom of which lies at a slightly lower level (fig. 19).

This latter cistern underlies the south-east ambulatory of the peristyle: over the hole already mentioned it has a small, almost rectangular, extension 2 feet 9 inches long by 11 to 15 inches broad. Over its south-east side has been laid a stone,<sup>1</sup> probably a block of the ambulatory epistyle with the mouldings cut off, though when it was placed there is quite uncertain. Apparently there was a dipping-shaft in the passage connecting the two cisterns. Bones of goat, pig, etc. and pottery, including a perfect Roman amphora, were found in this cistern from 7 feet down to the bottom; also the fragments of a fluted stone puteal (or the facing of a column, the core of which was formed of concrete).<sup>2</sup> The whole cistern is 8 feet 6 inches deep. The lower part of the sides and the bottom are lined with grey cement.

This bell-shaped cistern is very likely of earlier date than the house with which it was incorporated; the upper part and the north-west extension seem to have been carefully cut and smoothed, and the lower part, as it stands, shows signs of having been enlarged when the connexion with the rectangular cistern was made, as there are many traces of coarse hacking in the lower part. It was fed by two gutters communicating with the system of water-channels in the

<sup>1</sup> 5 feet 6 inches long by 2 feet high, by 1 foot 8 inches thick.

<sup>2</sup> 13½ inches in internal diameter, 2¼ inches thick; the flutes are each 1¾ inches wide.

upper portion of the house,<sup>1</sup> and also with a down-pipe in the south-east wall of the peristyle. The down-pipe was blocked with one or two stones and a piece of curiously rough, unglazed pottery. The nearest base-block to it, which lay between the first and second

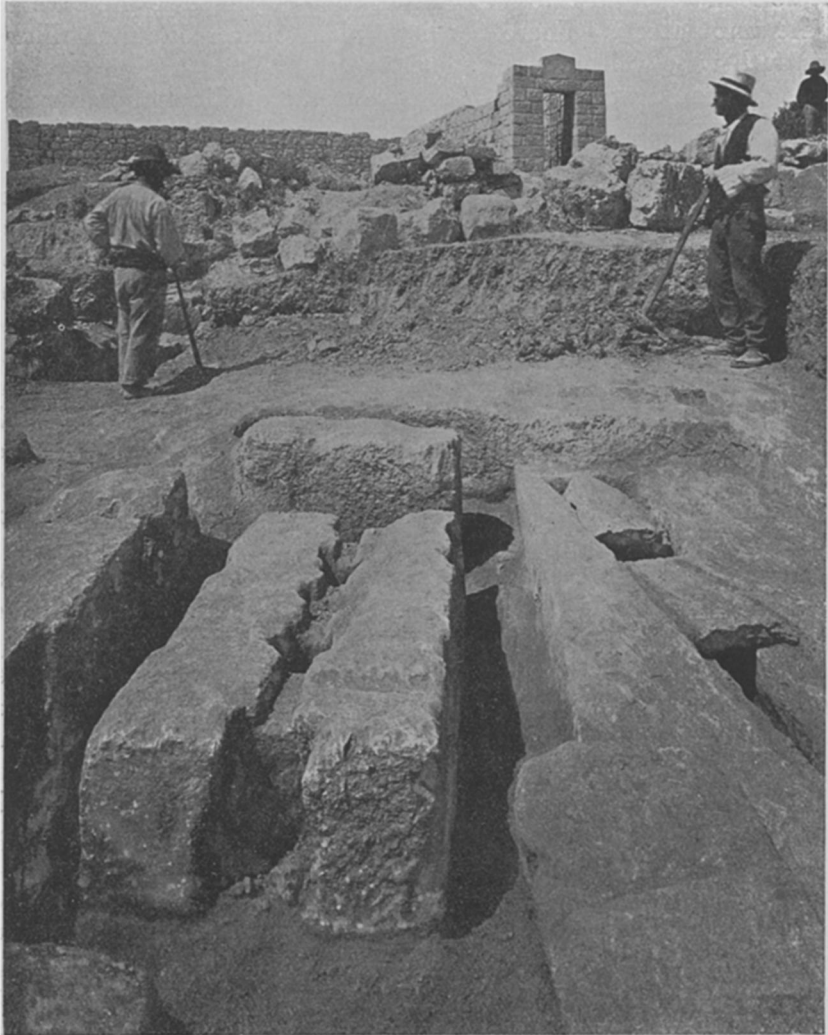


FIG. 20. ROMAN VILLA NEAR BIRZEBBUGIA: VIEW OF STONES D AND E FROM THE NORTH-EAST (p. 58).

columns of the south-west side, has a trough 3 inches deep hollowed in it. The purpose of this and other similar troughs is not altogether clear.

<sup>1</sup> These may be the remains of an earlier structure, but I very much doubt it.

The ambulatory was paved with a kind of concrete of brick, fragments of stone and pottery, and lime mortar, which is preserved close to the walls of the rooms which surrounded it, except in the north-east ambulatory, where nothing remains but a line of stones which supported the floor. A few diamond-shaped tiles were found, but none in situ, and I doubt whether they belonged to the pavement of the ambulatory. There is a little plain plaster one inch thick on the south-west wall near the south angle.

About the centre of the north-west side of the ambulatory, and divided from the channel already mentioned by a two-inch rim, is a rock-cut pit<sup>1</sup> (c) which no doubt preceded the construction of the house. It was filled with fine soil, and on the top of it were stones laid there purposely; one was a trough 1 foot 6 inches by 1 foot 2 inches, and 4 inches deep, the top of which was flush with the floor.

The rooms on the north-east side of the ambulatory have already been described. On the north-west, at the west angle, a door 2 feet 6 inches wide leads into a room (12) the floor of which is the solid rock; it is not higher than the ambulatory, but there is a sill to the door.<sup>2</sup> In this room was found a piece of a red imitation Samian plate with a figure in relief running to the right, with short drapery floating out behind (possibly orgiastic).<sup>3</sup> Alongside of the wall on the south-west<sup>4</sup> a flight of three rock-cut steps leads up to an area outside the house, consisting of the solid rock.

Here is a curious arrangement, the object of which is not clear (figs. 20, 21, and plate v). First, comes a block of stone 4 feet 10½ inches long, 2 feet 6 inches wide, and 1 foot 11 inches deep (D). In it are two holes 8 inches wide, with each of which is connected another portion narrowing to 3 inches wide. These holes are 15 inches deep and do not intercommunicate below, but at the top is a shallow channel running the whole length of the stone, and in this, between the two deep holes, is a round depression 3 inches deep. At the ends of the block are two similar deep holes open at the outer side, and stepped inside at 14 and 15 inches respectively. The object of the stone is uncertain; it may have been a press-bed. To the south-west is another block (E) with two shallow depressions, perhaps also for a press. All round, except on the north-east, is a rock-cut channel cemented on the upper part of the sides, and to the north-west is a gutter with a stone slab covering, in which was found a broken terracotta lamp. This runs off downhill, winding as it goes. These channels have above them an area of natural rock, while below they end abruptly.

<sup>1</sup> 9 feet 4½ inches deep, 6 feet long, and 1 foot 6 inches wide.

<sup>2</sup> To the north-west again, is the sill leading to room 11 with its 'torba' floor.

<sup>3</sup> The purpose of the rough foundations in this room, and in room 3, is quite uncertain.

<sup>4</sup> This wall is very rough and rests on a layer 1 foot 5 inches thick, containing burnt wood and snail-shells in great abundance (7 to 10 inches down), also a few pottery fragments above (10 to 13 inches). The fact that the steps do not come through under it seems to prove it ancient.



Some way below, near the west angle of the villa, are two sunk vats (F, G) cut in the rock, 8 feet 2 inches deep : both had apparently been cleared and filled again by the excavators who preceded us. A little pottery of no importance was found at the bottom of each. It is possible that the liquid from the press was conducted into one

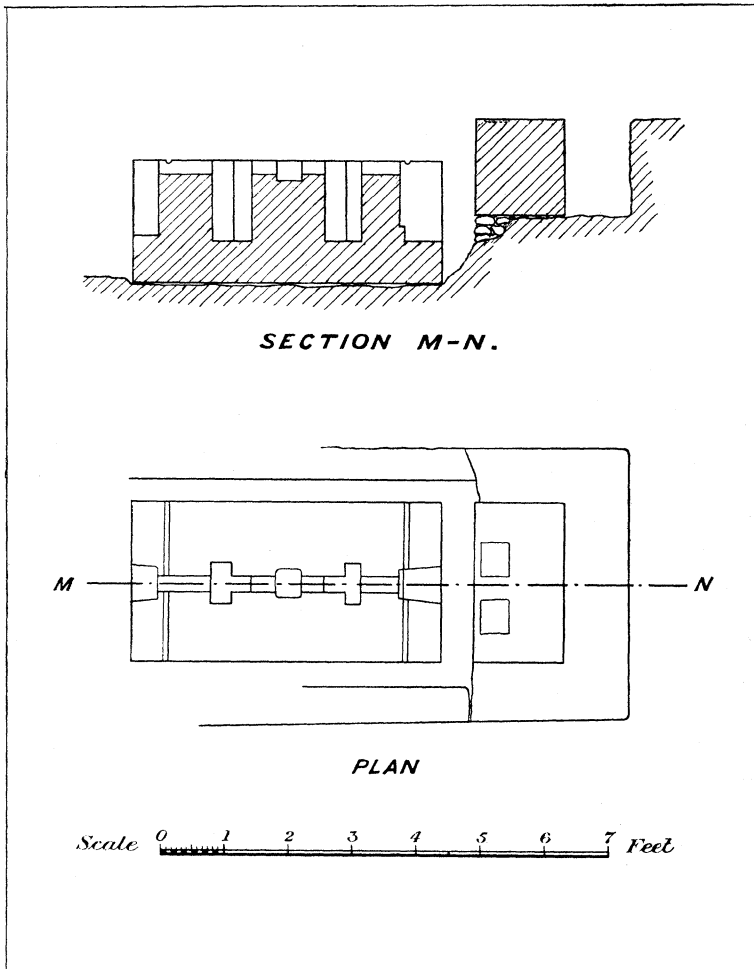


FIG. 21. ROMAN VILLA NEAR BIRZEBBUGIA : PLAN AND SECTION OF STONES D AND E (p. 58).

or both of these vats by a stone channel which has now disappeared, though it is curious that the rock-cut channels are not continued so far.

