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A Note on a Small Excavation at Cirencester

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A NOTE ON A SMALL EXCAVATION AT CIRENCESTER

Through the kindness of the Misses Goodworth of Querns Lane House, Cirencester, the writer was enabled to explore a further portion of the Roman wall which was examined in the 1955 season. The excavation this year (1956) commenced the 6th August and terminated the 6th September.

The site lies in the angle formed by Querns Lane and Watermoor Road near Watermoor Hospital, and is therefore in the S-E sector of Corinium. Five trenches were cut showing a road, with a house wall running beside it, and two further walls running at right-angles to the road.

The road surface was 2 feet 6 inches below the ground level and was covered with rubble. The coins found above the road range from a denarius of Severus Alexander in mint condition to the House of Theodosius, with only three coins from the Radiate period. This seems to show that the road was not repaired in the fourth century. Below the road surface, but running in the same direction as the road, was found a culvert which had sides lined with two courses of stone, and a gravel base. A full section was not cut through the road.

A section cut beside the walls running at right-angles to the road showed three successive mortar floors divided by occupation layers. The top layer, which had been sealed by a fall of roof-tiles of Stonesfield slate, was dated by coin evidence to A.D. 325-350. The two lower occupation layers produced only evidence of a fourth century occupation. The walls and the lowest mortar floors were set on very loosely packed large rubble, in the bottom of which several pieces of second or early third century pottery were found, suggesting an earlier occupation which it is hoped to investigate in the future. All the other pottery found is of fourth century date as are 54 of the 60 coins. Only one pot has been restored which is a large olla (compare 'Richborough 4' PLATE XCIII, No. 464).

I have firstly to thank the Misses Goodworth for allowing the Excavation to take place, and secondly all those who helped me in the work. I am also very grateful to Prof. Ian Richmond, Prof. Donald Atkinson, Mrs M. A. Cotton, Miss Clare Fell, Miss M. Taylor, and Mr H. Waddington who all gave valuable help in their visits to the site, and especially to Mrs E. M. Clifford who has given me a lot of help and encouragement at the site and in the preparation of this note.

Professor Donald Atkinson comments that, 'the results, as will be seen, are as yet not definitive but a satisfactory beginning has been made on a site which contains important remains, and when further and more extensive exploration becomes possible, it will be facilitated by what has already been done. I may perhaps mention that the Corinium Museum has been enriched by a considerable number of coins, and a cooking pot, sufficiently well preserved to be entirely restored, which is of unusual interest.'

RICHARD REECE.

GLOUCESTER CITY LIBRARY—MICROFILM READER

The Hon. Librarian reports that the Gloucester City Library has recently acquired a microfilm reader. This has been installed in a special room, and is available for the use of students, research workers, etc. The Library already possesses microfilms of some of its files of local newspapers, and other items from the Gloucestershire Collection, and it is hoped to acquire microfilms of important local items in other Libraries and Repositories. The reader may also be used by persons who wish to supply their own material.