

THE AUGUSTAN STREET

April 8, 1939
Photographs, pp. 1300 ff.

So we may venture to call the later east-west street which passes through the south part of our section. The evidence for the date of its first laying has been multiplied this year by the stratification in our north-south cuts on the 20 m. and 50 m. lines. The pottery from both below and above the original road surface points to the Augustan period as the time of its beginning. The cross sections will show that the road level rose through the accumulation of gravel very rapidly in the first and second centuries, A.D. Probably as early as the second century, the original drain, the stone channel along the north edge of the road, had its sides built up in masonry and covered by \cap -shaped tiles and it was supplemented by a capacious terracotta cloaca of \cup shape along the south side of the road. We have learned nothing more about the course of the street.

One may ask whether the "Augustan" street was intended to replace or to supplement the older thoroughfare farther north. The latter still seems to be the more probable alternative. Apart from the general consideration that it would have been extremely costly to shift far the line of an old established street at so late a date, note that two north-south lines of traffic would seem to have been given passage through the back wall of the Stoa, presumably to make contact with the old road to the north.

This choice of alternatives is perhaps favored also by the order of Pausanias' description. We may suppose that he entered the Market Square first by the main (north) road; covered the buildings of the

west and southwest parts of the square, left the square at its southwest corner, passed by the Hephaisteion, descended the north slope of Kolonos by the Great Stair of AA and MM, from the stair looked down on his right into the Sanctuary of Aphrodite, and thence turning right, on to the Augustan Street, re-entered the square and soon found himself in front of the Stoa Poikile.

NOTE ON EARLY EAST-WEST ROAD

April 8, 1939
Notebook references:
Vol. IV, p. 775, 791;
Vol. VI, p. 1002, 1143

The most significant result of this season's exploration has been the discovery of the line of the road which passed north-west-southeast, its south side falling within the north edge of our section. This appears to be a part of the original, and what was probably at all times in antiquity, the principal road between the area of the Sacred and Dipylon Gates and the Agora.

The course of this road would seem to have followed the natural drainage depression that must have led out from the region of the Agora, swept around the nose of Kolonos and joined the Eridanos, eventually to make its way out beyond the limits of the city. Our north-south cut through the west side of the section has given us a section through this depression and through the accumulation of road metal; our cut on the 20 m. line exposed the south edge of the roadway, as also did our digging in the area of the pit with burning at 10/IE in the northeast corner of the section. The course of the road would seem to have varied slightly from time to time, as was natural in view of the changes wrought by winter floods before the area had been built up in a substantial way. One of these slight fluctuations is well illustrated in the north-south cut on the 50 m. line, where the accumulation of road metal of geometra times lies slightly to the north of the earlier. Lacking the north edge, we have nowhere been able to fix the full width of the road.

The history of the road is well documented by the pottery from its successive layers of gravel, especially in the cut through the west part of the section, on the 50 m. line. The earliest of this

accumulation is probably of Neolithic times; some of the pottery seems to be certainly Early Helladic; there is a striking depth of accumulation of Middle Helladic times, the Late Helladic period is represented by a few sherds, the Geometric by a good many, and so too the succeeding periods, down at least into Roman times.

In the early fourth century B.C., the south edge of the road would seem to have been shoved north a bit: houses encroached on it both in the northeast and northwest corners of our area. For the precise line of its south edge as fixed at this time, we are fortunate in having the Boundary Stone of the Kerameikos. Since this stone seems to be of the same series as those bearing the same inscription outside the Dipylon Gate, we may suppose that it faced on the inward continuation of the road which passed through the Dipylon, leading to the Agora. The results of this season tend to draw the line of that road closer than we had supposed to the north end of Kolonos and to the Stoa of Zeus. If one will restore the line of the road on the basis of the new boundary stone, of the mass of road metal found in the northeast part of the section and of the line of the north side of the colonnaded building under the Stoa of Attalos, he will find that there remains very little room for a second stoa between the Stoa of Zeus and the road.

SECTION MM

Season of 1939

cf. also report for 1936

Since the section was to be refilled this year, supplementary exploration was carried on for six weeks at the beginning of the season in an attempt to resolve some of the obscurities which still remained in the history of the area. The familiar public convenience continued to protect from the excavator a large block of ancient filling in the north central part of the section. It was possible, however, to examine the significant stratification in a satisfactory way by cutting two trenches, each 2 m. wide, to bedrock, across the full north to south width of the section, one about one third of the length of the section from its east end ("cut on the 20 m. line"), the other across the west end of the section ("cut on the 50 m. line"). A little supplementary digging was done at other points, notably in the northeast corner of the section and along its south side.