In the centre of the south-west side of the peristyle a staircase (14) ascended to the upper floor of this part of the house. There was a tie-wall under the stairs. The steps seem to take us a good deal

higher than the upper level of the house on the ground floor. The staircase was 5 feet in width, and had triangular stone steps having 10-inch treads with a 9-inch rise. The slits for the support of these are still visible in the side walls. The blocks in situ show slits for three stairs in each side: we were able to find three other blocks, all belonging to the south-east side, and giving seven more stairs. In the north-west side wall a fragment of a cornice has been used as building material; and elsewhere in the building also there seems to be a use of stones which have belonged to some previous construction. Thus in the wall on the south-east side of the peristyle there are two chases which have no meaning as the blocks at present stand.<sup>1</sup>

There was a room on each side of the stairs, that on the south-east (15) being considerably larger than that on the north-west (13) owing to a change in the orientation of the south-west wall. The former has no floor except the solid rock; several channels are cut in it which seem to lead out through the east angle. Fragments of a large stone trough had been found in it by previous excavators. The latter has similarly a rock floor: in the centre is a round hole with a cupped bottom, 9 inches in diameter and 3 inches deep. There is a small channel along the north-east wall, which cannot be traced elsewhere.

I have already mentioned evidence for the existence of an earlier building on the site, and I may add here that the upper part of the south-west wall (at H) rests on a concrete floor 6 inches thick, which is 3 feet 6 inches above the rock floor of room 13 and now serves as a bedding for the stones.

The rooms on the south-east side of the peristyle (17-20) do not seem to have been accessible from it, unless they were reached from near the now-demolished east angle. They had, however, an independent passage (16), 3 feet 8 inches in width, which no doubt contained wooden stairs leading to the upper level. At the higher end of it were found some fragments of pottery, amphorae, etc. and an entire shallow bowl of badly-glazed red ware, 5 inches in diameter and  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inch in height, with a base ring and broad rim.

In the previous excavations most of these rooms were cleared down to the rock, no floors remaining, and there is nothing to be said about them, except for the one furthest to the south-east (19). Here we found rough stones, and, under the stones, besides some fragments of amphorae and ordinary pottery, was discovered a small plate with a low foot, white (?) paste, red slip, and bad black varnish, 7 inches in internal diameter; as well as twenty-three small pyramids of unbaked clay,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 5 inches in height, the use of which is uncertain; also three objects of the same material which appear to be amphora-plugs. Rock was reached about a foot further down. Three similar pyramids, together with a lamp, were given to me by Mr. Salvatore Cachia

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 53.

Zammit as part of the proceeds of the former excavations on the site. To the south-east again various trenches were made by us, but only one block was found, probably not in its original position. The south-east boundary of room 20 is quite uncertain.

The passage (16) was once continuous right up to the top of the house. In its lower portion it appears to have had long areas paved with 'torba,' with shallow steps leading gradually up from one to the other,<sup>1</sup> succeeded by rock-cut steps in the uppermost portion. To the south-east was a gutter, also rock-cut, which discharged into the cistern (B). In this upper portion we meet with a doorway on the right ( $\kappa$ ), 2 feet  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide, blocked with stones, among which was a small trough 2 feet by 1 foot 4 inches.<sup>2</sup> To the north-east of it was a tie-hole, and above this doorway a finely-cut vertical groove, 7 inches across and 3 deep, for a door placed across the corridor to swing in. Across the passage opposite to it are two tie-holes; and a finely-cut threshold-block found in the passage may have belonged to this door. At a later date the passage was blocked by a wall immediately below the stairs, and the walling below the tie-holes on the south-east side looks as if it, too, may be of more recent date. We may further notice that the lower part of the passage and the rooms to the south-east (21-23) which have 'torba' floors at the lower level contained at about 6 inches above these floors a strongly-marked burnt layer about 4 inches thick with charred wood in small twigs; the stones also show traces of fire.

The two rooms (or three, if we take into account the partition which was superseded in the later building) are quite inaccessible as they stand at present, and I think we must suppose the floor-level of the whole of this portion of the house to have been raised some four or five feet after a fire, the traces of which are marked by this layer. Over these rooms was a huge stone-heap, still only partially cleared,<sup>3</sup> supported by their lower wall, which was probably much modified. The upper structure of these rooms included something in which box-tiles<sup>4</sup> were used. An iron pick-head<sup>5</sup> was also found along the south-west wall of room 20.

Behind the peristyle there appear to be two ranges of rooms, one behind the other. In the first range one of those on the north-west (28) has a 'torba' floor, and in it is a curious cutting in the rock,

<sup>1</sup> The upper of these areas ( $\iota$ ), sloping up gently, is well preserved; it measures 6 feet 6 inches in length, and 3 feet 5 inches in width; a step 8 inches or more in height led up from it, and the beginning of the return of the cement may be seen upon its vertical face. There is also plaster  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch thick on the side walls on which no colour is visible. The floor of the lower landing ( $\jmath$ ) has perished. In a hole here four diamond-shaped paving tiles were found.

<sup>2</sup> A stone trough, 16 by 18 inches over all, 11 by

10 inches inside,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches deep, was also found in this passage.

<sup>3</sup> It still extends for some distance to the south-east of rooms 33 and 34, but there had been so much devastation that it did not seem worth while to remove more of it.

<sup>4</sup> Dimensions  $4\frac{1}{4}$  inches internal measurement (walls  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch) and diamond tiles  $\frac{7}{8}$  inch thick,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inch side.

<sup>5</sup>  $8\frac{3}{8}$  inch long with 1 inch blade and 1 inch square.

probably connected with the earlier building. They are traversed by a channel passing under the stairs, of which we shall speak presently. The only one of interest is that at the west angle (no. 26). It contained a large rock-cut trough (N) against its south-east wall, the walls of which have since been levelled down, a pit cut in the rock (L) in its north-west portion, measuring 5 feet 9 inches long,<sup>1</sup> which bears clear marks of a pick  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch wide. Two small stone troughs were found loose in this room<sup>2</sup> (fig. 22).

Above this room is another (25) at a still higher level, belonging to the highest range of all, and to this we now turn. It has a floor of mortar in which rough bricks were found at intervals, but a large number of diamond-shaped and hexagonal tiles<sup>3</sup> were discovered.



FIG. 22. ROMAN VILLA NEAR BIRZEBBUGIA : SMALL TROUGHS FOUND IN ROOM 26.

None of them was in position, and as fragments of box flue-tiles were also found,<sup>4</sup> it is possible that the room had a hypocaust and a raised floor of tiles, which has collapsed. Here, too, is a small rock-cut trough (o). Some window-glass  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch thick was also found here. The construction of the walls is quite different, being of small stones with much mortar. The area numbered 24 is cut in the rock to a depth of a few inches and marks the size of a room, the walls of which rested upon its edges.

On the same level but further to the south-east is a shallow

<sup>1</sup> It is 1 foot 8 inches wide for the first 4 feet, where it is 2 feet 6 inches deep, and narrows to 9 inches for the rest, becoming 2 feet 6 inches deep.

<sup>2</sup> One (N) was 2 feet 6 inches by 1 foot 6 inches over all, the other 1 foot 11 inches by 1 foot 4 inches (M).

<sup>3</sup> The side measurements of the diamonds being  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and the thickness  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches respectively.

