

SANCTUARY OF APOLLO AT KOURION

EXCAVATIONS were resumed in the Sanctuary of Apollo¹ (Plan 1) on the 28th of April 1939 and continued until the end of June. During these eight weeks most of the fallen debris from the north end of Street 1 was removed; debris was cleared from the floors of a building at the western limits of the site, revealing the plan of a propylon, or gateway; and the remains of a building, now known as the West Building, flanking the stairway of Temple A on the west, was excavated. Restoration work was undertaken in the South Building, and some pits were sunk beneath the floors. This building will be dealt with in another article.

Temple B, as a result of the removal of debris at the north end of Street 1, is now much clearer to view. The large blocks fallen into the street in front of the temple stairway were replaced on the flanking walls and add much to the impressiveness of this part of the site (Plate VII).

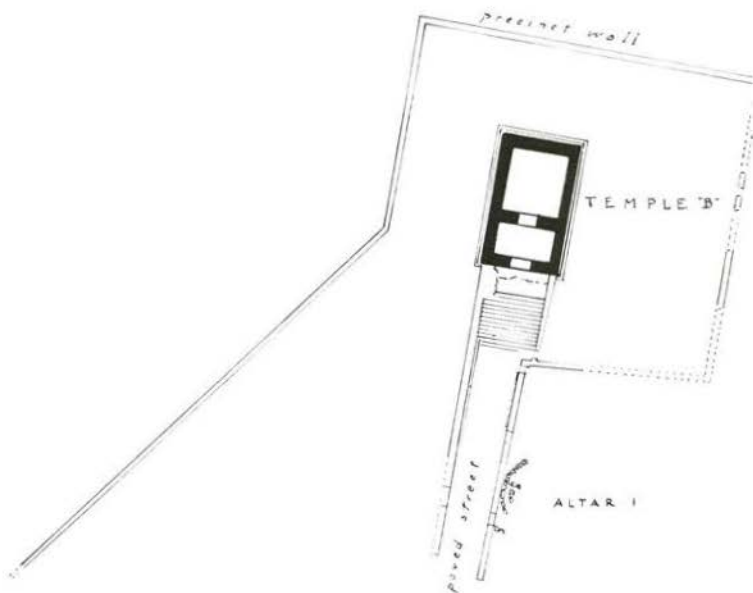
The propylon (Plan 1) consists of an open porch leading into an unroofed court through a cross wall pierced by a large doorway. Two columns projected from the cross wall in the porch, and the plinths on which these stood were found in situ. One of the limestone Doric capitals of a late type, with a section of the fluted shaft, lies on the floor nearby. The court leads down a flight of three steps to the street below at the foot of Temple A stairway.

The cross wall is somewhat thicker than the flanking walls; it is faced with ashlar, and the core is filled in with rubble and clay mortar. The north wall of the court and the scuth wall of the porch are composed of fairly even courses of ashlar; the rest are largely of rubble. The ashlar walls clearly antedate the propylon. The walls are solidly founded on the rock, which is never far below the floor levels, and were covered with a revetment of lime plaster many samples of which were found among the debris; the softness of the limestone made this essential.

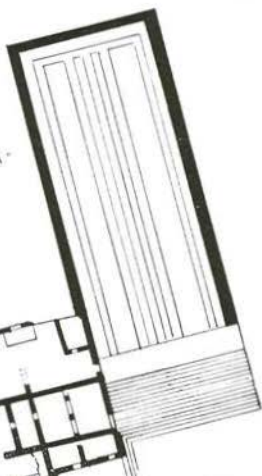
The threshold block for the doorway occurs in situ and measures 2.10 meters in length (Plate VII). It has pivot holes at each end for the double doors that opened into the court; these occur at the inner corners of the rebate cut in the block to receive the doors when closed. Stone jambs with a similar cutting framed the pivot holes in the South Building where there are many examples of this style of doorway. A step was inserted behind the doors at a later period, and the floor of the porch was raised; the two columns date from this time.

PLAN I.

