



The Roman Villa at Box Wiltshire

Harold Brakspear F.S.A.

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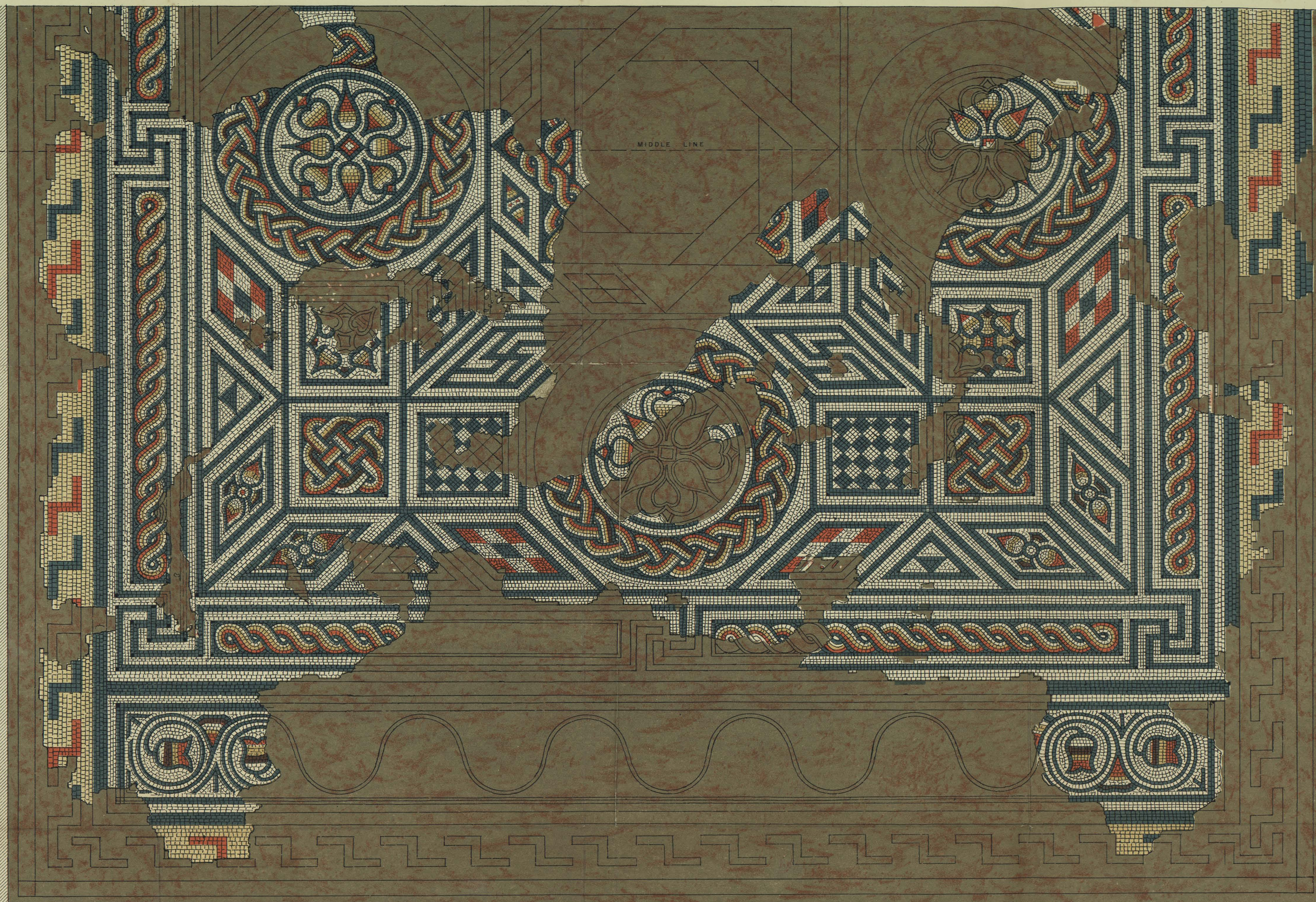
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D O O R W A Y

PAVEMENT OF CHAMBER N° VI.

SCALE OF 0 1 2 3 4 5 10 FEET

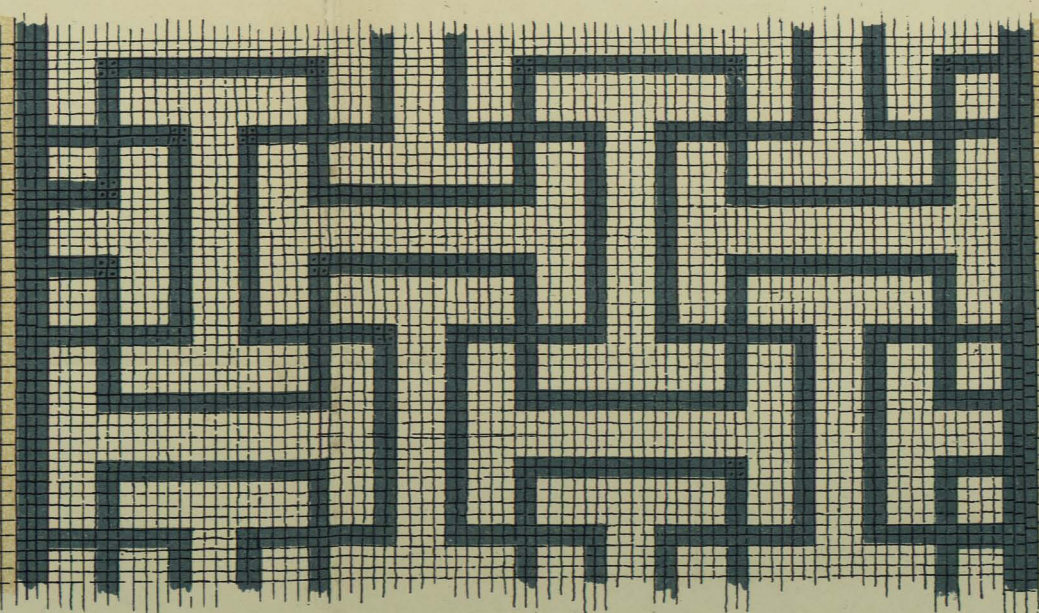


FIG. 1. PAVEMENT OF PASSAGE XX.



FIG. 2. PAVEMENT OF PASSAGES I.

THE ROMAN VILLA AT BOX,¹ WILTSHIRE.

By HAROLD BRAKSPEAR, F.S.A.

The village of Box, which is about five and a half miles east of Bath, just within the Wiltshire border, was in Roman times about two miles distant from either of the two great roads leading from Bath in an easterly and northerly direction to Silchester and Cirencester respectively.

A writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1831,² in a letter on the topography of Box, says :

"the tradition of the place was, that there had been formerly found baths . . . which had been considered to have been Roman,"

and :

"that several beautiful tessellated pavements had formerly been found in the churchyard and gardens adjoining, but no spot could be pointed out where the same might with certainty be found,"

but the writer continues :

"a year or two ago, in a garden belonging to Mr. Mullins³ adjoining the churchyard, in making some addition to a very old building,⁴ the workmen in sinking for a foundation struck upon the mutilated remains of a tessellated pavement about two or three feet below the surface of the ground. It appeared to have been part of a large square, and the part now discovered was evidently one of its corners. It had a wide ornamental border of no remarkable beauty, but what I particularly recollect (the few moments I had opportunity of seeing it) was that there were evident effects of repeated fires having been made, apparently about the middle of the square; for the tesserae toward the centre were burnt from their original colours to a brick-red, and the redness diminished in intensity as it approached the border, near which the colours were again all perfect. This pavement must have been discovered when the old building was erected, for it appeared to run

¹ For a large part of the expense of printing the illustrations accompanying this paper the Institute is indebted to the kindness of Mr. W. Heward Bell.

² Vol. ci. part i. 596-7.

³ He occupied the house now called "The Wilderness," and rented the land

whereon both the excavations of 1881 and 1902 took place.

⁴ This was certainly the "Old Parsonage House" that stood until 1853 upon the north-west angle of plot D (plan of site), and of which were found certain foundations, in part made of hypocaust pilae laid on their sides.

under its foundation, and if so, the remainder must have been then destroyed. The portion of it lately found, however, was considered worthy of preservation, and has been, it is hoped, safely secured from injury by means of large flagstones carefully placed over it."

This letter was followed in 1833 by a further notice in the same magazine¹ from the hand of the Rev. George Mullins, Rector of Ditteridge, who lived at Box, in the house now called "The Wilderness":

"In the Supplement to the first part of your vol. CI. p. 596, a correspondent, in speaking of the antiquities of the village of Box, mentions the existence of some Roman remains in my garden. The discovery which he alludes to was that of a tessellated pavement found there a few years ago. I believe that, until that discovery, no site of Roman remains could be pointed out in the village, although tradition spoke of their existence. I have now to announce a further and more important discovery, which has taken place within the present year.

