

Praktika 1909

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Excavation of Lykaion

(185) East of the main mountaintop of Lykaion, where the altar of Zeus once stood, a small valley exists which is in bloom most of the time and extends from three hundred and fifty meters to a width of about one hundred and twenty meters. The residents of the nearby areas call it Kato Kampo¹. This valley is located at about one thousand two hundred meters above sea-level and is the site of the ancient Lykaion hippodrome; this is where the Lykaion games took place, (VIII 38,5). The valley is set on such a high altitude that it is even strenuous for the donkeys to climb. When one is climbing to this valley even from the closest walkway of the Megalopolis it is difficult to believe that in a small place such as this one, not only athletic games were held, but also chariot races and equestrian events. Athletes from all over Greece came to participate in these competitions. This fact cannot be disputed, due to Pausanias' (VIII 38,5), testimony, the ruins that survive, and the inscriptions that were discovered (see *AE* 1905, 161 and Fougeres, in the article Lykaia in *Daremberg Saglio Diction*, 1433 ff).

The decades have dramatically changed the landscape of the valley. It used to be a smooth and easy road for the chariots, from the valley of

¹ The name Elliniko, as it was usually called by the most recent travelers, is confined to the southern valley, where one could clearly see the remains of ancient constructions. Skafithia is the name of the NW edge of the valley, where the stone "lekani" (fig. 9) was in existence even before the excavations.

Megalopolis to the hippodrome, (186) while today it is slippery and difficult to cross on horseback. Visible markings can be seen from the side of the hills that were imprinted by the horse chariots from the northeastern side of the village Karyes.

The most famous of travelers described the Lykaion Hippodrome before our excavations took place on the basis of the remains of the buildings. The most important of the recent travelers were Blouet, (Exp. II pl. 33), who in turn influenced Curtius (pl. 7), who published a rough topographical drawing of the landscape (see also Frazer Paus. IV, 382).

The depression of the hippodrome (fig. 1) from south to north is surrounded by small hillsides. The north half of the eastern side borders a steeper valley that was used to elevate the hippodrome; the same elevation seems to have existed on the southeastern side. At this part, the hill was destroyed completely and was swept away to the deepest depression along with part of the northeastern hippodrome.

From the excavations conducted thus far by the Archeological Society, much of the hippodrome was discovered. We have concluded that it is best to include a rough description along with pictures of these buildings in the present report, in which the results of the excavations at Lykaion conveniently become a part of the final publication. (187) (see *Praktika* 1904 p. 32 and *Comptes Rendus du Congres archeol.* I p. 256).

The stoa (fig. 2). Along the width of the base of the small hill, which defines the depression of the hippodrome in the south, extends a long stoa (A in fig. 1). At this place the hippodrome building ends. The area has not been completely excavated, therefore this description will be general. It has a preserved length of about 70 meters, but it is thought to have been much longer than that, because a part of it towards the east was destroyed and fell down with the building. Its depth is approximately eleven meters, in other words, the distance from the first point to the back wall. The back wall today has a height of about 3 meters, which is comprised of large orthostats (fig. 3); on top of these pieces, mud bricks have been found. It is impossible to image or define how much taller this wall used to be.

From the side-walls of the stoa only the western one (188) has remained; it has a length of eight (8) meters. This wall is built in a similar way to the back wall; however the taller part of the wall clearly has a polygonal character and consists of big rocks (fig. 4). The two steps of the stoa used to be about three and a half meters from the edge of this wall; this space appears to have been open. From the front part only a few meters were excavated which consisted of thick unconnected plaques of titan-stone. Traces of columns are not preserved here.

On the stoa a thick layer of earth was gathered from the hill; it seems that in Byzantine times they placed various buildings here since many remains of walls have been discovered in this area.

The surface of the stoa had not been excavated completely and for this reason no one knows how the stoa was used or how it used to look. On the eastern side the framework for rooms is still in tact.

In the stoa many Byzantine coins were discovered (Justinian I and II 527-578) as well as a few Christian tombs, built with thin, unworked plaques frames (none had funeral gifts.)²

(189) During ancient times statues of jockeys were probably placed in front of the stoa towards the western edge. (see fig. 4, left).

Seats of the hippodrome: At a distance of about forty-five meters towards the northern part of the stoa, (B on fig. 1) the remains of bleachers (steps) were discovered which were used as seating for the audience of the hippodrome. As can be seen, the bleachers were built in a straight line in all of the hippodrome's length from east to west, and somewhat diagonally towards southwestern side.

Only four bleachers have remained which are made of medium size stones, not very well wrought and with not any bond between them.

The space between the stoa and the bleachers has not been researched yet, but it seems as though the statues of the winners used to be placed in this area, due to the pedestals that were found there and on the

² Many similar tombs have been excavated on top of the surrounding hill.

bleachers. Some of them used to support archaic statues, as is obvious from the indentations for feet on them.

Seats near the starting point (aphesis). At a distance of fifteen meters from the bleachers mentioned above, a row of luxury seats were discovered in the small excavation on the surface of the hippodrome near the presumed starting point (aphesis), made of big square and perfectly hand carved stones in a parallel row to the stones of the above seats. (fig. 6). The stones used as the seating part are particularly well made. Even though only a small portion of these seats has been discovered in the eastern (**190**) part (it was confirmed after a test excavation), it seems possible that seats like these existed along the whole width of the hippodrome.

The surface on which the seats are set is found on the same level as the hippodrome, where the games took place. This surface is many meters lower than the stoa. It is presumed that in order to get to the hippodrome, the people had to go through the stoa and the bleachers. If the carriages entered into the hippodrome is not yet clear.

There has not yet been any excavation in order to study the presumed starting point (aphesis) location, due to lack of expropriation of the land.

Nyssai (??). At about two hundred and sixty-five meters (265) from the above buildings (after a very quick computation) there are the remains of two small bases that were discovered still in tact on the surface of the northern

side of the hippodrome, made of titan stones (0.70 D. and 0.35 H., fig. 7), at about sixty meters apart. The eastern base is 28 meters from the east long side of the hippodrome and the western one is about 30 meters from the base of the horizon towards the west of the hippodrome. It is obvious that these bases relate with the fulfillment of the games and were used as symbols. Usually a "Nyssa" was a simple column in ancient hippodromes; it is not clear why there were two bases present here, because in the hippodrome races there was usually only one.

