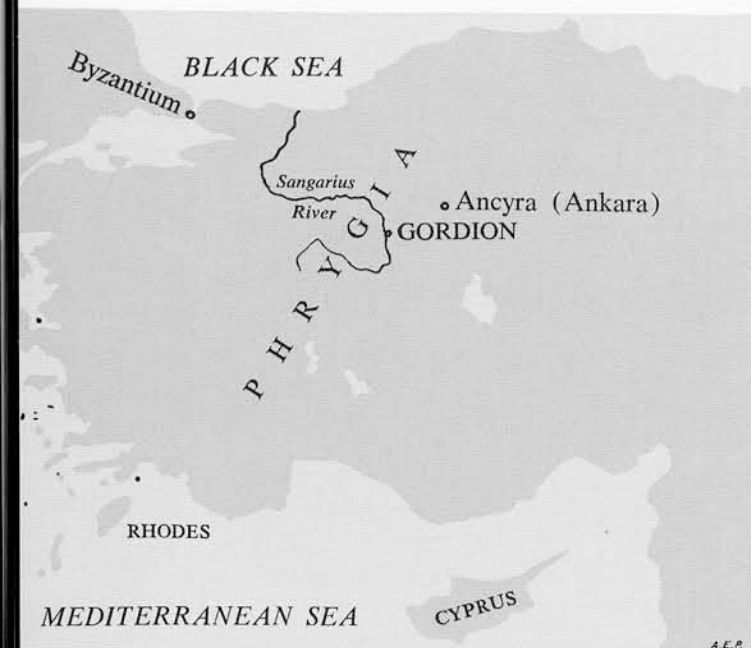




View of the site of the proposed Gordion Museum, looking toward the Midas Mound.

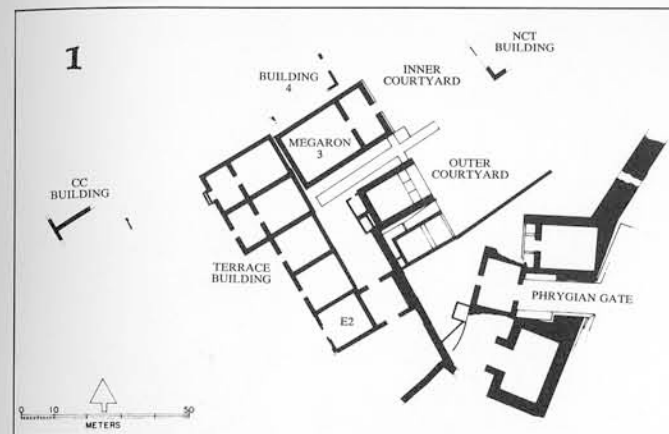
# GORDION: 1962

By G. ROGER EDWARDS



The account of the excavations at Gordion in 1962 takes up the thread of the narrative of this site's recovery from the last paragraphs of the latest article (*Expedition 4, 4, Summer, 1962*), by Rodney Young. There, it will be recalled, the project for the construction of a Gordion Museum was outlined. A major incentive of this year's campaign was the excavation of the site on which this will be placed.

The Museum, it is thought, may take the form of an architecturally exceptional building, Megaron 3, of the time of the greatest height of the power of the kingdom of Phrygia of which Gordion was the capital, of the time in which we locate Phrygia's semi-legendary King Midas, in the late eighth and early seventh centuries B.C. If we consult the plan of the Phrygian level within the citadel walls of Gordion (1) it is quickly seen that Megaron 3, of all the structures so far revealed, is the most impressive, the most conspicuously planned, the most commanding. Its importance in the Phrygian royal complex should

