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THE MERCANTILE QUARTER
(THE TABERNAE)
OF ANTIPATRIS

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BY

WILLIAM NEIDINGER

AND

EULAH MATTHEWS

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THE MERCANTILE QUARTER (THE TABERNAE) OF ANTIPATRIS

The mercantile quarter of classical Antipatris consists of two rows of tabernae (shops) along the section of the cardo just to the north of the city's forum and to the south of the Turkish castle that came to dominate the summit of the hill of Tel Aphek-Antipatris (see Figure 1). Tel Aviv University, under the direction of Professors Moshe Kochavi and Pirhiya Beck, began excavation of pre-classical Aphek in 1972. In 1978 a group of archaeologists who later formed the core staff of The Texas Foundation for Archaeological and Historical Research arrived at Tel Aphek-Antipatris

and began excavation along the cardo, which had been unearthed in previous years. Work continued in the area of classical Antipatris from 1978-1982 and in 1986. The following report concerns the stratigraphy of that part of the tel known as "the mercantile quarter." Previous publications catalogued the oil lamps of the mercantile quarter¹, and discussed a Roman mausoleum unearthed in the early 1960s². Future publications under the auspices of The Texas Foundation for Archaeological and Historical Research will report on the forum, the theatre, and the coins of classical Antipatris.

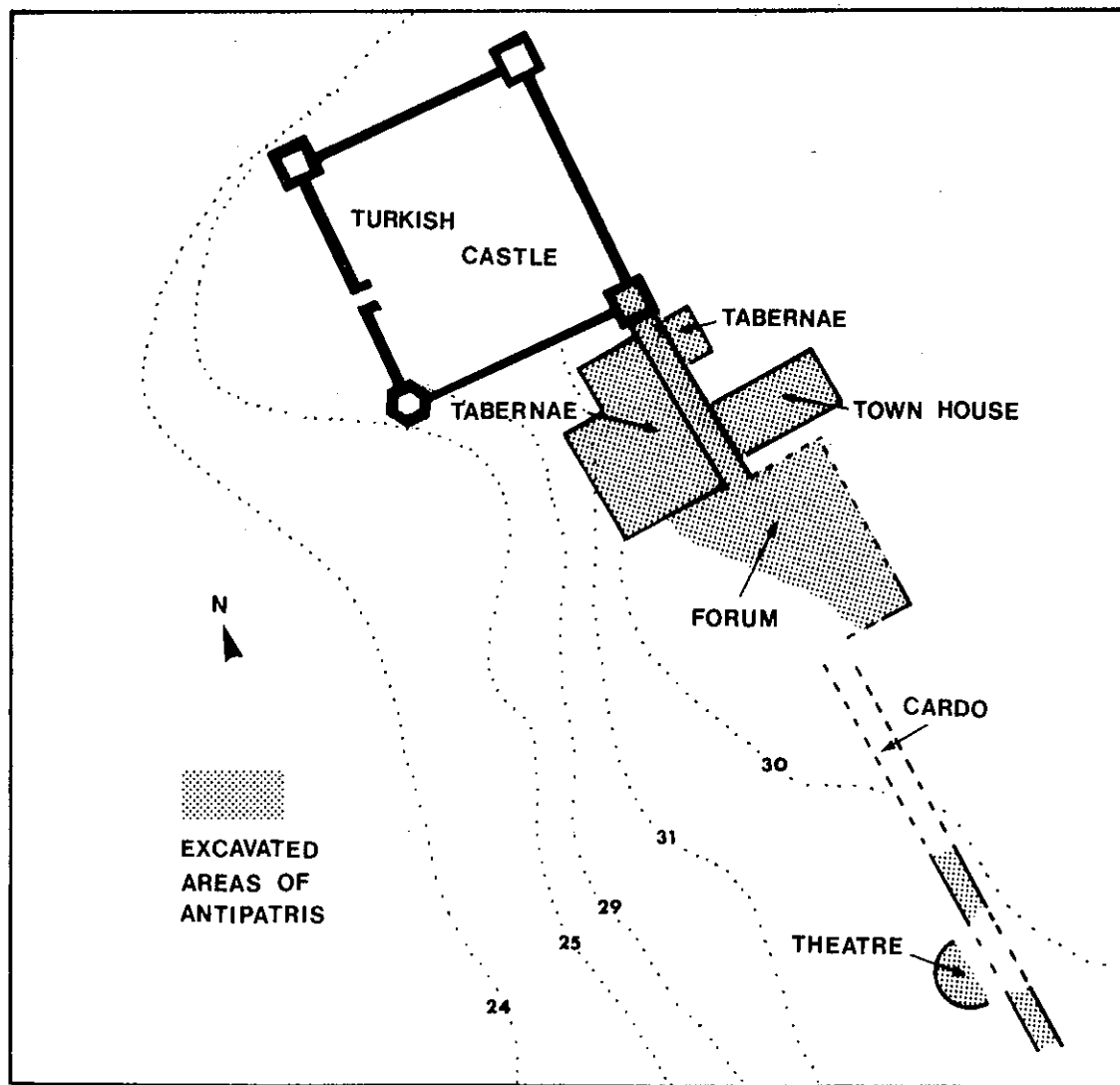


Figure 1. Excavated areas of classical Antipatris.

THE SITE OF TEL APHEK-ANTIPATRIS

Tel Aphek-Antipatris, formerly Tell Ras el-'Ain³, is an approximately twenty-five acre site ten kilometers east of Tel Aviv, located on the ancient Via Maris at the springs that are the source of the Yarkon River (see Figure 2). Indeed, the water supply of the springs is the reason why various cities and villages occupied the site since the third millennium B.C.

Aphek is mentioned in numerous ancient sources. One of the earliest documents to speak of Aphek is an Egyptian Execration Text⁴ that tells of 'Apqm (Aphek) and its ruler Ynk'lu, who bears an Amorite name meaning "May God Grant." Tuthmose III (reg. c. 1490-1435 B.C.) most probably passed through Aphek during his Palestinian and Syrian campaigns. In any case, 'Apqm (Aphek) is listed as one of the over three hundred and fifty middle eastern cities from the records of the Karnak temple complex⁵.

Aphek appears a number of times in the Old Testament. It is listed as one of the conquests of Joshua (Joshua 12:18), and it was at Aphek that the Philistines encamped the night before the battle of Eben-ezer, which resulted in the defeat of the Israelites, the capture of the Ark of the Covenant, and the destruction of the shrine at Shiloh (1 Samuel 4:1). The Philistines were eventually pushed out of the Plains of Sharon, and Aphek became an important Israelite settlement. Its importance continued well after the dissolution of the United Kingdom of David and Solomon. Esharhaddon of Assyria mentions the site on his march to Egypt in 671 B.C.⁶

In the late Hellenistic period Aphek's name seems to have been changed to "Arethuse," a name common to many cities throughout the Greco-Roman world that were associated with springs; Arethusa was the wood nymph of Greek mythology who was changed into a spring by Artemis to escape the amorous advances of the river god, Alpheios. If the identification of Aphek with Arethuse is correct⁷, then the city is mentioned twice by Flavius Josephus. Josephus lists Arethuse as one of the cities that Pompey the Great freed from Jewish control in 63 B.C. (AJ 14:75, BJ 1:156).

Antipatris was fortified during the wars between Alexander Jannaeus and Antiochus in 84 B.C.; to stop Antiochus, Alexander Jannaeus dug a

tremendous trench from Antipatris to Joppa on the coast, a distance of 150 furlongs (about 20 miles). He then fortified this trench with a wall, towers, and wooden redoubts (AJ 13:390, BJ 1:99). Josephus twice mentions Herod's rededication of the city to his father, Antipater. It was as a consequence of this rededication that the city received the name "Antipatris."

... Herod erected another city in the plain called Capharsaba; where he chose out a fit place, both for plenty of water and good soil; and proper for the production of what was there planted; a river encompassing the city itself, and a grove of the best trees for magnitude being round about it. This he named Antipatris from his father Antipater. (Josephus, AJ 16:143; also BJ 1:417)

Flavius Josephus also says (BJ 4.443) that during the First Jewish Revolt Vespasian passed through Antipatris on his march from Caesarea to Lydda and spent two days "settling the affairs" of the city. In that same war the Roman commander Cestius marched to Antipatris in pursuit of Jewish rebels who were entrenched in the Tower of Aphek, nearby Migdal Aphek or Mirabel (BJ 2:513). The rebels eventually left their position and laid waste to the neighboring villages and cities (BJ 2:515). In a later reversal of fortunes, the rebels pursued Cestius from Jerusalem as far as Antipatris before giving up the chase (BJ 2:554).

The New Testament relates the story of Paul being sent by Claudius Lysias to Felix in Caesarea after a conspiracy was hatched in Jerusalem to kill him. Paul was smuggled out of Jerusalem at night and brought to Antipatris, from where he continued his journey to Caesarea (Acts 23:31).

Antipatris continues to be mentioned in Talmudic, Mishnaic, and Christian sources. In 333 A.D., for example, an anonymous Christian pilgrim from Gaul lists Antipatris as a road station sixteen kilometers from Lydda⁸. A letter attributed to Bishop Cyril of Jerusalem (reg. 350-388) mentions "all of Antipatris and its region" as having been damaged by the earthquake of 363 A.D.⁹, which was described by Ammianus Marcellinus (History XXIII:1,2) and Rufinus (Church History X:39-40). Cyril's notice is the last mention of Antipatris in classical sources.

