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Roman Building in Southgate Street, Gloucester

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ROMAN BUILDING IN SOUTHGATE STREET GLOUCESTER

In September 1952, in preparation for laying a new concrete floor, about nine inches of material was removed from the floor of a cellar beneath Badham's, the ironmonger's shop at the corner of Bell Lane and Southgate Street. While this was being done, a small area of tessellated pavement was discovered in the extreme s.w. corner of the room.

The w. wall of the cellar in question lies immediately below the Southgate Street front of the shop and there is another cellar, now partly filled up with earth and stone, in front of it, extending under the pavement and part of the roadway of Southgate Street.

The piece of tessellated pavement uncovered appeared to be part of the floor of a room which must have extended below what is now the pavement and possibly under part of the roadway of Southgate Street. Though for the most part nothing remained but the pink mortar in which the tesserae had been set, those tesserae which were still in position were all plain blue, except in the extreme s.w. corner where part of the border of what was presumably the patterned area in the centre of the room could be observed. This was bounded by a band of white tesserae having inside it a narrower band of blue. Within and running diagonally up to these were lines of red, white and blue, but they were broken through almost immediately by the w. wall of the modern building.

The e. wall of the room to which the pavement belonged could be seen in section below the s. wall of the modern cellar, but had elsewhere been pulled out. East of it there had existed in Roman times a second room, also floored with mosaic. The section below the s. wall of the modern cellar showed that two tessellated floors had been laid in this room, one on top of the other. What may possibly be the remains of a third floor paved with broken tiles lay above the later of these. The pink mortar of the earliest floor could be traced extending outwards into the cellar for a few feet, but was then interrupted by large pits.

No evidence for the date of the building could be gathered, as all the soil removed was the result of later disturbances and the existing fragmentary remains were almost all directly beneath modern walls. A photograph of the piece of pavement first found and a plan and section of the remains uncovered have been deposited in the City Museum.

Thanks are due to Mrs Goscombe and her family for reporting the discovery and also for their kindness in allowing the work of flooring the cellar to be delayed while an investigation of the remains was carried out.

D. M. RENNIE.

BURIALS IN KINGSHOLM SQUARE, GLOUCESTER

During the Autumn of 1951 workmen who were making up the roadway in Kingsholm Square and preparing to lay surface drains, disturbed with a mechanical excavator a total of at least eleven inhumation burials. These occurred both on the East and on the West side of the Square and the bodies were all placed with heads East and feet West. The graves had evidently been dug through a layer containing much Roman pottery, the bulk of which was first and second century in date. As far as could be ascertained, there were no grave goods and the date of the burials remains uncertain.

Pottery and other objects, including three Roman coins and a Roman netting needle, have, through the good offices of the City Surveyor, been deposited in the Gloucester City Museum. Thanks are due to him and to his staff for their kind and helpful co-operation.

D. M. RENNIE.

THE KINGSCOTE STONE COFFIN

In a previous volume of these TRANSACTIONS¹ the late Captain Willmore has listed the stone coffins found in the county and describes a number of them. He quotes a newspaper paragraph stating that one had been found at Kingscote, but he has no further information.

¹ *B.G.A.S.*, LXXI, p. 135.