In excavating some earth at the distance of forty-three yards north from the pavement before alluded to, evident traces of another, but in a state of destruction, presented themselves; and in a line leading from this immediately to the former, I found seven stone pillars, of rough workmanship, and near them is an altar-like erection, consisting of several stones, and a piece of stone of a semicircular shape, about a foot across and eight inches thick, partially excavated on each side, as if for the purpose of holding something. This stone bears evident traces of fire. Distant twenty-eight yards to the west were the mutilated remains of a tessellated pavement of blue stones, ornamented with two red borders, the tesserae nearly an inch square, and the blue stones entirely decomposed. This pavement in its original state must have been at least ten or twelve feet square. The remains of a wall on the south side were covered with several flues, made of whole bricks, supported by iron cramps; and underneath the bed on which the pavement was laid, made of coarse gravel and mortar, were large flags, supported by pillars of stone, forming a regular hypocaust.

The discovery of this pavement induced me to make an opening at a point where I might conjecture, from the direction of the hypocaust, more remains would be found; and at a depth of four feet below the surface of the earth, I discovered a third tessellated pavement, very nearly perfect, apparently forming a passage from some other parts of the building. It is nine feet wide, twenty-eight feet long, and turns at a right angle six feet, where it is broken up; but it evidently extended much further in both directions. In one corner is a curious stone cut in form as though intended for a seat, but now only eight inches high. The pattern of this passage is particularly elegant. The ground colour is white; the exterior tesserae coarse; two blue lines of smaller cubes form the borders, six feet apart, and the intermediate space is filled with semicircles, forming waving lines, blue, crossing each other at right angles; these are again intersected by others of half the diameter, with their extremities united in the centre and terminating in small crosses,

¹ Vol. ciii. part i. 357.

shaded with red and yellow, white and blue, and producing a most beautiful effect. I have preserved several specimens of the plaster from the walls, the colours of which were very bright when first exposed to the air. The patterns were principally imitations of Egyptian marble, with elegant coloured borderings, but I have not been able to discover a decided figure on any of the pieces. One small vase, holding about a pint, apparently of British workmanship, was taken up near the pillars, but unfortunately damaged by the spade. Numberless fragments of earthen vessels, small pieces of pavements, tesserae, and Roman bricks, are now in my possession. One room was evidently paved with square red bricks, quite plain. One small coin only was found, and this was so far corroded as to be wholly illegible. There is another piece of pavement (which, however, I have never seen) in a distant part of my garden; and the whole of the original buildings, if square, must have covered a considerable portion of ground, the most distant of the pavements being at least fifty yards apart."

Although no plan accompanied this letter the late excavations have made it quite easy to identify the various pavements described, which will be referred to later when dealing with the respective chambers to which they belonged.

The next notice of the villa, so far as is known, occurs in the *British Archaeological Journal* for 1860,¹ in a short article by Mr. H. Syer Cuming, quoting a letter received from a friend of his who occupied a house on the site (probably that formerly occupied by Mr. Mullins), who says :

"My garden is full of Roman remains—tiles, somewhat ornamented, but broken, bricks, tessellated pavement, fused iron, etc. I send all away to mend the roads; they are a perfect nuisance. We cannot put a spade into the ground without bringing up these impediments to vegetable growth . . . There is a bath, quite perfect, in the centre of the garden: it has been opened, but is covered up, and a beautiful pavement runs all about. The bits I dug up were white and black, very coarse work."

Mr. Cuming goes on to say :

"I begged my friend to send me up some of the remains from his garden, which he has kindly done, and a selection is now before you, consisting of tessellae of rather rough-hewn dice of white lime-stone, and portions of four square flue-pipes of red terra-cotta, from the hypocaust, which are useful for comparison with examples found in London and elsewhere. The majority of the pipes met with at Box are scored with the common diamond pattern, a few have only bands of parallel lines, whilst one fragment is decorated with a succession of waved or undulated furrows of more novel design. From a careful examination of these air conduits, I am inclined to regard them as the products of

¹ Vol. xvi. 340-342.

different kilns, for they vary both in hardness and colour, and, above all, in the character of the material, which must have been obtained from different localities. The only example of stucco which has reached me is a fragment of the fine variety called albarium, composed of plaster of Paris washed over with white; but much of the walling has been painted in fresco, in imitation of African marbles with elegant coloured borderings."¹

In the *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* for 1887² is an interesting article by Mr. R. Mann, in which these notices are all quoted, dealing with a portion of the villa excavated in 1881 and accompanied by a plan.

This portion was situated to the south of that recently uncovered, and has been since partly built over. Mr.

¹ In his *Aquae Solis*, published 1864, Preb. Scarth, in his map marks the sites of seventeen or eighteen Roman villas existing within a radius of seven miles round Bath, of which this at Box is one, another at Ditteridge is scarcely more than a mile away, and a third at Colerne not more than two miles. Of the Box villa he says: "The tessellated floors of three rooms were found here quite perfect, but the patterns are plain and the work coarsely executed. The most interesting portion is the remains of the bath; the sides and circular end of which were covered with tesserae of white lias. Careful drawings have, I understand, been made of these pavements, which were situated in gardens in the middle of the village. The remains of a hypocaust have also been found, with several pillars entire, and a Roman bath is also stated to have been found on the south side of the church-yard."

On page 127 he remarks: "There are certain particulars of these villas (round Bath) which are worthy of notice. The regularity of their form. They were either built round a court, and formed three sides of a square; or else ran in a straight line, often with a projecting portion at right angles to the main body of the building. They were all provided with a hypocaust and baths, and had tessellated pavements of elegant workmanship. They were accompanied with outbuildings, and situated in an area of some extent enclosed by a boundary wall, within which were interments of two kinds, viz., cremation and inhumation. The villas were supplied with earthenware utensils of every description, and with glass, both for windows and

domestic use. Coins are found in the greatest abundance and to the latest period of the Roman occupation. The situations are well-chosen, and the villas are for the most part represented at the present day by elegant modern country houses in the same localities and near the same sites. They were always well supplied with water, and the wells were of excellent construction. The villas round Bath do not seem to have equalled in dimensions those laid open in other parts of England, as at Woodchester or Bignor, nor the elegant remains which exist at Lydney, in Gloucestershire. . . . The superstructure of these villas is a subject which has caused much perplexity; and antiquarians are not decided as to whether the upper portions were constructed of stone or wood. I am inclined to think that wood must have furnished the materials of the upper portions, and that the stone walls were only carried to a certain height above the ground-floors. The remains seem to indicate that they were hastily plundered and then set fire to, and that the roofs and timbers fell in upon the floors, which are often found indented and covered with burnt matter and roofing tiles. After remaining in this condition, it may be, for centuries, the portions of the walls still standing were afterwards used as quarries, when stone was needed for other buildings or to make enclosures. The Saxon population left them in ruins; the Norman and mediaeval inhabitants used them as materials, and thus little is left to our time except the foundations, and that which lies buried under their debris."

² Vol. xliii. 47-55.

Mann's description of the remains will be referred to later on.

Some Roman remains are said to have been found under the porch of "The Wilderness" about 1888, but no record was kept of their character.

In 1895 the small piece of pavement under the lawn of the same house was discovered.

In 1897 Mr. Hardy, provision merchant, of Box, purchased the walled garden (plot A, plan of site), with the narrow strip of land that gives access to it from the road on the south. This land was part of that occupied by Mr. Mullins and referred to in his letter quoted above. The tradition of the Roman finds on the site caused Mr. Hardy to begin excavating, with the result that the greater part of the buildings in his garden were uncovered.

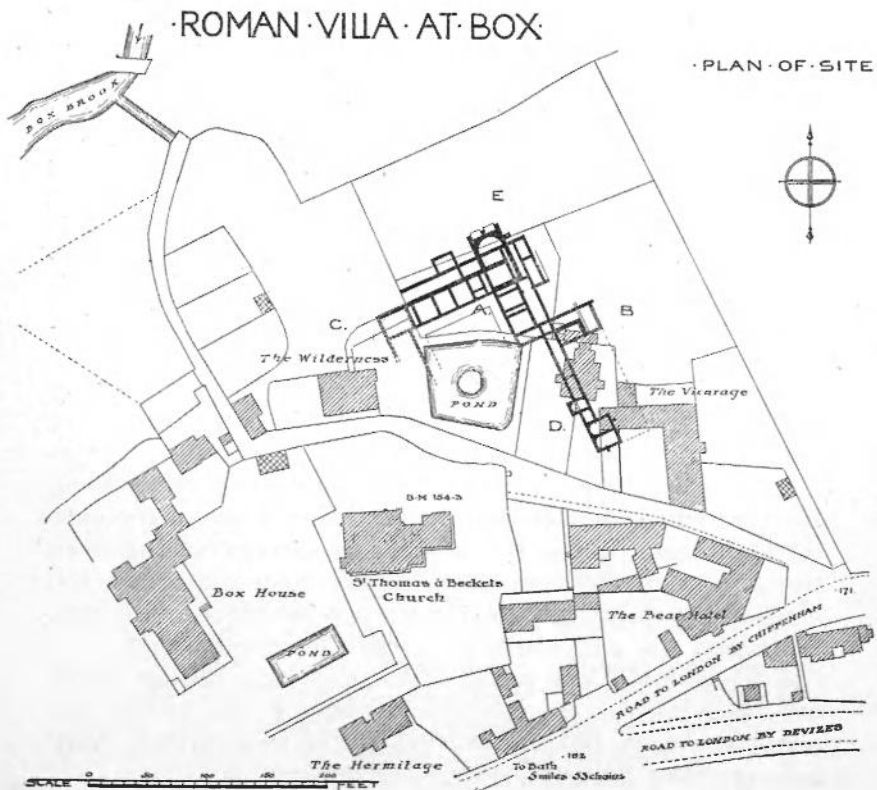
For various reasons it was impossible to make a thorough examination and survey of the site at that time, much as Mr. Hardy wished it, so that the whole was filled in again, and the matter remained in abeyance till the summer of last year (1902). Mr. W. Heward Bell, of Seend, then most generously offered to bear the expense incurred in having the whole excavated and planned. The work was commenced in August, 1902, and continued until the end of January, 1903, and it is only right to record that it was to the untiring energy of Mr. Hardy, in constantly superintending the men and securing every feature of interest as brought to light that the success of the undertaking is due.