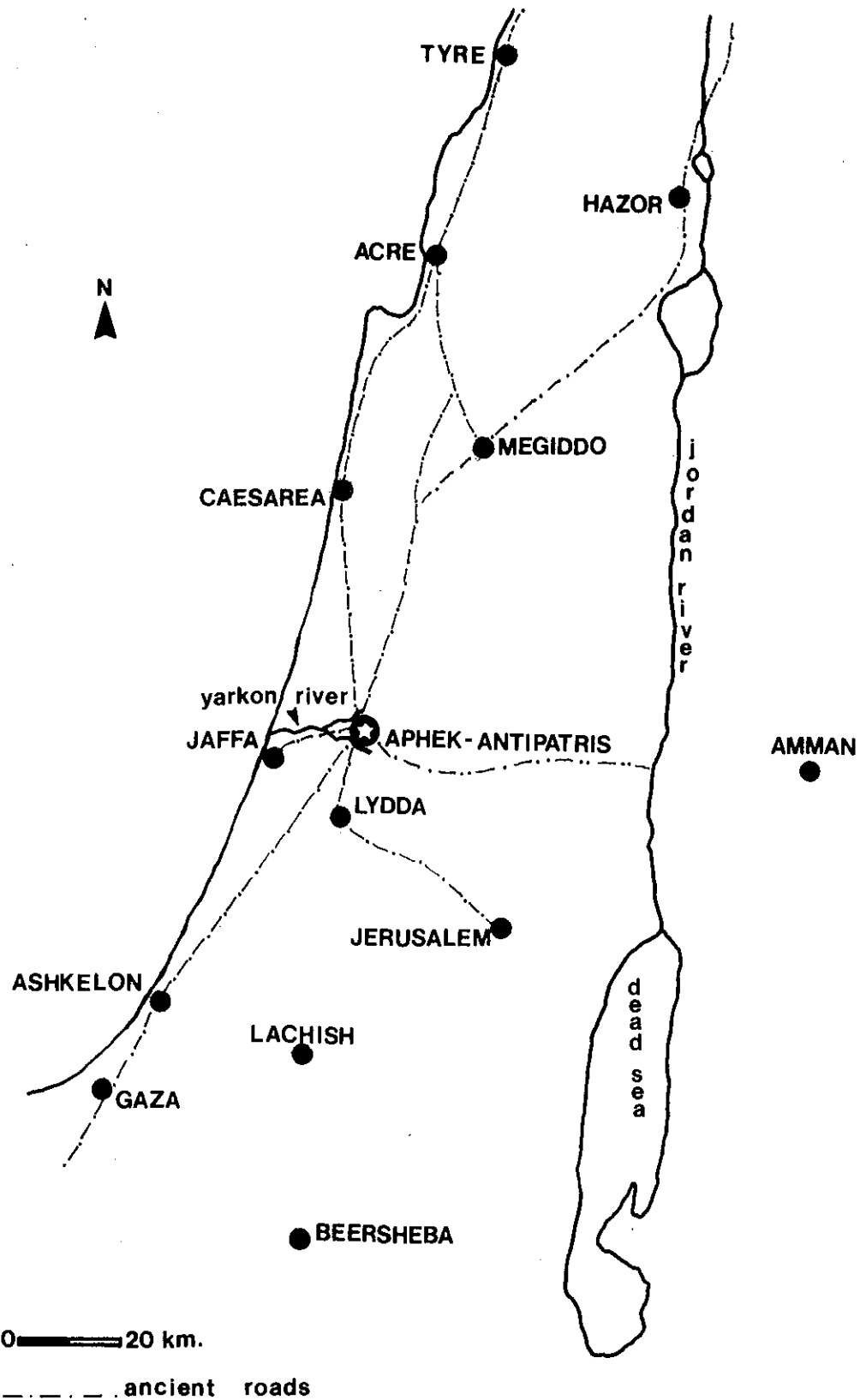


Figure 2. Map showing location of Tel Aphek-Antipatris.

THE TABERNAE OF ANTIPATRIS

Two rows of *tabernae*, shops, once lined the major north-south avenue, the *cardo*, of ancient Antipatris. To date, twelve of these shops have been fully excavated. All but one of them are situated on the western side of the street; most of the shops on the eastern side of the *cardo* were demolished by the construction of a later Roman town house. Four excavation seasons, 1978-80 and 1986, have seen over 1300 square meters of this mercantile quarter of the city uncovered, revealing a tradition of almost uninterrupted habitation from the second century B.C. to the fourth century A.D. (see Fig. 1). The historical strata of the mercantile quarter are:

I Late Byzantine (post-363 A.D.)

II Byzantine (351-363 A.D.)

III Roman (from the reign of Trajan to 351 A.D.)

IV Late Herodian (from the reign of Herod Agrippa I to 68 A.D.)

V Late Hellenistic - Early Herodian (initial date undetermined, to the reign of Herod Agrippa I)

Three deep soundings have been made in the mercantile quarter (see Figure 3). In 1980 Sounding A was cut to determine the stratigraphy beneath the Roman and Byzantine structures. Particular attention was paid to the levels which would correspond to Herod's "rebuilding" of the city. Sounding B was also cut in 1980 in order to clarify the structures between the mercantile quarter and the forum of the city. In 1986 an extensive area was opened up (Sounding C) and excavated to try and locate an earlier Herodian *cardo* that might be located beneath the Roman road, and to determine the rela-

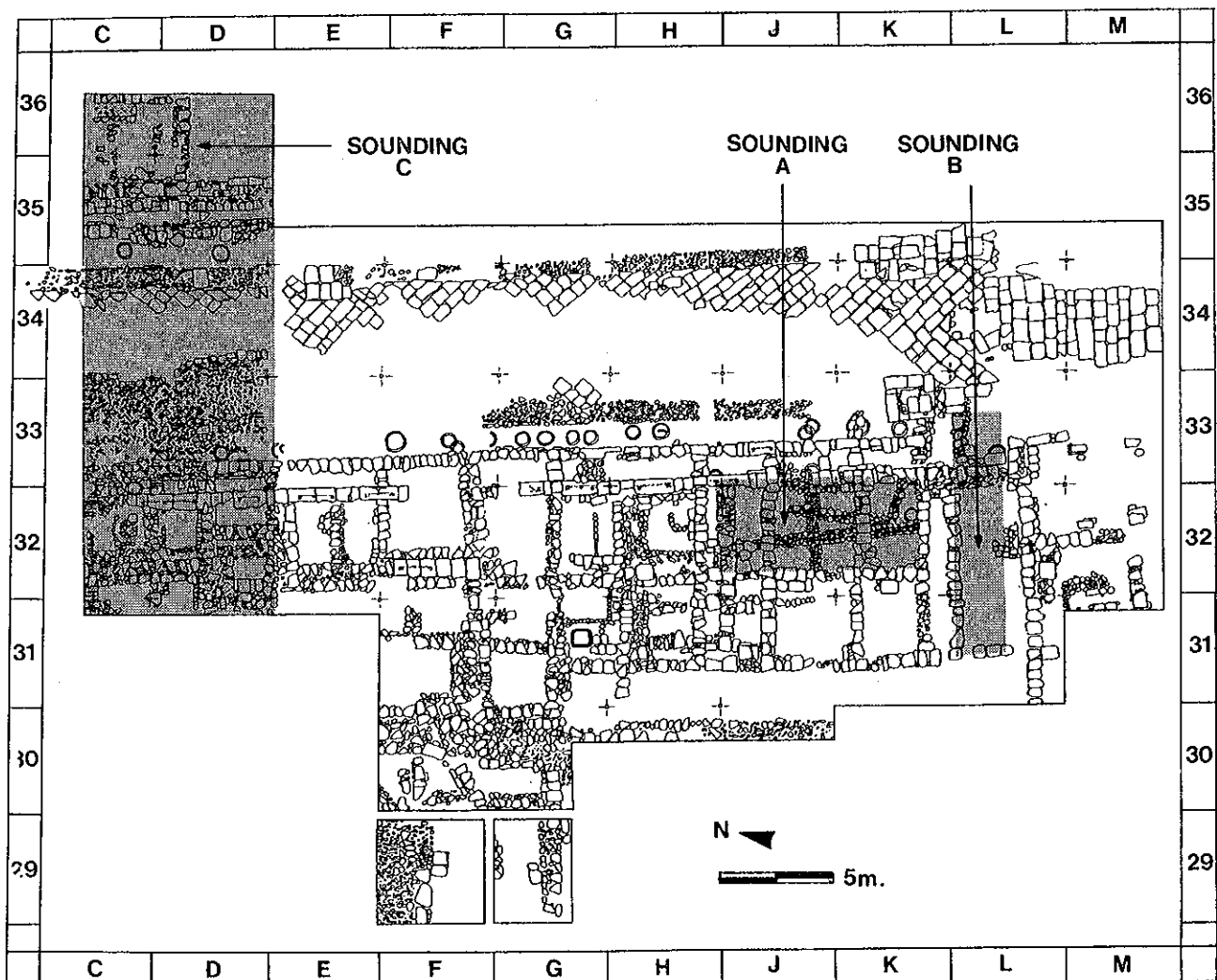


Figure 3. Deep soundings made in the mercantile quarter.

tionship of earlier structures to this road. The 1986 season not only fulfilled its objectives, but also allowed us to finalize the stratigraphy of the mercantile quarter. The only unanswered question remains that of the initial date of Stratum V, the late Hellenistic stratum.

STRATUM V: LATE HELLENISTIC-EARLY HERODIAN (see Insert)

The most extensive remains of this stratum appear in Soundings A and C, where structures were

found in association with Hellenistic and Herodian artifacts. In Sounding A (see Figure 4) there was unearthed the corner of a building (defined by walls K 326 and K 327) built of roughly cut stones in a northeast-southwest orientation, completely askew from the rigid north-south orientation of the structures of all later strata. These walls are in fact the courses of the building's foundation walls which supported a superstructure of mudbrick, remains of which were found in loci 7332, 7347, and 7357.

Immediately above the corner of this building lay a well-defined structure of the same period;