Stadium. In the middle, between the bleachers and the area of the above bases (191) a few elongated plaques were found along the western edge of the hippodrome, with two furrowed like lines on their surface (fig. 8). The same kinds of plaques with lines were placed on the starting line as well as the finish line and are very similar to ones from Olympia, Epidauros, and other locations too. These plaques also define the position of the stadium, in the hippodrome of Lykaion, mentioned by Pausanias.

The north side end of hippodrome cannot be distinguished, because it was washed away by small, though violent, rivers into the ditch, where the northern depression of the hippodrome ends.

Near the northern edge of the eastern side of the hippodrome in the lower valley, a small square room (4,75 x 4,36) was discovered with a southern entry, in which two rectangular basins (lekanai) (l. 2,28 w. 0,65, h. 0,45) were found opposite the entry wall. They were connected to each other by a single

ditch, found on the edge of the narrow sides of the basins. These basins have two mud bricks for bases (legs) (fig.9). On top of the rock, near the room, the traces of water pipes are apparent which were used to bring water to the basins. The floor of the room was made up of a combination of mud and lime. The threshold of the door (1.75 remains) is also present and made up of white titan stone. Next to this particular room a reservoir (**192**) is also present; this was published by Blouet, (fig. 34).

Xenona, Guest rooms: There was thought to be a building on the western side of the hippodrome, near the steps/seats, for welcoming society's formal visitors (fig. 10, E on fig.1). The building was totally covered by its stones and by earth carried down from the adjacent hills. Three outer walls were excavated, and a part of the inside room on the south and north part.

The building is rectangular with length of thirty-eight meters, and width of twenty meters. The height that has remained is one and a half to two meters. The walls are quite thick, made of big stones on the outer surface in a polygonal construction, though the inner one is made of smaller stones. They are constructed in an anomalous line, which in antiquity was covered by a coating. The entrance (fig. 11) is found on the south side and is quite wide (2.65 meters). No doors or windows have remained, though it is possible that the rectangular stone found on the lower level on both sides of the door served as a base for a wooden pilaster. Maybe doors and windows existed but remains have not been found.

On the inside, when walking along a corridor with a length of 6.30 m., where the walls follow the line of the sides of the entrance, we reach a wide square area that is believed to have been a courtyard. Further down another big room (west wall of 2.40 m. wide) (**193**) exists with an entrance near the end of the road. In the center of the western room (5.5 W x 7.5 L) there is a base of one column that supports the roof. The surface towards the eastern room (6.5 W X 8.5 L) is about 1 meter deeper than the road. At the right of the internal room a circular area exists that has a higher height than the rest of the room. In the center two basins are present on bases, one of which continues towards the south side; they were built and covered by solid coating. Near the lip of one of the basins ended a pipe, which brought in the water from the outside. Lower there was also another pipe present through which the water from inside the basin exited outside of the building.

There is also another room present, toward the north, which is quite a bit smaller and with a door to the courtyard. The confined area of the courtyard on the corresponding side of this place towards the room was not excavated, so it is not possible to say if a door existed there also.

The courtyard has a width of about five meters, from which 3.5 meters have been excavated from the road to the interior of the building.

The walls of the rooms of the building are built with somewhat small rocks and connected by mud.

Towards the north part of this xenona, two rooms were excavated with a width equaling the entire building; (194) the eastern part had a width of 10.6 meters while the west part was 7.5 meters. In between them there is a wall present with a thickness of 0.7 meters. In the middle of this wall there seems to have been a door present that connected the rooms.

In the center of the eastern room there is a square base with a column similar to the one in the other room that also helped to support the roof. The southern wall of this room towards the interior of the building was not uncovered. In the middle of the southern wall of the western room a door (1.80 m. width) is present which appears to have been shut in the past years. In this room, along the western wall, inscriptions were found on the surface of the floor, with the letters on the underside of the blocks (AE 1905, 161).

The surface of the northern part of the xenona is also 1.5 m. higher than the surface of the western rooms. The central part has not been excavated and due to this we do not know the relationship between the two. Near the northern corner of the eastern outer wall

Along the length of the southern side of the xenona flows a drain from the west towards the east (see fig. 11) covered by roughly hewn, large (195) titan stones. The area toward the xenona is also covered with plaques, but it is unknown to what distance, since only a small area (about 2 meters from the wall of the xenona) was dug.

We also do not know the exact time when the xenona was built, but from the way that the walls were built, especially the interior corners, it was possibly built around the end of the fourth century B.C. It is apparent that this building was used even after the time of Christ. Inside the northern room a tomb was discovered similar to the one found in the passage. Besides some unimportant architectural columns, many pieces of roof tile were found inside the building. One had the engravings of the creator, APELLIDA, and another one KLEIDASDA.

Near the eastern outside wall a few lintels, columns, roof tiles, pieces of pottery, philai, aryballoi, and choes with black glaze were found (196), which were mostly used after the fourth century B.C.

In the middle of the eastern wall of the xenona was found a small, stone klimax; it is unknown in what way it was used and it probably comes from a later period.

Semi-circular shaped building: Near the southwestern corner of the large stoa, a small building was discovered which was in a shape of a half moon on the inside (length 6.8, width 5.8). In the front it has 'Ionic' columns (see fig. 14). The use of this room has not been yet determined. The back wall of the building is found parallel to the back wall of the stoa.

The outside perimeter of this building is rectangular; it has in front a double step which continues around the side to a distance of about 2.5 m.

The side walls of the building are still intact up to 2.5 meters in height, with big rectangular rocks (.80 H x .45 W), which are placed on the foundation, of which only a little bit of large titan stone is visible. On the orthostats is one row of well worked, elongated orthogonal stones coming out on both sides above the orthostats, and on top of these walls are some smaller stones (fig. 15). These rocks are attached to each other with mud.

(197) These side walls end in front of a marble entrance at a distance of 1.85 m from the front step. On the front step are five 'Ionic' columns, four of which remain with bases and a small amount of the column (D .44 m), as it seems monoliths.

At a distance of 2.9 m from the entrance the walls of the building form the shape of an arch abruptly, and create the shape of the half moon (half circle). The back wall of the building is made of smaller, unworked stones, but this part was not visible in antiquity, since, like the back wall of the stoa, it was hidden by a small hill.