The villa was situated on the side of a hill, sloping north, overlooking the valley of Box brook, to the east and north of the parish church.

The high ground is still full of a number of very strong springs, which doubtless influenced the choice of the spot for habitation by the Romans. The springs coming from the limestone rock had from time immemorial deposited masses of tufa down the slope upon which the villa was built, and this tufa was used largely for the foundation of the floors and hypocausts. Whether the springs were collected into a reservoir before serving the villa is impossible to say, but the surplus water was carried away through deep culverts.

So great was the body of water from these springs that throughout the middle ages it was sufficient to drive a mill belonging to Monkton Farleigh Priory. The dam of this mill was formed upon the site of the court of the villa, possibly being merely an enlargement of an *impluvium*, and yet remains as a pond. The mill was still in use at the end of the eighteenth century, and the mill house is now incorporated in that of "The Wilderness." The writer of the article in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1831, already quoted, says "little remains of the mill are now visible here, excepting the place of the over-shot wheel and the circumstance that very many old-fashioned millstones are to be seen in the pavements about the premises."

The plan of the site shows the position of the villa with respect to the modern boundaries and buildings at present existing.



The recent excavations were principally confined to plot A, and embraced the whole of the north-east portions of the building. Some small parts were traced outside that ground on the north (plot E), and in the Vicarage garden (plot B) on the east. Unfortunately it was not possible to complete the excavations in the Vicarage garden to the outside walls. The excavations were also continued along the west side of plot D, but beyond a small fragment in the extreme north angle nothing was found, everything having doubtless been grubbed up by the owner, who considered them a "perfect nuisance" and "impediments to vegetable growth."

The villa, thus partly exposed by the various excavations that have taken place on its site, must have been one of very considerable size, as it measured at least 174 feet from east to west and 216 feet from north to south.

It was built on the courtyard plan: but whether the south side was enclosed by buildings, or open, in the more usual English manner, is impossible to say at present.¹

The court had a passage round it on the east, north, and west sides in front of a range of buildings presumably opening therefrom. On the north and east sides was another passage outside the buildings.

The outside passage, on the east side, continued southward to a set of chambers containing the baths, and in the centre of its length a considerable sized wing of other chambers projected eastward.

The arrangement on the west side was probably similar to that on the east, judging by the discoveries under the porch of "The Wilderness," and the reputed pavements in the churchyard.²

A considerable alteration of the original plan was made at a later period at the north-east angle, by the erection of a large chamber having an apsidal north end, and the outer passage on the east side was so altered as to be still on the outside of the new building.

If a corresponding addition was made on the west side

¹ The tradition of the place is that the remains found in the churchyard were close against the north boundary towards its east end, which, if correct, would prove the south side of the

court to have been enclosed by buildings.

² Since this was written the site in "The Wilderness" garden has been excavated as far as possible, and will be described later.

all evidence of its existence has been destroyed by the formation of a sunk garden on its site.

The whole of the walls of the villa were constructed of the freestone beds of the great oolite, for which Box is still famous.

The original walls were built in rubble or unsquared stones, without the usual bonding courses of tile or large flat stones common to Roman work, and were plastered inside and out.

The later walls were built with similar rubble, but faced externally with squared stones, in shallow courses varying from 6 to 4 inches, which do not seem to have been plastered.

The mortar was of an ordinary yellow colour, but not particularly good, and there was no sign of brick being used in its composition.

From the thickness of the foundations generally and the abundance of building stone in the neighbourhood it would appear that all the walls were built throughout of stone.

The plaster of the walls was apparently coloured and painted generally, and of this a great number of fragments were found, which, when first exposed, were very brilliant.

The plaster was formed of a yellowish oolitic gravel having pebbles of considerable size, and it is difficult to see how it was brought up to the smooth surface prepared for the paint. The thickness was often as much as 2 inches.

From the fragments it appeared that the general scheme of decoration was of large panels of colour bordered and framed with lines of red, green, and white. The chief interest lay in the wonderful variety of imitations of marble, with which the panels of many of the rooms must have been filled. This was produced solely by splashings of different colours from a brush, and not by any attempt at veining or marbling.

The roofs were covered with two sorts of tiles. The one, of which great quantities were found, being of thick Pennant¹ stones of elongated hexagonal form, of two sizes, with a pin-hole at one angle by which they were sus-

¹ These Pennant tiles doubtless came from the neighbourhood of Bristol.

pended. The other, of which a number of fragments were found, being the ordinary red flat flanged *tegulae* with half-tube shaped *imbrices* that protected the turned-up flanges.

Of the flat building bricks¹ only a very few examples were found in the recent excavations, and none *in situ* except round the stoke-holes of the hypocausts. But in the hypocausts opened in 1881 "the pilae were built of the usual 8-inch square tiles."

The tesserae ranged in size from $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches to $\frac{5}{8}$ inch square, and the materials from which they were made varied with the importance of the chambers.

The best rooms had pavements of small tesserae, the ground work being of a very fine-grained hard straight-splitting limestone varying from a light cream colour to almost pure white,² the dark portions were of a blue-black fine-grained lias and dark grey and chocolate coloured Pennant stone, the red was of hard fine-grained tile, the yellow (which was very sparingly used), of an oolite from the upper brash beds. The borders of these rooms were of large tesserae in nearly all cases of the cream-coloured limestone.

The inferior parts of the villa had floors of large tesserae of Pennant stone and a common buff oolite.

All the materials used were procurable within a comparatively few miles of the site.

The tesserae were laid on a thick bed of concrete formed of a rough mortar having a considerable admixture of broken bricks. This was supported above the hypocausts by large rough slabs of local stone from the fissile beds of the great oolite. Where there were no hypocausts the ground had been made up to a considerable depth with broken stones, gravel and tufa.

The general plan shows the buildings that have been

¹ Those found measured $10\frac{1}{2}$ in. \times $10\frac{1}{2}$ in. \times $1\frac{1}{2}$ in., or 13 in. \times $11\frac{1}{2}$ in. \times $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. Fragments only of others larger still and 2 in. thick were found.

² This material makes very regular and durable tesserae, and in addition to the cream colour and white a few were found of a very light grey or pinkish shade, probably produced by the heating of the stone. It appears to be precisely the same stone as is used in

the pavements of Cirencester and Silchester. The authorities of the Jermyn Street Museum say that it may be derived either from the white lias (Rhoetic) beds, or more likely from the white limestone of the great oolite. This is the material which is spoken of as "Palombino marble," by some of the earlier writers. Cf. *Wilt's Arch. Mag.* xxvi. 409—(Note by Rev. E. H. Goddard.)

discovered during the recent excavations, together with those found in 1881, in their respective positions.

Each chamber is numbered on the plan and will be described in order.

Chamber I., I., I., formed the passage round the central court, which was 80 feet wide from east to west. The passages were 9 feet wide, but all evidence of a wall next the court, if any ever existed, had entirely disappeared.

The pavement was formed of white, blue, and red tesserae with a cream-coloured border, and although not an uncommon design is exceedingly effective. It remained tolerably perfect along the east passage for 28 feet from the north wall, and returned a short distance along the north passage. The greater part of this passage was not cleared,¹ but at the west end fragments of the pavement were again found, which were of great interest as showing where the passage returned southward along the west side of the court.

The north-east angle of this passage was opened by Mr. Mullins in 1833, and described in his letter already quoted. The pavement appears to have been preserved by him by enclosing it in a walled building, that was used as a beer cellar, which was destroyed some years ago; but the lowest courses of its 8-inch ashlar walls were found.

Chamber II. was probably a passage, but it is not possible to say definitely, as the only indication of its existence is a fragment of pavement, now covered by a trap-door in the lawn of "The Wilderness."² It consists of a band of chocolate tesserae of uncertain width, a band of red $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, and a band of cream-colour also of uncertain width.

A large area of the lawn to the south covers tessellated pavements, judging by a probing rod, and may shortly be exposed to view.

Chamber III. retains the core of the foundations of the north wall, which now forms a terrace wall above the sunk garden already mentioned.

