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MEDIEVAL AIGOSTHENA

Some Measurements and Observations

American School of Classical Studies  
Athens, Greece  
July, 1954

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1874

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The above two photographs were given to me by Miss M. Alison Frantz and my thanks are due to her.

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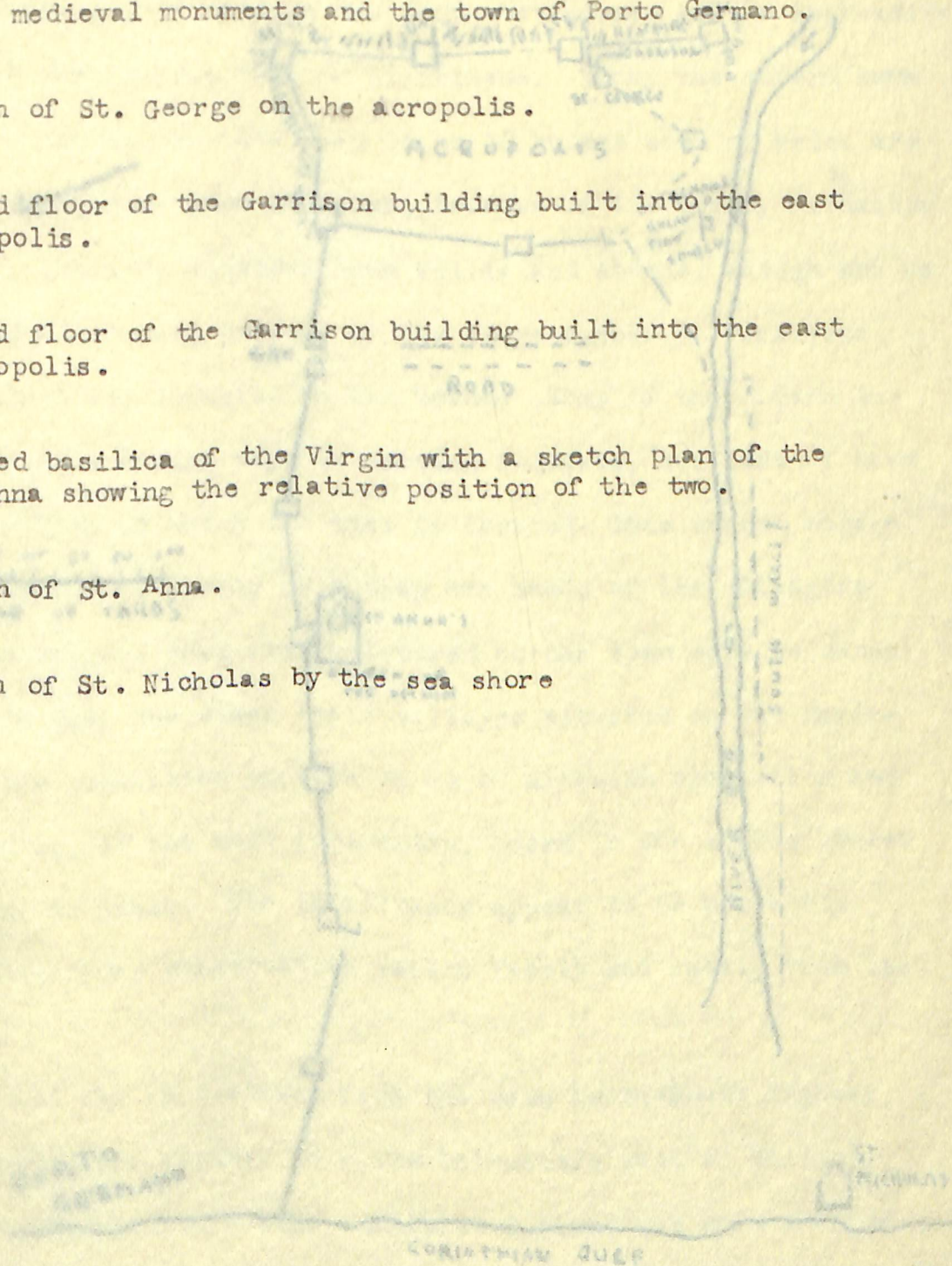
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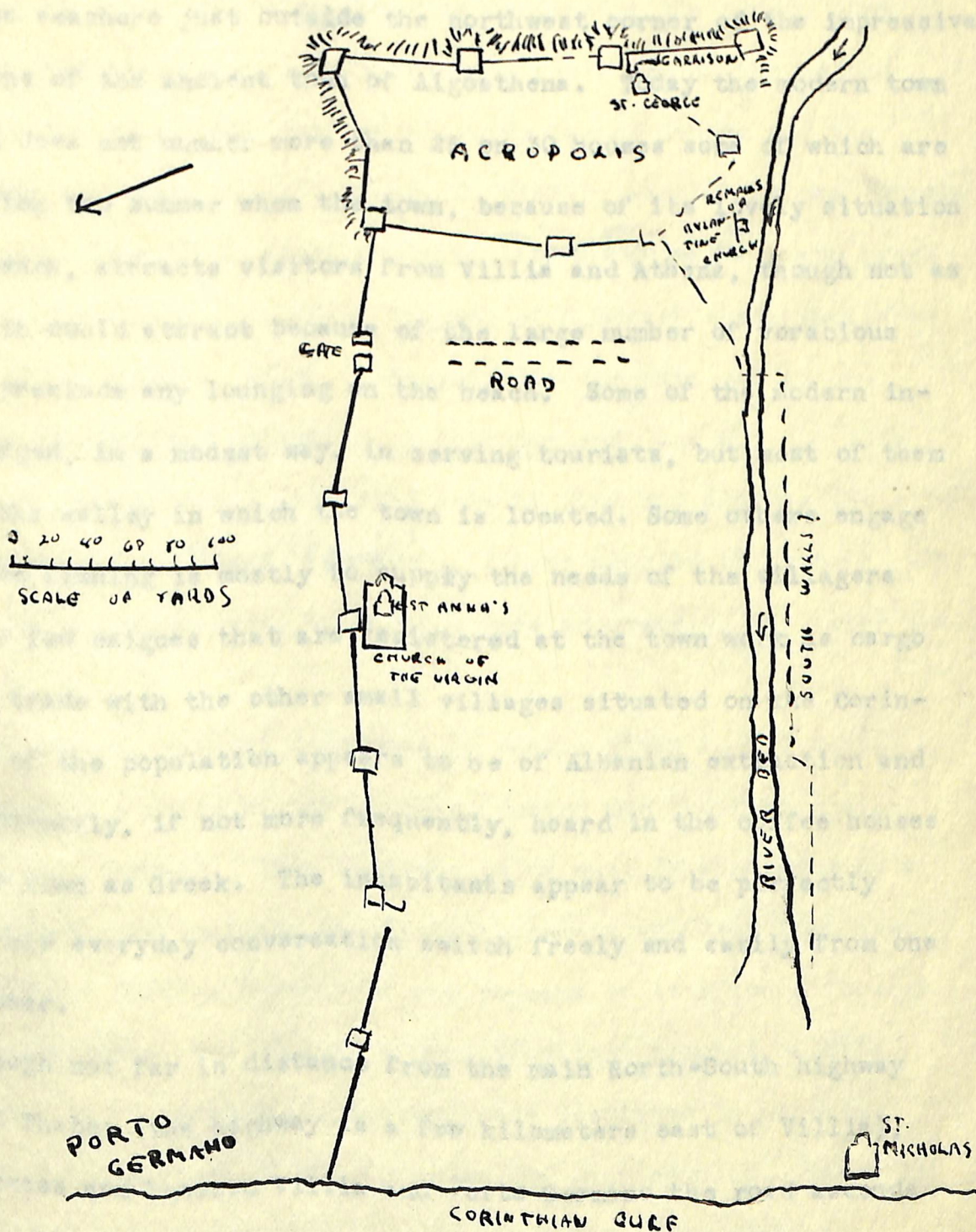


SKETCH PLAN OF ACROPOLIS AND LOWER TOWN OF AIGOSTROMA

FROM THE PLAN OF THE ACROPOLIS AND LOWER TOWN OF AIGOSTROMA - WITH ADDITIONS



# PLAN I



SKETCH PLAN OF ACROPOLES AND LOWER TOWN OF AIGOSTHENA

AFTER BENSON, JHS XV(1895) P. 320 - WITH ADDITIONS

The modern town of Porto Germano is situated about 17 kilometers southeast of the town of Villia on a stubby finger of the Corinthian Gulf and between the main range of Cithaeron to the north and an outlying spur, Kalliakouda, of the same range to the south. The town itself lies almost hidden by olive trees by the seashore just outside the northwest corner of the impressive and extensive ruins of the ancient town of Aigosthena. Today the modern town is very small and does not number more than 25 or 30 houses some of which are occupied only during the summer when the town, because of its lovely situation and fine pebble beach, attracts visitors from Villia and Athens, though not as many visitors as it could attract because of the large number of voracious horseflies which preclude any lounging on the beach. Some of the modern inhabitants are engaged, in a modest way, in serving tourists, but most of them work the land in the valley in which the town is located. Some others engage in fishing, but the fishing is mostly to supply the needs of the villagers themselves and the few caiques that are registered at the town work as cargo ships to carry on trade with the other small villages situated on the Corinthian Gulf. Most of the population appears to be of Albanian extraction and Albanian is as frequently, if not more frequently, heard in the coffee houses and taverns of the town as Greek. The inhabitants appear to be perfectly bilingual and in their everyday conversation switch freely and easily from one language to the other.