The back wall extends to a distance of 1.5 m approximately towards the stoa and it seems that the extension was used as a retaining wall(?) the overlying hill. The small space which remains between the corner of the extending wall and the stoa is completed by another unworked wall (see fig. 4). At the corner of the wall and the western wall of the stoa was found a big, round, high, shallow stone lekane (D 1.0 m., H. .8 m, see fig. 16). Many, similar lekane were found at various locations in the hippodrome.

It seems that the semi-circular building had a gabled roof. The front cornice, made of marble, was found in the epistyle (figs. 17-20), as were other architectural parts composing the timpanon of the triangular, marble gable (198). Some of these things were built in later years after the collapse of the building and before the burial in the repair of the eastern wall, but they were built in the same way in a small, newer wall. It was perpendicular from the eastern wall of the semi-circular building towards the west wall of the stoa. The architectural work of these parts seems likely to be derived from the Roman times.

And the semi-circular building was completely covered resulting here as well, in an embankment of stones and earth, which were deposited from the overlying hill.

The floor and the inside of the building seem to have traces of burning from a fire (burn marks on the wall, etc.). Here were also found fragments of roof tiles and a few insignificant remains of bronze objects. Near the semi-circular building were found stone bases that belonged to two, life-sized bronze statues, without inscriptions, as well as a part of a marble column with an undistinguished inscription of "Lykaionikon."

Fountain: (fig. 21) At a distance of 50 meters from the semi-circular building, towards the north-western base of the hill, a fountain was discovered, the lower part of which has survived extremely well.

In the inside part of the fountain (7 m L, 3.75 m. wide) a big reservoir is in tact (6.25 x 1.8, with an opening of 5.7 x .85) made out of big plaques, which ends in an inside drain (.8 m. W), coming out (**199**) from the overlying hill. In the middle of the front of the reservoir is an opening (.19 m wide, and about the same height) towards the base of a cavernous opening with a width of .90 m. down, and the same height, from both sides, composed of titanstone orthostats on the front of the reservoir.

The back wall of the reservoir is built with a polygonal system, whereas the front and side-walls are made of large orthostats. The side-walls of the reservoir extend to a considerable distance towards the front wall, thus creating two sides excluding the lower part of the fountain. The reservoir is built on a base of large plaques of titanstone, with a height of .15 m. There is no trace of the coating of the fountain. The floor of the fountain between the two side parts is divided into three parts of orthogonal plaques perpendicular to the front of the fountain with a height equal to the base of the reservoir.

Below the fountain in the line of the back wall of the reservoir there are the remains of small, polygonal walls. Neither the remains from the upper part of the wall of the fountain (nor from the stoa) were found, but they would have been towards the front of this part. Perhaps a small amount of geison teeth come from the roof of the fountain, the upper part of which had carved roof tiles. Near the fountain, many pieces of terracotta roof tiles were found. One of those had the engravings of the creator, ISOD.

In the triangular area between the stoa, the xenona (**200**) and the fountain should be found the temple of Pan with its sacred grove, buried in a deep embankment with other remains, according to Pausanias. I dug an elongated, narrow trench from the semi-circular building toward the fountain. It showed only that all the area is full of earth fill from the overlying hill, but without showing what exactly the antiquities are.

Doric capitals were found near the semi-circular building of sufficiently good workmanship (fig. 22). It is hypothesized that they come from the above-mentioned temple of Pan, which I hope later excavations will bring to light.

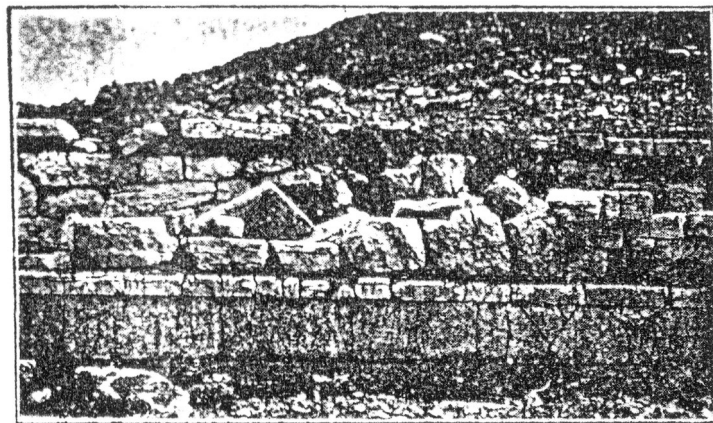
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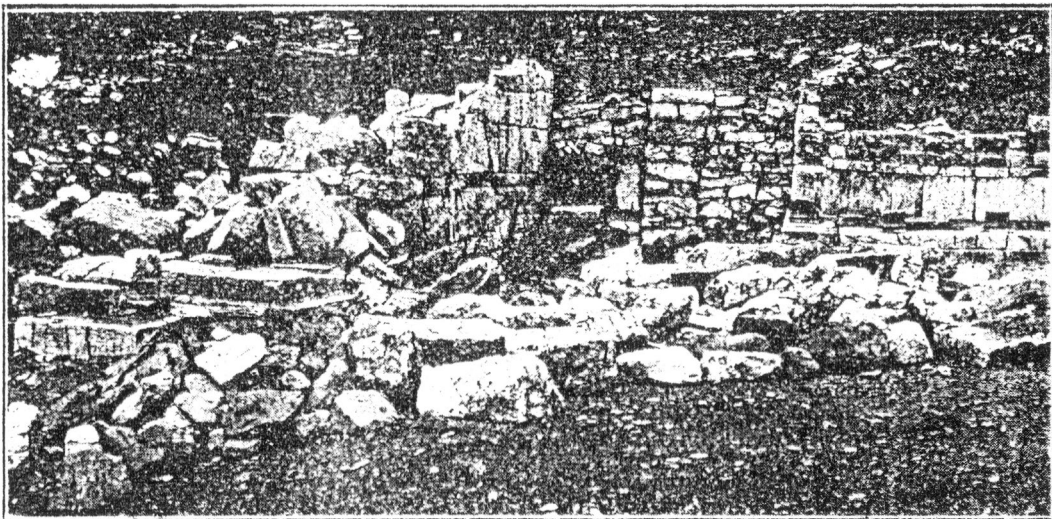
Ειχ. 1. Ίππόδρομος Άνκαίου.