<sup>4</sup>  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch thick, the internal width being  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

rock-cut tank (P), which did not communicate with the large cistern, but received the drainage of the area immediately above. The back wall of the whole building is hardly preserved at all. It rested on the rock, and in some places its lowest course and the lower courses of

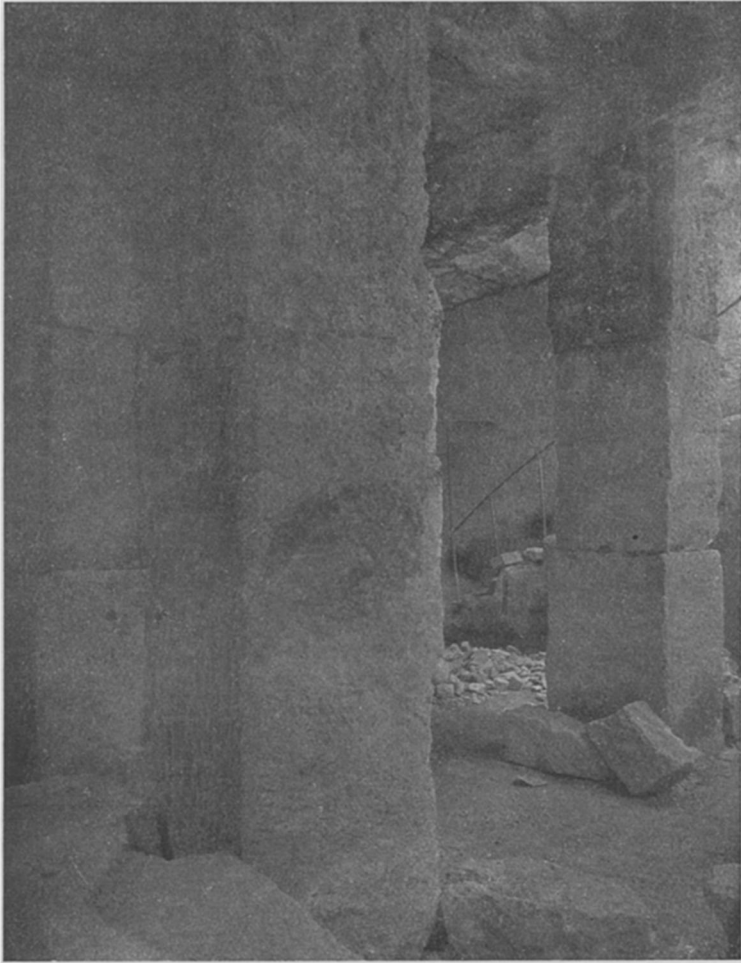


FIG. 23. ROMAN VILLA NEAR BIRZEBBUGIA : INTERIOR OF LARGE CISTERN  
LOOKING WEST (p. 64).

some of the partition-walls are preserved. In others we get the cutting of the rock, which shows where the wall ran, e.g. to the south-east of P.

We must now deal more in detail with the water-supply of the building. At a distance of some forty feet to the south-west there

is a large cistern, a plan of which is given by Mayr.<sup>1</sup> It is entirely cut in the rock, and perhaps served as the quarry from which the stone was obtained for the construction of the villa or the building which preceded it. It measures 33 feet 8 inches by 33 feet 6½ inches in plan, not including a portion 9 feet by 8 feet 6 inches which projects at the north-east end of the south-east side; this and the whole of the south-east aisle are 3 feet 3 inches deeper than the rest, so that there should be a supply available even in time of drought. The floor is sloped towards it, so that the minimum depth in the rest of the cistern is 12 feet 10 inches, increasing to 13 feet 9 inches. The cistern is reached by a flight of sixteen rock-cut steps, 2 feet 10 inches in width, with a tread of 1 foot 6 inches to 1 foot 10 inches, and a height of 1 foot to 1 foot 2 inches. It is roofed with four rows of flat slabs carried by crossbeams, which in turn rest on the solid rock and on twelve pillars consisting of two or three blocks of stone each, measuring on an average 2 feet 8 inches by 2 feet 5 inches (fig. 23). The small extension to the east was similarly roofed, as is shown by Vassallo's plan, which indicates an aperture 3 feet 2 inches in diameter for dipping, but the roofing has fallen in at this point. There is another square aperture at the foot of the stairs. The interior was lined with cement. The type of cistern is not infrequent in Malta; there is one at Tal-Brolli, on the edge of the road to Casal-Axiak by Wied-has-Saptan, 23 feet 4 inches long (as preserved) by 15 feet wide, and divided into three aisles, the roof being supported between the pillars by flat arches of seven voussoirs each. Another was recently found by Sir John Clauson near Tal-Hlas church, south of Wied-is-Seuda; and others have been noted elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>

The water-channels in the villa seem to have been supplied with running water by a channel irregularly cut in the rock, but only at such times as there was an overflow from the cistern. It ran into a rock-cut tank, 6 feet 6 inches square, with a maximum depth of 2 feet 3 inches, then over a shallow semicircular filtering bed, 5 feet 9 inches in diameter, and thence into a round lead pipe 1¼ inch in diameter: this soon transferred its water to a terracotta pipe 3 inches square externally and 2 internally, laid in a rock-cut channel. This was then carried down through the various rooms by a channel with rough walling in the upper part and cut in the rock in the lower part, as is the branch which leaves it in room 29; in either case a roof of small slabs was used.

Parts of the building were evidently decorated with painted plaster and coloured marbles, fragments of which were found; and one piece of a slab of grey marble ('bigio') half an inch thick, from the great stone-heap, bore the letters ΠΙΙ in good characters of the

<sup>1</sup> *Insel Malta*, 17.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Mayr, *Insel Malta*, 17; Zammit in *Annual Report*, 1913, 14, p. 3, and above, p. 50. An exact

parallel is to be found in the Cisternale di Vitagliano, which has wrongly been regarded as prehistoric (Maggiulli in *Apulia*, i, 1910, p. 251).

latter half of the second century of our era,  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches high. It may well have formed part of an inscription mentioning one of the Antonine emperors. The ancient coins found include three worn Punic coins, and one probably of Gratian, Valentinian, or Valens, too much damaged to be determined with certainty. Besides there was the coin of the grand master Pinto, mentioned above as giving a date for the original excavation of the place (1741-1773).

From the fragments found, we may infer considerable use of brick in the upper parts of the building. We have many interesting

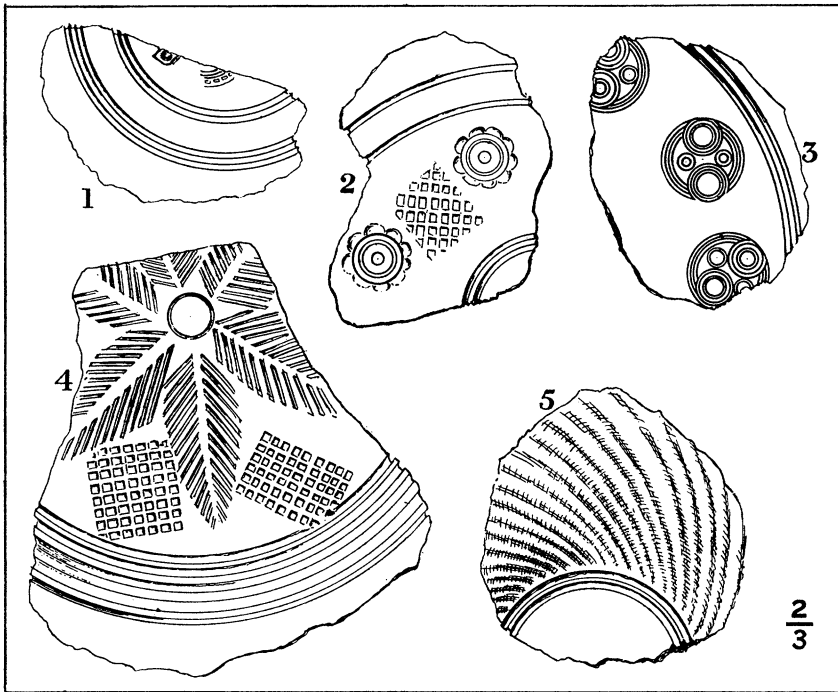


FIG. 24. BOTTOMS OF BOWLS OF IMITATION SAMIAN POTTERY FROM CORRIDOR (p. 66).

arch-bricks slightly curved,<sup>1</sup> with a projection  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch square in the centre which keyed into other similar bricks.

A great quantity of pottery fragments were found in the house, the overwhelming majority being coarse ware, suitable for domestic use or rough purposes. There are many handles and bottoms of amphorae, and various pieces of large vessels, some decorated with incised circles or rough raised designs of a simple nature. These sherds belong to the Punic and Roman periods, and are mostly of coarse badly-purified clay, usually covered with a rather finer slip.

<sup>1</sup> 8 inches long below,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches above,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide,  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches thick. There are other bricks also up to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches in thickness.

The superior fabrics were represented by the base of an Arretine cup with the inscription *L. RASINPIS* ('in planta pedis'),<sup>1</sup> and by a local imitation of Samian ware, occasionally decorated with stamped designs and, in one instance, with a human figure in relief.<sup>2</sup> No potters' names or other stamped inscriptions occur, also no graffiti. Only one whole vase was found, a shallow bowl with wide rim and small base-ring; it is of the same imitation glazed Samian ware, but the red is rather duller in tone than the real Arretine pottery. The pottery found in the corridor no. 16 was of rather finer quality than that discovered in the rest of the house. Among the fragments were pieces of imitation Samian ware, both small bowls and large shallow dishes. One, in particular, was ornamented with groups of punched dots arranged in squares, and from an incised ring in the centre six palm branches radiated outwards.<sup>3</sup> The clay is well purified, bright red in tone, and well glazed. Others were ornamented with circles and squares alternately (fig. 24). There were also larger coarse bowls<sup>4</sup> and one open dish with the interior coloured black and a wide rim of dull red.