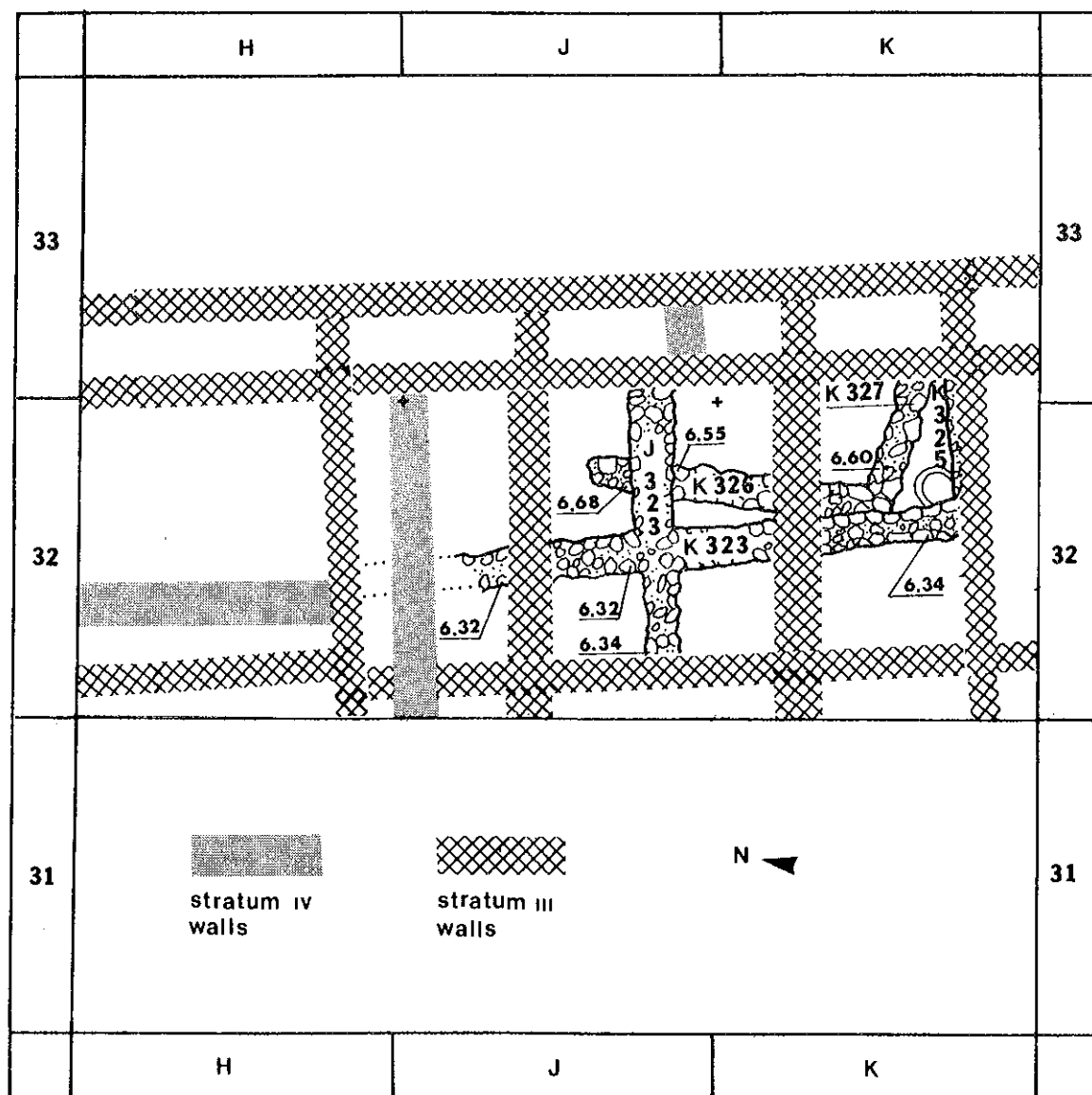


Figure 4. Sounding A.

although no one completely enclosed room has been unearthed, enough walls remain to allow a partial reconstruction of the building (see Photo 1). Two major east-west walls, K 325 and J 323, are intersected by a north-south wall, K 323, giving four adjacent rooms. The ceramic evidence from the lower levels of all the rooms (loci 5856, 5857, 5850, 5851) is purely Hellenistic and Herodian, the overwhelming majority of sherds being thin-walled coarse ware with only an occasional black glaze or Megarian sherd and occasional Hellenistic lamp fragments. No complete vessel was found, though in one locus (5850), in a heavy concentration of ash, there was found an unbaked clay bowl and an unbaked oil lamp — both of definite late Hellenistic variety. The heavy ash concentration was found only in this one corner of this one room, suggesting kiln or oven waste rather than a general conflagration. The coins in these loci all date to the reigns of either Herod I or Herod Archelaos. (One coin from the procuratorship of Antoninus Felix was found beneath an oven which intruded from a later stratum, suggesting that the coin too may be an intrusion.)

In each of the four rooms of this structure there is a constant remake of the plaster and beaten-earth floors. But even in the later remakes, there is a constant relationship in the frequency between Hellenistic and Herodian pottery and no significant shift in the percentage of coins from Herod I as opposed to Herod Archelaos. These facts indicate that the remakes were not spread out over a lengthy period of time but, on the other hand, were executed in a relatively short span. Neither do the remakes raise the floor levels in all the rooms at a steady rate, there being, rather, a considerable disparity in the levels at all points. There are two possible explanations for this: one, the more plausible, that if the rooms served different functions, the wear on the floors would have been different, necessitating remakes at different times; or two, the rooms are not of the same structure, but of different buildings sharing common walls. True, no connecting passage between any of the rooms has been discovered, but most of the lengths of these walls may still be obscured by later Herodian and Roman structures.

At one point, however, the floor level is the same in all four rooms; this is the final occupation of the building. At this time the floor level in each

room reached the top of the stone walls J 323 and K 323; K 325, which is probably the outer wall of the building, was somewhat higher. But the rooms still maintained their distinct division due to the mudbrick which rested atop the stone substructure; the 0.50 meter stonework is, then, not the remnants of the walls, but the entire subsupport for the mudbrick walls, of which only 0.15 meters were extant at any point.

It is in this final occupation that the strongest evidence for the rapid remaking of the floor levels comes. Whereas we might logically expect less Hellenistic material higher in the stratum, the case is just the opposite. More Hellenistic pottery, including the fragments of five separate oil lamps, and the only Hellenistic coins were found in this locus (5827). The two coins are both serrated Seleucid drachmae of a very late date; they were found together with an Herodian perutah.

There is no clear indication as to the nature of this structure. A great variety of objects were found which do not, however, suggest either a strictly domestic or commercial structure: loom weights, spindle whorls, iron fragments, pieces of glassware. The only indications of a mercantile enterprise were the unfired oil lamp and bowl.

In an adjacent trench, H 32, (see Insert), a solitary wall (H 328) was unearthed in a rough alignment with the structure in Sounding A and at a similar depth, 6.20-6.75 meters. In the lowest stratum (locus 5687) there was a fairly even mixture of Herodian fine ware sherds and Hellenistic material, including some black glaze; two coins of Herod I were also found in this layer. A sizeable quantity of iron slag was also discovered. And, as in Sounding A, in the upper layers (loci 5686 and 5684) there is a marked increase in Hellenistic pottery; coins of Herod I and Herod Archelaos also came from these loci. The floor of the final occupation period associated with this wall differs only by 0.03 meters from that in Sounding A. Although no mudbricks were noticed in conjunction with this wall, several fragments of red plaster were recovered from the floor, indicating the previous existence of mudbrick or mud-covered walls, since plaster is never laid directly over stone.

In G 31 (see Photo 2) another corner of a building (formed by G 313 and H 312) was uncovered at a depth approximate to that of the other

Hellenistic structures. The beaten-earth floor had two distinct, charred timbers imbedded in it (locus 5707); material recovered from this locus proved to be of the late Hellenistic (including a sizeable portion of a storage jar) and early Herodian era. Beneath this floor another layer (locus 5729) with the same mixture of sherds was found.

To the south of Sounding A, another deep sounding (Sounding B) was conducted through a later Herodian roadway. At the end of the fill for this road, a layer of hard compact dirt was reached. This may have been a path, the forerunner of the later road; it is at a level commensurate with the buildings of stratum V.

It is in Sounding C that the clearest relationship between the buildings and the thoroughfares of this period can be seen. Here the buildings of the Late Hellenistic-Early Herodian period are, like the walls discovered in G 31, more closely aligned with the walls of later eras (see Figure 5). A substantial wall of coarsely cut field stones and tightly packed mud and pebbles (D 336) follows the exact alignment of the threshold block of Stratum III. Wall D 336 is intersected by wall D 326, which, in turn, is integrated perpendicularly into wall D 327. D 326 and D 327 are the foundation walls for mudbrick superstructures (see Photo 3). The four rooms formed by these three walls are of beaten earth and at a depth

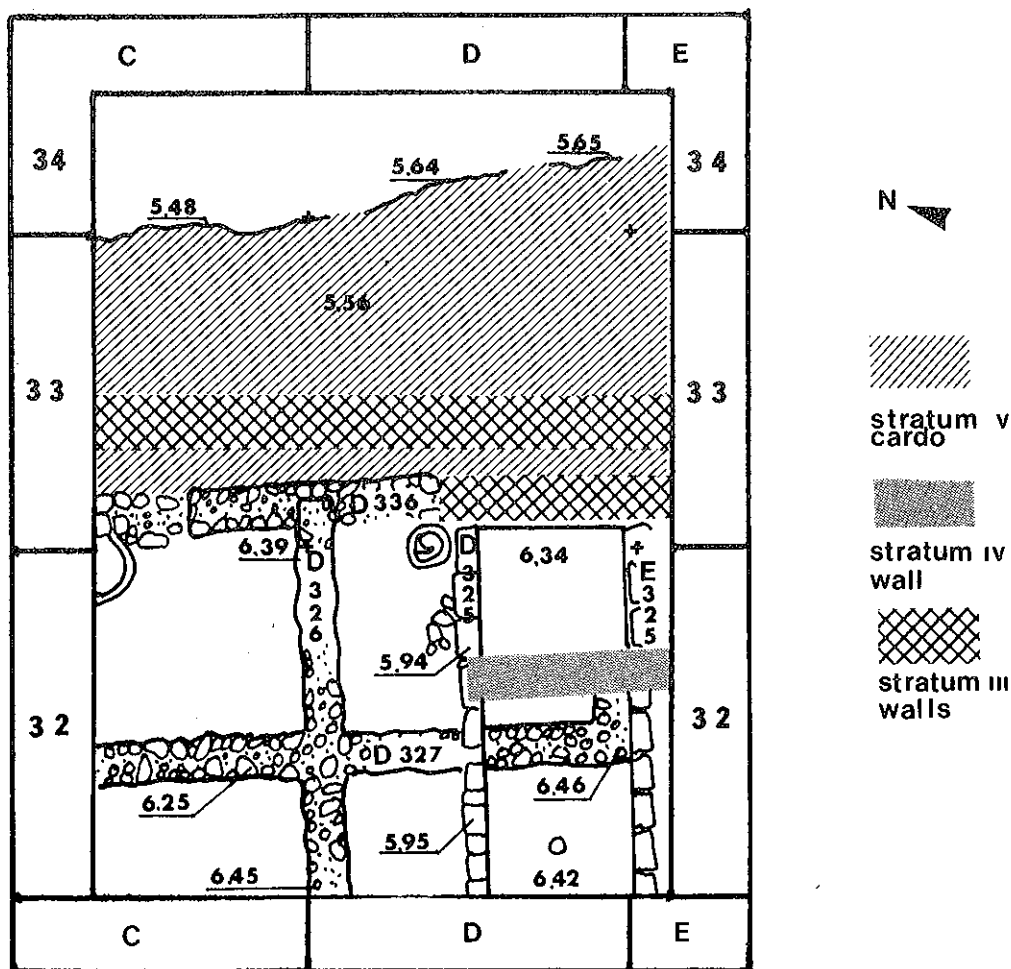


Figure 5. Sounding C

commensurate with the walls found in the rooms of Sounding A (5.9-6.15 m.).

Two bins/ovens were unearthed in the two rooms closest to the *cardo* (loci 9079 and 9092). Herodian coarse ware sherds were found in one oven (9097). The excellent state of preservation of this latter bin allows us to conclude that the structure was, by and large, sunk into the floor, with no more than 0.05 m. standing above floor level.

A crude threshold allows one entrance into the most northeasternly of these four rooms directly from the *cardo* of this period.