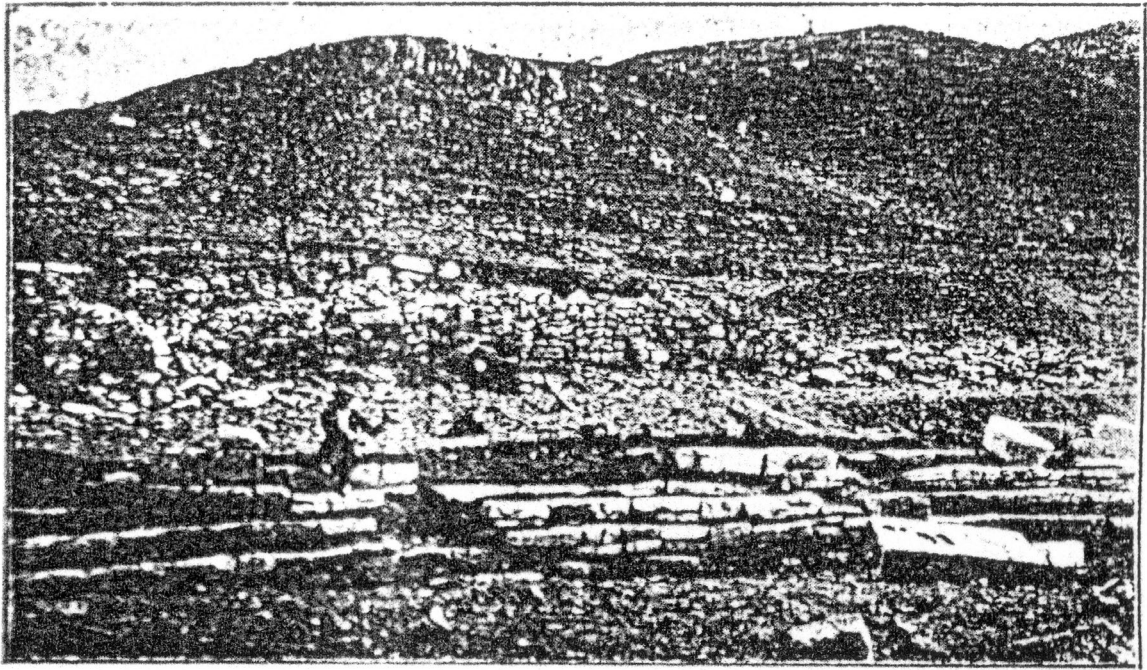
Εἰκ. 2. Στοά.



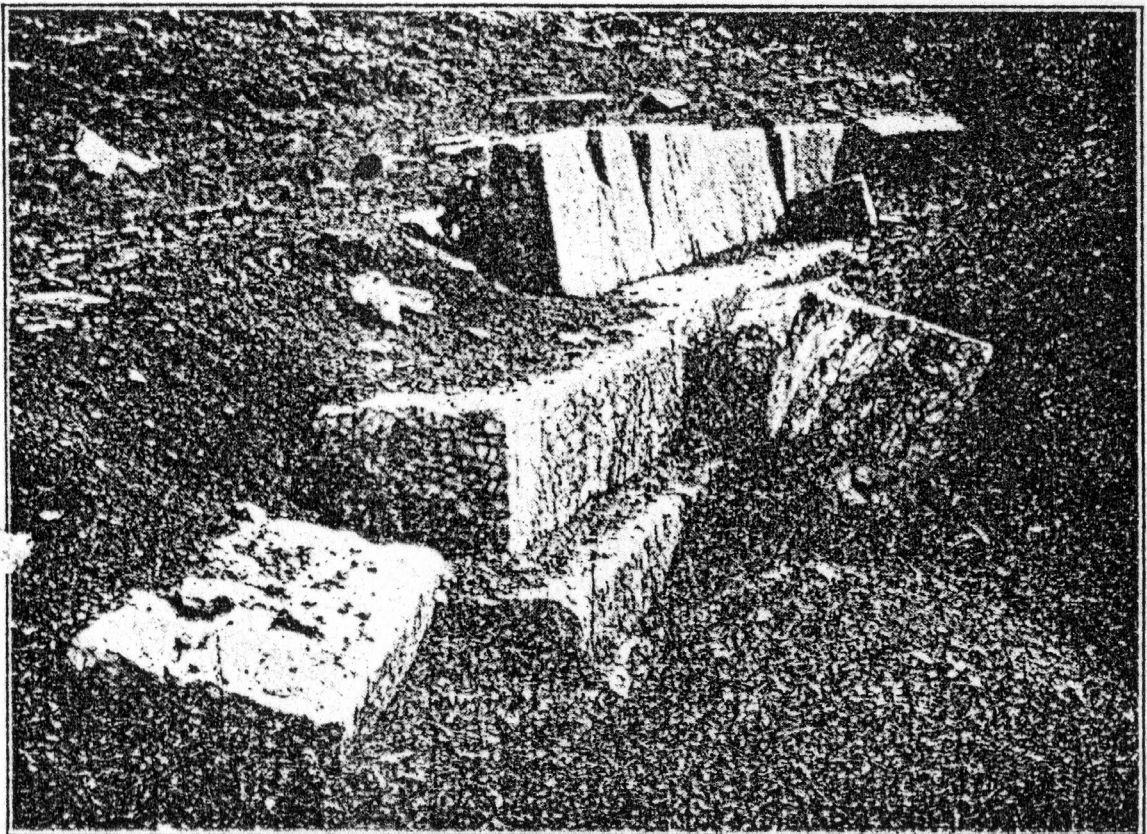
Εἰκ. 3. Ὁπίσθιος τοῖχος τῆς στοᾶς.