I may add that near the villa on the north-west is a small tomb, which, as Prof. Zammit thinks, belonged originally to the early type of round cremation-tombs. Later on it was adapted for the burial of one body and, later still, a second was placed in the space just inside the door which is usually reserved for pottery. That the second burial was a later addition is indicated by the fact that the usual drainage channel, cut to prevent moisture from reaching the head of the first body, discharges on to the space prepared for the head of the second. Beyond it to the north-west a search was made for other tombs, but the cuttings visible in the rock seem to be only the remains of quarrying; and much quarry rubbish, apparently systematically filled in, was found there.

### III. THE ISLAND OF GOZO.

The chief town of Gozo,<sup>5</sup> like that of Malta, was almost exactly in the centre of the island: and as in Malta, it bore the name of the island, *Gaulus*. The sites, too, are very similar. The town, which occupied the north extremity of a plateau, commanded an extensive view towards the east, and to some extent to the west

<sup>1</sup> *C.I.L.* xi, 519, e. (*L. Rasini Pisani*) certainly of the first century, as copies of the stamp have been found at Pompeii.

<sup>2</sup> cf. p. 58 *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> [Similar imitations of decorated Samian with the decoration stamped in, presumably by hand, instead of being in relief and cast in a mould, have been found at Holt near Chester (see my *Roman Britain in 1914*, figs. 1, 10, 11), and as Prof. Jullian and Mr. D. Atkinson tell me, in Austria, as, for example, at

Laibach, and perhaps also elsewhere. They seem distinct in date and in character from the stamped Samian with simple geometrical patterns used in the latest empire in Gaul, Britain, etc. (*Déchelette, Vases ornés*, ii, 327-334.—F. Haverfield.)

<sup>4</sup> Three bowls with flat bottoms and curved sides measured about a foot in diameter, the sides being about 3 inches high and  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch thick.

<sup>5</sup> Called *Ghaudex* in the vernacular.



# PLAN OF THE VILLA DISCOVERED AT RAMLEH BAY GOZO.

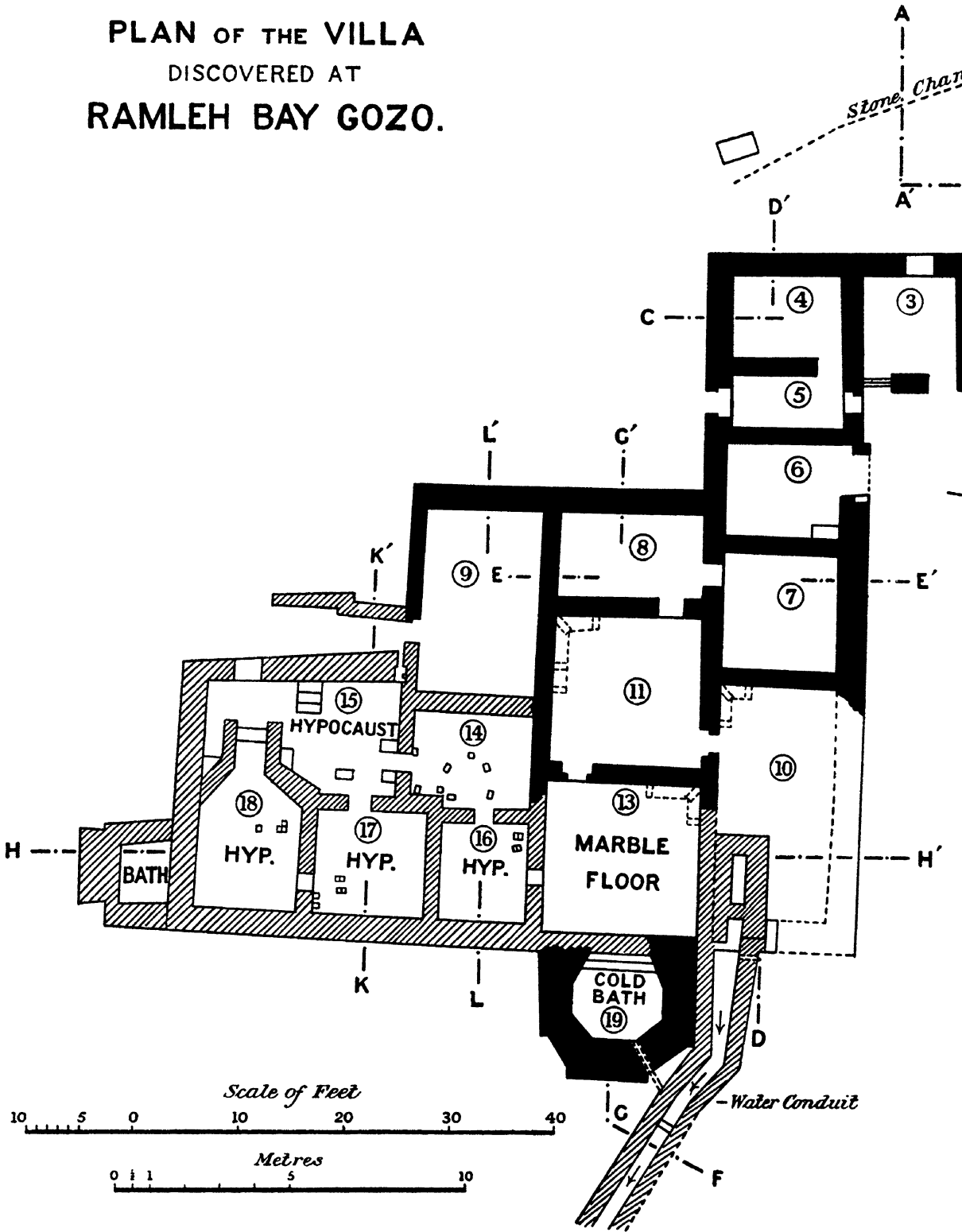
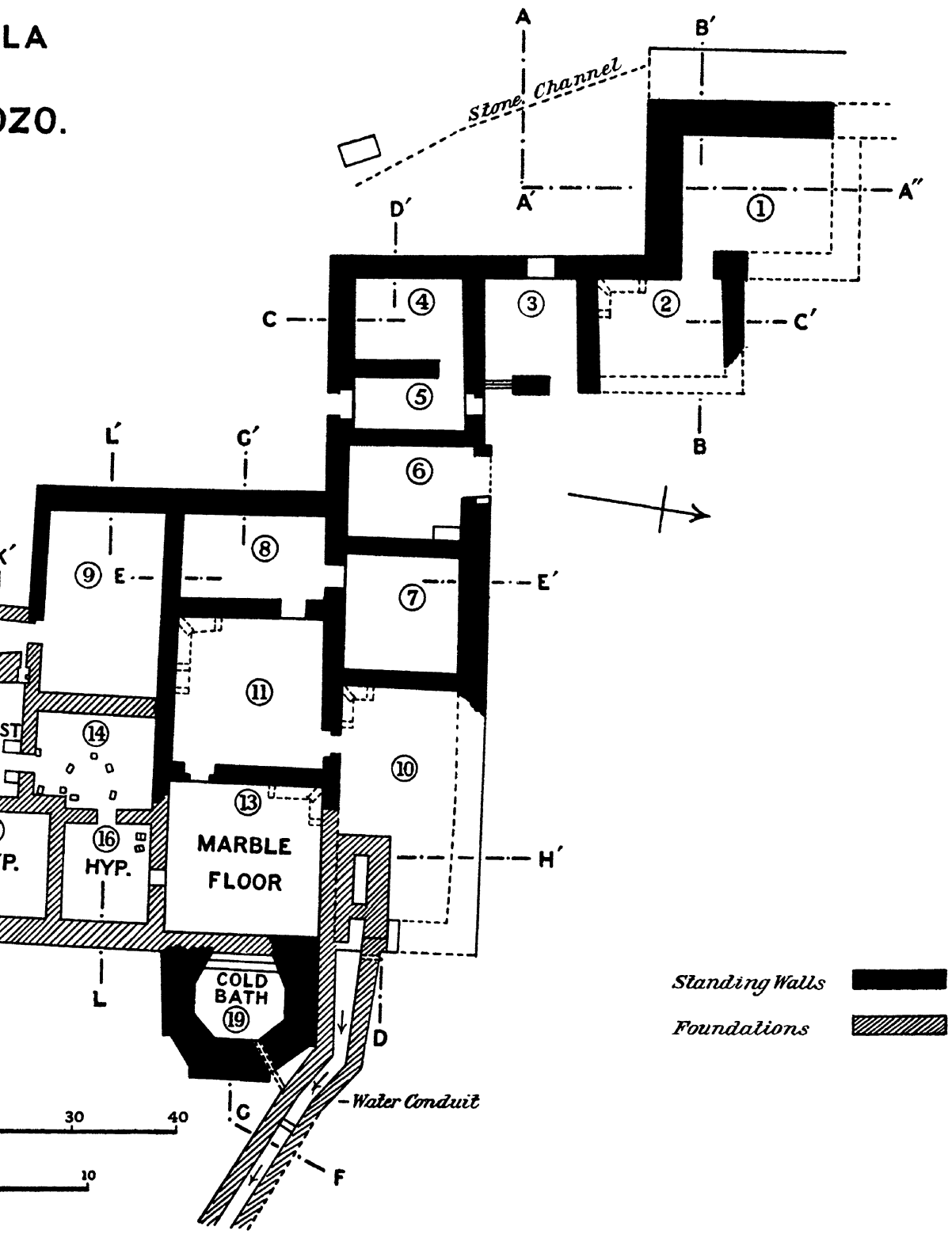


FIG. 25 (p. 71).