SANCTUARY OF APOLLO
AT KOURION



TEMPLE 'A'



WEST
BUILDING



PROPYLON

paving



ALTAR 2

S T R E E T
S T O A



SOUTH BUILDING

The West Building consists of seven rooms, three on the south side, and four on the north (Plan 2). On the south it opens on the propylon through doors leading from Rooms 1 and 3; and on the east it has access to Temple A stairway through a door leading from Room 7. All the walls are firmly founded on the rock, here also never far below the floor levels. The better ones in their extant courses are composed of large ashlars, some well over a meter in length, as in the south wall of Rooms 1 and 2, and the wall dividing Rooms 2 and 6 from Rooms 3 and 5. Their depth is on an average a little over 50 centimeters, and they are preserved to a height of 50 to 90 centimeters in the south wall, and from 100 to 130 centimeters in the north. Other walls, with the exception of the central one dividing the north from the south rooms, are of very rough masonry; the central wall has two courses of large ashlars, but their interstices are wide and these are filled in with rubble; the extension of this wall is of rubble. It is clear that the ashlar walls antedate the others which jut up against them at their intersection and belonged to an earlier building. Clay was used everywhere as mortar to which perhaps some lime was added, and all walls received a revetment of lime plaster.

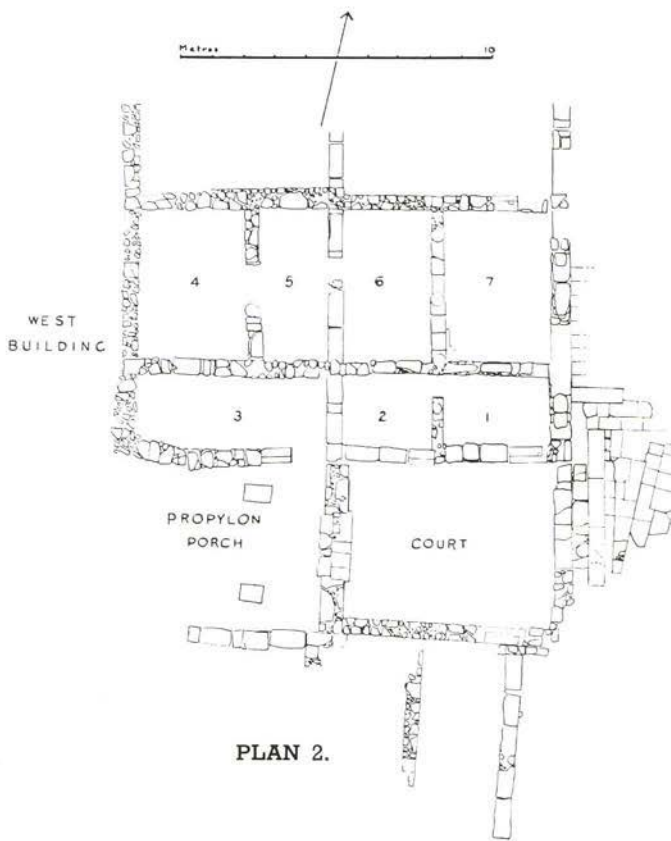
The doorways were of varying size, one being 2 meters in width, while another is no more than 77 centimeters. The south door of Room 1 (Plate VII) has a well preserved threshold block in situ of the same type as the propylon doorway, but with only a single pivot hole for the single door. If there were proper jambs, they would have been furnished with the same rebate to receive the door when closed; such a jamb serves as a threshold in the south doorway of Room 3, and a similar jamb occurs in situ in the doorway between Rooms 5 and 6, but it is a reused block that served once elsewhere as a cornice and has been recut for its use here.

Although no other examples of such jambs are *in situ*, it is possible that the doorway leading from Room 7 to the temple stairway, being a larger and exterior one as well, was of the propylon type, and we may have one of the jambs in a block found among the debris nearby. In the doorway between Rooms 3 and 4, an ordinary rectangular block in the foundation wall serves as the threshold; this has a pivot hole at one end which shows the upright blocks that now frame the doorway served for the jambs. There is a large opening in the wall between Rooms 4 and 5 framed by two uprights and if we take these for jambs we have a doorway measuring two meters in width. The blocks are so badly weathered

it is difficult to say whether they were of the propylon type; among the debris before the doorway, however, is a transverse tie piece that may belong to it, and there is an upright jamb block in Room 5 to match it. On the other hand, a suitable threshold is lacking, and if such once rested on the roughly dressed squarish blocks that appear to have served in its stead, it would have been the only one in the building raised well above the floor levels. The opening between Rooms 1 and 2 was a small one of 77 centimeters in width, and it is doubtful whether there was a door here. It is framed by a simple upright block and the face of the north wall.

A stylobate composed of ashlar divides Rooms 6 and 7 which are really compartments of the same room. On this stylobate stand drums of three unfluted columns in situ, one slightly bonded into the south wall, a second near the centre, and a third near the north wall; the space between this column and the north wall being built in with rough masonry.