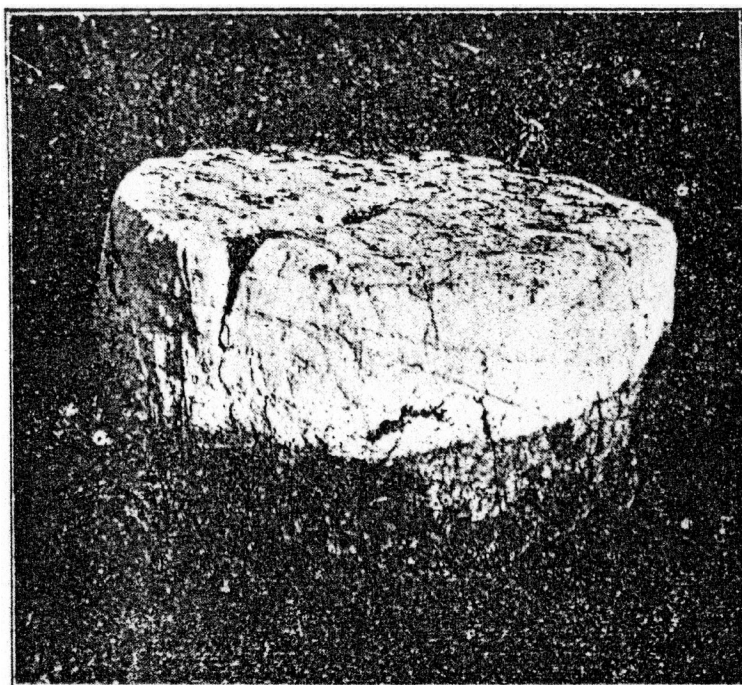
Εἰκ. 4. Δυσμικτὸν ἄκρον τῆς στοᾶς.



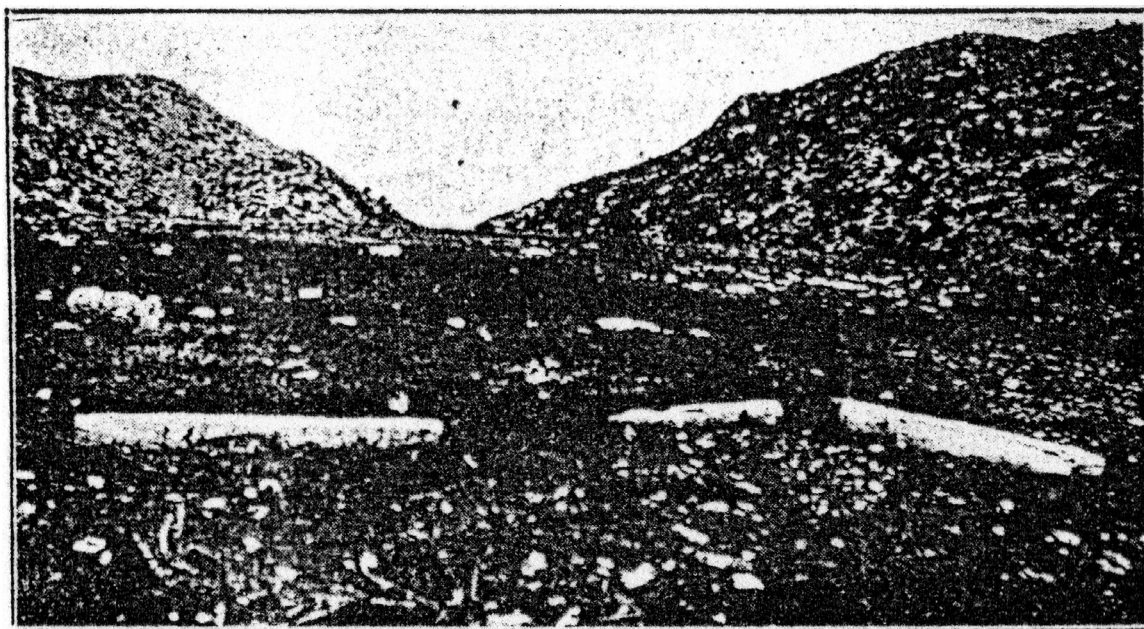
Εἰκ. 5. Βαθμωτὶ ἐδῶλια Ἱπποδρόμου.



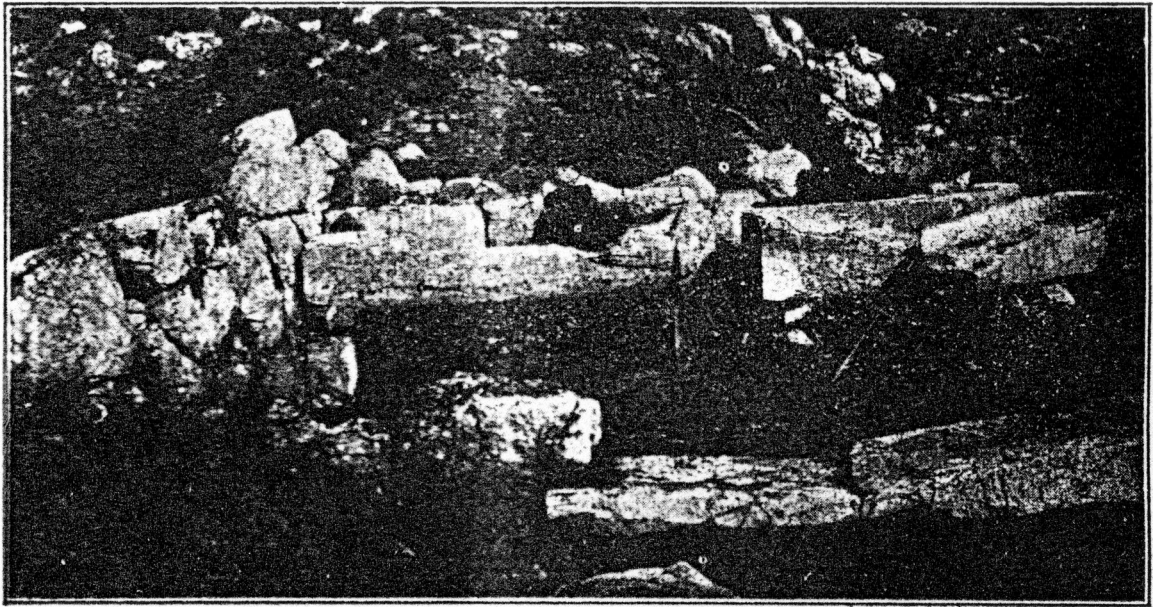
Εἰκ. 6. Ἐδῶλιον πλησίον ἀφάσεως.