LA  
OZO.





*Standing Walls*        
*Foundations*        

FIG. 25 (p. 71).

also, the hills being more broken up and the contours more varied than in Malta. The coast is even more abrupt, and there are only two small harbours.<sup>1</sup> The acropolis, which rises over 100 feet from the plateau at its north extremity, was occupied in the middle ages by a castle, the fortifications of which were further strengthened by the Knights. It contains the old town, now half in ruins, while the new town extends over the plateau.<sup>2</sup> It is not defended by lofty cliffs, as is the site on the larger island, nor are there now any traces



FIG. 26. DRAPED FEMALE STATUE FOUND IN GOZO, NOW IN THE VALETTA MUSEUM (p. 70, note 2).

of the walls or ditch which we must suppose to have isolated it on the south.<sup>8</sup>

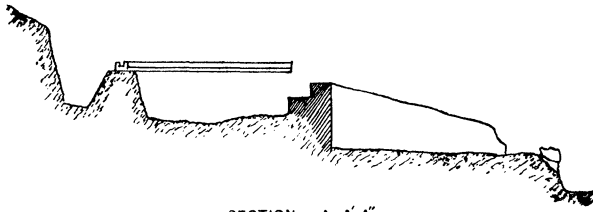
A Phoenician inscription records the restoration of three temples by the people of Gaulus in Carthaginian times, but we know nothing

<sup>1</sup> Diodorus' praise of it, as *λιμέσιν εὐκαίροις κεκοσμένη* (v, 12) might with more truth have been applied to Malta: see Weiss in Pauly-Wissowa, vii, 875.

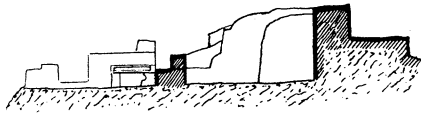
<sup>2</sup> Mayr, p. 17, fig. 2, gives a plan, and Caruana.

*Report*, p. 22, a photograph from a drawing. Mayr cites parallels from Syracuse and Roman Africa.

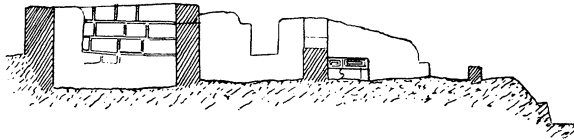
<sup>3</sup> Caruana, *Frammento Critico*, 273, states that the foundations of the walls of the lower city were seen about 1800 and again in 1882, and also fixes the sites of three gates.



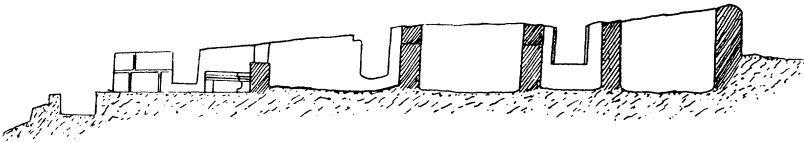
SECTION A-A''



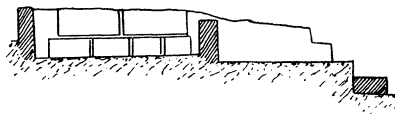
SECTION B-B'



SECTION C-C'



SECTION D-D'



SECTION E-E'

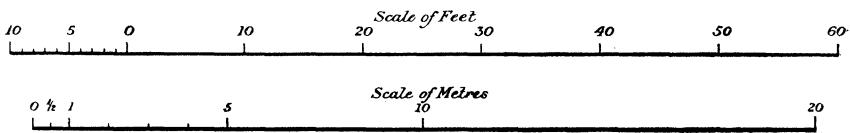
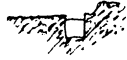
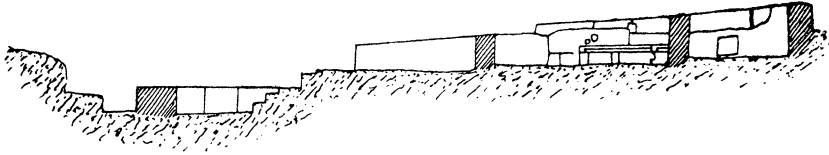


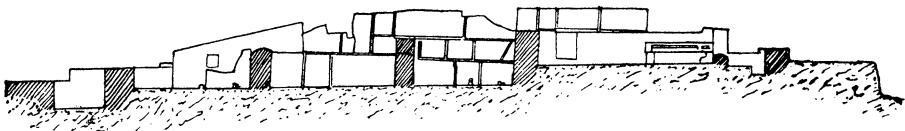
FIG. 27. ROMAN VILLA AT RAMLEH BAY, GOZO : SECTIONS OF REMAINS (p. 70).



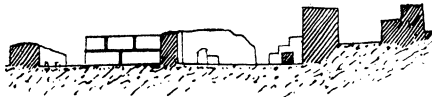
SECTION F-C



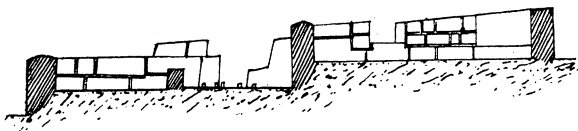
SECTION G-C'



SECTION H-H'



SECTION K-K'



SECTION L-L'

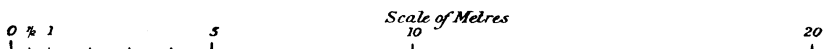
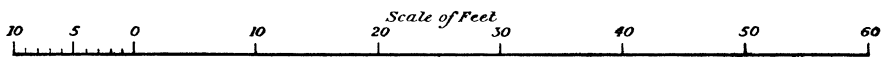


FIG. 28. ROMAN VILLA AT RAMLEH BAY, GOZO : SECTIONS OF REMAINS (p. 70).

of their sites. We are, however, justified in supposing that the worship of the emperors, to which inscriptions allude,<sup>1</sup> was carried on in a temple or temples within the city. Though no traces survive to-day, authors of the eighteenth century<sup>2</sup> note the existence in the town of many architectural fragments, columns, capitals, bases, cornices, and the like.

Mayr was not able<sup>3</sup> to record the presence of Roman remains elsewhere on the island of Gozo.<sup>4</sup> But the ruins of Ghain-el-Cbira, near the castle of Gozo, are said to have yielded in 1720 the group of Romulus and Remus with the wolf, which is now in the Valetta museum,<sup>5</sup> and a villa was found lately at Ramleh Bay which merits fuller description. The excavation was carried out in and after December, 1910, under the direction of Prof. Zammit; a very little work was done under my supervision, and it has now been covered in again.<sup>6</sup>

#### VILLA AT RAMLEH BAY.

The villa lies in a beautiful spot, with magnificent sea-views, on the west slope of the bay just below a battery erected by the knights of St. John. The shore was, no doubt, approached by the valley on the south, though no traces of a Roman road can be found along it, and the principal entrance to the villa was probably from the beach on the north. This portion of the building has almost entirely disappeared, owing to the subsidence or removal of the sand

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Tradition records that the cathedral occupies the site of a temple of Iuno. Agius, ii, ch. 2, states that remains of Doric columns and blocks of marble were discovered in rebuilding, and were lying in the streets; and that no less than 22 other shafts were lying about: cf. Ciantar, i, 365; Houel, iv, 77. Six of these shafts found their way down to the wharf at Mgiarro, and were removed, five to the Valetta museum and one to that of Gozo, in 1905-6 (*Annual Report*, 14). Houel figures (pl. 248) a headless draped female statue, and notes that a head, crowned with leaves like laurel leaves, but much damaged, which was shown him in Gozo, might, from its size, have belonged to this statue. The statue is now in the Valetta museum (fig. 26), but the head has disappeared. The statue belongs to the first century of our era: cf. Caruana, *Report*, p. 113. A well-tomb of the ordinary Punic type was found in the Strada Vairingia, Rabato, Gozo, which appears to have been used in Roman times, inasmuch as, besides late Carthaginian and Maltese coins, Roman coins from A.D. 138 to 254 were discovered in it (*Annual Report*, 1909-10, 5).

<sup>3</sup> p. 152.

<sup>4</sup> In the Valetta museum are some fine fragments of fresco and coloured marbles from Haggaria, Rabat, presented by Father Magri in 1905.

<sup>5</sup> Caruana, *Report*, p. 112: probably also a

renaissance work. It is reported that on the hill of Ghelmus, near Zebbug, there was found in 1722-36 (under grand master Manoel) a golden heifer on a golden stand, surrounded by small round disks (like loaves): the eyes were carbuncles, and there was a larger carbuncle on the forehead. It was, however, sold, and no trace of it could be recovered. Near Garbo, in 1759, there was found a small terracotta figure of a dog seated on a base with a Phoenician inscription (Ciantar, i, 367, and pl. xii). A statuette of Hercules, similar to that in the Valetta museum, is said also to have been found in Gozo (Agius MS. ap. Caruana, *Report*, p. 113). A sepulchral cippus from Gozo, with the bust of a woman and (apparently) a pair of handcuffs or fetters below, is figured by Houel, iv, pl. 261, n; and a statue, which in Abela's time was in the castle, but has now disappeared, is given by Abela, p. 217 = Ciantar, pl. ii, fig. 2.