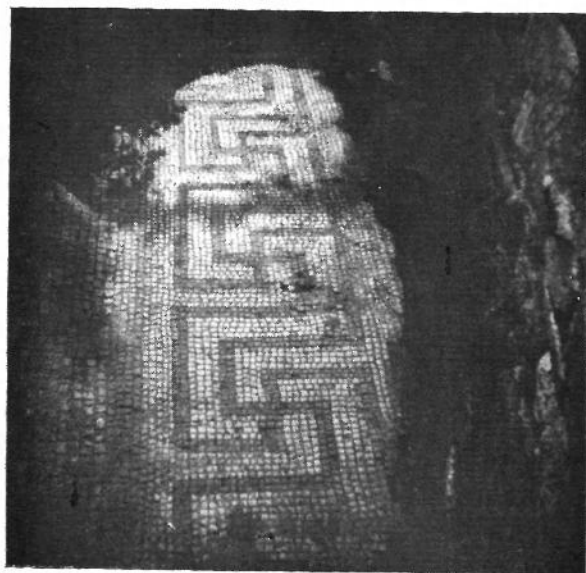
¹ The pavement, from the reports of the workmen who had uncovered part of it before, is believed to be in a fairly perfect condition throughout most of the northern passage.

² This fragment of flooring has unfortunately been since destroyed through an error.



PAVEMENT OF PASSAGE I. (EAST SIDE OF COURT).

To face page 11.



PAVEMENT OF CHAMBER IV.

To face page 11.



HYPOCAUST OF CHAMBER V.

The nature of the floor is unknown, as no excavation has been made on the site.¹

This chamber was apparently the westernmost of the range forming the north side of the court, all the chambers of which are 19 feet wide from north to south and had a north wall 4 feet thick.

Chamber IV. was a passage $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide, and retained part of its side walls above the floor level.

It was paved with small blue and white tesserae, in a bold fret pattern, and had a cream border, of which a small portion remained. The whole pavement was found in fair preservation in 1898, but was then taken up.

Chamber V. was 18 feet from east to west, and was of considerable interest. It was entered either from passage IV. or chamber VI., and not directly from the court, as the wall on that side was standing some 12 inches above the floor-level for its whole length without an opening.

It originally had a fine pavement, of which numerous fragments were found, and stood over a hypocaust.

Of the hypocaust some fifty-one straight-sided stone pilae remained in position, and the stoke-hole, in the centre of the north wall, was constructed with tiles. Against the south and part of the east walls remained a number of flue-tiles set on the top of the 3-inch ledge that formed the set-off of the foundation.

This chamber was among those discovered by Mr. Mullins in 1833, and then "had mutilated remains of a tessellated pavement of blue stones, ornamented with two red borders; the tesserae being nearly 1 inch square and the blue stones entirely decomposed. The remains of a wall on the south side were covered with several flues made of whole bricks supported by iron cramps, and underneath the bed on which the pavement was laid, made of coarse gravel and mortar, were large flags supported by pillars of stone forming a regular hypocaust."

¹ In the recent excavations, which will be referred to at the end of this paper, a fragment of this floor was found at the south-west angle of the apartment. It consists of a border 16 inches wide of coarse cream-coloured tesserae,

with a vandyked band of small blue-black tesserae $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches wide, forming the edge of the centre portion, which had a white ground, but had almost all been destroyed.

Chamber VI. was 15 feet from east to west, and retained part of its walls near both south angles above the floor-level. In the centre of the south wall was a gap evidently for the entrance from the court.

The pavement was the most ornamental of any discovered, the tesserae were of unusually small size in chocolate, blue, white, buff, and red. The pattern being prepared for a square chamber had been enlarged north and south by engrailed borders ornamented with tulips. The border was of large cream tesserae having blue and red keys alternated.

There was no hypocaust beneath and it may have formed a vestibule to the two rooms on either side of it.

The pavement was opened in 1898 and left exposed too long, when a considerable portion of the west side, which was quite perfect, was spoilt by the frost.

The weather being too wet when it was opened last year to allow of its removal, the whole has been covered up again.

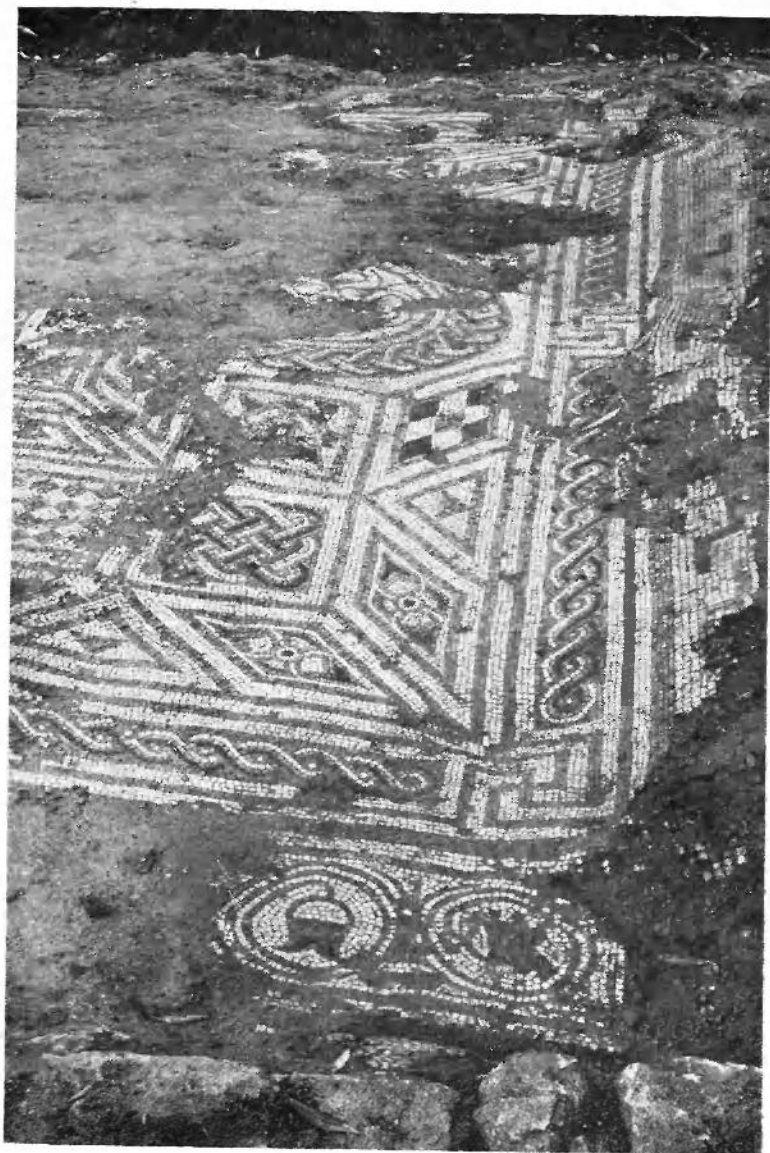
Chamber VII. was 15 feet from east to west and had a hypocaust beneath. Fourteen pillars of the hypocaust were standing, averaging 8 inches square and $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, and were straight-sided and roughly sawn. Two were rebated on the angle, as if originally intended for jamb stones of a door. The stoke-hole was in the middle of the north wall and was formed with tiles. Just within this a number of loose tiles were found and several were stuck together with mortar, and may have been from the jambs of the stoke-hole or possibly the pilae immediately within it, and most subject to heat.¹

A few tesserae of small size were found so that the pavement of the chamber was doubtless of good quality.²

Against the south wall was a remarkable formation of stalagmite, which is clearly shown towards the left of the photograph, deposited by the percolation of water

¹ This was borne out by one tile remaining imbedded in the concrete bottom of the hypocaust, where a pillar certainly stood.

² A piece of an altar-tomb, apparently from the church, was found to the north of this chamber, showing how everything on the site had been disturbed.

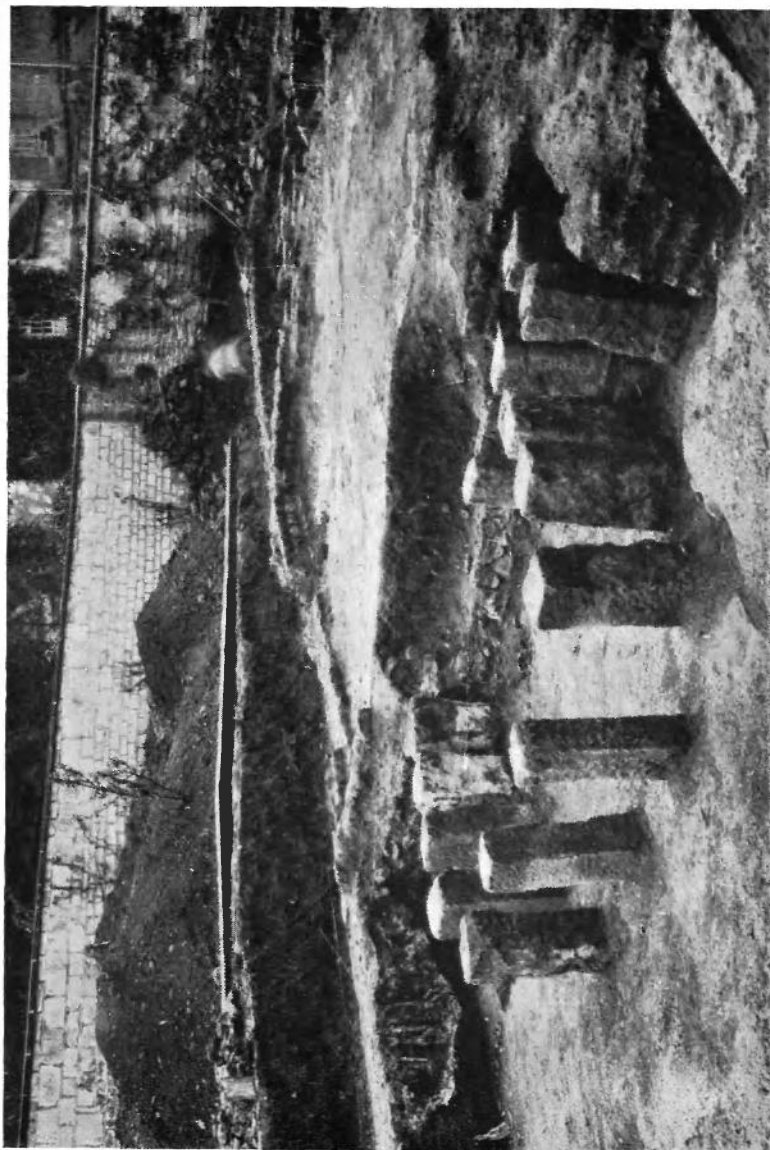


EAST SIDE OF PAVEMENT OF CHAMBER VI.