What little was found of the *cardo* of this era, a mere 50 square m., indicates that it was completely lacking in the technological sophistication of the later Roman *cardo*. Rather than being constructed of finely cut stones like the Roman version of the road, the *cardo* of stratum V was nothing more than a tightly packed mass of uncut and roughly cut, hand-sized field stones held together by mud and clay (see Photo 4). Excavation revealed that the road was remade a number of times. An irregular line of larger uncut stones marked the road's eastern border, and on the west the *cardo* reached right to the front walls (D 336) of the building. From the road it was a slight step down to the threshold and another step down to the floor level of the building.

In Sounding C there was again discovered evidence for the rapid rebuilding of the structures of this era. Here, directly over the southerly continuation of wall D 327, was built a small (2.5 m. x 6 m.) cistern (see Photo 5). The floor of the cistern rested directly atop wall D 327. It was, in fact, this building of the cistern directly atop the wall that caused the cistern's destruction. Specifically, the cistern had to have been a weighty structure (large fine cut stones overlaid with layers of plaster) which gradually settled and sank into the earth. The earth, of course, yielded everywhere, except along the course of wall D 327. And it was precisely at this point that the walls of the cistern cracked, rendering the cistern useless (see Photo 6). The cistern was subsequently filled in with stone and mudbrick rubble, bones (cow), and pottery sherds, including Herodian cook pot fragments and Herodian lamp pieces (loci 9043, 9044, 9098).

The cistern slanted slightly to the west, there being an average difference of 0.10 m. between the eastern and western ends. In the western end was

located a 0.57 m. deep sump hole (see Photo 5). The floor of the cistern was constructed as follows: upon a tightly packed layer of uncut, fist-sized stones there was poured a 0.04 m. layer of mortar into which were set large (0.03 x 0.03 m.) black and white tesserae. The north and south walls were built of large (0.75 x 0.35 m.) finely cut stones overlaid with plaster; these walls (E 325 and D 325) were extant for only two courses. The western wall of the cistern was beneath the balk and was not excavated, and the eastern wall was built in a crude fashion: small stones held in place by mortar and mud. From the remnants of the eastern wall it is certain that the cistern was vaulted, standing approximately 1.50 m.

The few structures uncovered from this period forbid us to propose any reliable reconstruction of the mercantile quarter in the late Hellenistic - early Herodian era. To fix a precise date for this stratum is equally difficult, though some time at the beginning of the first century B. C. would not seem far amiss. The stratum does definitely span the greater part of this century. The problem is this: how does the archaeological evidence correspond with the extant literary sources? Particularly, what are we to make of Josephus' account that Herod the Great founded a city here in honor of Antipater?

There is sufficient evidence of rebuilding in all three soundings, the most significant being the cistern, of course. But in all three cases the rebuildings do not appear to be consistent with any major rebuilding program. They seem, rather, to be in the nature of routine structural repair and renovation. How, then, are we to correlate this with the evidence given by Flavius Josephus about the "foundation" of Antipatris?

Perhaps a re-examination of the relevant texts might shed some light on the "foundation" of Antipatris by Herod the Great. There are two major passages in Josephus which refer to Herod's foundation of Antipatris. One passage (*AJ* 16.143) states *πολὴν ἀλλήν ἀνηγειρεν ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ*. The word *ἀνηγειρεν* is rare in this context and renders the phrase enigmatic. This word is often used to mean "to awaken" (*II*. 10.138), and it is occasionally used with the word "house," meaning "to build a house," or with the word *θεμελιόζ*, meaning "to raise a house from the foundation." In any case, the use of the word in this context is so infrequent in

Greek, that it does not offer us any insight into the nature of the "foundation" of Antipatris.

A more informative passage comes from the Wars of the Jews, 1.417. *καὶ γὰρ τῷ πατρὶ μνημεῖον κατεθηκεν πολὺ*. The sentence is normally translated as "he built a city in his father's memory" or "he founded a city in his father's memory." But a literal translation of the Greek reads, "he established (or set up) a city as a memorial to his father." This hits upon the heart of the matter of the "foundation" of a city in antiquity; "to found a city" is not necessarily synonymous with building a city. It merely requires certain religious ceremonies "to found," that is, to dedicate a city — or even to rededicate or refound it. Such is the case with Antipatris; Herod did not build a new city, for Josephus informs us that a city had already existed on the site. Herod only rededicated and renamed a pre-existing city, perhaps erecting nothing more than a memorial arch or inscription to honor the event. Moreover, when Josephus discusses the other cities built or rebuilt by Herod, such as Caesarea, Agrippium, and Jericho, he is specific, mentioning individual buildings or projects. Only in discussing Antipatris is he vague, mentioning not one single building or specific project. And rightly so, since Herod probably did no rebuilding at the site, but merely rededicated it.

To fix a terminal date for the late Hellenistic - early Herodian stratum is not difficult. Throughout the mercantile quarter there are signs of destruction in the latest phase of this stratum — deposits of charcoal and ash. Immediately above this last phase comes again, throughout the mercantile quarter, a layer of fairly sterile, light brown soil anywhere from 0.35 to 0.55 meters thick (loci 5635, 5653, 5655, 5656, 5664, 5667, 5693, 5707, 5727, 5811, 5814, 5816, and 5827). The ceramic and numismatic evidence from this layer is most revealing. Sherds, though relatively infrequent, span all the way from the Middle Bronze Age to Herodian times and are found together at the same levels in these loci. The latest ceramics date to the end of the first century B. C. and the beginning of the first century A. D., that is, imported terra sigillata (Arretine ware) from loci 5667 and 5693. The unusual color of the soil and the great variety and mixture of sherds suggest that this layer is deliberate fill, used to raise the general level of the mercantile area after

its destruction at the end of stratum V. The numismatic evidence helps us fix the date. There were ten coins of Herod I, one of Augustus, five of Herod Archelaos, and three of Marcus Ambibulus. There are no coins which date after 12/14 A. D.; this accords well with the ceramic evidence. The next coins which appear in the lowest level of stratum IV date to the reign of Herod Agrippa I. Sometime, then, between 12/14 and 37 A. D. this fill layer was laid down.

STRATUM IV LATE HERODIAN (see Insert)

This fill layer is followed by an extensive rebuilding of the entire mercantile quarter, which, as the numismatic evidence suggests, was executed during the reign of Herod Agrippa I. We shall postpone a description of this rebuilding to deal at present with the question of the absolute chronology of the destruction of stratum V, the fill, and the rebuilding in stratum IV. Does any of this archaeological evidence correspond to any of the events related by Flavius Josephus?

After the death of Herod the Great in 4 B.C., when Herod Archelaos sought the throne, Judaea, Flavius Josephus tells us (AJ 17:269-285), was plunged into a state of rebellion. Pretenders to the throne came and went and destruction was fairly widespread throughout the land. Although Josephus does not mention Antipatris by name, it is quite possible that the city was caught in the midst of the riots and battles. The destruction that closed stratum V bears this out. The fill layer and rebuilding in the time of Herod Agrippa I would correspond to the relative peace and prosperity under that ruler. Josephus mentions that Herod Agrippa I was generous in his building endowments not only to foreign cities, as was Herod the Great, but also to native Jewish cities (AJ 19:328-334). The new tabernae of stratum IV would be characteristic of the rebuilding under Herod Agrippa I.

The shops of this period are laid out in a highly regular pattern. They are all aligned perpendicular to the *cardo* with a strict east-west orientation; a long continuous wall (E 331) serves as the threshold for all of the shops, which also have a common back wall, F 311, that acts as a retaining wall against the slope of the hill. Actual threshold blocks, with carved indentations for the door and sockets, are

visible at only one point, in J 33, due to a later Roman reuse of this wall. In addition to their common orientation, there is a great deal of regularity in the layout of the shops. They vary only slightly in width (about 3.80 meters average), are three-roomed, and have terracotta ovens on both sides of the threshold. It is likely that they were constructed all at the same time, since they share common dividing walls. Only at one point is there a double dividing wall, H 322, indicating that the shops may have been built in units of four. Behind the four most southerly shops there is an open alley, whereas behind the three next northerly there is another row of shops going down the slope of the hill. Due to a later Roman and Byzantine reuse of this area on the slope, it is virtually impossible to ascertain the orientation and structure of these slopeside shops.

One constant feature of these shops is the circular terracotta oven; over two dozen have been excavated to date (see Photo 7). The ovens are laid out in two parallel rows, one between the threshold and the retaining wall of the later *cardo*, and the other on the inside of the threshold. The ovens of this latter row are often cut in half by the later Roman (stratum III) threshold. Ovens 5671 and 5795, for example, although both containing a number of intact vessels, are cut by the later foundation wall for the Roman threshold. From one oven (5795) came ten vessels: cups, deep bowls, shallow bowls, dishes, and pans; oven 5671 (see Photo 8) yielded two goblets, a dish, and two water jugs. The ceramic material from both these ovens is of Herodian manufacture. Only occasionally are coins found in these ovens; in 5789, in addition to two complete vessels, coins of Herod Agrippa I and Pontius Pilate were found.

From the ceramic evidence of the ovens, it is apparent that they served to cook and heat foodstuffs. This idea is supported by the occasional bones (5789, 5795) and egg shells (5790) found within. Ashes are commonly found at the bottom of the ovens.

The ovens were partially above, but mainly beneath, ground level; occasionally the walls of the ovens were supported by a small buildup of stones on the outside (see Photo 7). Some ovens (5681, for example) have flue holes and channels at the bottom of the oven to allow for the freer circulation of air to fan the embers (see Photo 9). The walls of the

ovens were fragile and often collapsed; eleven broken ovens were unearthed. But rather than completely remove the damaged ovens, new ones were placed right alongside and cutting into the old ones (5680, 5681, 5789 [see Photos 10 and 11], and 5790).

To the south of wall K 324, the row of *tabernae* stops; a road running east-west terminates the mercantile quarter. This road lies beneath fortifications of the Byzantine era (see Photo 12). When these later structures were removed, it was possible to excavate Sounding B to determine the nature of earlier buildings. But no building was forthcoming; rather, the remnants of a late Herodian road were uncovered. The foundation material of the Byzantine structure (5760, 5766, and 5780) ended immediately atop the remains of the paving stones of the road; only a small patch of these stones is extant, the rest having been destroyed or robbed out. The sounding was narrowed to the space where the stones were missing and carried down through the foundation makeup of the road (loci 5792 and 5820). The foundation makeup consisted of layers of plaster mixed with a heavy concentration of extremely small sherds, most of which were beyond identification. Only an occasional spout to an Herodian oil lamp gave any clue, as far as pottery goes, to the date of the road. An unusual feature of this foundation fill was the number of coins in it; from loci 5792 and 5820, 74 coins were recovered. All of them belong either to the Herodian dynasty or the period of the procurators, but not one of them dates after the reign of Herod Agrippa I. This again confirms the dating of the rebuilding of stratum IV to that ruler's reign. With only one or two exceptions, the earlier coins are found lower in these loci and the later ones higher, suggesting that the road was laid down gradually and paved only during the reign of Herod Agrippa I; the absence of any wear on the road (such as ruts) would seem to support this theory.