The town, though not far in distance from the main North-South highway between Athens and Thebes (the highway is a few kilometers east of Villia), is difficult of access and between Villia and Porto Germano the road ascends 2000 feet<sup>1</sup> onto the range of Cithaeron before the descent to the sea begins. There are indications that it was not always as populated as it is today, in spite of its small present day population, for one traveler who was there in 1857 states there were no houses there at that time and another<sup>2</sup> in 1876 puts<sup>3</sup>

the number of inhabitants at fifty. Benson, in 1895, was as charmed with the remoteness of the place as he was with the antiquities and says, "...thus while few have heard of it and fewer visit it, it may remain undisturbed for many years--a place, for those who have seen it, to marvel at and return to."<sup>4</sup>

There are a number of conflicting theories concerning the modern name of the town and in fact there are even conflicting spellings of the second part of the name of the town. The British Military Map of Greece and the map of Euboea-Sterea published in 1948 by Mr. B. Platis, as well as the current greek newspapers spell it with an epsilon, thus: *Πόρο Γεργερό*<sup>5</sup>, and greek encyclopedias, most greek maps (including the map of Euboea-Boeotia published before the war by Mr. I. Sarris, which is essentially the same map as Mr. Platis's), the book Italienisch Ortsnamen in Griechenland,<sup>6</sup> and all the 19th century travelers and geographers I have been able to find who discuss the site spell it with an alpha, thus: *Πόρο Γεργαρό*<sup>8</sup>. I have adopted the second usage, which seems to me to be the correct, or perhaps more accurately, the older spelling.<sup>9</sup>

In 1844 Le Bas states, without reference or reason given in his text, that perhaps the name is a relic of the worship, during the Frankish domination of Greece, of St. Germain. This it seems to me must be dismissed as a case of excessive French nationalism, for it is extremely unlikely that the Greeks would countenance foreign worship or any remnant of it after a foreign conqueror had left the scene, and we have a most excellent example of this Greek character trait in the frenzy and thoroughness displayed in pitching down minarets after the departure of the Turks in the last century. There is another theory that the town was named after an extremely pious monk who lived there and was named Germanos. A quotation from 19th century traveler,<sup>11</sup> cited below,<sup>12</sup> might be construed to support this theory, and it is just possible that a little sea port could be named after a famous monk, if he were famous enough, if he lived long enough, if he gained enough notoriety, and if he were a forceful enough personality to make a solid and lasting impression on the

on the minds of his contemporaries in that region and their descendants. However it must not be overlooked that there is little more than faith to support this theory.

Some other possible, even if rather remote, explanations have occurred to me, one of them being historical and the others philological. The historical one posits a hypothetical landing at the site by some of Morosini's German troops after Morosini and Koenigsmark took Corinth and before the armada made its way around the Peloponnese to attack Athens in 1687. This is unattested as far as I know. The philological theories center around the Latin and Italian meanings for the words germanus (which in byzantine greek was Γερμανός) and germano. The former, when used as an adjective, can mean either pertaining to brothers and sisters or something genuine, real, or true. Indeed it would be far fetched to have a port with such a name, but not impossible. The latter, in Italian, can mean brother, but more interesting it can also mean a sort of wild duck. It does not seem likely that ducks would light in such an open and unsheltered place as the Bay of Germano, but again it is possible and Italians may have, at one time, hunted the ducks there and thus named the place.

My personal inclination among all these possibilities is towards the theory that centers about the monk Germanos. It seems less beyond the realm of possibility than the others, but even it, unfortunately, is nothing more than a theory built on very little.

Since there can be no certainty about the time and cause of the change in nomenclature for this site, perhaps it would be most suitable if, in discussing the byzantine remains, we would continue to use the ancient name, Aigosthena, about which there is no possible dispute.

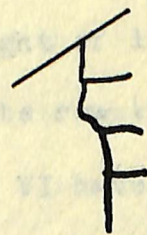
The first of the byzantine monuments we shall discuss is the church in the acropolis of the town (see plan I) known as the church of St. George (see figs. 3 to 8). It must be this church that Inwood means when he says, "I entered a small Greek church in the highest division of the city, the doors of which were merely slightly closed, and within saw only the robes of the priest

and appurtenances for the service and for the attendants, open to view, with some beautiful shells of the feather or pinna species, each upward of two feet in length, richly crimson coloured in the interior, taken probably in the adjoining bay; the quiet ripple of whose waters under this beautiful climate, apparently waiting to bring the supplies to the town, enhanced greatly the stillness and interest of the scene." I was not as fortunate as Inwood in my visits to the church, for I never saw a soul in it or near it.

It is a simple church 11.15 meters in overall length and 4.43 meters in width. The church itself is only 5.02 meters long and the narthex, an extremely modern addition, not more than fifty years old, makes up the rest of the length.<sup>18</sup> The church is almost, but not quite, square, in its form. The narthex is a crude affair covered with a wooden stick supported roof and having a combination earth and stone floor. Its only attraction is the lovely view out of its west door over the olive groves of the valley down to the Gulf of Corinth. It is irregular in shape measuring (on the outside) 6.13 meters on the south side and 4.40 meters on the north. The door leading from the narthex to the church proper is .85 meters wide and 1.77 meters high and above it is a small arch .75 meters high set into the wall. The interior of the church is smaller than one would imagine from the outside, for the walls have what seems to me an uncommon thickness, usually about .75 meters, but about twice that at the western end of the church. The interior of the church is in the form of a cross in a square with the square formed by the meeting of the aisle and transept covered by a dome supported by four arches and four pendentives.<sup>19</sup> The west arch is 2.15 meters wide, the south 2.26 meters, the east 2.31 meters, and the north 2.27 meters wide. The arches begin their upward thrust 1.95 meters from the ground and are 3.23 meters at their highest point. The dome is peculiar in that it does not span the whole circumference, but is of a smaller circumference. The dome itself is not directly supported by the arches and pendentives but by a circular upward thrust which rests on the arches. I could not measure the height of the

dome because I did not have adequate equipment. In the eastern end of the church (in back of the iconostasis) there is a half dome forming the apse which is 1.92 meters across its western opening. The half dome is not as high as the arches being only 3.06 meters from ground level. A little off center (probably because the northern length of the church is more than the southern) in the apse is a window .67 meters wide and .84 meters high. There is another window cut in the south wall which seems to me to have been cut sometime after the original building of the church in contrast to the window in the apse which looks to be contemporary with the first building of the church. There are frescos covering most of the wall space in the interior of the church, but they appear to be of a fairly recent date. Saints are on the walls, the Virgin in the dome of the apse and Christ Pantokrator in the dome of the church itself.

On the outside the church presents rather pleasing proportions. The height marked A in fig 5 is 3.30 meters from ground level while that marked B is 2.70 meters. I was unable to get the dome measurements. The dome is high and has a moulding at its top just below the eaves of the pleasantly pitched tile roof. The moulding is unusual and may date from some repair of the church. If the dome were repaired this would also account for the interior arrangement of the dome. On the north side of the church (figs 7 and 8) one can see brickwork that appears to be byzantine.



PROFILE OF  
DOME MOULDING

This church of St. George may be compared to another church of St. George<sup>20</sup> familiar to those who travel the main highway between Athens and Thebes. It is about 43 kilometers from Athens and not <sup>far</sup> from the turn which leads to Aigosthena. Both churches have high dome and similarly pitched roofs and have similar proportions. Orlandos thinks that the church of St. George on the highway probably dates from the 12th century and the church of St. George in Aigosthena may date from that time also. But it must be kept in mind that it is very difficult to date small byzantine churches on nothing more than stylistic grounds,

and even one as expert as Orlandos hesitates to commit himself any more specifically than to a certain <sup>century</sup> ~~century~~. There is a stair case (fig. 13) 1.30

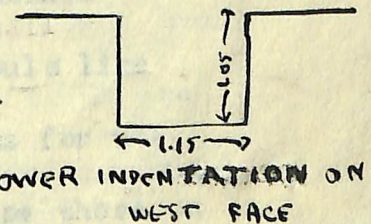
Immediately to the east of the church of St. George and built against the east wall of the acropolis of Aigosthena is a large two story L shaped building (see plans I, III, and IV, and figs. 9 to 13.) The overall length of the building is 18.80 meters and the present width (at its widest point along the northern wing) is 12.85 meters though there are indications that this northern wing was even longer. The west wall of room VI appears not to have been an end wall, but to have another room adjoining it. On the west side of this wall are traces of a vault and interior plastering. This plaster seems finer than the interior plastering in the other rooms and one might assume that this was the cistern which has now disappeared. The east wall as shown in plans III and IV indicates the inside surface of the ancient east wall of the Acropolis so that the whole width is not represented. Every room on the ground floor is vaulted and all except room IV have windows. Room V, the largest room of all, has two windows. The most important room appears to have been room IV for it had the highest and widest door (fig. 11) being 1.10 meters wide and 2.00 meters high as set against a width of .60 meters for the other doors along that wall and a height of 1.60 (figs 9 and 10). It has its own vault. The other three rooms in its row (rooms I, II, and III) have one vault running north-south, and rooms V and VI have one vault running east-west. Rooms I to IV are 6.25 meters deep and each of them is about 3.50 meters wide. The large room, V, is 8.70 meters long and 4.80 meters wide, and room VI is 4.80 by 3.40 meters.