CHAMBER VI. FROM THE SOUTH.

To face page 12.



HYPOCAUST OF CHAMBER VII.

through the soil and walls after the original water channels of the Roman house were destroyed.

Chamber VIII. was 10 feet from east to west by 12 feet from north to south.

Towards the north of the chamber were found remains of a tessellated pavement in 1898. It apparently consisted of a two-ringed knot pattern of white, red and blue tesserae surrounded by a white and blue fret border. This piece of pavement was unfortunately removed in 1898 without proper measurements being taken, but from a rough tracing of Mr. Hardy's the accompanying sketch has been made.

Towards the south-east of the chamber was a fragment of *opus signinum*,¹ which may have been used to repair a defective piece of floor.

Across the centre of the floor was a drain running northward formed of stones having a sunk channelled bottom, about 6 inches across by 4 inches deep, covered with flat stones and pieces of tile.

A considerable quantity of wall plaster painted yellow was found in this room.

Beneath the walls running north and south, of this and the last chamber described, are large blocks of

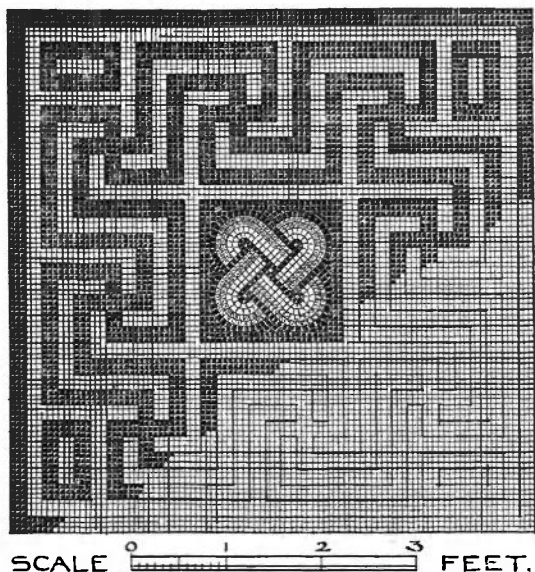


FIG. 2.—RESTORED PAVEMENT OF CHAMBER VIII.
(From a tracing taken by Mr. Hardy.)

¹ Some of the rooms which were not laid with tessellated pavements seem to have been floored with this material—a strong concrete formed of gravel and small bits of broken tile, the whole

ground down to a smooth surface making a durable floor of pleasing appearance. Considerable masses of it were found mixed with the wall plaster. [Note by Rev. E. H. Goddard.]

foundation, like buttresses, but set irregularly against the north wall of the chambers, for what purpose it is impossible to say.

Chamber VIII.a. occupies the space between chamber VIII. and the court, and from the evidence of the drain, already described, leading from this chamber, it is supposed to have been used for necessary convenience.

Chamber IX. was a passage $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide connecting the court with the passage on the north side of the buildings. It retained its east wall, over 12 inches in height, and a portion of the west wall remained above the floor-level. In the latter were probably openings leading to chambers VIII. and VIII.a.

The pavement remained tolerably perfect and was composed of large tesserae in alternate squares of buff oolite and chocolate-coloured Pennant, 13 inches wide, within a buff border. It showed signs of fire in places.

Chamber X. was 20 feet from east to west, and formed the angle between the chambers on the north and east sides of the court, but was considerably altered in later Roman times.

It apparently was without a hypocaust originally, but one was inserted with a stoke-hole at the north-east angle at the time of the later enlargement. In this hypocaust the pilae are of different shape from the others, being roughly-hewn blocks of stone with slightly hollowed sides, of which twenty-three remained in position. A flue tile set horizontally remained in the south-west angle.

Part of this hypocaust was opened in 1833, when Mr. Mullins "found seven stone pillars of rough workmanship and near them an altar-like erection consisting of several stones and a piece of stone of semi-circular shape about 1 foot across and 8 inches thick partially excavated on each side, as if for the purpose of holding something. The stone had evident marks of fire."

The "altar-like erection" had entirely disappeared before the late excavations.

The pavement of the room was of small tesserae, of which a number were found, including some pieces which apparently were part of a guilloche pattern, and the border



HYPOCAUST OF CHAMBER X.

was of large chocolate-coloured tesserae, of which a small piece remained in the south-west angle.

Chamber XI. was a passage about 4 feet wide leading from the court to the outer passage on the east side. The south wall remained to some 12 inches above the floor-level. In the north wall must have been an entrance to chamber X.

The pavement had been entirely destroyed.

Chamber XII. was $14\frac{3}{4}$ feet from north to south, and was apparently only entered from the court. The north, west and part of the south walls remained above the floor-level. Very distinct indications of fire existed towards the north end, the wall was much burnt, and the floor covered by a thick layer of ash. The floor was of *opus signinum*. A quantity of pieces of plaster, painted yellow, were found in this chamber.

Chamber XIII. was a passage only $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide. The centre part of the north wall was standing 3 feet above the floor-level, and retained part of its plaster, but the colouring, if it ever had any, had perished.

The floor was entirely destroyed.

Chamber XIV. was $15\frac{3}{4}$ feet from north to south and retained its north wall above the floor-level.

The floor was completely destroyed and nothing of interest was found.

Chamber XV. was apparently about $9\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide, and was 3 feet longer towards the east than the rest of the chambers in this range. It retained a small portion of the walls in the north-east angle above the floor-level.

A fragment of pavement of small red, blue, and white tesserae existed towards its west end with a considerable piece of a buff border.

At its east end was a drain constructed with wide stone bottom having a channel 12 inches wide and 4 inches deep worked in it. The drain returned at slightly more than a right angle 3 feet from the north wall of the chamber, in an easterly direction.

In this chamber was found in 1898 a small perfectly plain altar measuring $22\frac{1}{2}$ inches high by about 10 inches square. All traces of an inscription, if such ever existed, had been weathered or cut away.¹

¹ This altar has been presented by Mr. Hardy to the Devizes Museum.

Chamber XVI. was a small lobby about 8 feet by 9 feet from north to south. It retained its north wall above floor-level, showing it had no connection with chamber XXI., unless the doorway had a raised sill.

The floor has left a fragment of its border of cream tesserae, against the north wall, which was 7 inches higher than that in chamber XV.

Chamber XVII. was apparently approached from the last and formed a passage leading to that part of the villa opened in 1881, of which more later.

Chamber XVIII. was $20\frac{1}{2}$ feet long by 11 feet wide. It had a wall 4 feet thick on the north side.

The floor was covered with small tesserae which had apparently been removed at some time, the mortar bed upon which they rested being quite perfect and retained a few odd tesserae *in situ*.

To the south of this chamber, judging by the dimensions given by Mr. Mullins in 1833, must have been the pavement discovered in 1831, "in making some additions to a very old building the workman in sinking for a foundation struck upon the mutilated remains of a tessellated pavement about two or three feet below the surface of the ground. It appeared to have been part of a large square, and the part now discovered was evidently one of its corners. It had a wide ornamental border of no remarkable beauty." There was no record of this being found in 1881, so that as it was carefully covered with flag-stones it may yet be exposed at some future date.

Chamber XIX. was only partly excavated at its north end, but no indications of a pavement remained.

Running along its west side was a culvert $1\frac{3}{4}$ feet wide and $3\frac{1}{4}$ feet deep, with a paved bottom, $4\frac{1}{4}$ feet below the level of the floor of chamber XX. At the south side of the chamber the culvert turned at about an angle of 45° in a south-easterly direction and had a right-angle branch, of the same width as the main culvert, joining it from an easterly direction.

Chamber XX. was 8 feet from north to south, but of uncertain length, and apparently a passage-way.

The north wall remained, as far as the culvert, above the floor-level.

Under the north-west corner the drain already mentioned in chamber XV. turned again at right angles in a northerly direction. Outside the north wall immediately to the east side of the drain was found a moulded Doric capital, used up for old material, which is now in the Devizes Museum.

The floor remained for a considerable area in a perfect condition; it was composed of small white and blue tesserae arranged in a fret pattern and had a cream-coloured border. It was slightly higher in level than the floor of the passages round the court, but lower by 7 inches than that of chamber XVIII.