Εἰκ. 7. Νύσσα ;



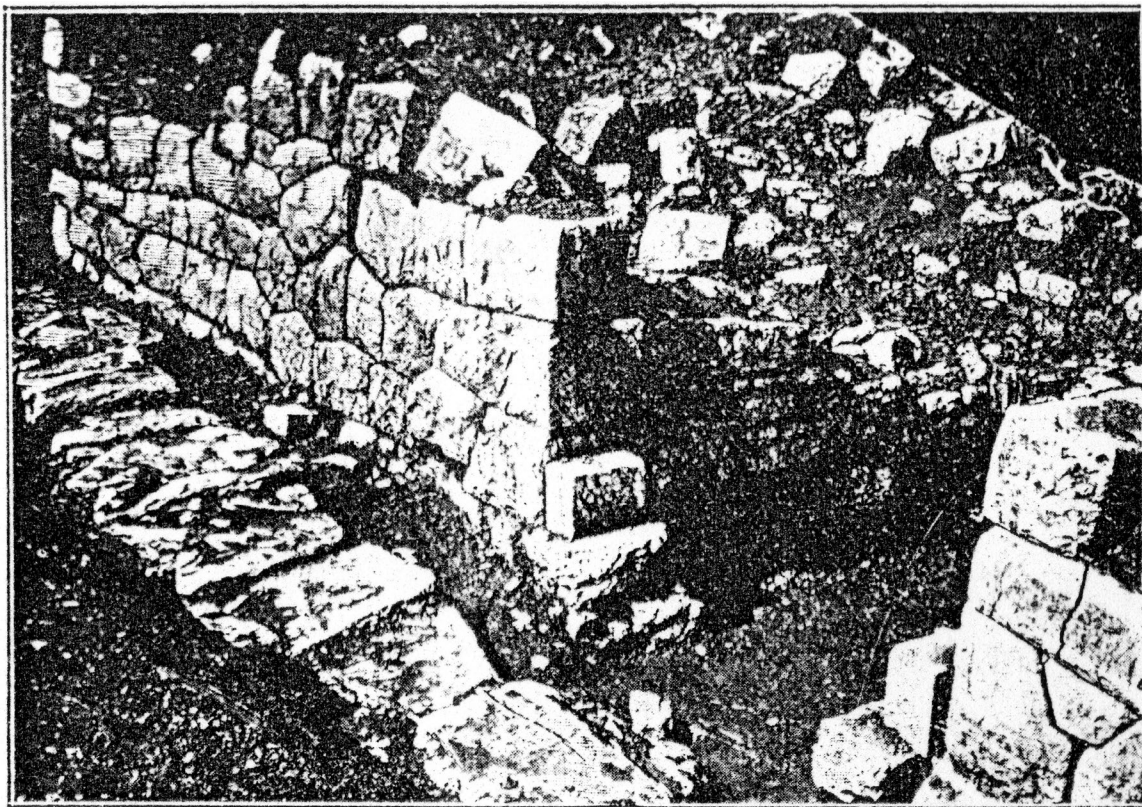
Εἰκ. 8. Πλάκες ἀφέσεως σταδίου.



Εἰκ. 9. Λίθιναι λεκάναι.



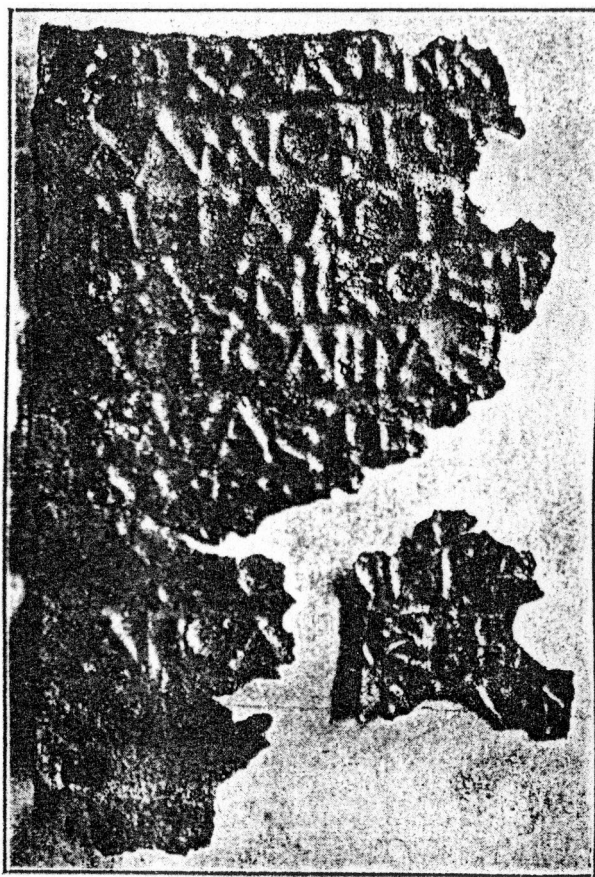
Εἰκ. 10. Ξενών ;



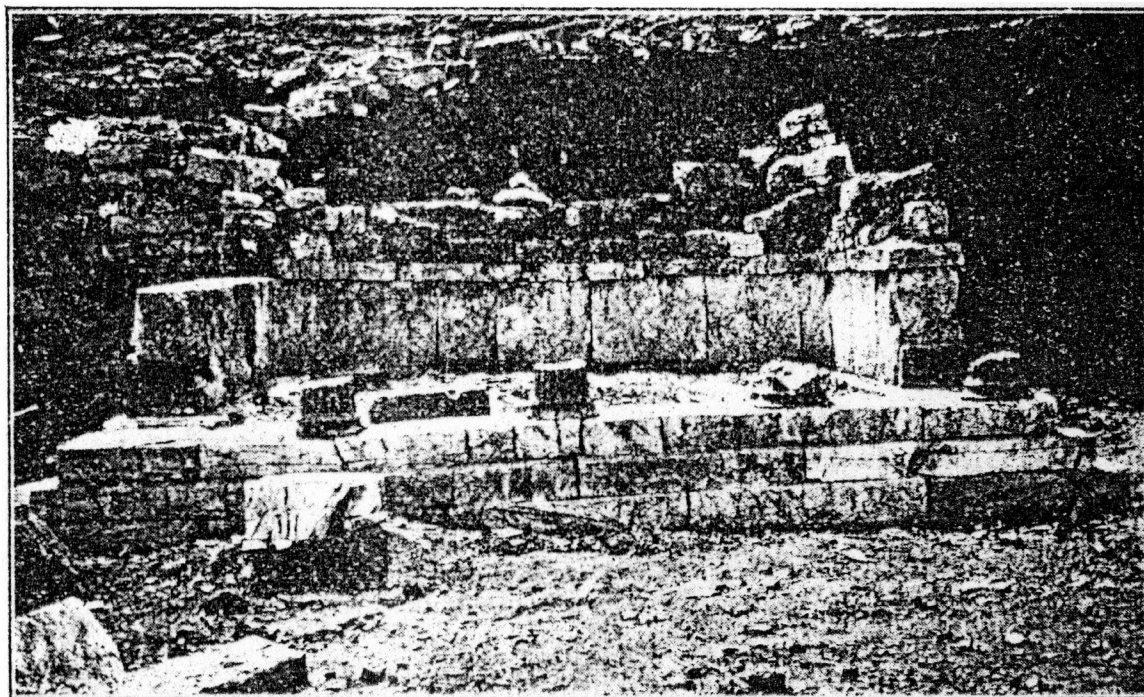
Εικ. 11. Τοίχος προσόψεως και είσοδος ξενώνος.