The walls are made of rough field stone with the intervals filled with smaller stones and some bricks. A great deal of plaster was used to hold this conglomeration together, tho much of the plaster has disappeared by now. Larger blocks of stone are put at the corner, but even these are not of any considerable size. All the windows and door ways are arched and the frames are cut from a soft porous stone. These stones are carefully cut and the contrast they present

with the rest of the building in both style and color is not displeasing.

At the south end of the building there is a stair case ( fig. 12) 1.60 meters wide, 2.80 meters in length and consisting of 11 steps leading to a platform which extends to the west wall of the acropolis. The second story (plan IV and figs 12 and 13) consists of three rooms (VII, VIII, and IX), a terrace, A, whose level is 3.50 meters above ground level, a tower, B, whose level is 4.30 meters above ground level and .80 meters above the level of terrace A, and area C the roof of rooms V and VI which is about 3.00 meters above ground level. The terrace, A, is 4.00 meters by 10.10 meters and it has three rooms leading on to it ( fig. 13). These three rooms are all 3.40 meters deep<sup>21</sup> and of different widths, room VII being 2.80, VIII 3.20, and IX 3.40. Each of them has its own vault running east-west and each has a window cut in its east wall. The stone work is exactly like that of the ground level except that the plaster is in better condition, perhaps because it has been redone at some time subsequent to the original building (fig. 13). The doors are similar to those on the ground floor and are about .60 meters by 1.65 meters in size.

The area B seems to have been some sort of a tower for it has walls .77 meters thick in contrast to the rest of the walls in the building which are about .25 meters thick. Because of the problem of support (there is no special support under these tower walls in the ground floor) I do not think that the walls could have been much higher than their present height, that is 1.05 meters from the level of the tower and 1.85 from the level of the terrace which is to the south of the tower. On the east and west faces of the wall there is a sort of crenelation, or perhaps it would more simply be called an indentation in the wall, 1.15 meters wide and going down to the level of the tower, that is 1.05 meters deep. Area C appears to be nothing more than the roof of rooms V and VI.



It is this building Ludwig Salvator is speaking about when he says,<sup>22</sup> "An die Mauer angelehnt ist ein venetianische oder gar tuerkisches Gebaeude, welches untn als Oelmuehle und Stallung, oben aber wo ein breit Terrasse



kleine Rundbogenthueren aufweist, einem gebrechlichen Kalogero als Wohnung dient." This makes it clear that for at least a while the building served as a sort of hermitage (and perhaps for the very Germanos who left his name to the valley and port which his abode overlooked), but it does not mean that it was a monastery attached to the church of St. George which is about 10 feet away from it. There do not seem to be enough rooms to serve as cells for monks if this were really a monastery. The rooms on the upper level might serve, but those on the lower level seem too large to be simply cells. Indeed the huge stone once used for crushing olives (and perhaps still used in season) is now in room IV, though there were no signs of livestock in any of the other rooms. The size of the church of St. George is another argument against the building's being a monastery for if the church were built to serve a monastic establishment it would surely have been larger and more elegant. There are no traces of any larger church ever having been built in the area either. Still another point is the presence of what appears to be a tower built within the confines of the building itself. It is true that many monasteries have their own defense towers and arsenals, but they do not appear as a part of the building proper.

I should like to propose that this building was a small inner fort or garrison building and that the church of St. George was attached to the garrison rather than the building to the church. We shall see in a few moments that the acropolis of Aigosthena was occupied and fortified for at least a little while during the middle ages and this may have been the combined barracks and headquarters for the garrison manning the fort. I should like to say that rooms I, II, III, VII, VIII, and IX were barracks rooms for the soldiers, perhaps the officers upstairs and the men down, or perhaps those on duty were quartered on the upper level; room IV was a common room or perhaps dining room; room V made up the quarters of the garrison commander; and room VI was the headquarters room itself. Perhaps the weakest point in this argument is the tower, for if it were actually that and served as a strong hold

or watch tower, the builders must have been blind to the advantages and uses of the strong and well preserved ancient tower at the southeast corner of the acropolis, for it was and still is the strongest point in the whole valley. If area B were not a tower it might have been used simply as a higher terrace, a little protected by the walls but still affording a good view down to the sea.

Whatever the use of the individual rooms I believe that this building was a military establishment. The church was attached to it, and, as such, would not need to be very large. It would be only when the town was in danger and the whole population had to go to the acropolis that the church would be overcrowded.

It is difficult to date this building for it is only the cut stone in the door and window frames that offers any clue, and I have nothing to correspond to the sort of lintel block shown in fig. 9, a single block arched on its lower side and with straight lines on its upper side. If I were to put forward a guess I would say that they were Venetian<sup>23</sup> and thus agree with Ludwig Salvator. If the building is Venetian it would remove the problem of the church, for if the church is 12th century as I have said then it would pre-date the building by hundreds of years.

Benson and Salvator<sup>24</sup> both mention the ruins of a byzantine church just a little to the southwest of the acropolis, but I was unable to find anything at all in the vicinity. There was a brick wall, but it was unintelligible to me.

When one walks about the circuit of the ancient walls of Aigosthena it is immediately evident to what extent these walls were utilized in the middle ages. The long walls running down to the sea ( see plan I) appear never to have been touched since they first fell into disrepair. The walls along the north are fairly well preserved, but those along the south are almost completely gone. This may be due to the stream that runs down that side of the valley which could have undermined the foundations of the south wall. The walls that encircle the acropolis show extensive repairs (see figs. 14 and 15), and it

can be said with some assurance that the acropolis was the only fortified area in medieval times. It is difficult if not impossible to say who it was who repaired the walls, but one can be fairly sure that it was not the Turks, first of all because of the building on the acropolis which is certainly prior to the turkish conquest and secondly because of the lack of the huge amount of mortar usually used by the Turks in their fortifications. Because of the height of the walls and the absence of any trace of moats or counter scarps one can be reasonably sure that the walls were repaired before the use of the cannon came into general use. The walls in their repaired sections are somewhat similar in appearance to the walls in the Castle of the Villehardouin at Mistra.<sup>25</sup> This could mean that they were either early Frankish in construction or late byzantine for the two style do not differ greatly.<sup>26</sup> It would not have been impossible for the Franks in their sweep down through Greece in late 1204 and 1205 to have taken the town and repaired the walls, though there is no documentary evidence for this.

About half way between the acropolis and the sea close to the north walls (plan I) one sees the ruins of the church of the Virgin (plan V and figs. 16 to 21) and within the ruins the small byzantine church of St. Anna (Plans V and VI). The church of the Virgin is in a state of considerable ruin and one sees only the whole of the north wall ( figs. 17 and 18), most of the east wall (figs 16 and 19), the apse in the east wall (figs 20 and 21), part of the south wall and the walls of the small room in the northeast corner of the church. The church was very large, 24.50 meters along its north wall, which is broken only for a door 2.80 meters wide, 11.22 meters from the east wall of the church. The inside width of the church is 18.35 meters and the apse measures 4.95 meters across its western opening. The west wall of the small room (the walls of which bind in with the main walls of the church) measures 3.87 meters and the south wall 6.20 meters. The walls of this room are .55 meters thick while those of the outside walls are just a little thicker,

.60 meters. The walls are composed of rough field stones laid into cement and relieved by rows of bricks ( figs 17, 18, and 19). This masonry looks like good 5th century masonry. The corners are made up of large blocks measuring 1.05 by .50 by .55 meters. <sup>These</sup> ~~This~~ obviously come from the ancient wall of Aigosthena. These same large blocks are used in the foundations of the building ( visible on the south side). The highest preserved part of the wall is at the northwest corner (fig. 18) where the height is 1.65 meters. I would assume that this church would be a basilica, but there is no sign of an interior colonnade, and the south wall of the small room is just about where one would expect a colonnade to be. ~~except extend .79 meters be-~~

It might be thought that a basilica church of this size would serve a population of somewhat generous proportions. ~~And~~ it is possible in the 5th century after Christ that there were many people living at Aigosthena, but it is not at all certain. We have too many examples of ecclesiastic architectural ostentation in small towns today, when towns with no more than a handful of inhabitants take it upon themselves to construct and worship in a church that could comfortably house their number many times over, to be able to overlook this greek trait or to consider it simply as a recent one.