Chamber XXI. formed part of the passage along the outside of the eastern range of chambers. It was 10 feet wide and $32\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, and was entered from the west by passage XIII.

Along the west side was a piece of masonry projecting 18 inches from the wall that tapered off to the wall face at the south-west angle.

The east wall was all destroyed above the foundations.

The north end had a wide opening with square ashlar piers 18 inches wide. That on the east remained to some three courses high, but on the west had been destroyed.

The pavement had been entirely destroyed.

Chamber XXII. originally formed another section of the same passage, of about the same length as chamber XXI., and had also a wide opening at its north end in line with the northern wall of the northern range of chambers.

When the addition before mentioned was made, this chamber was reduced to a mere lobby 9 feet from east to west, which apparently was entered from the court by the passage XI., and had another opening opposite into chamber XXIII.

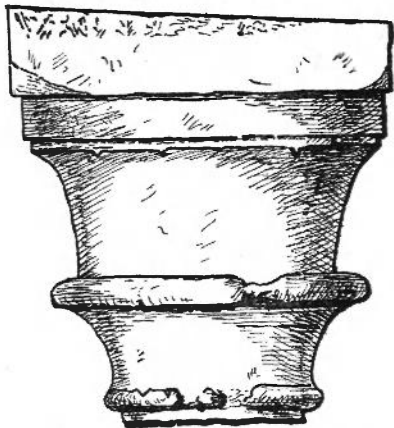


FIG. 3.—CAPITAL FOUND BUILT UP IN FOUNDATIONS.

Before proceeding further it will be well to describe the addition, made at the later period, at the north-east angle of the villa.

This apparently consisted in building a large room, 24 feet wide by 32 feet from north to south, having an apsidal end projecting northward, upon the site of chambers X., XXV. or part of the passage along the north side the building, and XXII. or part of the eastern passage.

Chamber X. was then converted into a hypocaust with a stoke-hole in its north-east angle, but the rest of the new chamber had no hypocaust beneath.

It is quite possible the new addition was divided into two chambers by leaving the old north wall of chamber X. and merely piercing it with an opening.

The apsidal north end was built square externally and had a buttress projecting $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet in line with each side wall and one in the centre. These buttresses had small chamfered plinths on their north faces.

There was a piece of foundation on the east side that may have been for another buttress.

Between the buttresses had been built, still later in Roman times, high blocks of masonry with rough offsets to the north, but for what purpose it is impossible to say.

As a result of this addition the old east passage was destroyed, and as this seemed a requisite part of the villa it was built again eastward of the new building.

Chamber XXIII. formed the southern part of the rebuilt east passage, which was 8 feet wide and had a projecting footing 3 feet wide in its east face.



FIG. 4.—FIGURE OF HUNTSMAN IN A NICHE.

This also seems to have had buttresses, as the commencement of one in line with the south end was found.

In this chamber, in 1898, was found in made ground a large stone retaining the middle portion of

To face page 19.



BUTRESSES OUTSIDE CHAMBER XXVI.

a well-carved standing figure in a niche, apparently representing a man returning from the chase, having a hare hanging over one shoulder and a bird over the other.

Chamber XXIV. formed the northern part of the rebuilt passage which was found separated from chamber XXIII. by a wall standing some 3 feet in height. This wall was apparently a later work, after the passage was disused, and may have formed part of an alteration whereby the chambers XXIII. and XXIV. were made into separate and wider rooms, as it crosses the old west wall of the first passage as though joining up to the main wall of the added apartments.

Chambers XXV., XXVII., and XXVIII. were apparently in the first place all part of a passage exterior to the northern range of chambers.

The northern wall was plastered throughout its length externally, showing that the ground outside must have been at a considerable depth below the floor-levels of the villa.

Inside chambers XXV. and XXVII. near the south wall was found an immense quantity of small pieces of painted plaster at a depth of 3 feet below the floor-level.

Towards the eastern end of the first chamber six hypocaust pillars were found similar to those in chamber X. They may have been the identical pillars met with in 1833. This chamber at that time had a pavement, "but in a state of destruction."

Chamber XXVI. with *XXV.* formed one apartment of the later addition already described.

The inside face of the apse remained for $11\frac{1}{2}$ feet on the east side and 5 feet on the west.

Chamber XXIX. apparently was an addition to the original work. It was 12 feet from north to south and 17 feet long, having walls $1\frac{3}{4}$ feet thick standing fully 3 feet in height. They were faced externally with squared stones in courses, and seem not to have been plastered.

The portion of the villa found in 1881 stood to the south of the central court, approached by a continuation of passage XVII., and consisted principally of two chambers with hypocausts having apsidal ends towards the west.

Mr. Mann, in the paper already referred to,¹ describes what was then exposed, and from his account the following description is arranged to be in accordance with that of the recent excavations.

Chamber XXX. was a passage in continuation of passage XVII., but only $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide.

In the south wall was an opening only 2 feet wide.

It had a pavement, having a large fret pattern in blue and white tesserae, a patch of which at a little distance from its south end "was discoloured by fire." It sloped $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches in its length towards the north.

Chamber XXXI. was a small square lobby at the end of the passage entered through the narrow door from the last chamber. It had on the east side at M "a rectangular piece of masonry, the upper surface being level with the floor: most probably it served as a pedestal of statuary or an altar." Unless it "marks the position of any steps of access to a doorway which might have been at a higher level than the top of the wall now seen."

"The flooring is of white lias tesserae having the dark-coloured fret pattern; and its enclosing border, formed with tesserae of Pennant, in colour a dark indigo."

On the west side of this chamber is a wide opening into

Chamber XXXII., which Mr. Mann designates a bath. "The floor of the bath itself was 2 feet 11 inches below the floor of its chamber (XXXI.), from which the bathers descended by two steps, as shown in the section. The

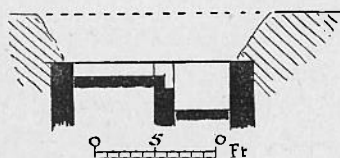


FIG. 5.—SECTION OF BATH LOOKING SOUTH.

The floor and sides were faced with tesserae of white lias; an arrangement seldom met with, I believe. I could see no plug or other means of emptying it; but at L on plan there was an overflow pipe 2 inches in diameter, embedded in the wall. I was told that on the opposite side, nearest the furnace, was another pipe; if so, it must have been removed previous to my visit. But though I did not see it I believe it

¹ *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, xliii. 47-55.

to have been there, serving as a supply-pipe possibly conveying the water after it had been heated by any vessels, which for that purpose would have been admirably placed in the latter chamber over the furnace (K)."

This was removed together with the pavements, by the owner of the property, Mr. Stier, of Bath, in whose possession they are at the present time.¹

From the above description and the position of this semi-circular receptacle for water, opening direct from a passage of communication, it is far more likely it was a fountain than a bath.

Chamber XXXIII. was at a height of nearly 3 feet above chamber XXXI., from which it would be approached by steps in the thickness of the wall. It had a hypocaust beneath, with a stoke-hole in the west wall, and apparently ten pilae standing. It is called by Mr. Mann the furnace or *præfurnium*.

Chambers XXXIV. and XXXV. were both of equal size and had apsidal ends towards the west that appear to have had pilasters at the junctions of the circular and square parts.

Both chambers had hypocausts of which thirteen pilae seem to have been standing in the first and two in the last. "The floor of the hypocaust upon which the pilae were built was formed of concrete at a level of 2 feet 10 inches to 3 feet below the room floor above. The letter P marks the position of a hollow flue-tile 4 inches square, built into the wall, the bottom of the opening being 2 feet 2 inches above the lower concrete floor. At Q is the aperture for the flame and heat from the furnace K. In all probability there was a duplicate opening at the corresponding point in the intervening wall, but the earth was not sufficiently removed to allow of access. The width of the aperture Q was 1 foot $6\frac{3}{4}$ inches. At 1 foot 11 inches above the concrete floor, three successive courses of brick projected into its opening, and so, reducing its width, the next course of flat tile completely covered it. The top side of this tile is 2 feet 8 inches above the concrete floor.

¹ For an account of this "bath" and pavement, and illustrations of them as they existed *in situ*, before removal, see

a paper by Rev. E. H. Goddard in *Wilts. Arch. Mag.* xxvi. 405-409.

"At R, and at about 1 foot above the concrete floor, apparently crushed down from its proper position, were two small pieces of the tessellated pavement. In one there were three rows of Pennant (dull indigo colour), then four rows of white lias, succeeded by one row of Pennant, evidently part of the border or division, unless it formed a portion of a floor of geometrical design. In the second piece there were two rows of dark Pennant followed by three rows of a lighter shade and then four rows of white lias. The pilae of the hypocaust were built of the usual 8-inch square tiles."

Outside of these chambers was found a drain 12 inches wide and 4 inches deep, which came from a southerly direction and turned with two right-angle bends round their south-west angle; it then followed the west wall and turned again westward. It was without doubt the upper part of the same drain that passed under chambers XVI. and XX.

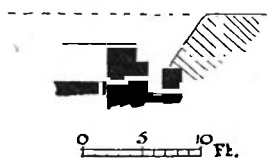


FIG. 6.—SECTION OF WEST WALL OF CHAMBER XXXIV.