Much debris was removed before finding the floor levels in the propylon and West Building. This consisted mainly of tiles and rough undressed stones. In the porch of the propylon the debris fell on a floor of beaten earth a few centimeters below the upper edge of the plinths for the columns, and in the court much of the debris fell directly on the rock which was doubtless leveled off to form a floor. In the West Building the floors of Rooms 1 and 2 were indicated by some pieces of terracotta piping set up on end by some hand before the collapse of the building; by the absence of debris below this level; and by some broken pottery and fragments of a marble inscription. The floor is of beaten earth in this and in the adjoining room where the strata are comple-



The Temple B
Stairway.



Propylon thresh-
old. The metre stick
points to the place
where a coin of
Constantine II was
found on the rock.



Floor of
Room 1,
West
Building,
after re-
moving the
second
Stratum.

mentary. In the other five rooms there was found, under the debris, a layer of fallen clay mixed with chavara² varying in depth from 10 to 22 centimeters which is explained as having fallen from the roof or from an upper floor. In Room 3 it occurs directly over a paved floor. As is the practice today in Cypriot rural architecture, the clay would have been laid over reed matting supported on beams. The solidity of the masonry suggests the likelihood of there being an upper floor over all rooms save 1 and 2. The absence of fallen clay in these, and the presence of tiles among the debris in all rooms without exception, would indicate the roof was tiled and probably boarding rather than clay and matting was used here, and the clay where this occurs is to be accounted for as having fallen from an upper floor.

In Room 7 many pieces of lime concrete lay among the debris over the clay, and some within it, suggesting that the upper floor here was of concrete. Examples of such flooring occur elsewhere on the site.

Rooms 4, 5, 6, and 7 seem to have had paved floors, the level under the fallen clay being somewhat too far below the thresholds to have been convenient. What appears to be a fragment of a paved floor occurs in a corner of Room 6 flush with the threshold and lying immediately under the clay that fell on it. What probably happened here is what is known to have happened in the South Building; the paving was removed before the upper floor or roof fell in.

No traces of a stairway remain, but the upper floor might have easily been reached from the north of the building where the ground is very much higher.

The walls are nowhere sufficiently preserved to show how the rooms were lighted. If there were any windows in Rooms 5, 6, and 7, they would have been very high; but these rooms seem to have served only as a basement and would have demanded no great amount of light.

The removal of the paving stones to be carted off for use elsewhere probably happened in the last days of paganism.

The rock that served for the floors in Rooms 5, 6, and 7, in this impoverished period, and the lower courses of the walls, especially in the corners, show marks of fires in many places; and it is clear these were made for cooking. Marks of such fires occur also in Rooms 1 and 2, and cooking pots are found in nearly all the rooms under the debris.

Now the absence of any finds under the fallen clay, or on any of the floors where these are preserved, that can be dated with any certainty

as yet later than the time of Constantius II, indicates that these rooms were not occupied long after his death in 363. The many coins found on the floor of Room 2, and one under the fallen clay in Room 4, appear to belong to the early 4th Century; these are now in course of being studied. Three lamps (Broneer Type 28) found on the late floor level just over the rock in Room 5, and under the clay; and fragments of the same type under the debris in other rooms, confirm the evidence of the coins. In the propylon court on the rock at the foot of the threshold, was found a coin of Constantius II (Plate VII); and in Room 1 on the floor a coin of the same Emperor was found with the same type of late Roman ribbed ware as occurs on the floor of a Roman house on the bluff of Kourion excavated in 1934. Here also a coin of Constantius II was found on the floor, near the skeleton remains of two women³ caught in the earthquake that brought down the house. Two lamps on the floor nearby, and another that had never been used, in splendid condition, found on the forearm of one of the victims, are of the same type (Broneer Type 28) as those found under the clay in the West Building. That none returned to retrieve or bury the dead testifies to the magnitude and extent of the earthquake, and explains the catastrophe that overcame the Sanctuary of Apollo at the same time.

The earthquake doubtless made itself felt in other parts of the island, and it is offered here as a likely explanation of the destruction of the Temple of Soli on the northern coast⁴. There the end of the period during which the temples were occupied is indicated by coins, and all these, with the exception of two explained finds, are of the Constantine era. The latest is dated to 324-327 A. D., so the earthquake may well have occurred in the second quarter of the Century.

It is hoped that further excavations this Spring will shed light on the period of construction.

G. H. McF.

¹ University Bulletin, Vol. 7, No. 2.

² A local name for granular rock derived from crumbling limestone.

³ Formerly thought to have been of a man and woman (University Bulletin January 1935). This house was excavated by Mr. J. F. Daniel of the Museum staff.

⁴ Swedish Cyprus Expedition, Vol. III.