There is a problem of identification concerning the church of <sup>the</sup> Virgin. I was told by the inhabitants that this was the ruined church of the Virgin, but Le Bas and the IG <sup>27</sup> say that an inscription was found in the lintel over the door of the church of the Virgin. The church referred to must be the one I call <sup>ancient</sup> St. Anna's for that does have an inscription in its lintel and one more so defaced as to be illegible in the wall of the courtyard in front of the church of St. Anna ( fig. 22). There is a possibility that Le Bas and the IG were mistaken and not seeing the ruins of the church of the Virgin mistook the name given to them for the standing church. But this is extremely unlikely. More probably the little church was called the church of the Virgin in the 19th century and then for some reason, the addition of an icon or some reputed miracle, the name was changed to St. Anna's. It would be very likely on the one hand that a

church built among the ruins of an earlier church would have no name other than the one that the previous church had had. And on the other hand the Virgin and St. Anna are so close to one another in popular conception that it would not take any great shift in mental attitude if the patronage of a church were transferred from one to the other.

The church now called St. Anna's ( plan VI and figs. 22 to 27) is a small byzantine church set within the ruins of the church of the Virgin ( fig. 21 shows the north side of the apse in relation to the apse of the ruined church.) It is 6.71 meters in overall length and 3.81 wide at its west wall, but 5.39 meters wide at the transept. The ends of the transept extend .79 meters beyond the north and south walls. There are windows in the apse ( fig. 26) and in the south transept (fig. 25.) Each of the windows in the apse measures .10 meters across and .26 meters high, and the interval between them is another .10 meters. The window in the south transept is .60 meters wide, .70 in height at its edges and .75 meters at its center. Both of these windows appear to be contemporary with the building of the church. The church is set low into the ground ( fig. 26 shows the apse windows very close to the exterior ground level) and the exterior ground level is about .50 meters higher than the interior. For exterior heights see fig. 25. Height A is 1.85 meters, B 1.98 meters, C 2.48 meters, D 1.74 meters, and E 1.92 meters. I was unable to measure the height of the dome. The dome is not as high as the dome on the church of St. George and <sup>a</sup> little simpler in its construction in that it does not have the moulding about the top. There are windows cut into the east and north sides of the dome, and they appear to postdate the original building of the church. In the main this church does not have as pleasing an aspect as the church of St. George does. One can see from the photographs (figs. 24 to 27) that recent repairs have been made on the church. It has been some time since 1949 when figs. 26 and 27 were taken. Since then a new wall has been built around the court yard in front of the church. It was then that a mosaic was discovered in the floor of the basilica and it is said that a man

came from Athens to examine it. I could not find any trace of the mosaic, but it has probably been covered over.

The entrance door of the church is 1.08 meters wide and 1.79 meters high. The interior of the church is what Orlandos calls three-apsed. Thickness of the walls in the church is .55 meters. The overall interior length from the door to the apse in the east wall is 5.28 meters. The interior west wall is 2.31 meters long and the walls running from the west wall to the central area under the dome are each 1.16 meters long. The transept is 2.13 meters wide on the south side and 2.07 meters wide on the north. The elevations for the south apse are as follows: from ground level to bottom of the window 1.41 meters, the window is .71 meters high (its width is .59 meters), from ground level to the top of the arch is 3.98 meters and from ground level to the beginning of the upward thrust of the arch is 1.99 meters. The radius of the apse measures 1.21 meters. The arched area between the dome and the east apse is 1.17 meters deep and 2.36 meters deep and 3.30 meters from ground level or .68 meters less than the height of the south apse. The east apse is 1.66 meters across its west opening and .82 meters deep while its semi-dome is 2.70 meters above ground level, so it again is about .60 meters less than the arch immediately to the west of it. The diagonal measurements across the area covered by the dome are these: from the northeast corner to the southwest corner it is 3.07 meters and from the southeast corner to the northwest it is 3.35 meters. Between the top of the arches and pendentives and the bottom of the dome there is a band .31 meters wide which goes all the way around the bottom circumference of the dome leaving a clear space between it and its supports. I was unable to get dome measurements, but relatively speaking it was higher and had a larger diameter than did the interior dome in the church of St. George on the acropolis.

According to Orlandos<sup>28</sup> this sort of church, that is a single aisled, three-apsed church whose exterior transept walls are rectangular, is very rare and he was able to find only two examples in Greece, one in Crete near the town of<sup>29</sup>

Rethymnon and the other in the town of Vineni near the lake of Prespa in western Macedonia. I could not find definite dates for either of these churches

and Orlandos himself says that single aisled, three apsed churches, "... κατά -  
 σκευήματα ἐκ τῆς ὡς ἐπὶ τῆς μεγάλης μασίας διαστάσεως κατά τῆς ἀνατολικῆς καὶ τῆς

<sup>31</sup> κατά τῆς ἀνατολικῆς καὶ τῆς ἐνοχίας There is one church, however, published by Orlandos which, though it is not exactly like the church of St. Anna, is similar enough in proportions and construction to hazard a comparison. This is the church of St. John Elaionos (Ἐλαιῶνος, a district near Athens, and also the greek name for the Mount of Olives.) It has truncated transept ends rather than rectangular and has an additional window in its north apse. Its dome is a little lower and broader than St. Anna's and its transepts extend further out beyond the main north and south walls of the church further than St. Anna's do. Orlandos dates this church in the 14th or 15th century. Since the above mentioned difference between the two churches make one think that St. John's is slightly later in date I would say that the church of St. Anna would date from the late 13th or early 14th century. This date would coincide with the date of at least one of the other churches of this type, that of St. Maria at Kyrgiana near Rethymnon in Crete. For, though no definite date is given, I presume that since it is included in a work on Venetian antiquities in Crete the author thinks it dates from the Venetian period. Venice gained possession of Crete in 1212 and did not lose it until 1669.

The final church to be discussed in this paper is the church of St. Nicholas a little to the south of the streambed and right on the seashore (see plans I and VII, and figs. 2 and 28 to 33.) The church is not at all unpleasing in aspect and is perhaps, because of its setting near the sea, the prettiest church at Aigosthena. It is what Orlandos calls a one aisled basilica type church. Its overall measurements, not including the front porch, are 9.47 meters in length and 4.65 meters in width. The porch at the west end of the church is 1.28 meters wide at its south end <sup>and</sup> 1.05 at the north; and equal in length with the

width of the church, but it becomes .23 meters narrower 3.68 meters from its south end. The porch is .90 meters above the ground level. A window is situated on the south side of the church 4.82 meters from the west end of the south wall. The window is 550 meters wide, .79 meters high and .90 meters above ground level. The window in the apse is .10 meters wide, .40 meters high and 1.25 meters from the ground level. The east wall of the church has the following horizontal measurements: from south end of wall to beginning of apse, distance A in fig. 28, 1.06 meters; distance B in fig. 28, along south side of apse, .85 meters; distance C, east side of apse, 1.20 meters; along north side of apse, distance F in fig. 29, .82 meters; and from apse to north end of the wall, distance G fig. 29, 1.18 meters. The vertical distances as marked in fig. 30 are the following: A, 2.00 meters; B, 1.05 meters; and C, .35 meters. The vertical distance on the north side of the church are marked according to fig. 29: A, 2.60 meters; B, 2.93 meters; C, 3.65 meters; D, 3.79 meters; and E, 2.72 meters. The horizontal distances are these: from line A to B, 1.80 meters; from B to C, that is to the east side of the dome 1.33 meters; from C to D, that is the width of one segment of the dome, 1.80 meters; and from D to E, to the end of the church 3.99 meters. The dome is octagonal with narrow windows cut in the east and west faces. It is low and low pitched and fairly wide in comparison to the other churches at the site.

The porch on the west side of the church is reached by two steps at its north end. The height of the church from the porch to the roof marked A in fig. 33 is 2.36 meters. The entrance from the porch to the vaulted narthex is by a door 2.00 meters from the south corner of the west wall. The door itself is .83 meters wide and 1.73 meters high. The narthex is 2.03 meters by 3.60 meters, it has a pebble floor, and a vaulted ceiling. The vault is 2.47 meters at its highest point and its thrust begins at 1.85 meters. The walls of the narthex bind with the walls of the church proper so they were built together. The door between the narthex and the church proper is .78 meters wide on the narthex



side and 1.12 meters on the church side while its height is 1.64 meters all the way through. This door is 1.37 meters distance from the north wall of the narthex and .96 meters from the north wall of the church, so it can be seen that the walls of the church are slightly thicker than the walls of the narthex.