In conclusion the writer wishes to record his indebtedness:—

To the Rev. E. H. Goddard, for great help of various kinds, including the descriptions of objects found in the excavations;

To the Council of the British Archaeological Association, for permission to make use of the plan of the discoveries in 1881;

To the Rev. W. White, for permission to excavate in his garden;

To Miss Burges, for similar permission and information of previous finds;

To Mr. Sidney Brakspear, for taking the photographs for four of the plates; and to Mr. J. Hardy, most particularly, for ready help at all times with the measuring tape, and also for various information in connection with the site and his excavations of 1898.

LATER EXCAVATIONS OF THE WEST WING.

Since the foregoing was written, through the kindness of Miss Burges, the owner of "The Wilderness," a

thorough investigation of her garden was undertaken during the autumn of last year (1903).

The remains discovered were not so complete as those in the adjoining garden, already described, but were sufficient to enable the complete plan of the western wing of the villa to be traced.

The wing was the same length from north to south as the corresponding one on the east side of the court, and was divided into two large and two small chambers. On the west side along its southern portion, was a similar external passage to that on the other sides of the villa, and against the northern part was a large room, that had apparently been added at a later period.

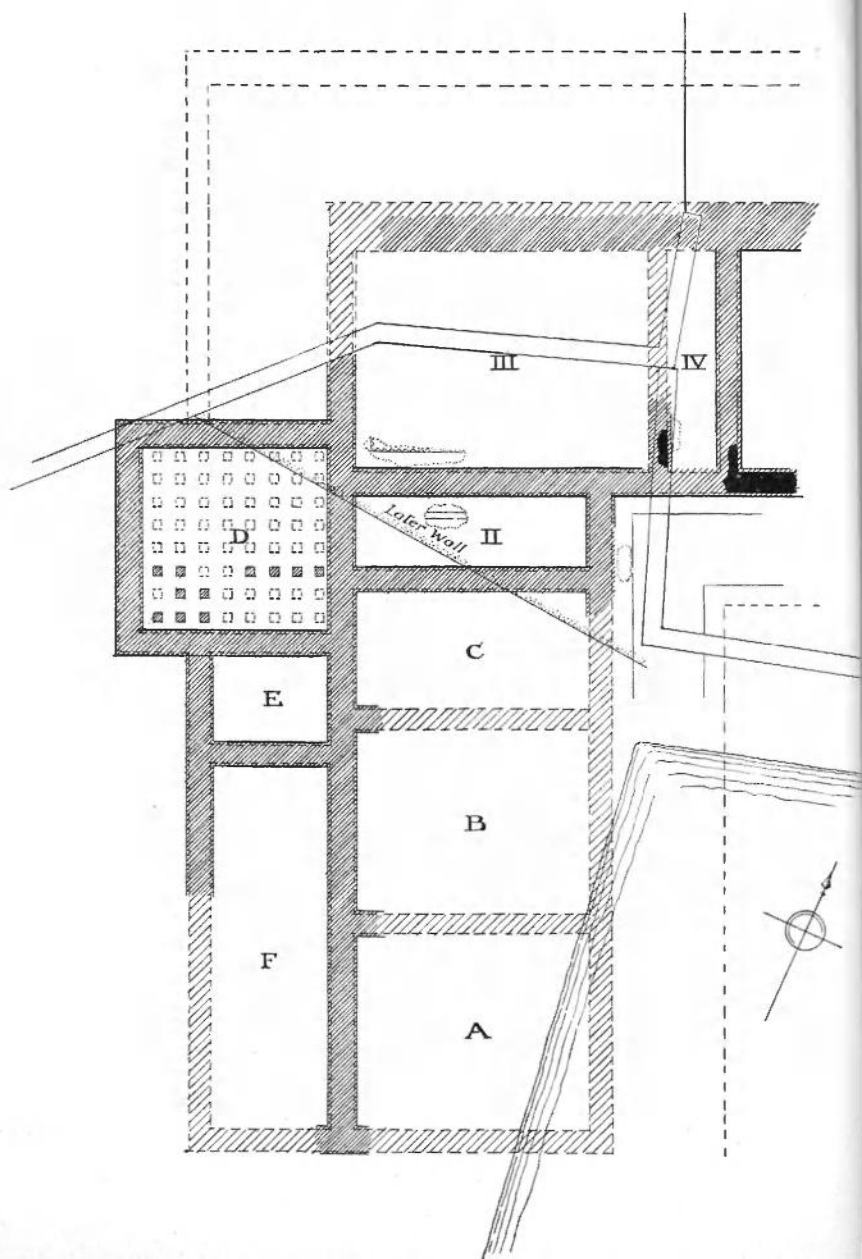
The chambers thus uncovered are shown on the small ground-plan and indicated by letters, and may be described as follows:—

Chamber A. was the southernmost in the wing, and was $18\frac{1}{4}$ feet from east to west by $16\frac{1}{4}$ feet from north to south. Its west wall and the returns of its north and south walls were the only portions that could be uncovered. It had no hypocaust, and no remains of its floor were found.

Chamber B., the next apartment northward, was the same width from east to west as chamber A., but $15\frac{1}{4}$ feet from north to south. Its west and north walls were traced, but there were no remains of the floor found, nor had it a hypocaust.

Chamber C. adjoined the last chamber to the north. It was $9\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide and the same from east to west as the other apartments in the wing. Each of the walls were found, but there were no remains of its flooring. Originally it apparently formed one room with chamber II., until the addition of chamber D., when chamber II. was cut off to form a passage.

Chamber D. was $15\frac{1}{2}$ feet from north to south by $15\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide. Each of its walls was traced, and it had a hypocaust constructed with tile pilae $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches square. The floor was of good quality, with small coloured tesserae, of which a number of quite large fragments were found, to one of which was attached a complete covering tile or the hypocaust. The stoke-hole could not be found, but may have been in the south-east angle, which was not excavated.



Chambers E. and F. formed part of a passage-way $9\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide outside the chief rooms, similar to that on the other sides of the villa.

The whole of this west wing has been much destroyed by works in connection with the mediaeval mill, the race of which passed over it. All the walls of the southern part had been taken down to the bottom course of the footings, and a thick layer of lime silt covered the whole area at about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet below the present surface. A fine ashlar wall, forming the north side of this mill-race, crossed chamber C. diagonally; but the corresponding side on the south was not found.

Outside the buildings was found a portion of a stone drain, having a 12-inch wide channel exactly similar to that beneath the eastern wing of the villa. It followed the outside walls of chambers F. and E., and then turned at right angles, but it could not be traced further owing to modern work above.

NOTES ON OBJECTS FOUND. BY REV. E. H. GODDARD.

The list of objects found on the site is a singularly meagre one, a condition of things accounted for by the fact that the ground had been often disturbed and turned over before.

Worked Stone.—In addition to the altar, carved figure, and capital, already described, a fragment of another capital of similar but not identical mouldings; a single drum of a freestone column 1 ft. 4 in. in height, with a diameter of $12\frac{1}{2}$ in., found previously by Mr. Hardy, and shown in the photo of "Buttresses of added Building"; a fragment of moulding; what appears to have been a small capital greatly weathered and worn;¹ a finial ornament (?) in the same condition [a precisely similar piece of stone is in the Silchester collection at Reading]; and a large piece of a grooved millstone of Old Red Sandstone (not a quern), the material of which is procurable near Bath, were found.

Marble.—A single fragment, about 2 in. square and $\frac{5}{8}$ in. thick, of a carefully-sawn slab of marble, which has

¹ This capital and finial are now at Devizes Museum.

been polished one side, possibly for the panelling of a wall. It is green and white in colour, with black crystals interspersed. Except for these black spots it much resembles "Cipolino." In the Silchester collection at Reading are pieces of several such slabs, of various colours, and a fragment in our museum from the North Wraxall villa much resembles the Box example. The Rev. H. H. Winwood kindly sent it up for examination to the Geological Survey Office, and received the reply "We can none of us identify the source of the specimen." Mr. Winwood added, "I have not a doubt in my own mind that it is not an English rock."

The Painted Wall Plaster.—This was in great abundance, and of a great variety of colours—which, when first exposed, were as brilliant as when they were first painted. No very large pieces were found. Whether there was always a very thin coat of white on the plaster before the colour was applied does not appear quite evident. Certainly in places the coloured borders were painted over a white surface, but it was not clear whether the large masses of red and yellow in the panels of the walls were painted over a white ground or not. The thickness of the plaster was often as much as 2 in. or $2\frac{1}{2}$ in., and the waggon loads of gravel found at the foot of the walls suggested the possibility of some of the walls having been of timber and lath and plaster, rather than of stone. In his previous diggings Mr. Hardy found a small very sketchily-painted face in red and yellow, now in the possession of Mr. Falconer; but with this exception nothing that could be recognised as part of a figure was found. A few small pieces with portions of patterns or subjects on them (now in the Devizes Museum) turned up, but it was evident that the general scheme of decoration was that of large panels of colour, bordered and framed by lines of red, green, and white. A fine Venetian red seemed the favourite colour of all, though in some of the rooms a clear deep yellow formed the chief ground of the walls. The chief interest in the plaster painting, however, lay in the wonderful variety of imitations of marble with which the panels in many of the rooms must have been filled, a variety noticed by the writers in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Indeed Silchester itself does not

seem to have produced so many varieties of this kind of decoration as were found at Box. There was apparently nothing in the way of veining or "marbling," but the effect was produced solely by larger or smaller splashings or spirtlings of different colours from a brush. Specimens of the following were found and have been set in plaster frames and preserved in the museum at Devizes :

A dark greyish green ground covered thickly with minute spirtles of dark red and white. This gives exactly the effect of a fine-grained granite or serpentine. This seemed the commonest of the "marble" colourings.