The *cardo*, like the shops of the late Herodian period, was probably raised and improved. But the deep foundations of the later Roman (stratum III) *cardo* obliterated all traces of the road of this period and penetrated down to the *cardo* of stratum V.

The side road (minor *decumanus*) is bounded on the north by wall K 324 and on the south by L 333; both walls are unbroken, without thresholds.

To the south of L 333, adjacent to the forum, rather than a continuation of tabernae, there was uncovered an arched cellar of a late Herodian building. The floor of the cellar was of plaster, and three of the four bases for the arches were found imbedded in this plaster. Postholes directly in front of the two eastern arch bases are from a later reuse of the building (see Photo 13). The cellar evidently served as a storage area, for an abnormally large amount of pottery was found within (locus 5818): two oil lamps, five amphorae, nine thin-walled cups, five water goblets, and six shallow dishes. One coin of Herod Archelaos was found. The full extent of this cellar has not yet been determined, and, at the end of the season, at least two more amphorae had to be left in the balks.

With the exceptions of those pots found within the ovens and the cellar, it should be noted that no intact late Herodian vessels (except oil lamps) were found on the floors of the shops. Neither was there any unique distribution of material that might have suggested the functions of the three rooms in the shops, although we might safely conjecture that the front room was used to conduct business and cook food, and the rear rooms to store foodstuffs and merchandise. The lack of intact vessels from within the shops may be due to the violent destruction at the end of stratum IV. Throughout the mercantile quarter there are signs of destruction: either heavy ash layers (5642, for example), or heavy rubble (5641) (see Photo 14). Both the coins and the ceramics from all of these destruction loci are of the late Herodian dynasty.

STRATUM III ROMAN (see Insert)

The tabernae of stratum IV, built during the reign of Herod Agrippa I, were short-lived. We do not have to search far for the date of their destruction — First Revolt against Rome. Josephus (*BJ* 4:443) mentions that Vespasian marched into Antipatris in the spring of 68 A.D. and spent two days “in restoring order.” He briefly alludes in the passage immediately preceding this that many of the small towns and villages of Judaea had been destroyed in the revolt that winter. This corresponds well with the evidence from the mercantile quarter. The last coins of stratum IV date to the procuratorship of Antoninus Felix; then came the destruction.

Although the mercantile quarter was again rebuilt under Roman rule, the numismatic evidence hints at a brief period of abandonment; the next coins found in any frequency date to the early second century A.D.: Trajan, Hadrian, Faustina Junior. Two Judaea Capta and two coins of Domitian were found, but in disturbed contexts (5626, 5629, 5731, 5781); the other coins were found in well-stratified levels, usually on beaten-earth or plaster floors.

The major rebuilding activity in Antipatris in the second century A.D. concerned the upgrading of the *cardo* (and perhaps the forum). The road was rebuilt in true Roman fashion. Retaining walls approximately one meter deep (G 341 and G 331) were sunk in an almost perfect north-south orientation. The space between the two retaining walls was then filled in with tightly packed layers of plaster, pebbles, and occasional sherds. This fill was then topped with finely cut limestone blocks (about 0.45 x 0.75 m.) set at a diagonal to the north-south orientation of the road. The tops of the retaining walls were capped with similar sized and cut limestone blocks placed in an east-west orientation. These latter blocks were one course higher than the stones of the *cardo*, and, in fact, one row overlapped the paving stones of the *cardo*.

As the *cardo* approached the forum (see Figure 6 and Photo 15), the alignment of the stones shifted abruptly to a stricter north-south orientation. Since excavation of the forum is not complete, a description of the transition from the mercantile quarter and *cardo* to the forum remains tentative. The evidence gained from Sounding B suggests that there was a minor *decumanus* running alongside the forum and intersecting the *cardo* in the late Herodian and Roman periods. It is certain that the *cardo*'s entrance to the forum was marked by some large memorial structure. Initially archaeologists speculated that this structure might be a tetrapylon. But closer examination of the evidence rules out this hypothesis. In squares K 33 and K 34 were unearthed two small platforms (approximately 2.0 x 2.0 m.) of large finely cut limestone blocks extant to two courses high. Further to the south towards the *cardo*, in squares L 33 and L 35, there were discovered massive conglomerations of small stones set into a greyish mortar (see Photo 16); these conglomerations (4.0 x 4.0 x 2.0 m.) were sunk

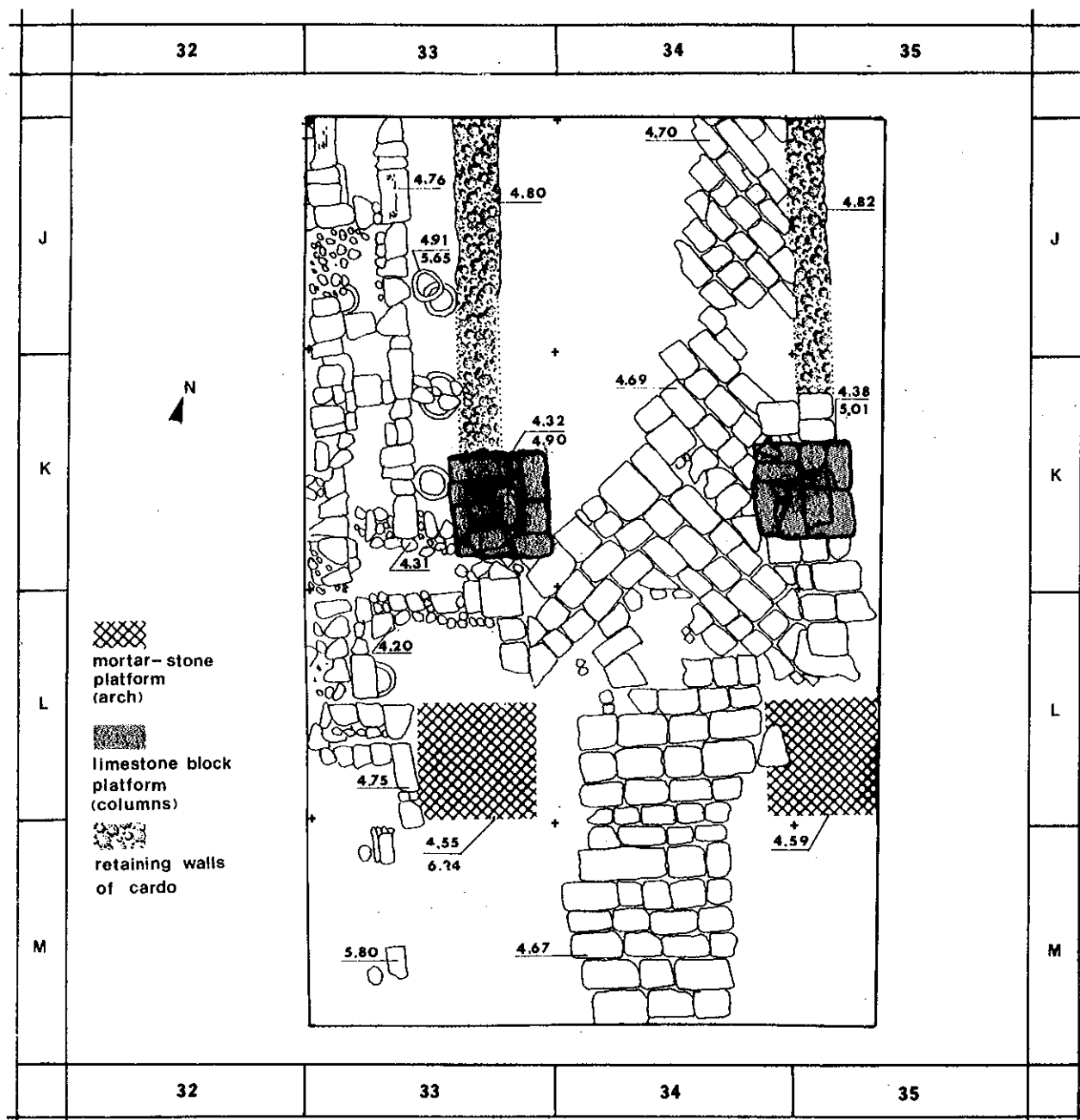


Figure 6. Intersection of the cardo and forum.

beneath the level of the cardo. Initial speculation proposed that the two platforms and two mortar conglomerations were the four bases of the supports of a tetrapylon, but the disparity between the platforms and the conglomerations suggests another explanation. The two limestone platforms probably served as bases for memorial columns, and the more substantial mortar conglomerations probably were the substructures of an arch that spanned the cardo's immediate entrance into the forum. Such an arran-

gement of column and arch is, of course, common in Roman architecture throughout the Mediterranean.

The rebuilding of the shops was along the same orientation that was established in the late Herodian period, although some minor revisions were undertaken. For example, the wall which previously had served as the threshold (E 331) was still used, but not as an entrance proper. Its level was now raised by one course of stones, c. 0.40 m., to act as a raised

approach to a foreroom open to the sidewalk which ran alongside the *cardo* (see reconstruction, Figure 7). The ovens on either side of the late Herodian threshold were covered over by a plaster floor; ovens went out of use in the mercantile quarter after the reconstruction of the second century A.D. The actual threshold of the new shops, L 332, that is, the blocks containing grooves for the door and door jambs, was moved about 0.50 meters to the west. It is this new threshold that cut through many of the interior ovens of the late Herodian period. The

shops still retained their basic three-roomed organization, though the rear retaining wall was pushed westwards some 0.35 meters (wall G 312). The open alley behind the five most southerly shops was still retained and a sizeable dump built up against this wall provided material valuable in dating the lifespan of these Roman shops — a point which will be dealt with later.