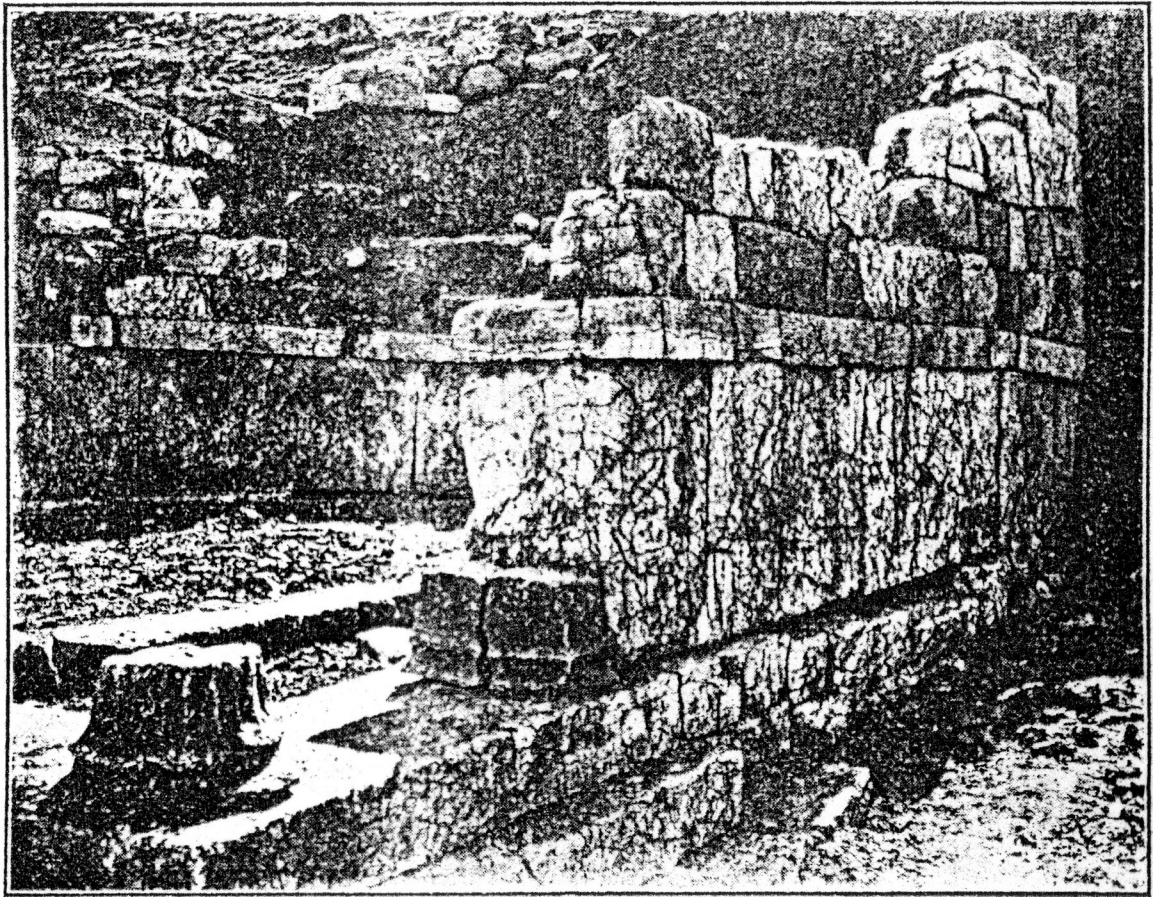
Εικ. 12. ΒΑ γωνία ξενώνος.



Εἰκ. 13. Ἐπιγραφὴ χαλκῇ.



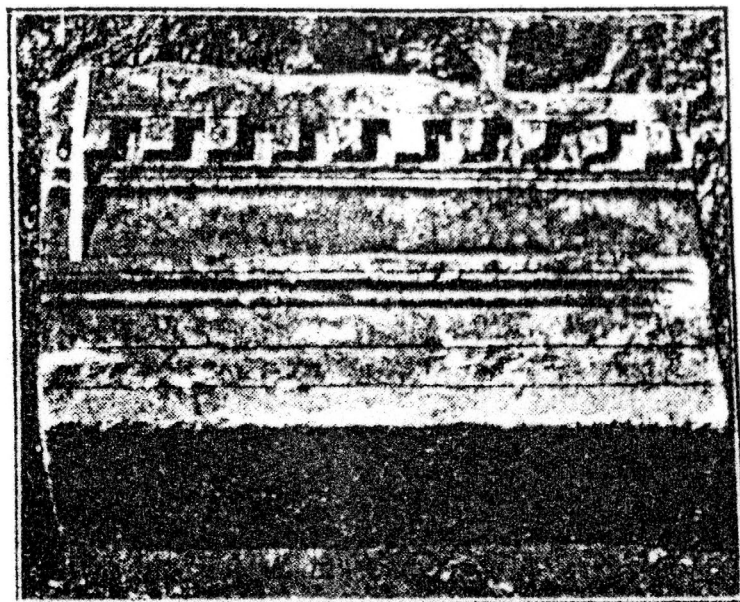
Εἰκ. 14. Ἡμικυκλικὸν οἰκοδόμημα.



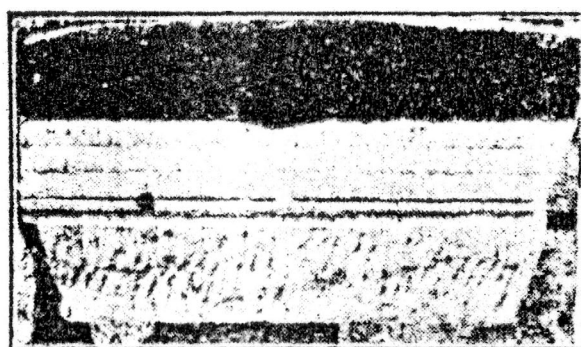
Εἰς. 15. Δυσμική πλευρὰ ἡμικυκλικοῦ οἰκοδομήματος.