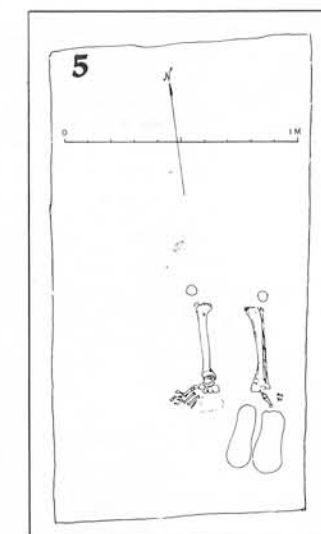
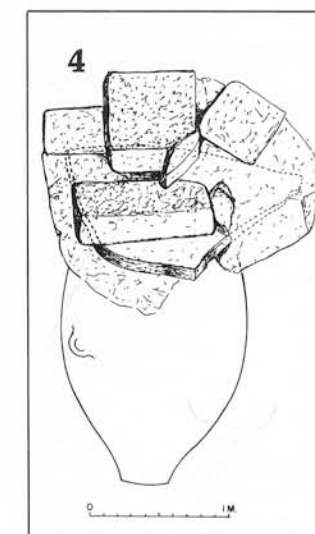
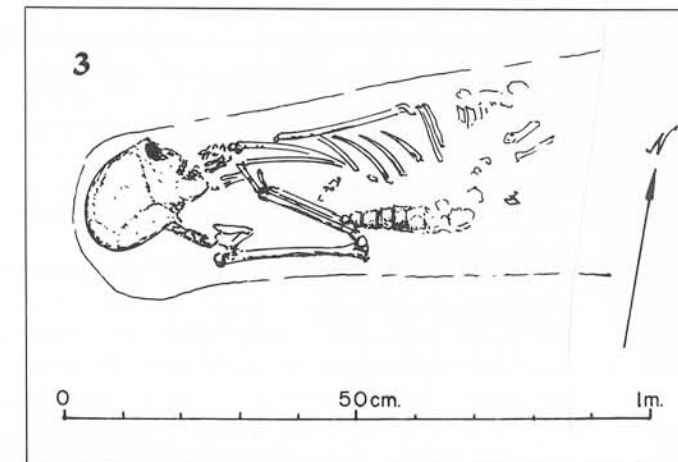
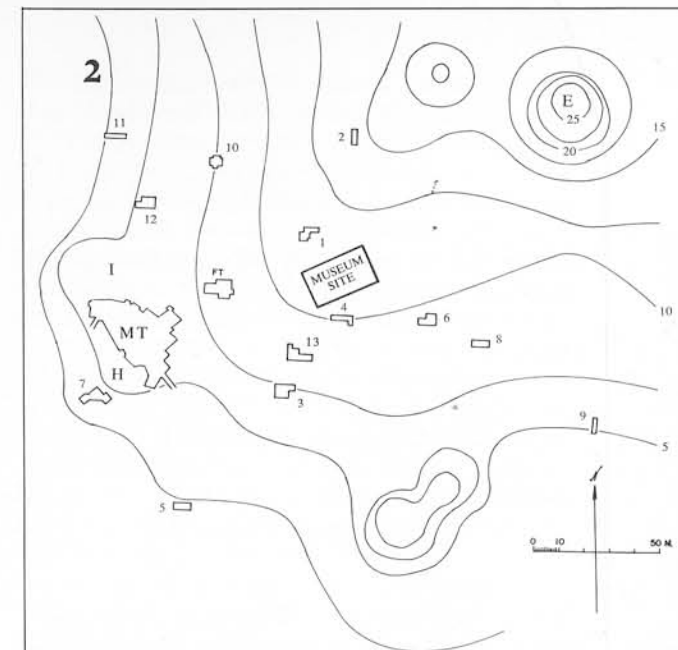


The Phrygian Level

be commensurate. In transposing Megaron 3, as it were, for a Gordion Museum, its new site is in keeping, for, conspicuously and suitably isolated from its related structures, it will have as an appropriate backdrop the Midas Mound (*Expedition 1, 1, Fall, 1958*) where a certainly great, contemporary Phrygian king was buried, and will command Gordion again, in view, from the slopes to the east of its original location.