All that remains of the walls of these shops are the foundations of tightly packed, small field stones, and the first course of roughly cut, large rectangular

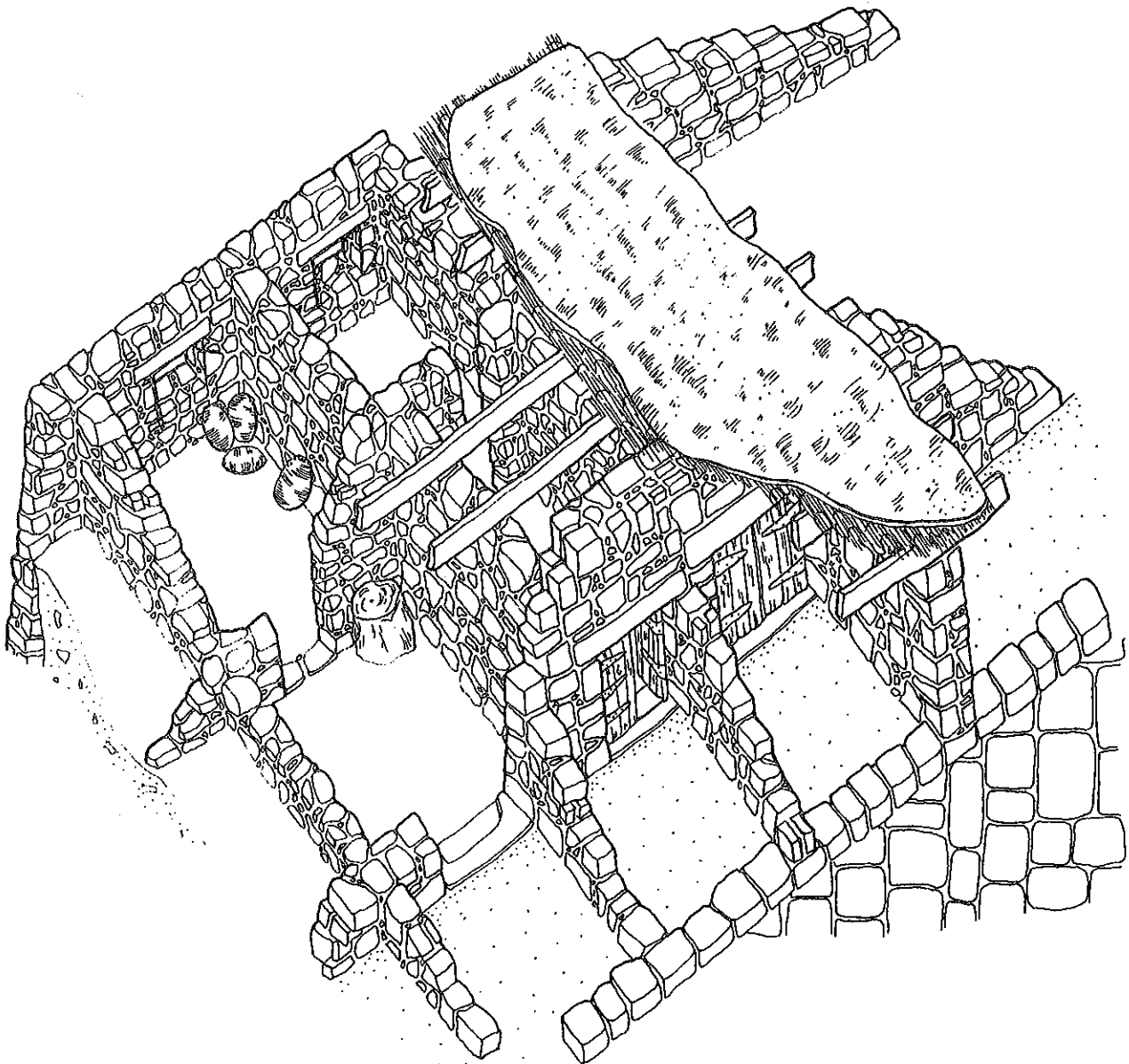


Figure 7. Reconstruction of a Roman shop.

stones. It is uncertain, due to the proximity of these walls to the surface, whether the first course of stones was followed by upper courses of mudbrick or stone. The only clue comes from some of the east-west walls, G 321, for example, which are extant to a height of 2.0 meters, and the retaining wall, G 312. Both are built of successive layers of large, roughly cut stones with smaller stones used to level the courses and inserted in the interstices. More likely than not, mud or clay would have been used to close the chinks and gaps.

All the shops are step-down structures, there being a difference of 0.45 meters between the level of the cardo and sidewalk and the shop floors. In most of the shops two stones serving as steps were placed immediately inside the threshold block (see Photo 17).

The basic layout of the shops of the mercantile quarter remained unchanged for about two hundred and fifty years. If the coins are any index of economic prosperity, then Antipatris seems to have reached a peak in the early third century A.D. The concentration of coins from this period ranks second only to the late Herodian era. The third heaviest concentration of coins comes from the

reign of Constantine. In the mid-fourth century the coinage thins out dramatically. In the dump built up against the retaining wall of the shops (5690, 5693, 5696, 5697), the latest ceramic material is clearly Roman, there being a definite lack of Byzantine pottery.

STRATUM II EARLY BYZANTINE (See insert)

The transition from Roman to Byzantine is, of course, marked by no other event than the transfer of the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome to Constantinople in 330. This naturally leaves no archaeological traces, so the distinction we seek in the stratigraphy of Antipatris between strata III and II must be sought in some event of the fourth century that did leave distinct material traces.

The event we seek took place in the middle of the fourth century, at a time when the tabernae of the mercantile quarter ceased functioning as shops. The mercantile quarter underwent what we might term a radical "militarization". A drastic change came in the reorganization of the buildings in the mercantile quarter. A large defensive wall (F 301), 2.90 meters thick, was constructed over the most

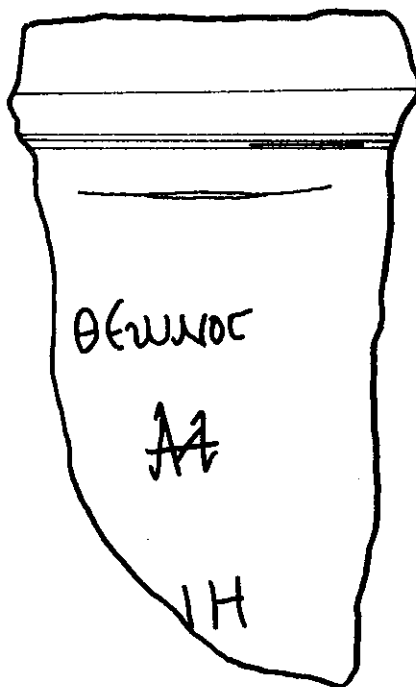


Figure 8. Drawing of amphora sherd with grafitto.

northerly shops along the western slope of the tel. A circular tower (F 302) was built into it (see Photo 18). The wall and the tower rest directly upon the walls of Roman shops (F 303, G 331, F 313), there being no intervening level of destruction, abandonment, or debris. The minor decumanus which had existed since Herodian times was blocked off by walls even with the retaining wall (L 311) and the threshold wall (L 331); the space between these walls was then filled with pottery (loci 5755 and 5670), and another east-west wall, L 321, was built adjacent to K 324 atop this pottery fill. Two small spur walls connect L 331 to the stones of the cardo. Adjacent to and partially covering L 331 was a large circular ash pit (5721) in which an enormous quantity of charred, shattered and unrestorable pottery was found; it was all distinctly Byzantine. The function of the long room formed by the closing of the road is unknown; neither is there any clue as to the nature of the two spur walls.

The shop just north of these new constructions was also drastically changed. What had once been the rear room of the taberna was excavated down to the early Herodian level and then filled with stones and rubble (5754 and 5761). Such a sturdy foundation could only be the support for a small tower. Adjacent to the tower was an east room with its threshold to the north.

There are remnants of other structures from the rebuilding of this period, but their remnants are too scanty to allow for any reliable interpretation. Only one other structure was preserved intact. The middle and rear rooms of a Roman shop, in squares H 31 and H 32, were turned into a two-roomed storage area. An enormous quantity of restorable ceramic material was recovered from these two rooms, especially the western room (5610) (see Photo 19). Most of the sherds came from amphorae; one completely restorable amphora contained numerous fish bones and fresh water snail and crustacean shells. This jar may have contained liquamen, recommended so frequently by Apicius in his *Artis Magiricae* and used throughout the Roman world (*Geoponica* xx:46). Two sherds from the same locus were found which had graffiti written in red ink on them. The most complete one read: ΘΕΩΝΟΣ/Μ/ΙΗ, that is: (From the shop) of Theon/ 1/2 follis/ 18 hemenai (ounces) (see Figure 8). The other had only a frag-

ment of a name _ _ _ ΙΕΤΟΥ, (From the shop) of _ _ _ istos.

In sounding C a similar rebuilding directly over the remains of the Roman era took place. A thick (1.50 m.) wall, C 321, found in trenches C 32 and D 32, rested directly atop the wall of the taberna of the preceding stratum (see Photo 20). This wall may connect with the large defensive wall F 301.

The manner of construction of these new edifices was hasty; the stones, especially of the defensive wall, were not carefully laid down, but sloppily thrown down, there being no close fitting of the stones. A number of reused architectural fragments were found in the walls of these Byzantine buildings: a column drum in the circular tower and a pilaster and entablature fragment in the wall (K 324) of the reworked taberna near the small rectangular tower. The entablature fragment (see Photo 21) had a chalice, winged lion, and rosette frieze carved on it. At the same time as this revamping of the mercantile quarter took place, a military watchtower was built into the eastern end of the town's forum.

What occasioned this change in the mercantile quarter? What caused this "militarization" of the shops? An answer comes from the *Liber de Caesaribus* (42:9 seq.) of Sextus Aurelius Victor. In 351/352 A.D., the Jews of Palestine revolted against the rule of Constantius II's co-ruler, Gallus, in a poorly organized revolt led by a certain Patricius. Although the center of the rebellion was in the Galilee, another center of resistance was Lydda, a town only sixteen kilometers from Antipatris. In fact, to pass from Caesarea to Lydda or Jerusalem, one had to pass through Antipatris. And it was exactly this route that the Roman general who crushed the revolt, Ursicinus, took. Sextus Aurelius Victor does not specifically mention Antipatris as having taken part in the revolt, but, from the archaeological evidence, it appears certain that the city was in some way affected by the war. The hasty defensive works confirm this. The question remains, however, who constructed these works? To fortify Antipatris as an advance position against the Romans would have made good sense for the Jewish rebels in Lydda, as it would have made good sense for the Romans to fortify it to contain the revolt in Lydda and prevent it from linking up with resistance centers in the north. But there is no ar-

archaeological evidence from the mercantile quarter that would offer any clue in determining who had constructed the fortifications. That the defensive works continued to be used after the revolt lends credence to the theory of Roman construction, although the Romans may just as easily have occupied Jewish defense works after the war.

The fortifications were finally destroyed, probably by the earthquake of 363 A.D. The clearest evidence of this comes from the storehouse in H 32 and H 31, where the stone walls collapsed, crushing (and preserving) a mass of pottery and animal bones (5604 and 5610) (see Photo 19). There is no numismatic evidence from this stratum with the sole exception of one coin of Julian (5687, a disturbed context), and a very worn, probably early fifth century coin (5759) from the floor of the building erected near the rectangular tower. Only from this slender evidence can we tentatively place the date of the destruction of the city to the earthquake of 363. This corresponds well with the letter of Cyril mentioned above.

STRATUM I POST 363 A.D.