The interior of the church is a simple one aisled basilica in style. There is another slight thickening of the walls just to the rear of the iconostasis (.30 meters on each side). A very large and fairly high dome covers the whole central part of the church. The diagonal measurements of this central part are these: from northeast to southwest 4.59 meters and from southeast to northwest 4.51 meters. The four sides of the area under the dome measure 3.20 meters on the west, 3.23 meters on the south, 3.25 meters on the east, and 3.24 meters on the north. In the south wall there is a window 1.16 meters from the east end of that wall. The window is .34 meters wide, .98 meters high, and 1.26 meters above ground level. The dome is supported by filled in arches set into the north, west and south walls, and a real arch on the east side. These filled in arches begin their thrust 1.72 meters above ground level and reach their highest point at 3.26 meters. There is a free band .24 meters wide below the dome and above the arches and pendentives. The arch on the east is 1.39 meters deep and it begins its thrust 2.00 meters <sup>above ground level</sup> and reaches its high point at 3.02 meters. The half dome formed by the apse is 2.57 meters from the ground at its highest point, and it is 1.47 meters across its western opening. The window in the apse widens as it comes towards the inside and though it is only .10 meters on the outside, its width is .57 meters on the inside.

This sort of church is a common enough type. One can tell by looking at it that it is not a byzantine church mostly because of its low broad dome. The type was popular in Greece during the period of Turkish domination, and there are many examples of this simple type of basilica in Athens and its vicinity. Soteriou published many such churches in the *Εὐπετ' ἱερὰ* <sup>33</sup> for Athens and most of them he dates to the period of Turkish rule. Orlandos has published many such churches

also and it was in his volume of the *Επετηρίδιον* <sup>34</sup> that the church that seems to me to come closest to St. Nicholas at Aigosthena was found. It is another church of St. Nicholas in Patisia on Kolokythos St. in the fields of Thomas Gkiza. It is similar in many ways, almost all ways except that its dome is round rather than octagonal. Orlandos dates it to the 16th or 17th century. I would say that St. Nicholas at Aigosthena could be given a like date.

In conclusion we can just outline what we have inferred about the history of Aigosthena in the middle ages. It had a large and seemingly well built basilica in the 5th or early 6th century. At some time this basilica was destroyed. We think that in the late 13th or 14th century the church of St. Anna was built within the ruins of the basilica. It is not likely that the basilica was destroyed much before the church of St. Anna was built for it would be contrary to tradition to leave a sanctified spot without some sort of holy edifice for too long a time. We know the ancient walls were repaired and they look as if they might have been repaired either in late byzantine times or during the early period of the Frankish rule in Greece. We also think that the church on the acropolis was built sometime in the 12th century. Might we not link all of these assumptions together and deduce an assumed history for part of the middle ages? Could we not say that in <sup>a</sup> period of unrest, decentralization, and at times <sup>s</sup> near anarchy in the Byzantine Empire in the 12th century before the Fourth Crusade that the citizens of Aigosthena repaired the ancient walls within which they lived and set about to defend themselves? Then could we not say that the acropolis was stormed and taken by the Franks ~~in~~ during their five year long siege of Aegeroninth ( 1205-1210 ), and that in that taking the basilica was destroyed, only to have its place taken by a new and smaller church within a century? The would it not be possible that the Franks themselves repaired the damage they had done to the walls and settled down there only to sell out to the Venetians who would always appreciate another port and another fort defending a port? Whether the Venetians thought the place worth defending against the

Turks is a moot point, and we need not discuss it here since there appears to be no evidence one way or the other. Life went on in Turkish times, but not at too fast a pace, for, though a new church could be built in the 16th or 17<sup>th</sup> century, by the beginning of the 19th century there were few if any inhabitants living regularly at Aigosthena. The people who are there now are of Albanian stock, probably descendants of those Albanians who had come to Greece in the 17th century,<sup>35</sup> and it is likely that the Albanians brought the new name to the place.<sup>36</sup>

These conclusions may be accepted or not, but in the light of the evidence offered in this paper they must at least be considered.

In the course of this excavation Professor Orlandos has removed the exterior wall of the Byzantine church which is shown in Plate 6, Fig. 22. In addition, he has cleared away the plaster and whitewash from the exterior walls of the Byzantine church, thus exposing some of the original masonry. This shows the relieving arch over the entrance to great advantage.

## A D D E N D U M

In the autumn of 1954 a few months after this paper was written, Professor A. Orlandos began a systematic excavation of the ruined basilica which is described and measured in this paper (pp. 10-11 and plan V).

Although the results of this excavation have not been published, a cursory examination of the remains shows that the basilica had a broad nave with two aisles on either side. The floors show evidence of mosaics, especially in the narthex. The area of the sanctuary (templum) is more difficult for the layman to appreciate owing to the presence of the later Byzantine church. One can note, however, that Professor Orlandos seems to have recovered some fragments of the members of the chancel screen. Adjoining the church on the south is a small baptistry in a relatively good state of preservation. The main details of the font can be easily recognized. Slightly east of the baptistry, with a different orientation, are the remains of what must be an earlier building. One wall is preserved to a height of about a meter and appears to have on its inner face a series of plaster panels of different colors. Whether the basilica had an atrium or not was difficult to ascertain, although there seemed to be some foundations running westward from the narthex.

In the course of this excavation Professor Orlandos has removed the enclosure wall of the Byzantine church which is so prominent in Plate 6, Fig. 22. In addition, he has cleared much of the plaster and whitewash from the exterior walls of the Byzantine church, thus exposing some of the original brickwork. This shows the relieving arch over the entrance to great advantage.

C.W.J.E.  
Feb. 15, 1955

NOTES

I want to express my gratitude to the people who have helped me with this paper. I want to thank Miss M. Alison Frantz for her sympathetic attention when I told her about my project and her advice and photographic aid. Mr. Eugene Vanderpool, who first suggested the project to me, was always ready to listen to me and offer suggestions. Miss Claireve Grandjouan was another ready auditor who was generous with her time and advice. I owe a great debt to Miss Gloria S. Livermore who took time out from her own work to accompany me to Aigosthena and help me take more accurate measurements than I could take alone. She was unstinting of her time in Athens also and gave me invaluable aid in making the plans which accompany this paper. My many thanks to these and to others for their kindness and sympathy.

1. This figure comes from Benson, E.F., "Aegosthena." *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, XV (1895), pp. 314 - 324
2. Forchhammer, P.W., *Halkonia--Wanderung an den Ufer des Halkyonisches Meeres*. Berlin, 1857. p. 15
3. Salvator, Erzherzog Ludwig, *Eine Spazierfahrt in Golfe von Korinth*. Prague, 1876. pp 124-132. The book includes drawings of the ancient walls of Aigosthena and one drawing of the church of St. Nicholas. Salvator also comments on the flora of the area, and is struck by a very old Juniper tree that grew near the church of St. Nicholas.
4. Benson, op. cit. p. 324
5. It is spelled in latin characters, Yermenos, on sheet 1.9 Khalkis.
6. This information comes from Mr. Eugene Vanderpool. I have not seen it myself.
7. Ἐγκυκλοπαίδειον Λεξικὸν Ἑσπερολογικόν, 12 volumes, Athens, 1927, under Αἰγὸς θανά
8. Μεγάλη Ἑλληνικὴ Ἐγκυκλοπαίδεια, 24 volumes, Athens 1926, under Πόρον Γερμανία.

8. Kahane, Heinrich und Renée, Italienische Ortsnamen in Griechenland, Athens, 1940. p. 181. Unfortunately this excellent book<sup>1</sup> says nothing <sup>other</sup> about Porto Germano then, "Bucht, das alte Aigosthena." There is no mention of Porto Germano in Georgacas, Demetrius J., "Italian Place-names in Greece and Placenames from Italian Loan Words" in the Beitrage zur Namenforschung--Erster Jahrgang, 1959 Heft 2, pp 149-170 which supplements Kahane.
9. Inwood, Henry William, The Erechtheion at Athens, Fragments of Athenian Architecture and a Few Remains in Attica, Megara and Epirus, London, 1831. p. 46 ff. and plate XXXVIII.  
Leake, William M. Travels in Northern Greece, vol. II, London 1835, pp 405-407.  
Le Bas, M., "Voyages et Recherches Archéologiques en Grèce et en Asie Mineure" in Revue Archéologique, I, 1844. pp 168-175.  
Ross, Ludwig, Archaeologische Aufsätze. Erst Sammlung. Leipzig, 1855, pp236 f.  
Forchhammer, op. cit.  
Salvator, op. cit.  
Benson, op. cit.  
Frazer, J.G., Commentary to Pausanias's Description of Greece, vol. II, London, 1898, pp453f.
10. Bursian, C., Geographie von Griechenland, Leipzig, 1862, p. 232.
11. Le Bas, op. cit. p. 168
12. See page 77 f., History of Greece from B.C. 146 to A.D. 1864, Vol V, pp 180-192.
13. Finlay, George, History of Greece from B.C. 146 to A.D. 1864, Vol V, pp 180-192.
14. Sophocles, E.A., Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods, New York, 1887.
15. Millhouse, John, Nuovo Dizionario Italiano ed Inglese, Vol II, Milan, 1892.
16. There is one other possibility. I have looked up the word germadha in an albanian dictionary (Meyer, G., Etymologische Woerterbuch der Albanesischen Sprache, Strassburg, 1891.) and I find that it means ruins. It is just possible that when Albanians came to site they gave it this name and in the hellenization of the name it became Porto Germano rather than "Port of the Ruins."
17. Inwood, op. cit. p.47.
18. Most of the measurements in this paper were made when I was alone, and tho I was as accurate as I could be I would not doubt but that some of the measurements were not absolute. Some of the seeming inaccuracies in measurements, though, may be due to the bad building material or bad workmanship that went into building these small churches.
19. The diagonal measurements of the square formed by the meeting of the transept and the aisle are these: from northeast to south-