The Museum Site (2) with which we pick up the thread serves, as dug, as a capsule account of Gordion's history, for its excavation has provided representatives, primarily graves, of both limits of Gordion's history and many steps in between. The earlier Bronze Age is perhaps represented by a single burial (3), the succeeding period of the Hittite Empire by several (4). Burials of both periods may in form suggest some thought of rebirth, for all are in strongly contracted positions suggesting that of the fetus at birth, with the head highest. In that of the Bronze Age the body was suitably fitted into an earth cavity just big enough. The large pear-shaped pithoi which contained the Hittite burials, laid on a slope with the mouths highest, may be a more formal expression of the same idea. The form of these Hittite pithos burials, their placement in the earth, and their orientation, all toward the southeast, are paralleled by numerous others found previously in the area. The various other trenches shown on the plan of the area of the Museum Site are those of the extensive Hittite Cemetery (published by Machteld Mellink, *A Hittite Cemetery at Gordion*, University Museum Monograph Series) of which the 1962 Hittite burials are a part.

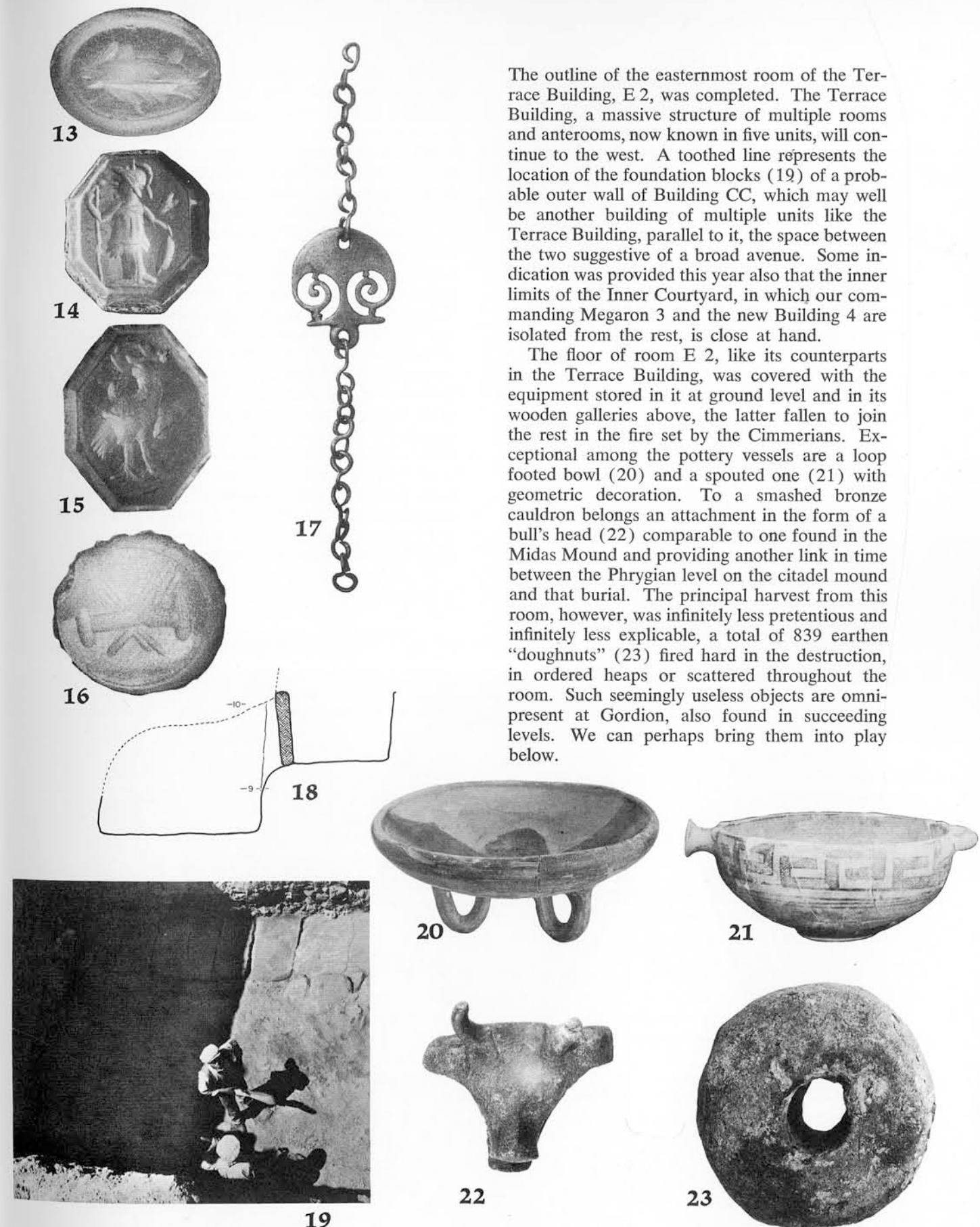
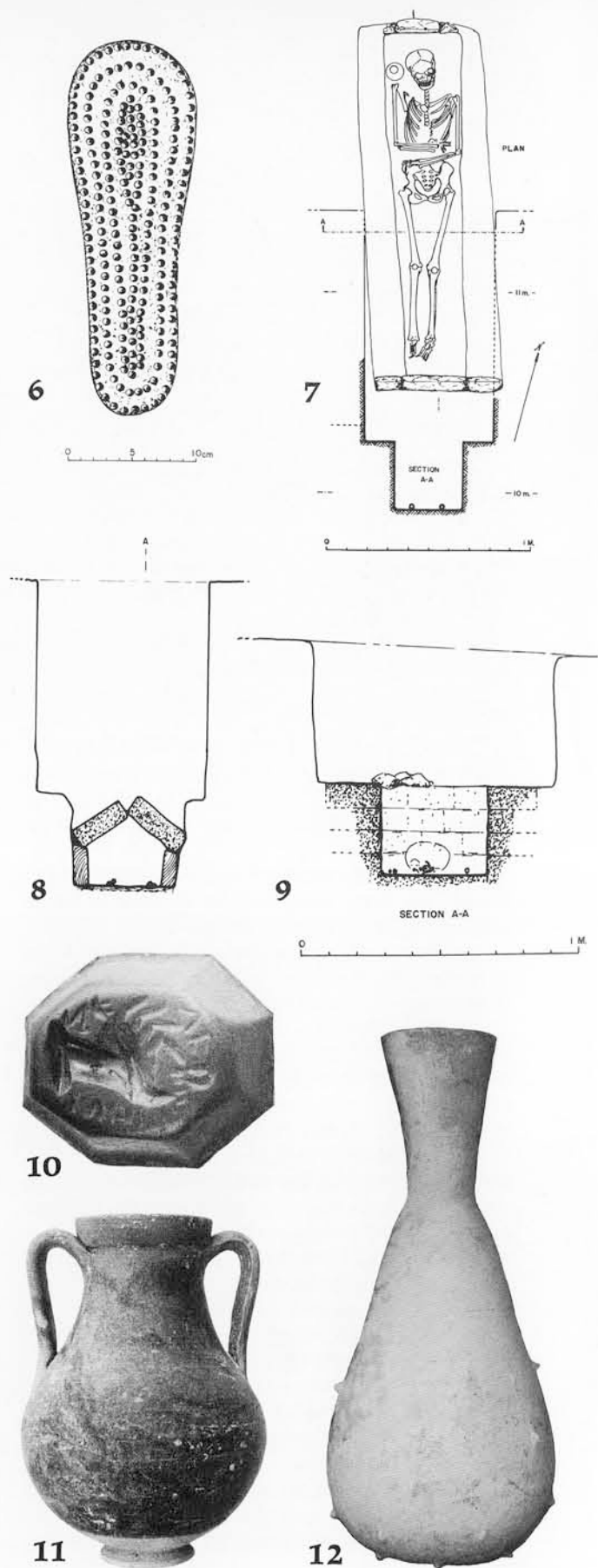
The period of the greatest power of the Phrygian kingdom is not attested on the Museum Site, but the succeeding one, following the destruction of Gordion in the early seventh century by the invading hordes of Cimmerians from the north, may be, by a single burial (5), conceivably that of a largely demolished tumulus on the



order of many in the adjacent landscape. Its large, rectangular grave pit, once lined with wood, is characteristic of such tumulus burials. Special interest attaches to one find ignored by the tomb robbers, the iron hobnails of an extra pair of shoes (6) provided for the deceased, important for knowledge of Phrygian footgear of perhaps the seventh or sixth century B.C. and for after-life thought of a long journey to be performed.

