

BEYCESULTAN EXCAVATIONS 1956.

Seton LLOYD

The third season of excavations at Beycesultan by the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara took place in June and July 1956.

The staff consisted of the Director and Mrs. Seton Lloyd, Mr. James Mellaart, Mr. David Stronach (Institute Scholar for 1955/56), a Turkish architect, Bay Mübin Beken (whose services were obtained at twenty-four hours' notice through the kindness of Professor Arif Müfit Mansel, and whose duties were discharged with unexceptional efficiency), and our Turkish Government representative, Bayan Nihal Dönmez. Mr. Michael Ballance used our camp as his headquarters during the greater part of the season, while continuing the epigraphical survey of Phrygia. The expedition was again quartered in the village of Menteş, this time in a newly rented house which proved much more comfortable than the previous one. The little primary school was once more lent to us as museum and workshop. A picked gang of fifty labourers was employed throughout; as in previous seasons the actual work accomplished by this gang, far exceeded anything in our combined experience.

Our central project this year had a double objective: firstly to find out more about the public building of the Palace period (Level V), discovered at the end of the previous season in the centre of the western hill, and secondly to continue our exploration of the Early Bronze Age levels beneath. This was accomplished by cutting a trench five metres wide outwards from the original sounding to the flank of the mound. The trench was carried down as far as the Palace level over its whole

length, and a new sounding then begun at its outer end. As this descended, a narrow "wheel-barrow passage" was kept open for the disposal of earth at the same level. The length of the trench was thus eventually protracted to over ninety metres. By the end of the season, sounding and barrow—passage alike had reached an occupation level corresponding to the middle of the second settlement at Troy (c. 2400 B.C.) about M.8.50 above virgin soil. Any further penetration would have incurred some risk owing to the depth of the trench (M. 15.00).

The results of this major stratigraphical operation gain greatly in importance from the fact that the continuity of occupation was found to be unbroken, from the earliest level reached until the final abandonment of the mound in the eleventh century B.C. But new revelations concerning certain individual epochs in the mound's history are also outstanding.

The peak of the city's importance and prosperity can now be seen to have corresponded with the lifetime of the Burnt Palace in Level V (c.1900 - 1750 B. C.). At this time the greater part of the western hill also seems to have been covered with government establishments. The new trench revealed two such public buildings, each nearly twenty-five metres wide, separated by a gravelled street and enclosed by a wall more than two metres thick. At the entrance to one was an anteroom with lustral arrangements. The actual dwellings of the city must have been terraced into the slopes of the mound and occupied the peripheral skirt of more level ground beyond. A minor operation undertaken this year near the river—

crossing in the south showed that at this time the whole city was surrounded by a town wall of stone and crude brick five metres thick. The position of this wall has also been located on the northern side of the city.

The destruction of the Level V city (perhaps to be associated with the conquest of Arzawa by the Hittite king Labarnas) was followed by a period of impoverishment, for which the sounding has fixed a duration of at least three centuries. The revival of its fortunes was contemporary with the rise of the Hittite Empire in the fifteenth century, but this year's trenches have shown that it was never again fortified.

An interesting reflexion on the language spoken and perhaps written during the Level V period, is suggested by the discovery in Level V of a stamp-seal bearing signs tentatively identified by one expert as hieroglyphs. The deep sounding in its early stages provided an opportunity for a further study of this level and level VII beneath, whose pottery had proved of so much interest in the previous season. The equation between them and Troy V, which had already been suggested, has now been confirmed and three successive occupations beneath, during which the same walls were repeatedly reused or rebuilt, correspond closely enough to the duration of Troy IV. In these levels (VIII, IX and X) the greater part of two buildings fell within the area of the sounding, both of them dwellings in the form of "megara". Standard features found elsewhere included open porch with "antae", hall with central hearth, circular or oval, brick benches and "sleeping-platforms" built against the base of the walls. The architecture had points of close resemblance to "megara" found last in a Late Bronze Age setting (Levels Ia and II). In

Level IX the smaller "megaron" had been destroyed by fire and still contained a very full complement of domestic pottery.

Levels XI and XII, apparently corresponding to Troy III, were of less interest (like their prototype), but in Level XIII for the first time a major cultural change became evident. Though again no actual break could be detected in the continuity of occupation, a most striking transformation had taken place both in pottery and architecture. Here for the first time in the whole stratigraphical sequence there was evidence that (contemporary perhaps with the destruction of the second settlement of Troy) a radical change had taken place in the inhabitants of the mound. Three levels representing the period preceding this change (XIII, XIV and XV) were finally excavated and in the deepest of them we were fortunate enough to make a find of great importance. This occurred not in the sounding itself but in the "barrow-passage" which was by now twelve metres deep and hardly more than two metres wide. Here it passed across a building which has been destroyed by fire on three successive occasions and which now proved to have been a religious shrine of a type familiar on a smaller scale in much later times. The remains of the original building in Level XV were preserved to a height of eighty centimetres so that the structure of the shrine and all its votive paraphernalia remained virtually intact. The discovery was made only twenty-four hours before the termination of our season's work, but by lateral tunnelling it was eventually found possible in the time which remained to clear and record the shrine itself and a large part of the votive deposits. Such of the pottery as was removable is at present being reconstructed.