<sup>6</sup> *Annual Report*, 1910-11, p. 11. An account of the building, with some photographs and an unauthorised reproduction of the plan, has appeared in the *Bulletin of the Archaeological Institute of America*, iii (1912), 178-180, and pls. xv-xvii. The plans and sections are the work of Mr. N. Said, assistant surveyor, to whom I desire to express my acknowledgments. Drawings of the wall-decoration by Mr. Busuttill are preserved in the Valetta museum as a record.

on which it is built. The villa consists of nineteen rooms (figs. 25, 27, 28). Of these, rooms 1—6 seem to form a separate group, while the rest make up a fairly complete set of baths. The building is constructed of blocks of local stone: many of them are large rectangular blocks<sup>1</sup> which show signs of having been previously in use elsewhere. The construction is poor: no mortar was used, the walls are not coursed, and the interstices are filled up with clay.



FIG. 29. TELAMON FOUND IN THE ROMAN VILLA AT RAMLEH BAY, GOZO (p. 72).

Room 1 is the highest of all in level. It was built against the hillside, and its upper walls, which alone are preserved, are over three feet deeper on the inside than on the outside. The west wall is no less than 7 feet 6 inches thick at the bottom. There are remains of painting preserved on the plaster, some red and yellow lines and panels on a white ground, intended probably to represent marble. The floor has perished, but some rough foundation-stones remain.

<sup>1</sup> One measured 5 feet 3 inches by 1 foot 7 inches by 1 foot 2½ inches.

Some fragments of mosaic pavement found in the room had obviously fallen from above, and must have belonged either to the ceiling or to the floor of an upper room. The tesserae are blue-black and white, and rather coarse: it was not possible to recover enough of the mosaic to make out the design. To the upper part of the wall, or to an upper room, also belonged some fallen stone slabs. Outside this room an open gutter runs in a south-easterly direction.<sup>1</sup> Its further course beyond the point marked in the plan is uncertain, but it no doubt supplied the baths with water from a spring, which still exists in the hillside above the battery.

Room 2 is entered from room 1 by a doorway, 3 feet 4 inches in width. All the doorways in this building are rather narrow, and this one is much above the average. A good deal of the walling has collapsed, so that it was impossible to ascertain its connexion with the rest of the house; it seems clear, however, that it had no communication with room 3. In the angle is a low stone seat.<sup>2</sup> There is a little plaster on the walls, much damaged: some of it is dark red in colour. In the *ESE.* angle was found a telamon in local stone, representing a nude and youthful satyr, with the mouth open, pointed ears, and ivy in the hair (fig. 29). The stone is broken off below; as it stands, it is 1 foot 9 inches high, the head being 8½ inches high. It stood obviously against a wall, and the slab left at the back is 1½ inches thick.

Room 3 was accessible from the exterior of the building on the *sw.* and it had one door, if not two; but owing to the collapse of this part of the building, it is quite uncertain to what they led. Room 3 certainly did not communicate directly with room 4, but only by means of no. 5, which was a passage leading to the exterior of the house. The doorway into room 4 is only 1 foot 11 inches wide.

Room 6 was only accessible from the *nw.* side, apparently by a narrow door: to the *sw.* of it there is a massive block of stone from some other building, used as the lowest course of the wall. Like the rest of the rooms we have so far examined, this one has no floor preserved: in each case the natural clay was reached beneath the floor-level.

Room 7 probably served as the entrance to the series of baths which occupies the remainder of the building. Much loose lime was found at the level where the floor would have been.

From room 7 a door leads to room 8, which had a limestone-concrete floor, and served as a passage into room 11, also paved with limestone-concrete. Rooms 10 and 11 both have stone benches in

<sup>1</sup> It can be traced for some 26 feet; it is built of solid blocks of stone (13 inches wide, 10 inches high), in which is cut a gutter 4½ inches wide by 5 inches deep.

<sup>2</sup> The front of the seat has a simple moulding.

It runs for 2 feet 11½ inches along one side of the room, and 3 feet 10 inches along the other. It is 1 foot 4 inches wide, 4½ inches thick, and stands on profiled supports 1 foot high.



the angle similar to that in room 2, and they may, therefore, probably be considered as apodyteria or dressing-rooms.

Room 10 was paved with small diamond-shaped tiles.<sup>1</sup> What lay on the north side of this room we do not know. Probably it had originally a door into room 13, afterwards blocked by the seat in the latter.

Room 13 was accessible from room 11, and itself gave access both to the cold bath (19) and to the hot rooms (14-18), and was thus a kind of waiting-room. It was by far the finest in the building, 15 feet 2 inches square, with a pavement of various coloured marbles. The outer border is formed of Gozo stone, within which is a band of gray marble, enclosing a thin band of black. Another band of gray, a thin band of red, and a third band of gray follow successively, framing a centre of eight slabs of a fine breccia.

In the angle is a stone seat, and on the walls are remains of inferior painting in imitation of coloured marbles. Other fragments of painting were found on two slabs of stone lying loose in the room, and probably belonging to the upper part of the walls. On the NNW. side is a bath, 4 feet 6 inches long by 2 feet 7 inches wide, with an outlet channel running along the external wall of room 19, and receiving the waste water from it also. After a further course of some 33 feet it disappears in the sand. It is lined with stone slabs and paved with cobbles, and at the upper end, where it is more regular, is 1 foot  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches by 1 foot 7 inches.

Room 19, the cold bath, was approached from no. 13 by a wide step, which has been removed, and two narrow ones of Gozo stone; it has the form of an irregular octagon and is lined with gray marble. In it were found two small stone bases, and fragments of two more.<sup>2</sup> The waste water was carried off by a round pipe in the north-east angle into the water-channel already mentioned.

Southward of no. 13 is a series of five rooms (14-18) heated by hypocausts: the floors are in no case preserved, but some small hexagonal bricks, each side measuring  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches, were found loose; the level was almost identical with that of room 13, from which there were two steps leading up.<sup>3</sup> The pillars supporting the floor were in some cases formed of small baked tiles<sup>4</sup> usually placed in pairs to form an independent pillar, but only singly when they are placed against one of the side walls. In room 15, however, we have stone pilae and short walls of stone as supports for the floor. Numerous fragments of rectangular flue-tiles have been found in these rooms. All of them communicate with one another by means of openings

<sup>1</sup> A few only are preserved in situ; each side is 2 inches in length. There is a little painted plaster of the usual kind in situ above the seat.

<sup>2</sup> One is 1 foot by 9 inches by  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inches; another  $12\frac{1}{2}$  by 14 by 12 inches, with an oval depression in

the upper surface, and the third and fourth 9 by 10 by  $12\frac{1}{2}$  inches and 9 by 11 by  $12\frac{1}{2}$  inches; of these last two, one half is split off diagonally.

<sup>3</sup> The one preserved gives a rise of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches only.

<sup>4</sup> Size 4 by 6 by  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

in the walls below the floor-level, but as these are not preserved to any greater height, the position of the doorways is quite uncertain. However, as all the rooms were heated by hypocausts, it is probably correct to suppose that there was no entrance to the building anywhere on this side.

Room 18 had an irregular projection on the east, and a rectangular bath.

The stoke-hole for this series of hypocausts must have opened into the passage 12 which has no distinct entrance from the south. It also gives access to the large room 9, not hitherto mentioned: it has no communication with the other parts of the building.

Of the objects found, the most interesting is the telamon already mentioned. There are also scanty fragments of a circular 'oscillum' of white marble, three-sixteenths of an inch in thickness, with a bearded Silenus head, and the legs with some drapery on another piece; and there are fragments of a draped female statuette, which served as a fountain figure with a hole for the pipe. The pottery is all quite ordinary, and certainly belongs to the Roman period, but no coins have been found. A piece of white marble seemed to have a graffito in red upon it, which it was impossible to decipher.

#### CONCLUSION.

In the foregoing account of the Maltese islands, a somewhat greater elaboration of detail than usual has been attempted, in order to collect the fragments of information from inaccessible and scattered publications. The examination of the remains shows that the distribution of population differed widely in the Roman period from that of the present day. It should, however, be borne in mind that in many places the shallowness of the soil and the use of old walling as quarries for modern buildings may have led to the disappearance of many Roman structures. Nor have the islands been systematically explored for remains of this, or indeed of any other period. Owing to the high state of cultivation which prevails, access to many sites is difficult at most seasons, and one has to rely largely upon casual discoveries, many of which are not reported at all. Until recently, too, such sites as were excavated were inadequately supervised, and often covered in without proper published record.

These things are nowadays much more efficiently done, and the curator of the museum, Prof. Temistocle Zammit, finds time to observe and record all new discoveries of importance, so that the Valetta museum is now one of great interest. To him and to Prof. Napoleone Tagliaferro, who has occupied himself especially with the prehistoric period, to Mr. G. Despott, curator of the natural history museum, and to Mr. C. Rizzo, whose main interest extends

to even more remote periods, Maltese archaeology owes a very great debt ; and those who have visited Malta will not readily forget their unflinching kindness. I must myself express my very hearty thanks to Prof. Zammit for many of the illustrations of this article, and for much help in its preparation.