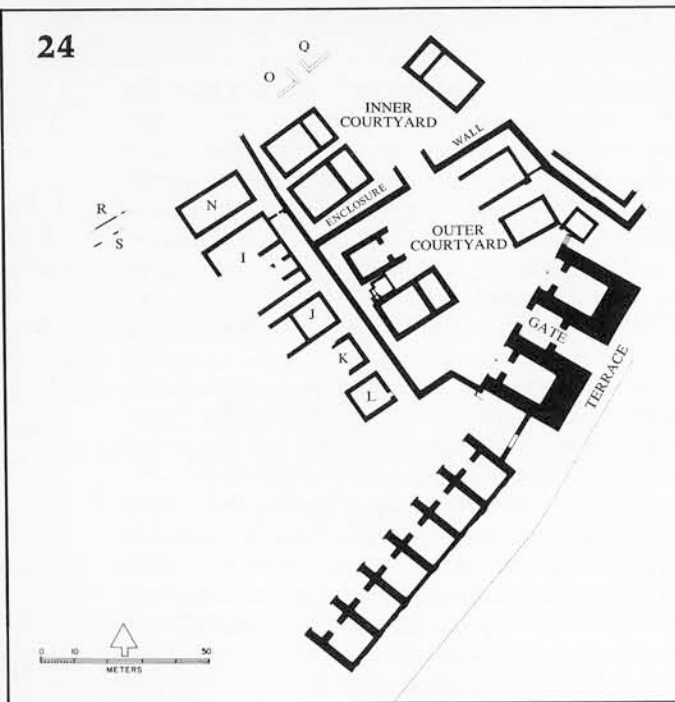
Succeeding centuries are but scantily represented on the Museum Site. A time well beyond the limits of major occupation within the area of the citadel is, however, well attested. Gordion, abandoned probably in 189 B.C., was reoccupied much later, in the Roman period, and it is to this time that some twenty burials of the Museum Site belong. These were oriented in the general direction of north. The most common form (7) had a rectangular grave pit cut deep into the hardpan. At the bottom a second rectangular pit, narrower than the pit proper, was cut to receive the extended skeleton, the resulting ledges providing placement for a covering of boards. Variations include the substitution of a pitched mud brick "roof" for the boards (8), or a carefully constructed mud brick box (9) covered with crosswise boards overlaid with mud bricks. Parental grief and special affection may be reflected in the last, exceptional variation and in the unusual number of offerings—a glass bottle beside the head; a glass bracelet on the arm; a ring whose gem shows a hand within an inscription (10); and a suitably tiny bronze mirror for this child. Typical offerings for adults were but a container, such as a little pottery amphora (11) or a glass bottle (12), again set beside the head, and a ring only. Four such, of bronze and silver, have gems engraved respectively with a fish (13), a standing Athena (14), a fantastic bird (15), and a representation whose identity is not yet determined (16). For another child a linked chain with a cut-out bronze ornament (17) served as part of a necklace. An exceptional form of burial was that of two adults in a deeply cut chamber (18) closed with a large stone block between it and its vertical entrance shaft.

We pick up the main periods of Gordion, so slightly represented on the Museum Site, on the citadel mound. Comparison of the plan of the Phrygian level (1) at the end of the 1962 season with its counterpart of 1961 (*Expedition 4*, 4, p. 7) shows the advances of the present season. Not startling changes, to be sure, for this was a short season, but suggestive of what is to come. The southern limits of a new major structure, Building 4, parallel to Megaron 3, were defined.