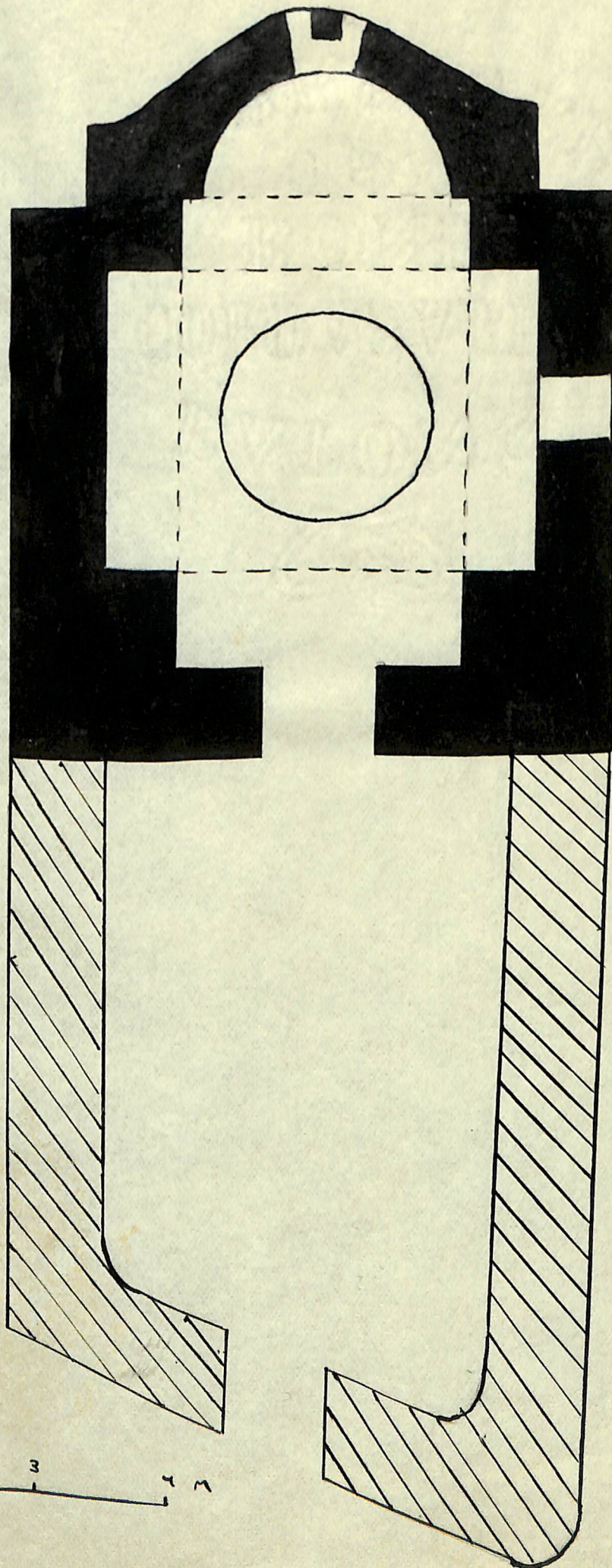
west 3.32 meters and from southeast to northwest 3.27 meters.

20. Orlandos, A., *Ἀρχαῖα τῆς Βυζαντινῆς Μουσικῆς τῆς Ἐλλάδος*, Vol V, 1939-40, p. 113ff.  
Another article by Orlandos in the same publication, Vol II, 1936, fascicle 1, January to June, pp 57-69 and in particular figure 3 on page 60 offers a good comparison for themoulding on the dome of the church.
21. The upper floor of this building is about one meter deeper (that is in its east-west measurement) than the ground floor. This is so because both stories have the east wall of the acropolis as their east wall. The ground floor is backed by the ancient wall, but the upper story is back by a repair which is one meter less in its thickness than ancient wall.
22. *Salvator*, op. cit. p. 126.
23. I was not able to find any other lintel exactly like these, but there are some close parallels to be found in Andrews, Kevin, *Castles of the Morea*, Princeton, 1953, especially page 220 and page 94 figures 101 and 102.
24. Benson, op. cit. p. 319  
*Salvator*, op. cit. p. 130
25. Andrews, Kevin, op. cit. page 171, figure 185.
26. *Ibid.* page 223 f. and figures 122, 123, 126.
27. Le Bas, op. cit. p. 169  
IG, Volume VII, *Inscriptiones Megaridis et Boeotiae*, ed. Dittenberger, Berlin, 1892, no. 207.
28. Orlandos, A. op. cit. Vol I 1935, p. 112, in a study of single aisled three apsed churches pp. 105 - 120.
29. *Ibid.*, op. 114, figure 10.  
Gerola, Giuseppe, *Monumenti Veneti Nell'Isola di Creta*, Vol. II, Venice, 1908, p. 216, figure 198 is a plan of St. Maria's at Kyrgiana (Kjirghjana) near Rethymnon in Crete. Discussion of the church is on page 211 and note 1.
30. Orlandos, loc. cit. p. 117, fig. 19.
31. *Ibid.* p. 110.
32. Orlandos, A. *Μεσαιωνικά Μνημεία τῆς Πελοποννήσου τῆς Ἀρκαδίας καὶ τῆς Κρήτης Ἰματῶν - Περτεγίου Πύργου καὶ Ἀργεῶν*, Athens, 1933, page 146, figures 191, 192, and 193.

33. Soutiriou, George and Kourouniotis, K., *Εὑρεμαίω τῶν Μεγα-*  
*αλοπολιτῶν Μυνηίων* - Vol I, *Αἰών*, fascicle 2, Athens  
 t/ 1929, pages 96 to 103.
34. Orlandos, op. cit. page 140, figures 182 and 184.
35. Finlay, op. cit, Vol V. p. 118.
36. See note 16 above. I have come to think more of this possibility  
 as I have thought about it. It is far from sure, but it is also  
 extremely possible, or so it seems to me. According to Finlay, Vol  
 IV, page 30 ff., in the 19th century all of Attica and the Megarid  
 population was Albanian except for the two chief cities.