The most significant result of this season's exploration was the discovery of a line of road which passed northwest-southeast, its south ^{side} falling within the north edge of our section. This appears to be a part of the original, and of what was probably at all times in antiquity the principal road between the region of the Agora and that of the Sacred and Dipylon Gates.

The course of the road followed in general the natural drainage depression which led out from the area of the Agora, swept around the nose of Kolonos and joined the Eridanos, eventually to make its way out beyond the limits of the city. Our cut on the 50 m. line has given us a cross section through this depression and through

the accumulation of road metal by which it was eventually filled; our cut on the 20 m. line exposed the south edge of the roadway, as also did our digging in the northeast corner of the section. The course of the road varied slightly from time to time, as was natural in view of the changes wrought by winter floods before the thoroughfare was bordered by substantial buildings. One of these fluctuations is well illustrated in the cut on the 50 m. line where the accumulation of road gravel of the Geometric Period lies slightly to the north of the earlier. Lacking the north edge of the road, we have nowhere been able to fix its full width.

The history of the road is well documented by the pottery from its successive layers of gravel especially as examined in the cut on the 50 m. line. The earliest accumulation is probably of Neolithic times; some of the lowest pottery is certainly Early Helladic; there is a striking depth of accumulation of Middle Helladic times (over 1 m.); the Late Helladic period is represented by a few sherds, the Geometric by a good many and so too the succeeding periods down at least into Roman times.

At the turn of the fifth and fourth centuries, the line of the road was adjusted slightly, perhaps in consequence of the construction of the Stoa of Zeus. Small, probably private buildings, encroached on its south side and pushed its south edge a little farther north. The south edge as it was at this period and for long thereafter is precisely indicated by a boundary stone which was found in situ at the northwest corner of the section. The stele (MM 501=I 5770) is of Hymettian marble, 0.16 x 0.34 m. in section, with a total height of 1.47 m., of which 0.83 m. rose above the contemporary ground level. The inscribed face looks north and

reads HOPOΣ | KEPAMEIKO. This stone is a generation or so earlier than those with the same inscription which border the main road outside the Dipylon; but it would seem to have been placed on the inward continuation of that same roadway, which must at this time have formed the principal thoroughfare between the Dipylon and the Agora. The boundary stone provides useful new evidence for fixing the line of this road farther to the east. When combined with the indication given by the north side of the colonnaded square building beneath the Stoa of Attalos (which would seem to have been oriented by the eastward continuation of the same road) this new evidence tends to draw the main road at the point where it entered the market-square still closer to the north end of the Stoa of Zeus. In the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., the south edge of the road apparently passed a bare 20 m. north of the Stoa; and it will be remembered that a certain open area has to be hypothecated immediately to the north of the Stoa in order to account for the wear on the Bryaxis Base which stood there.

Our north to south cuts have also brought new evidence for the history of the lesser roadway between the main "Dromos" and the foot of Kolonos. As previously conjectured, this street may still be thought of as coming from the Sacred Gate, as running parallel to the main road for some distance and as swinging around the northern end of the Stoa of Zeus to enter the market-square. It now seems clear that a roadway had existed on this line from quite early times. A section of this earlier thoroughfare was exposed deep down in the cut on the 50 m. line. The earlier road lay directly beneath the later and had practically the same orientation; but it was a mere alley, measuring 1.85 m. in width between the polygonal retaining

walls which flanked its sides. The alley and its ruinous retaining walls were completely buried beneath the great mass of earth filling brought in to form the new road. This new road had an average width of ca. 6.50 m.; its surface was smooth, level and carefully prepared of gravel; it was drained originally by a stone channel along its north edge; as the level of the road rose the walls of the stone channel were carried up in masonry and an additional terracotta drain was laid along the south side of the street. The road was bordered on the north by a simple Doric colonnade, on the south by various buildings and enclosures.