A dark red finely spirtled with white, the effect being that of fine-grained red granite. This and the preceding seem to have been used as panels next to each other and divided only by a narrow white line.

A lighter pinkish red ground with rather large splashes of white, and more sparingly of dark red. The effect is that of a large-grained pink granite. Very little of this was found.

A white ground, splashed sparingly with rather large blood-red spots. Only a few pieces of this were found.

A white ground with very small spirtles of dark red, very sparingly applied. This, also, was scarce.

Several fragments of apparently figures or pictures were found, nearly all having the subject painted in a dark purplish maroon, on a light green ground. This maroon colour was in worse condition and scaled off more easily than any other.

Some large pieces of white plaster were found, but whether they were originally white, or whether the colours painted on the white ground had washed off, was not evident.

A good many fragments of a solid plain quarter circle moulding in plaster all coloured a purplish maroon occurred, and in one case a piece was found still *in situ*, showing that this moulding ran round the edge of the tessellated floors at the junction with the walls. Similar plaster "skirtings" have been found in other Roman

villas.¹ One or two other bits of moulded plaster, possibly portions of door jambs, were found.

Pottery.—Mr. J. P. E. Falconer found in 1898, and still possesses, a curious little female figure seated with a cloak wrapped round it, and the head enveloped as in a hood. It is of hard fine terra-cotta, but whether of ancient or modern date has not as yet been authoritatively decided. In consequence of the way in which the site has been disturbed many times before, it was scarcely possible to assert of any object found that from its position it must have been of Roman age.

Of vessels of pottery a considerable number of fragments occurred, though with one exception² nothing like a whole vessel of any sort was found,

- (1) Of good red Samian ware we only found four small fragments. These were all without ornament, two of them belong to a small flat saucer with upright edge, the others to a larger and thicker bowl. Ten fragments were found by Mr. Falconer in 1898, including one with the potter's name, REGINVS.
- (2) Two fragments of wide bowl-shaped vessels with a broad overhanging flange,³ of a coarse red on the surface, and grey in the inner part of the substance, which has apparently been coloured

¹ See an example in the villa at Wheatley (Oxon), illustrated in *Archaeological Journal*, ii. 353.

² The one exception was a curious vessel, of which some fragments were found in 1898, and passed into the hands of Mr. Falconer, whilst others were found in the recent excavations, all in made soil filled with all sorts of rubbish, Roman and Wedgewood fragments lying side by side, on or outside the northern boundary wall. These fragments were of a buff-coloured ware ornamented with scrolls, etc., in relief in the same coloured slip, the ornament being analogous somewhat to that of some of the Castor ware from *Durobriva*, near Peterborough, and still more of certain pots from Cologne, of Roman date, in the Guildhall Museum. When put together, however, they formed a vessel in the shape of a somewhat globular fish, on a stand, with a ring handle at the top, which was entirely

closed over, a funnel-shaped opening projecting on one side of the handle and a small straight spout on the other; altogether, if it had been ancient, a very remarkable find. I happened, however, to have a modern vessel, brought from South of Spain, with precisely the same spout and funnel-shaped mouth, with almost precisely similar raised slip ornament, and of a very similar material and make, and when the two were set side by side it was generally allowed that the Box example was of practically the same ware and must also be of modern Spanish make. Since then I have seen an example of this same ware of fish shape like the Box pot.

³ Gen. Pitt Rivers, *Excavations*, III. 144, gives a cut showing the way in which he believes these flanged vessels were used, the flange being intended for the purpose of supporting them on the frame of an iron tripod, possibly over a charcoal fire.

a rich red by some paint or glaze. Similar painted ware, a piece of a mortarium, is in Reading Museum, from Silchester.

- (3) Five fragments of the very hard purplish brown (grey in the substance) New Forest ware, two of them belonging to an upright vase with the usual indented sides, the projections ornamented with lines and dots in conspicuous white paint.
- (4) One fragment of a mortarium of ware red inside but coloured stone-colour on the surface.
- (4a) Two bits of brick-coloured bowls, which have been coloured a better red on the surface.
- (5) Two fragments of the lid of a vessel like an old-fashioned tea-pot lid. They are closely covered with an impressed ornament difficult to describe. At first I thought they were modern, but Mr. Mill Stephenson, who has had so much experience at Silchester, saw them and pronounced them to be, in his opinion, Roman. Since then I have seen two or three fragments in the Reading Museum, from Silchester, covered with this same "engine-turned" ornament, and very similar to these. In the York Museum are a good many fragments of red ware, unglazed, and of black ware, having this same ornament, and one fragment having the same metallic glaze.

In Vol. III.¹ of his *Excavations* Gen. Pitt Rivers figures¹ a fragment from Woodyates settlement with apparently exactly the same pattern, of which he says, "I have not been able to find any example of this ornamentation in any other works, but similar patterns appear recently to have been found at Silchester." Again, in Vol. II. is shown² a fragment with somewhat similar ornament of which he says, "The interior has a lustre on the surface which gives it the appearance of having been sized." The Box specimens have this curious dark bluish metallic lustre, the ware itself in the inside being greyish buff.

¹ Plate clxxxvii. fig. 5.

² Plate clxxxix. fig. 3.

Another fragment of buff ware coloured dull reddish brown on the surface has a more wavy ornament of the same character, and also has something of the lustre on the surface. A very small bit of the same ware has a scale or basket-work ornament on it. A fragment very like this is in the Silchester collection at Reading.

- (6) A few pieces of apparently somewhat globular bowls or jars with out-turned rims, of grey-brown ware, with small specks of mica on the surface.
- (7) Neck and part of body of a globular-shaped jug with handle, of hard grey ware, a band of ornament composed of curls lightly marked on the wet clay with a blunt instrument running round the upper part of the body.
- (8) A number of rims of basin- or bowl-shaped vessels with straight sides; they have projecting rims, above which the edge rises up. General Pitt Rivers gives a long series of sections of such vessels, and a cut of a perfect one (p. 169), from the Romano-British villages of Rotherley and Woodcuts, in vol. II., pl. cxvi., of his *Excavations*. Some of the rims suggest that a cover fitted over them, or perhaps the overlapping rims were for the same purpose as the broader flanges of No. 2. They are of brownish black thick ware and some of them still retain under the rims the black and soot which collected on them when used for cooking.

A number of fragments also occurred of the rims and bottoms of flat upright-edged saucers of this same brown or dark ware, ornamented with crossed lines and scrolls marked on the wet clay with a blunt instrument. General Pitt Rivers gives an example from Woodcuts in *Excavations*, vol. I.,¹ where he suggests that these saucers may perhaps have been used as lids for the basin-shaped vessels with rims. A good deal of this black ware, especially in the

¹ Plate xxxiv. fig. 1.

case of the saucers, has a kind of polish on the surface, as if it had been tooled over.

Of the same ware, again, are a number of fragments of pots, vases, or jars, all of much the same shape,¹ a small bottom swelling out into a larger body which has round it a band of simple crossed lines slightly marked on the wet clay narrowing somewhat to the wide mouth, which has a wide everted rim. These vessels, also, are some of them blackened with soot.

More than three-quarters of all the pottery found was of this common black ware, and belonged to vessels of the three above-named shapes.

- (9) One fragment of a thin ware, red in substance, but black on the surface, containing minute grains of mica throughout its substance, apparently part of a small bowl.
- (9a) Another fragment of a still smaller and thinner bowl also has specks of mica. It is black on the surface and grey-brown in the substance.
- (10) A very hard ware, grey in the substance and reddish-yellow on the surface, furnished several fragments. It seems to be of a ware similar to fragments found in a Romano-British dwelling-pit at Corton, in Hilmarton, and also by General Pitt Rivers in the Rushmore villages.
- (11) A few pieces of coarse yellow and green glazed ware were doubtless mediaeval.

Bones.—Hardly any bones were found except the two leg bones of a cock with very large spurs, which were found amongst the floor debris, and are pretty certainly of Roman age.

Metal Objects.—Absolutely the only objects in metal discovered were :—

- (A) The corroded and decomposed fragments of a pewter or white metal jug found in Hypocaust X. of which there is just enough to show that it had a small long neck and a handle, $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches

¹ A precisely similar pot, from Rivers' *Excavations*, Vol. I. Plate Woodyates, is figured in Gen. Pitt XXXII. fig. 5.

in length, and a body tapering to a small base, $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter. A similar vessel, also in a fragmentary condition, is in Reading Museum, from Silchester ; and there are also examples in other museums.

- (B) Also in this Hypocaust X. amongst the stone pillars was found an iron object, much corroded and with gravel adhering to it, which looks like the coulter of a plough (?). There is nothing in its position to prove its age, the upper floor of the hypocaust was entirely broken in. It may be Roman, or it may not. Not a single coin turned up during our excavations, but Mr. Hardy has one of Valens found on the site.