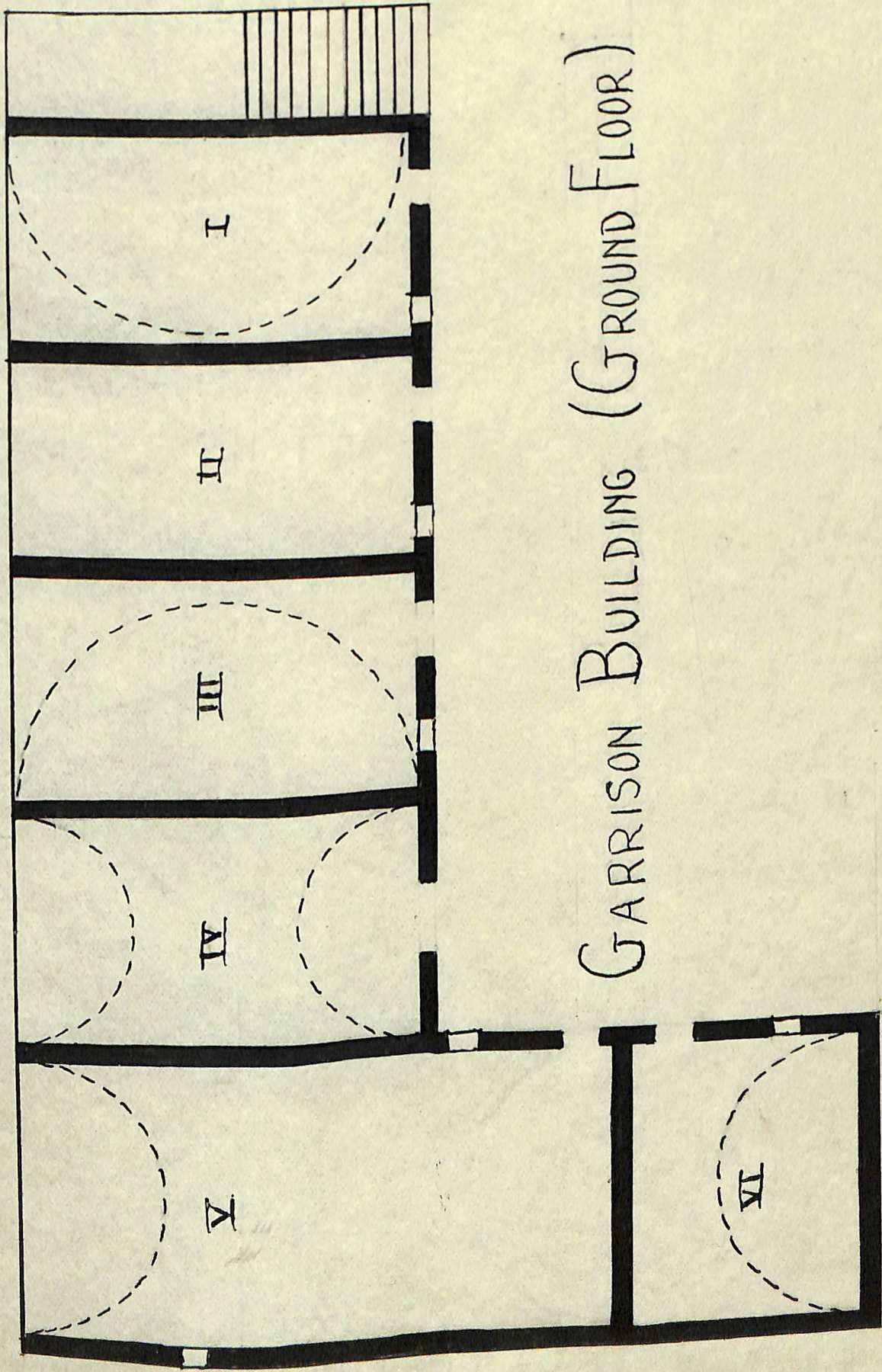
PLAN II



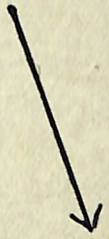
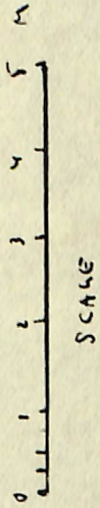
CHURCH OF  
ST. GEORGE

SCALE

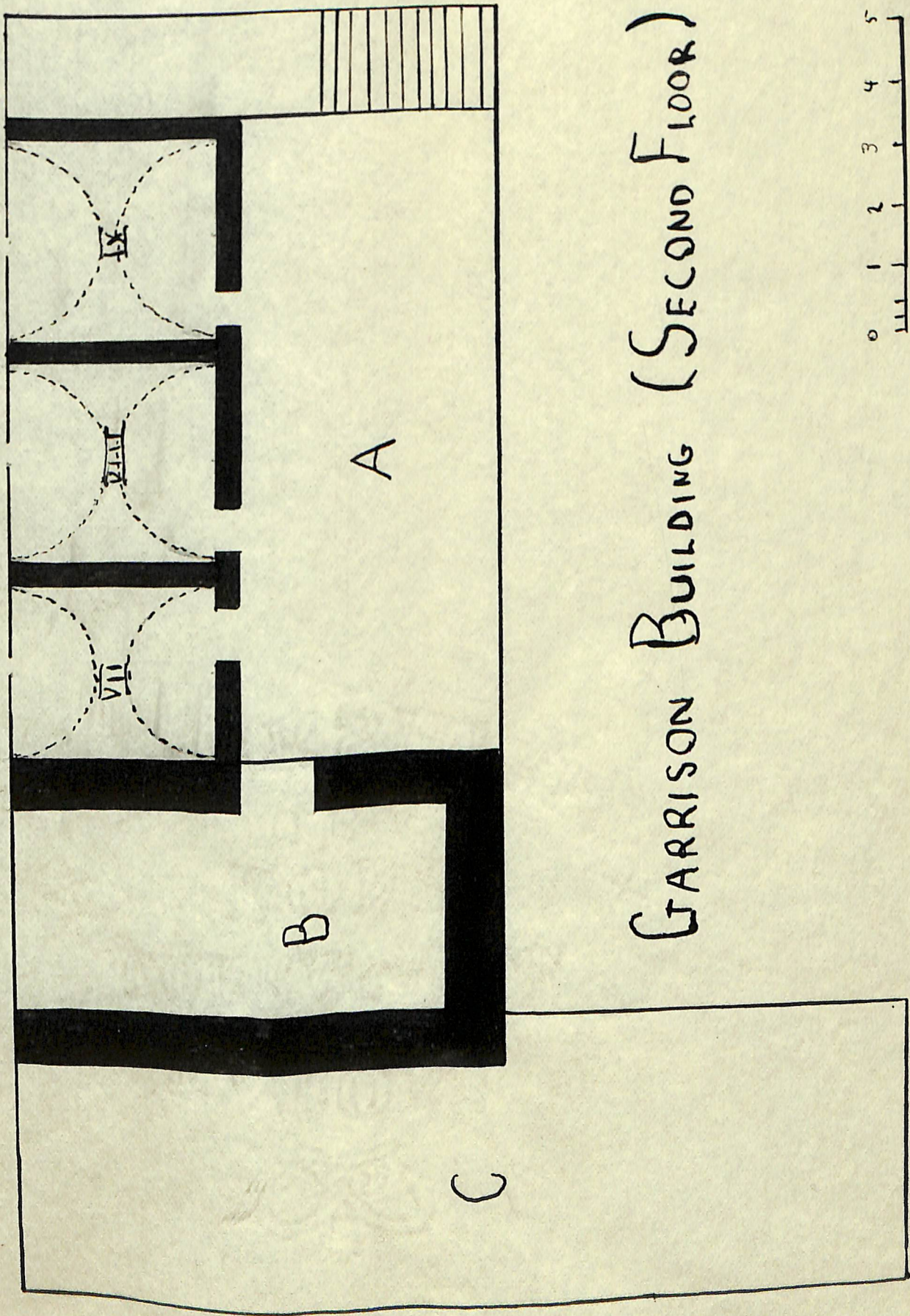
# PLAN III



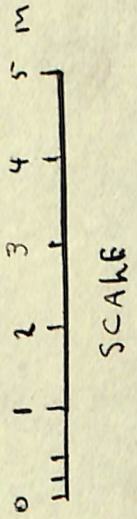
GARRISON BUILDING (GROUND FLOOR)



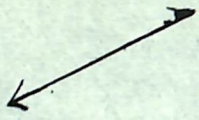
PLAN IV



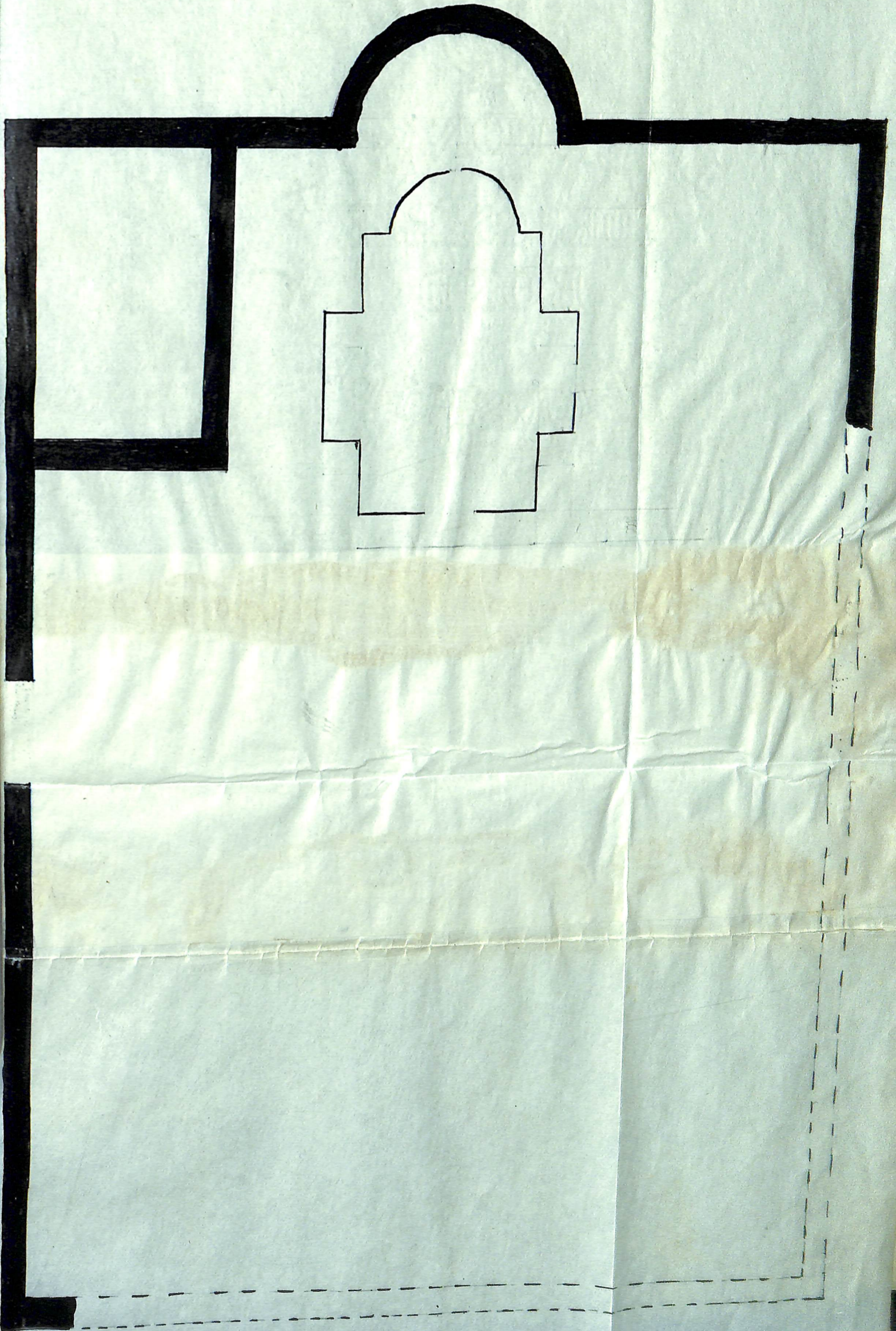
GARRISON BUILDING (SECOND FLOOR)