Antipatris continued to be inhabited after the earthquake, but probably not on the same grand scale it once had been. There is mention of a bishop of Antipatris attending the Council of Chalcedon in 451 A.D.¹⁰, and a considerable Jewish and Christian population resided there until early Abbasid times, as may be inferred from various passages in the Talmud¹¹. But the remains from this stratum are almost nonexistent in the mercantile quarter: a few scattered Byzantine coins in the topsoil, an Arabic oil lamp (5666), Mafjar sherds (5603), and a small terracotta oven (5677), the latter being the only stratified piece of evidence; within it were Arabic sherds and a worn coin that has provisionally been identified as Umayyid. No complete structures, only partial walls, were uncovered; these walls are, significantly enough, in direct alignment with the earlier walls of strata II, III, and IV. It appears, in fact, that the walls of stratum II may have been reused during this last phase of occupation of the mercantile quarter.

The structures of strata II and, especially, I are in such poor condition for two reasons: 1) their proximity to the surface, and 2) during the Middle

Ages the ruins of Antipatris were quarried for building material for the Turkish castle. The buildings of the mercantile quarter, the western half of the forum, most of the cardo, and the fourth century defensive wall and tower were all pillaged. Definitive proof of Turkish robbing came from a robber trench along the line of what was once the defensive wall (5699); pottery recovered from this robbed area of ashy soil was glazed medieval Turkish ware.

Such is the stratigraphy of the mercantile quarter of Antipatris (see Figure 9); it can be of some use in determining the sequence of strata in other areas of the tel, although there is no certainty that each section of the tel underwent the same ravages of the same events. Its major significance comes in the correlation of archaeological and historical evidence. The role of Antipatris in the First Revolt has been clarified; additional information regarding the rebellion of 351/2, the riots attending the ascension of Herod Archelaos, and the return to peace under Herod Agrippa I may have been uncovered; and perhaps an elucidation of the nature of Herod the Great's "foundation" of Antipatris has been achieved.

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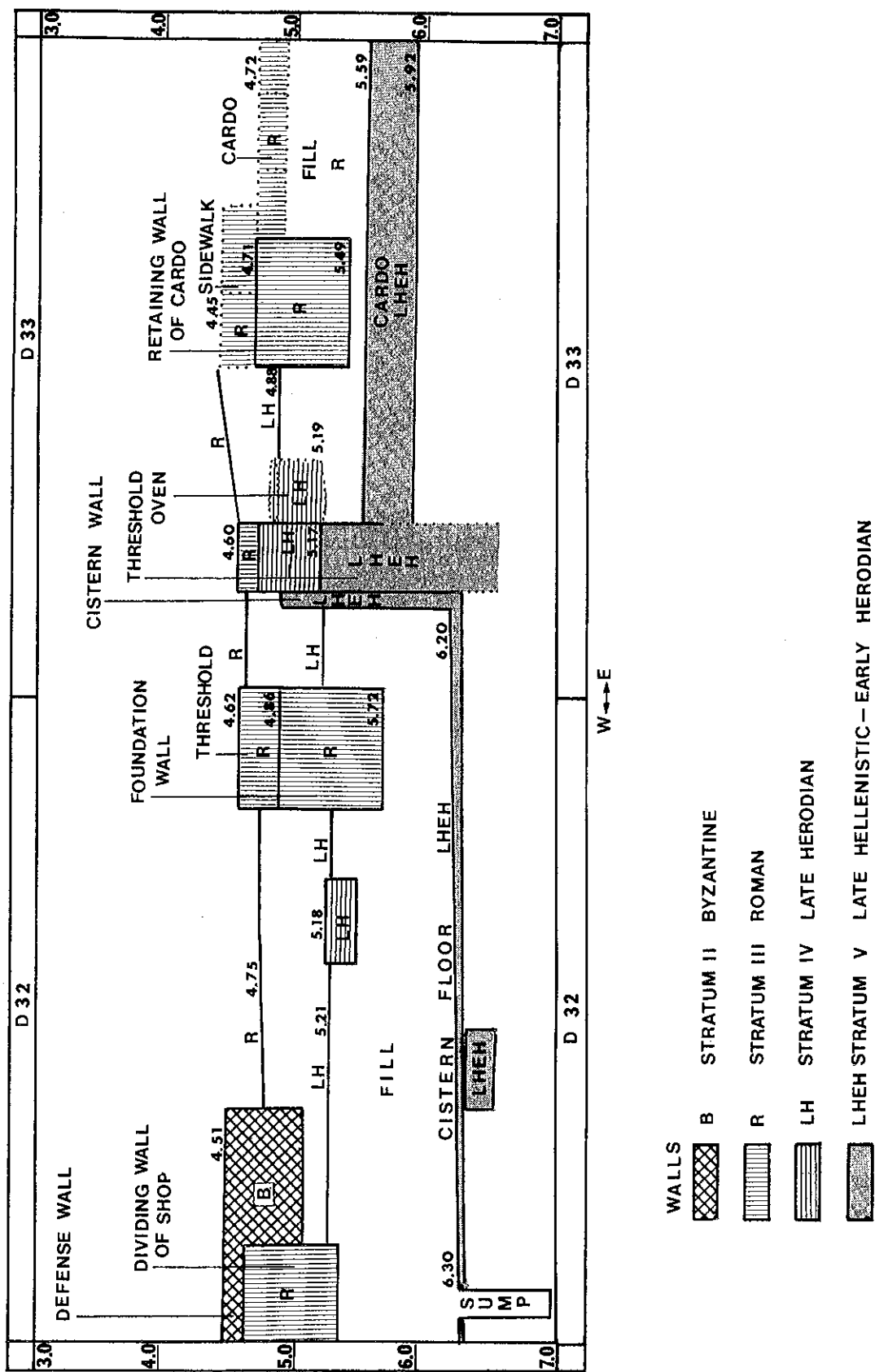


Figure 9. Schematic stratigraphical section of Sounding C.

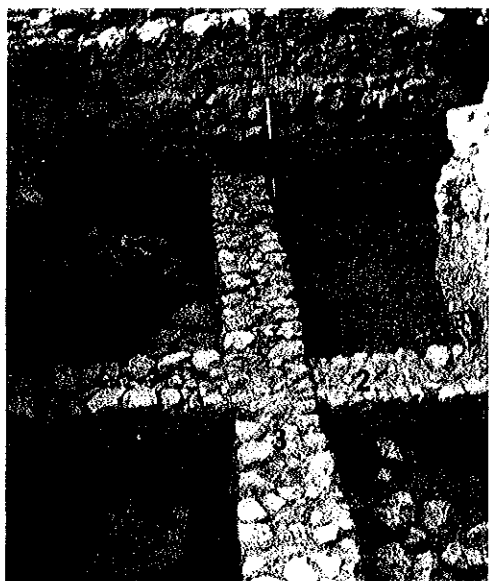


PHOTO 1.
Sounding A.
1)K325
2)J323
3)K323
4)K326
5)K327

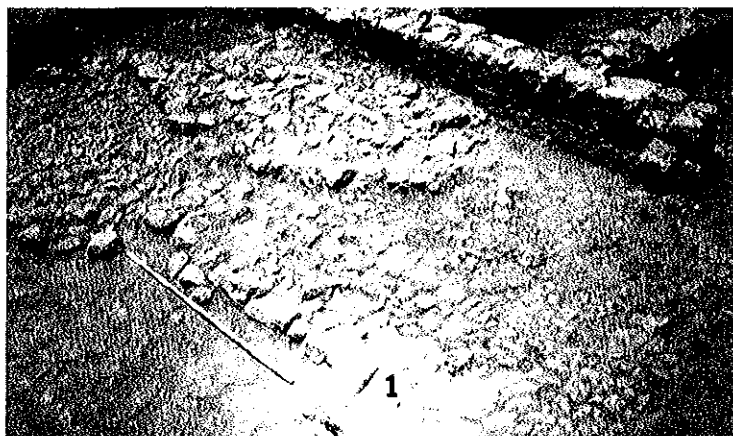


PHOTO 4. Stratum V cardo.
1)Cardo of Stratum V.
2)Wall D336.
3)Threshold of building fronting cardo.

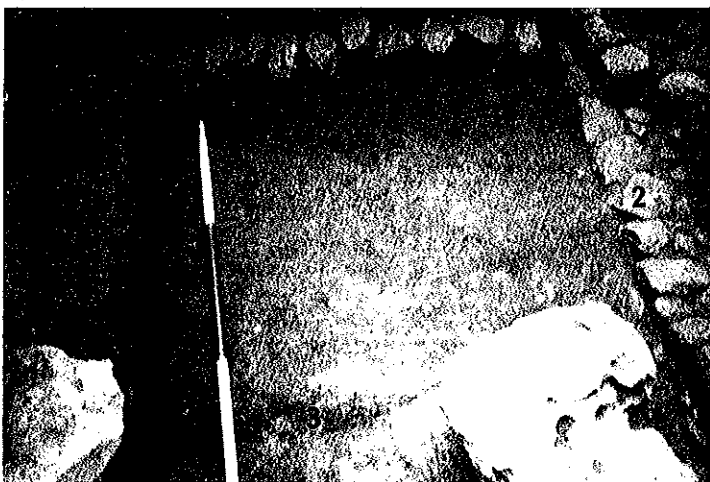


PHOTO 2. Square G 31
1)G 313
2)H 312
3)Charred timbers



PHOTO 5.
Cistern.
1)Stratum V cistern.
2)Stratum IV walls.



PHOTO 3.
Remnants of a mudbrick wall resting atop wall D327.



PHOTO 6.
Excavation through the cistern floor revealing wall D327 immediately beneath cistern.

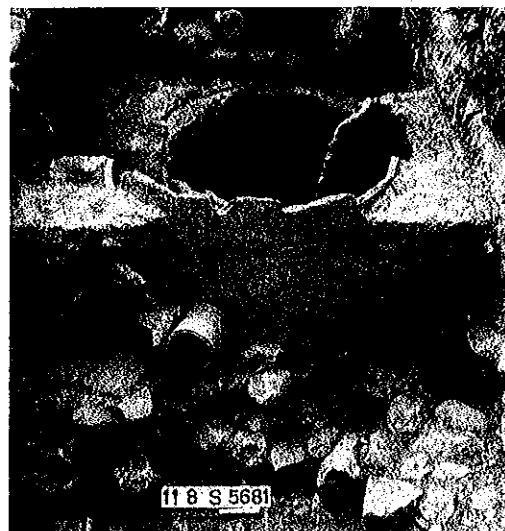


PHOTO 9. Oven 5681.



PHOTO 7.
Excavation of
stratum IV
terracotta
oven.