The outline of the easternmost room of the Terrace Building, E 2, was completed. The Terrace Building, a massive structure of multiple rooms and anterooms, now known in five units, will continue to the west. A toothed line represents the location of the foundation blocks (19) of a probable outer wall of Building CC, which may well be another building of multiple units like the Terrace Building, parallel to it, the space between the two suggestive of a broad avenue. Some indication was provided this year also that the inner limits of the Inner Courtyard, in which our commanding Megaron 3 and the new Building 4 are isolated from the rest, is close at hand.

The floor of room E 2, like its counterparts in the Terrace Building, was covered with the equipment stored in it at ground level and in its wooden galleries above, the latter fallen to join the rest in the fire set by the Cimmerians. Exceptional among the pottery vessels are a loop footed bowl (20) and a spouted one (21) with geometric decoration. To a smashed bronze cauldron belongs an attachment in the form of a bull's head (22) comparable to one found in the Midas Mound and providing another link in time between the Phrygian level on the citadel mound and that burial. The principal harvest from this room, however, was infinitely less pretentious and infinitely less explicable, a total of 839 earthen "doughnuts" (23) fired hard in the destruction, in ordered heaps or scattered throughout the room. Such seemingly useless objects are omnipresent at Gordion, also found in succeeding levels. We can perhaps bring them into play below.



The Persian Level

The grandiose layout of the level of the Phrygian kingdom within the citadel is generally repeated in that of the succeeding level (24), raised many feet higher by a blanket filling of clay (19), the level which was Gordion at the time of the Persian domination in the latter sixth century. Elements of the new level repeated from the old, testifying to the tenacity of the Phrygian tradition in architecture despite calamity and vassalage, include the Main Gate and the Outer and Inner Courtyards, both enclosing major buildings, these in much the same location above as the old. Walls of two new major structures, Buildings R and S, seem to indicate a new line of buildings parallel to the series N through L, repeating above the parallel lines of the Phrygian level Terrace and CC Buildings. The layout of Gordion of these times was a mighty one, suggesting still a royal complex, although we know it not to have been that of an independent capital.

One of the tantalizing aspects of our investigations of Gordion is the language of the Phrygians, still undeciphered, although it was written in letters similar to those of the Greek alphabet. The Phrygian alphabet is known to have been in

use in Gordion in the time of the independent Phrygian kingdom, but so far the majority of the inscriptions found have come from succeeding levels. Each year adds a few more, 1962 providing, among others, a complete word or name on a black polished pot handle (25). It was especially gratifying this year to find, in circumstances suggesting that it may have been of the time of the Persian domination, an inscription supplementing the alphabetic, providing Phrygian numerals. It was incised before firing on a pithos used to contain provisions, perhaps grain, and indicates the number of measures it held. Two other pithoi, found in previous years, have similar notations. The three form a graduated series, small, medium, and large (26-28) and the numbers are graduated accordingly (29-31). Phrygian numerals so attested are: a dotted circle, a half circle in two positions, a dot, and a stroke. The dotted circle is the largest number, the others being presumably lesser units. Whatever numerical value the dotted circle may prove to have, used as an indication of capacity, as has been determined, it represents a measure of about 25 liters. And, as a by-product, although other explanations are possible, we may perhaps associate with the dotted circle the enigmatic earthen "doughnuts" (23) which so closely resemble them in a plastic medium. The "doughnuts" conceivably may be counters, perhaps to record reception, storage, and issue of provisions in royal or other storerooms.

Coming from a context also of the time of the Persian domination, from the foundation trench of one of the new buildings of this level, we now have an engaging plastic lion cub (32), an attachment for a pottery vessel. It is stylistically referable to the time of the independent Phrygian kingdom, and reminds us in miniature of the stone heads of adult lions which decorated the façade of at least one of the major structures of the royal complex, although amiability is the tone of the cub, while ferocity, with equal appropriateness, is that of its stone elders.