The interest of Malta, which begins in the neolithic period, is sustained all through the succeeding ages ; we have, as yet, found no certain traces of any public building, or even of any temple, of the Roman period, but the artistic beauty of the mosaics and sculptures preserved in the Roman Villa museum at Notabile testifies to the existence of a high degree of culture, and the industry of the Maltese seems to have conduced, as it does to-day, to a considerable degree of prosperity in trade and agriculture. Whether



FIG. 30. MALE PORTRAIT-HEAD IN THE VALETTA MUSEUM, no. 62 (p. 76).



FIG. 31. MALE HEAD IN THE VALETTA MUSEUM, no. 59 (p. 78).

they ever became thoroughly Romanised is doubtful : they are still, perhaps, one of the most unchanged races in Europe, and singularly attached to a group of islands which, bare and treeless as they appear when first approached, will be found, by those who learn to know them, to possess a beauty and charm which are quite their own.

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#### APPENDIX ON THE VALETTA MUSEUM.

The Valetta museum contains many Greek and Roman antiquities which have not been mentioned previously in this monograph, and may be noted briefly here. Of nearly all the provenance is doubtful ; some are known to have been found outside the Maltese islands. Prof. Gardner and Mrs. Arthur Strong have kindly examined the photographs and helped with some suggestions.

(1) Male portrait-head, 9 ins. high, of the third century A.D. Hair hammered, eyebrows also hammered (rather in herringbone style), pupils rendered by incised circles,

head much polished. Probably found in Malta : see Caruana, *Report*, p. 77 ; Zammit, *Valetta Mus.* 41, no. 62 (fig. 30).

(2) Circular 'oscillum,' 11 ins. in diameter, bearing on one side a female dramatic mask with high-piled hair and open mouth, and on the other side a griffin rampant, with ram's head beneath its left claw. Found in the island of Gozo : see Caruana, p. 77 ; Zammit, 41 ; museum no. 52.

(3) Marble statuette of Jupiter, 6½ ins. high. Thunderbolt in right hand ; left

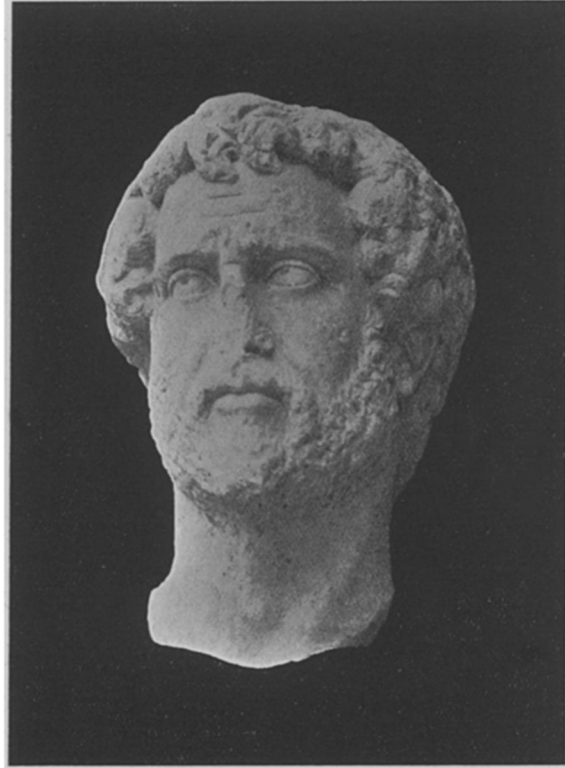


FIG. 32. HEAD OF IMPERIAL PERSONAGE OF THE PERIOD OF SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS IN THE VALETTA MUSEUM, NO. 17 (p. 77).

arm (probably raised, to rest on sceptre), top of head and both feet lost. Provenance uncertain : see Caruana, p. 77 ; Zammit, 41 ; museum case L.

(4) Bronze Harpocrates. Provenance uncertain : see Caruana, p. 114, and plate opposite p. 118.

(5) Bronze head of Mercury, from a cista. Provenance unknown. The Mercury (found at Zurrico) and the Harpocrates which are figured by Abela, pp. 191, 193, and Ciantar, pl. iii, are lost.

(6) Bronze statuette, covered with characters not yet deciphered. Found in Gozo : see Becker, p. 166.

(7) Statuette of Artemis, in Greek (? Parian) marble, 10 ins. high as preserved. The goddess is moving to her left; the quiver at the back is fastened by a strap above the right shoulder; both breasts are bare; in the right leg is an iron rod; at the back, by the left leg, is a dog (?), also with an iron rod. Provenance unknown; museum no. 50.

(8) Portrait-bust of youth, 8 ins. high, fat, sleepy and rather Etruscan-looking. Pentelic marble (?). Provenance unknown: museum no. 51.

(9) Male bust, 15 ins. high, possibly Phoenician. Hair in three rings, ears very flat,

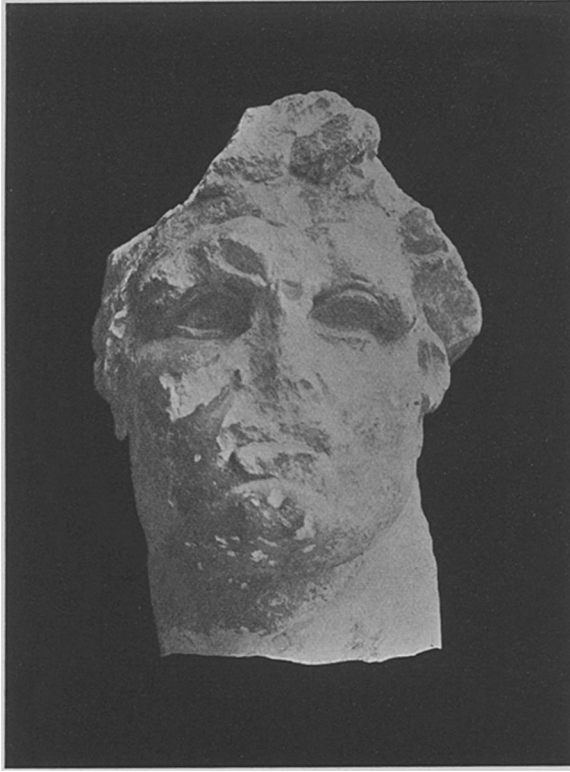


FIG. 33. MALE HEAD IN THE VALETTA MUSEUM, no. 58 (p. 78).

headdress falling in flaps behind the ears; below, the usual breast drapery. Pentelic marble (?). Provenance unknown; museum no. 51.

(10) Female portrait-bust, 8 ins. high. Flat features, featureless smile on face, bony structure, kerchief over head with ends crossing in front, hair parted and waved back. Provenance unknown; museum no. 54.

(11) Male portrait-bust. Short hair and whiskers, flat features, a little Phoenician in character, 7 ins. high. Pentelic marble (?). Provenance unknown; museum no. 55.

(12) Head of imperial personage, of period of Septimius Severus, 17½ ins. high. Pupils rendered by bean-shaped segments; beard and moustache shown by thick clustering locks. Provenance unknown; museum no. 17 (fig. 32).

(13) Male head,  $13\frac{1}{2}$  ins. high, damaged; style akin to that of Damophon; Professor P. Gardner rightly points out the likeness to the Anytus head (Brunn-Bruckmann, 480). Pentelic marble, with very white crystals. Provenance unknown; museum no. 58 (fig. 33).

(14) Male bearded head with drapery. Some explain as a Greek philosopher; Professor Gardner notes the likeness to certain types of Herakles, and suggests Herakles disguised by Omphale. Provenance unknown; museum no. 59 (fig. 31).

(15) Male torso, youthful, nude, 24 ins. high. Right arm raised, left hanging by side, short locks to nape of neck, back worked. There is a large 'puntello' on the right hip, a smaller one on the left hip, and two more a little above the left knee. Provenance unknown; museum no. 61.

(16) Head, almost bald, of old man with grumpy expression, 10 ins. high; nose almost gone. Perhaps of the republican age. Provenance unknown; museum no. 67 (fig. 34).



FIG. 34. HEAD OF OLD MAN IN THE VALETTA MUSEUM, NO. 67.

(17) Fragment of inscribed marble. Provenance unknown; museum case V. The surviving letters are

IMO · T  
F · PRO

broken all round; traces of RU(?) above MO.

(18) Tablet of 'pavonazetto' (Phrygian marble), with funeral inscription. Presented in 1914 by Monsignor Canon Isidoro de' Conti Formosa; provenance unknown, possibly some columbarium at Rome. The inscription reads:

CEIONIO · PAEZONTI  
PATRONO · FEC · CEIONIA  
HELPIS · BENEMER(*enti*)

(19) Oblong cinerary urn of stone, inscribed DIODORI, on the lid; presented by Professor S. Pisani. Probably local provenance (museum no. 108); a similar urn (museum no. 107) bears a Phoenician inscription.

(20) Statuette of satyr, 14 ins. high. Found in Italy, presented in 1893 by the Rev. Don Vincenzo Caruana. Inferior work.