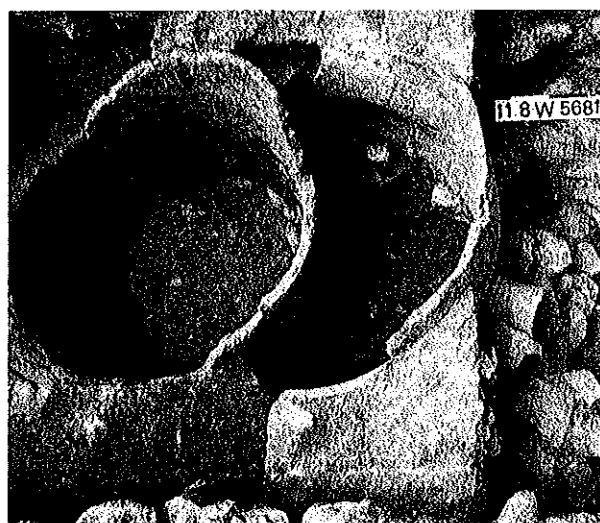


PHOTO 10. "Double oven."

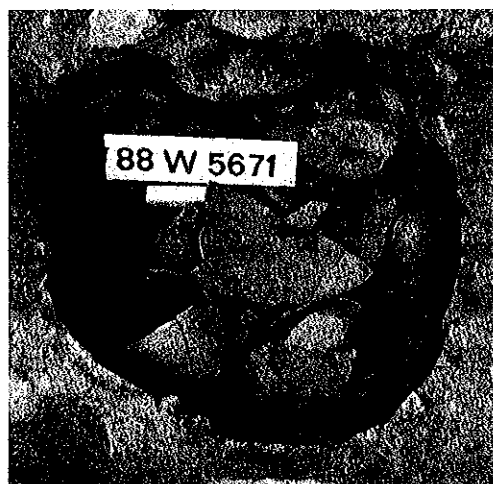


PHOTO 8. Oven 5671 cut by later Roman wall.

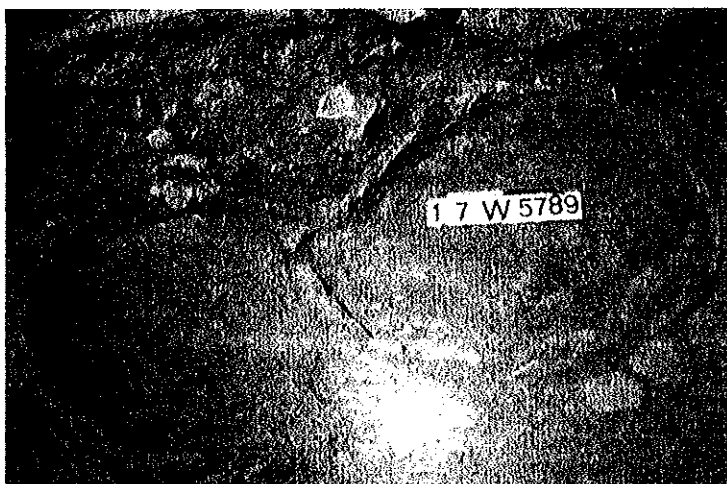


PHOTO 11. "Double oven."

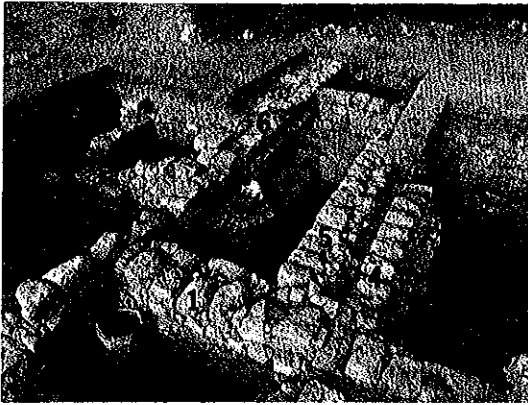


PHOTO 12. Sounding B.
1)L3431-Byzantine
2)Remnants of a Herodian road
3)Loci 5792 and 5820
4)K324-Late Herodian
5)L321-Byzantine
6)L333-Byzantine

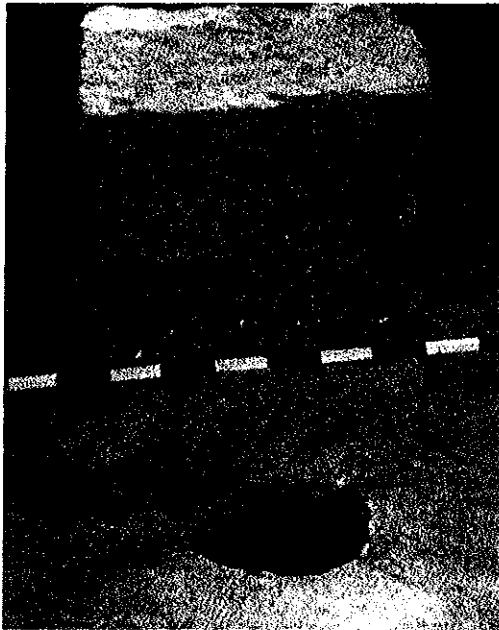


PHOTO 13.
Posthole
(Roman) and
foundation of
and arch (Late
Herodian) from
the cellar of a
Late Herodian
building.



PHOTO 15.
Intersection of
the cardo and
forum.
1)Cardo.
2)Forum.
3)Base for a column?
4)Base for an arch?

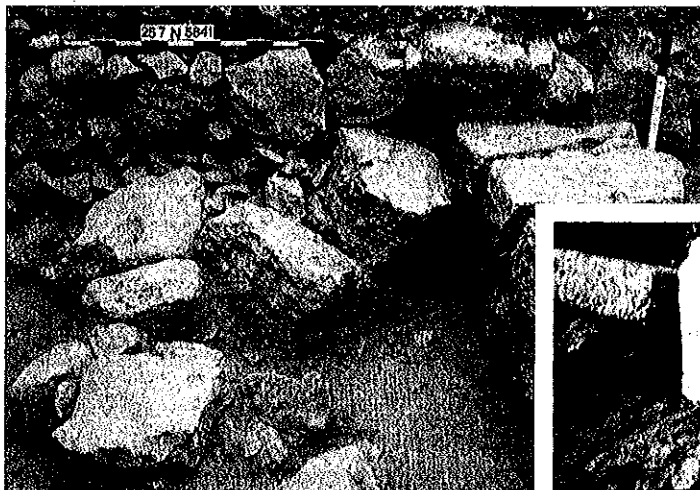


PHOTO 14.
Evidence of
destruction
at the end of
Stratum IV.



PHOTO 16.
Top of the stone and mortar conglomeration, possibly
serving as a base for an arch.



PHOTO 17.
Steps down into a shop.

PHOTO 20.
Byzantine wall in Sounding C.
1) C321-Byzantine
2) Shop walls from Stratum III, Roman

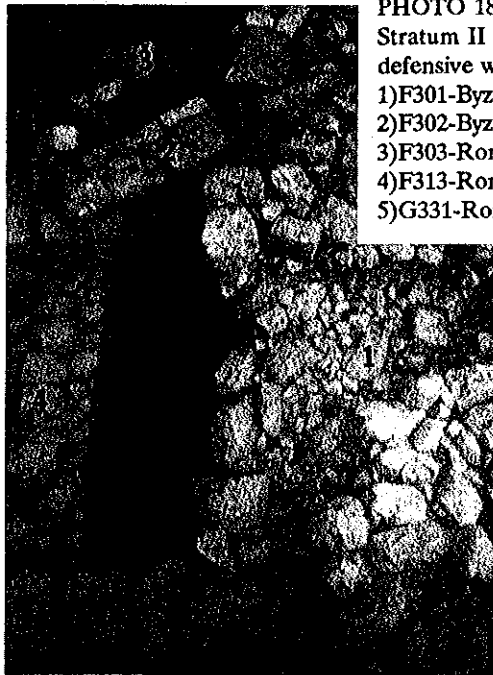


PHOTO 18.
Stratum II
defensive works.
1) F301-Byzantine
2) F302-Byzantine
3) F303-Roman
4) F313-Roman
5) G331-Roman

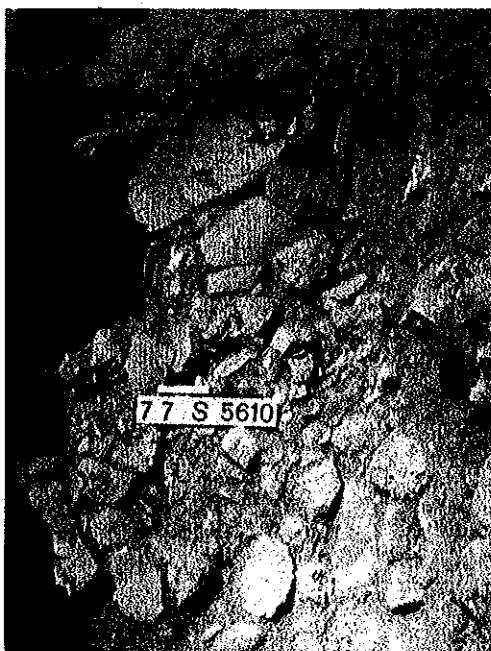


PHOTO 19.
Destroyed
amphorae from H 31.

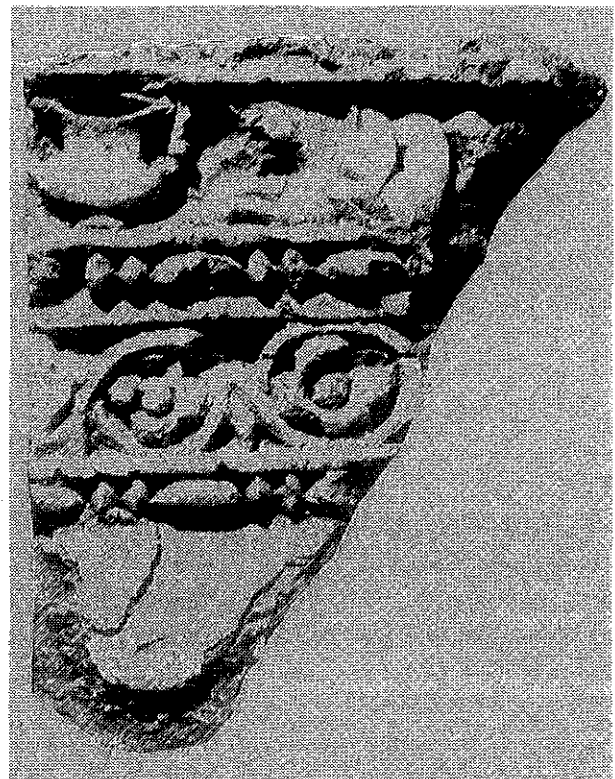


PHOTO 21.
Re-used entablature fragment found in Byzantine wall.

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