Levels between that of the Persian period and the abandonment of the citadel area in 189 B.C. have in previous seasons and in this suggested a drastic impoverishment and a reduction of the status of the citadel to that of a village of poor, mud brick and rubble homes and industrial establishments. The latter type this year was represented by a pair of potters' kilns (33) sunk deep into the once formal Inner Courtyard of Persian times. A hopeful sign, however, that our picture of later Gordion, of Hellenistic times, may ultimately prove to be less bleak than it has seemed, is provided by the remaining courses of

25



26



27



28



29



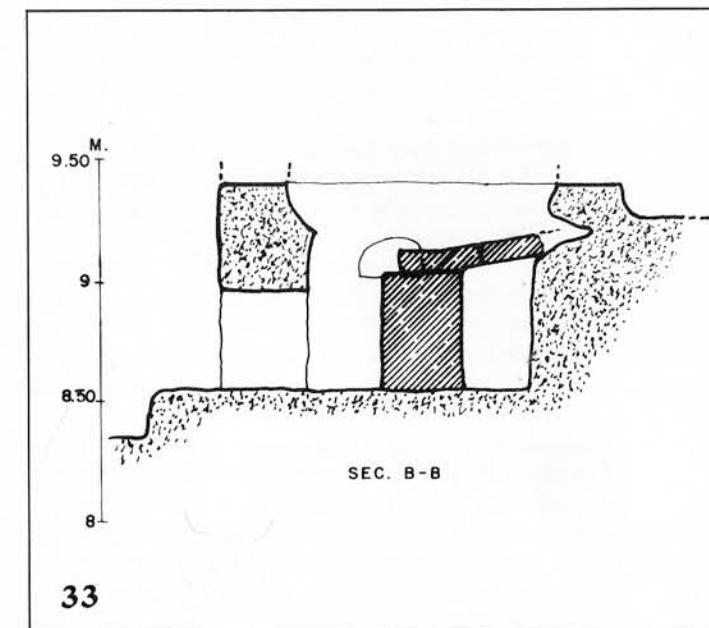
30



31



32



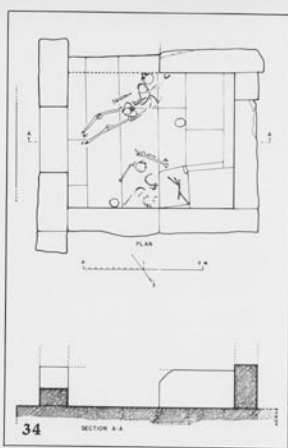
33



35

a carefully constructed chamber tomb of well cut stone (34), laid out on a set unit of measure, in a plundered tumulus across the Sangarios River to the west of the citadel mound. If tomb architecture of the Hellenistic period in Gordion can be of such relatively high quality, it seems likely that contemporary civic architecture of comparable quality may yet be found. We are in fact, told by the Roman historian Livy that in 189 B.C. Gordion was an *emporium* "celebre et frequens," a famous and much frequented market center. It is at least conceivable that in the Hellenistic period the civic center of Gordion shifted across the river to the vicinity of our new chamber tomb, leaving the old citadel for slums and industry. The more optimistic note which the new chamber tomb, and, in fact, a predecessor farther away on the same side of the river, suggest for Hellenistic Gordion as it may yet prove to be is given emphasis by the quality of a small marble head (35) wearing a cap resembling the Persian *tiara*, found in the topsoil of the citadel mound. A fresh, young face, the fringe of hair once perhaps gilded.

24



34

SECTION A-A



**G. ROGER EDWARDS** is Associate Curator of the Mediterranean Section of the University Museum and Associate Professor in the Department of Classical Archaeology of the University of Pennsylvania. He received his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University in 1939, was Assistant Curator at the Bowdoin College Museum from 1939 to 1946 except for wartime service in the U. S. Army. During the next four years, he was at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens; in 1950, he came to this Museum. His primary interest is in the Hellenistic Period, particularly in its pottery, and he is now engaged on a study of that period in Athens and Corinth. He is responsible for the publication of the results of the Museum's expeditions to Cyprus.

#### SUGGESTED READING

For a general account of Gordion, well illustrated, see Machteld J. Mellink, "The City of Midas" in *Scientific American*, July, 1959. Other accounts by Rodney S. Young have appeared in the *Illustrated London News* (January 3, 1953; September 17, 1955; November 10 and 17, 1956; May 17, 1958).