The cut on the 20 m. line brought to light along the south edge of this new street a foundation which is to be connected with foundations previously uncovered in Section AA on the north edge of Kolonos. As noted in the report on Section AA, there is good reason to restore on these foundations a monumental stairway giving access to the hilltop. This stair would have led up directly from the new road; but it now appears that it could have been approached from the older street by means of a north to south street. For the restoration of this cross street, there remains much of its eastern parapet wall and indications of its passage through the back wall of the stoa that flanks the new road to the north. Both the great stairway and the north to south cross street would seem to be slightly earlier than the new road and its accompanying buildings.

A second line of north to south traffic may be restored across the western end of the section. Its approach from the south is marked by a series of small terracotta drains; and there are indications that it too passed through an opening in the back wall of the stoa.

The date of the laying out of this new road may now be

fixed with the help of abundant new ceramic evidence. A preliminary examination points clearly to the Augustan period. The same date may be accepted for the stoa to the north and for the original buildings along the south side of the new road.

Apart from the roadways, one of the more interesting indications of early habitation appeared in the northeast corner of the section at the south edge of the early road in the form of an oval pit cut down in the bedrock (2.20 x 2.75 x 0.80 m. deep). We found the cavity full of ash and burning, broken pottery, millstones, mortars, etc., obviously a mass of refuse which probably resulted from the destruction of some neighboring house and which had been thus neatly disposed of. The pottery is of the time of the Persian Wars and a similar date is suggested by an ostrakon against Megakles, son of Hippokrates, which was found in the mouth of the pit (MM 377: P 14,490).

Of the buildings which encroached on the earlier road at the turn of the fifth and fourth centuries, the best preserved is that in the northwest corner of the section in front of which the boundary stone of the Kerameikos was placed. The northwest corner of this structure was exposed over a north to south length of (sc) 8.00 m. and east to west width of ca. 2.20 m. Within these dimensions parts of two rooms are included. There remain the lower parts of walls of polygonal limestone plastered with plain gray stucco, and floors of packed clay. The building would seem to date from the beginning of the fourth century B.C.; it was damaged, rebuilt and finally abandoned probably within the same century.

A suggestion for the purpose of the building is given by remains found in an open courtyard immediately to the west. Here

appeared abundant traces of iron working, of actual smelting if one may judge from the quantities of slag, ash and charcoal. This material overlay the floor of the court and filled a curious pit set down in the firm earth beneath (1.50 m. wide, over 5.00 m. long, 0.60 m. deep). Along with this waste lay much fragmentary pottery of the first half of the fourth century B.C.: red figured and black glazed, moulds for terracotta figurines and an impression from the cheek-plate of a helmet (MM 400=T 1931).

Little can be added to the earlier report about the stoa along the north side of the later road. The lower part of a second column was found in place in the western part of the section; it confirms the interaxial spacing of 2.94 m. previously proposed. Traces of a supplementary bedding along the inner edge of the foundation for the back wall of the stoa suggest that a bench rested at the foot of that wall. Bases for two bronze statues were found among the debris on the floor of the building. One of them retains on its face part of its dedicatory inscription (MM 499=I 5769).

The history of the buildings along the south side of the later road has been somewhat clarified. When this road was first laid out, its south edge was bordered by a large building which extended from the monumental stairway to the west edge of the section and beyond, a distance of over 25 m. Most of the building lies beneath the railway tracks and its width has not been recovered. Its front foundation was built of re-used blocks of poros, conglomerate and marble, among them the base signed by Praxiteles (MM 336=I 4165).

This building was later dismantled and its place was taken by two less substantial structures. Of the eastern of these, the

~~full length~~

full length of its north foundation has been exposed (15.50 m.) between the monumental stairway and the western of the two cross-roads noted above. The width is again concealed by the railway. The foundation as preserved consists of a packing of small stones. Its slightly irregular line and the absence of cross-walls suggest that we have to do with an enclosure rather than with a roofed building. To the west of the western cross-road is the beginning of the second later structure. Its foundation also consisted of a packing of small stones but the new foundation is firmly bedded in the surviving blocks of the old and the upper part of the packing of small stones is strengthened with lime mortar, whereas clay only had been used in its eastern neighbor. The western structure may accordingly be restored as a roofed building, of uncertain purpose. So far as our available evidence goes, these alterations may have occurred as early as the second century A.D.

A certain amount of new information was gathered for the later history of the site and especially for the study of the large houses which covered the area in the Byzantine period.

The entire section has now been refilled to its original level and is ready to be turned into a public garden.