(21) Greek sepulchral relief, 13 ins. wide, 20 ins. high, representing a draped woman seated to left on a draped stool, with her feet on a footstool; she gives her right hand to

a standing draped female figure whose left hand hangs down. The stele has a triangular top, with traces of blue paint (possibly ancient) on the background. The relief is only 1 cm. deep, the whole stele 6 cm. thick. Marble striated, with small crystals. The inscription has not been fully deciphered: it seems to contain some such formula as *εὐτύχει, χαίρει εὐψύχει* and *μήτηρ χρηστὴ χαίρει*. The Bishop of Lincoln suggests that the name of the deceased, which preceded, was perhaps . . . *ανναία Δημητρίου*, but he has only been able to see a copy of the lettering as read by others.

(22) Slab of gray-black marble,  $24\frac{1}{2}$  ins. wide, 27 ins. high,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ins. thick, with a Latin sepulchral inscription in letters 35 mm. tall. The text is blurred and has not been made out fully; it appears to record two women, one Rennia (?) . . . who lived thirty years, the other Aufustia . . . who lived ten years. Above the inscription is a flat recess flanked by rude columns and topped by a yet ruder architrave. In it stand two female figures (presumably Rennia and Aufustia) looking out front-face and side by side; their right hands are extended above small altars, on which they make offerings; their left hands hold unidentifiable objects. Both women are draped fully in long tunics and mantles falling to the ground. In the field behind and between them is a rosette in low relief. The slab was bought recently from a dealer who knew nothing of its history: probably it is not Maltese.

I may add that the reliefs shown by Houel, pl. 26 (2), copied by Caruana (opp. p. 116), and the two 'torsi' of draped statues figured by Abela, fig. 219, and Ciantar, pl. xiii, are no longer traceable. Caruana, pp. 116 foll. notes some unimportant remains in private collections which I have not seen.

## A NOTE ON THE MOSAIC FROM THE ROMAN VILLA AT RABATO, MALTA.

By G. McN. RUSHFORTH.

In the absence of a minute description of the mosaic (p. 35), and with nothing before one but a photograph which is by no means clear in every detail (plate 111), the results of any attempt to identify the subject must be somewhat uncertain. The idea of Samson and Delilah may be dismissed, if only because the point of that story is that the hero could only be bound after he was deprived of his locks, whereas in the mosaic the man has been first bound in order to have his beard or hair forcibly cut. From Dr. Ashby's silence about the lion's skin and club at the feet of the figure, mentioned by Caruana (*Report*, p. 6), one may infer that these details were imaginary; otherwise they would have been decisive for Hercules. At first sight the central figure strikes me as belonging to the Satyr type. The robust form, the snub nose, the pair of short horns which I seem to make out rising close together over the forehead, and especially the pointed leaf-shaped ear which, unless I am mistaken, can be seen just above the left shoulder, all indicate the wild creature of the forest and the mountain. But why should he be thus treated by the women? Now one recalls how troublesome the Pans and the Satyrs and all that tribe are to their female counterparts, the Nymphs:

Quid non et Satyri, saltatibus apta iuventus,  
fecere, et pinu praeincti cornua Panes,  
ut poterentur ea (sc. Pomona)?

Ovid, *Met.* xiv, 637.

Pan, as a Greek novelist puts it, never lets the Nymphs alone. *παύεται δὲ οὐδέποτε*

Δρυάσιν ἐνοχλῶν καὶ Ἐπιμηλίσι Νύμφαις παρέχων πράγματα (Longus, ii, 39, 3). So they must have their revenge, and accordingly we find among the *Eikónes* of Philostratus a picture of the Nymphs who have caught Pan asleep, tie his hands behind his back, and proceed to shave or cut off his beard. προσπεσοῦσαι γὰρ αὐτῷ αἱ νύμφαι περιῆκται μὲν ἤδη τῷ χεῖρε ὁ Πάν, δέδιε δὲ ἐπὶ τοῖς σκέλεσιν ἐπειδὴ βούλονται αἰρεῖν αὐτά. τὸ δὲ δὴ γένειον, οὐ πλείστος αὐτῷ λόγος, ἐξύρηται μαχαιρίδων ἐσβεβληκυῶν ἐς αὐτό (*Imagines*, ii, 11, p. 828). One could hardly expect to find every detail of this description reproduced in the mosaic at Malta, but I think it a not unreasonable conjecture that it represents at least an episode of a similar nature. The scene, as the trees show, is in the open country. What the women are wearing on their heads is not clear, but the bare arms and shoulder of the one on the left may well suggest a Nymph. The victim has not goat's legs, i.e. he is not an Aegipan; but this is not necessary even for Pan himself (British Museum *Catalogue of Sculpture*, vol. iii, part vii, p. 61; Helbig, *Führer*, 2nd ed. i, 395), or an ordinary Satyr may be intended.

This interpretation reminds me of another illustration of the disrespectful and ignominious treatment to which Pan was sometimes subjected. I refer to the relief on a sarcophagus in the British Museum (2298 C; *Catalogue*, iii, part viii, p. 303; *Marbles*, x, pl. 37), described as the 'Chatisement of Pan' by Satyrs. No doubt there is some story behind this, perhaps on the lines of the passage in Theocritus, vii, 105 :

καὶ μὲν ταῦτ' ἔρδοις ὦ Πάν φίλε, μήτι τυ παῖδες  
Ἄρκαδιοὶ σκίλλαισιν ὑπὸ πλευράς τε καὶ ὤμων  
τανίκα μαστίσδοιεν, ὅτε κρέα τυτθὰ παρείη.

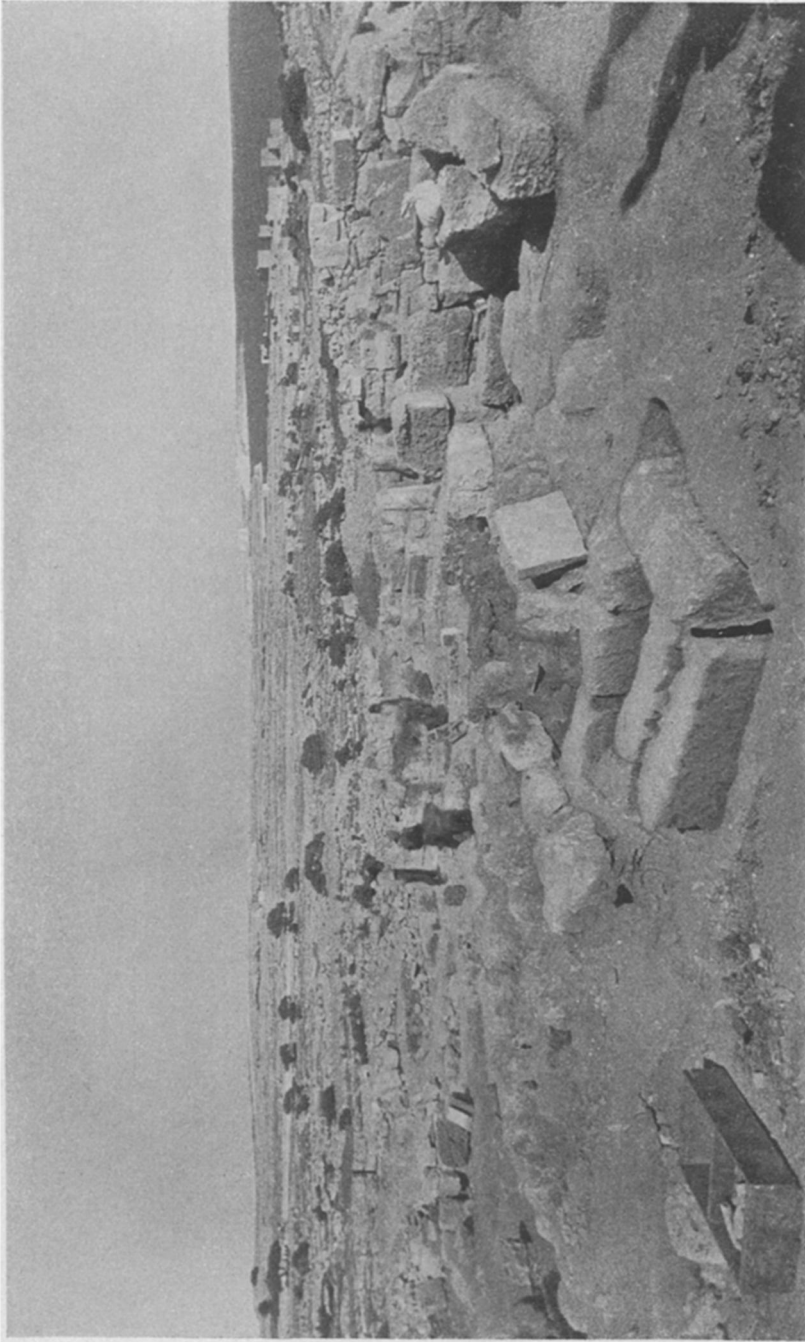




MOSAIC FROM THE ROMAN VILLA AT RABATO, MALTA, SUPPOSED TO REPRESENT SAMSON AND DELILAH (pp. 35, 79).



MOSAIC IN THE ROMAN VILLA AT RABATO REPRESENTING AUTUMN (?) (p. 38).



VIEW OF REMAINS OF ROMAN VILLA NEAR BIRZEBUGIA, LOOKING EAST (pp. 52, 58).