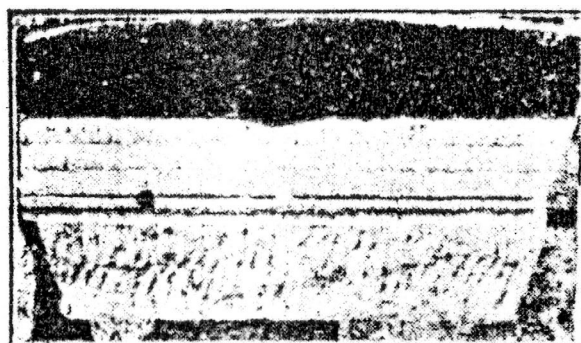
Εἰς. 16. Λιθίνη λεκάνη.



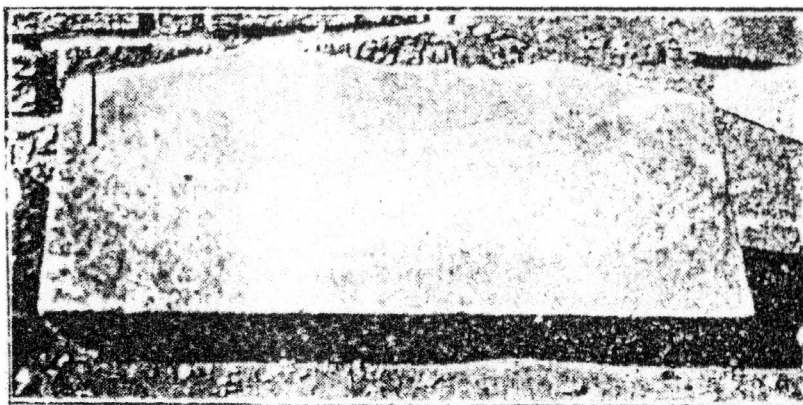
Εἰκ. 17. Ἐπιστύλιον ἡμικυκλικοῦ οἰκοδομήματος.



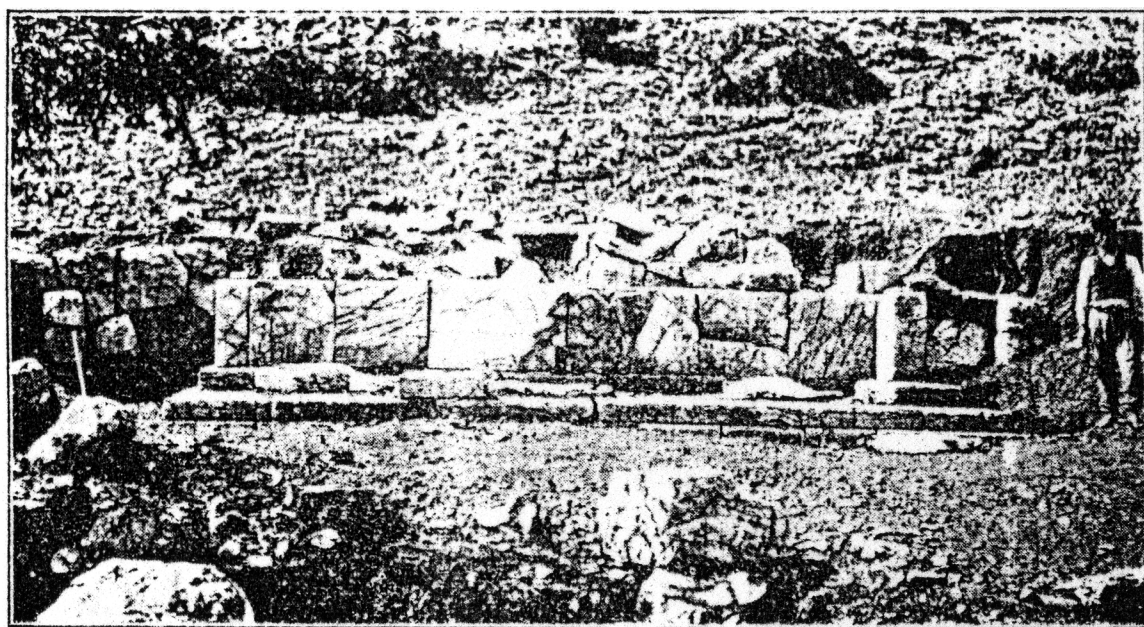
Εἰκ. 18. Ἐπιστύλιον ἡμικυκλικοῦ οἰκοδομήματος.



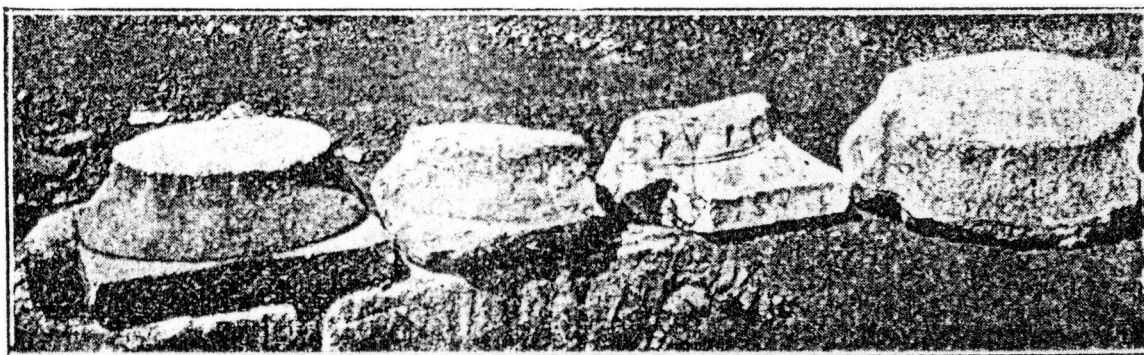
Εἰκ. 18. Ἐπιστύλιον ἡμικυκλικοῦ οἰκοδομήματος.



Εἰκ. 20. Τύπεον ἀετώματος ἡμικυκλικοῦ οἰκοδομήματος.



Εἰκ. 21. Κρήνη.



Εἰκ. 22. Λίθινα κιονόκρανα.