PLAN V

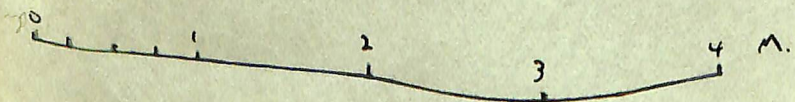
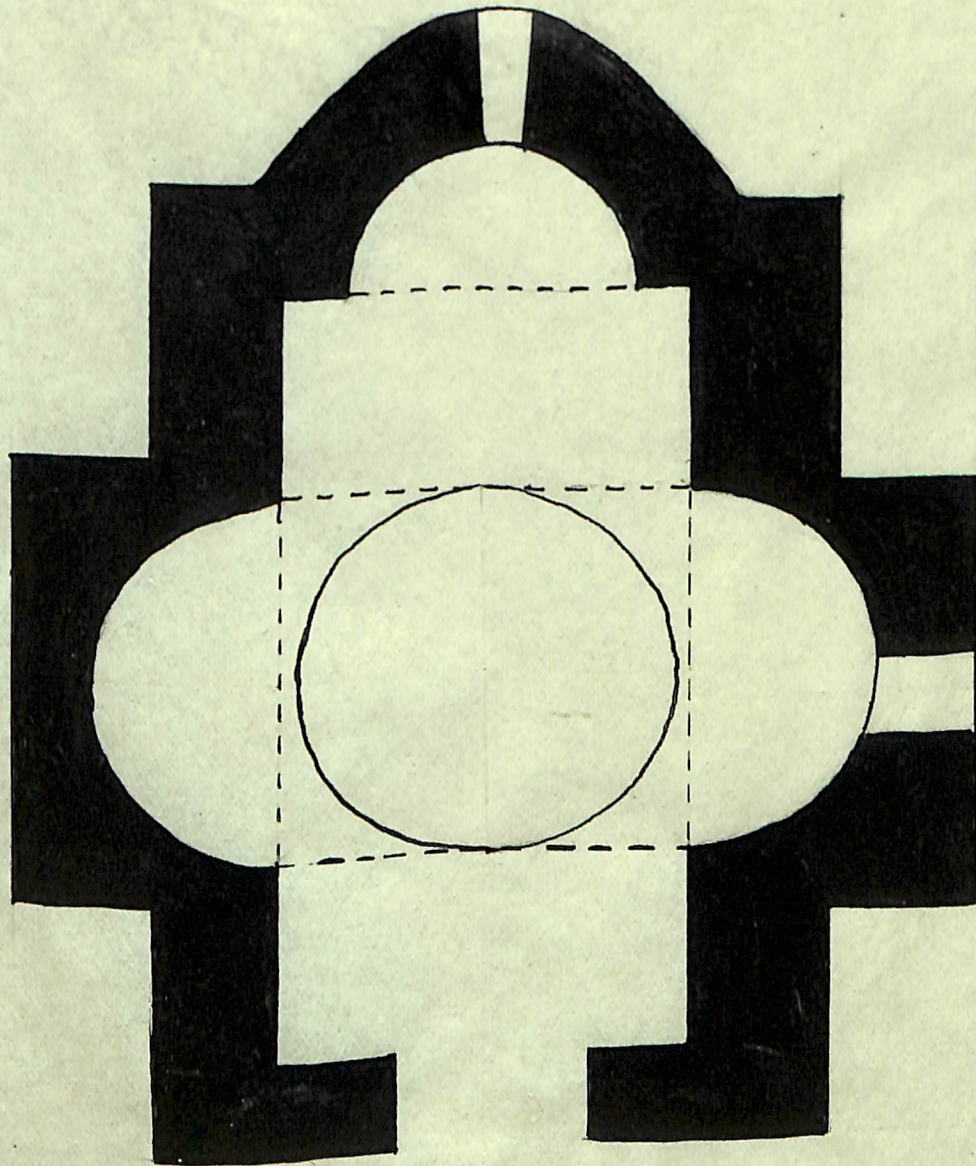


RUINED BASILICA OF THE VIRGIN  
WITH SKETCH PLAN OF THE CHURCH OF ST. ANNA

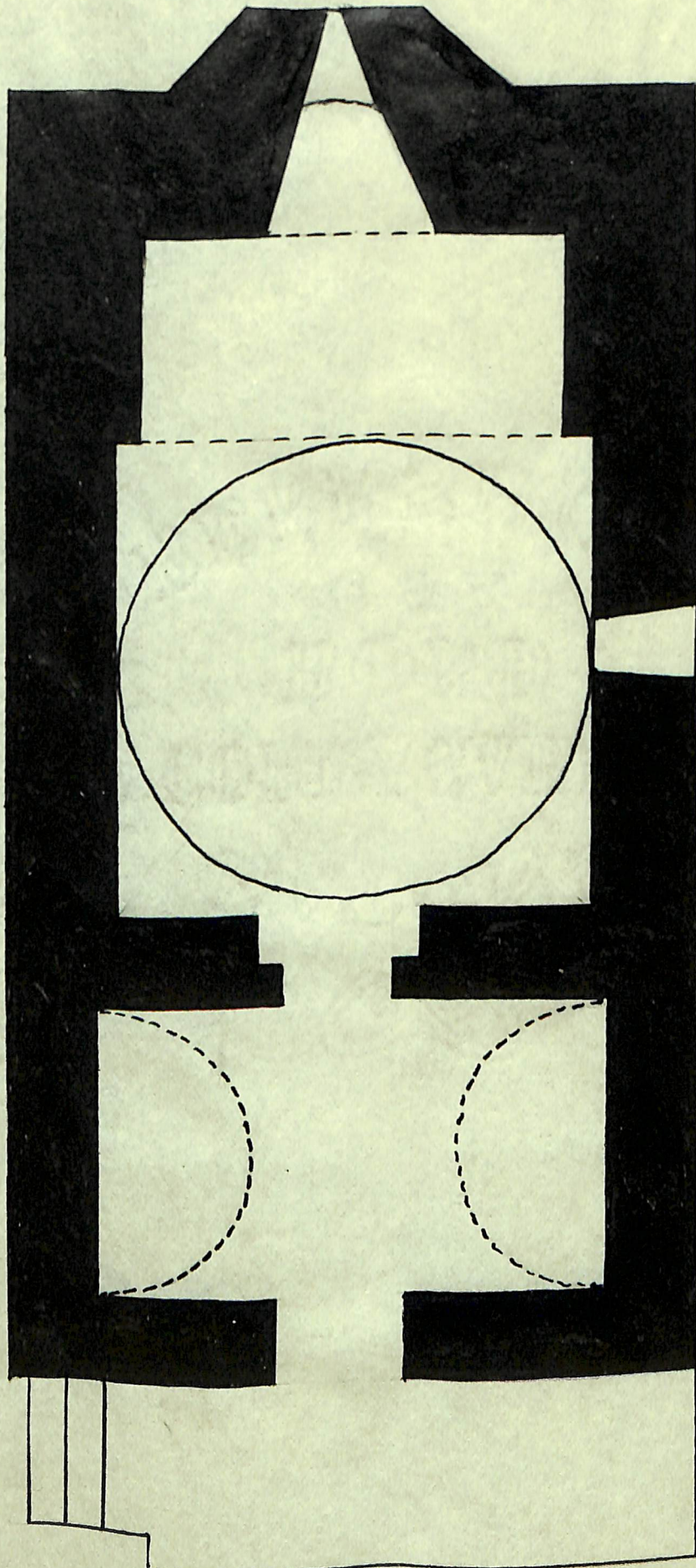


PLAN VI

CHURCH OF ST. ANNA



PLAN VII



CHURCH OF  
ST. NICHOLAS

SCALE

4 M.

PLATE 2



FIG. 3



FIG. 4



FIG. 5

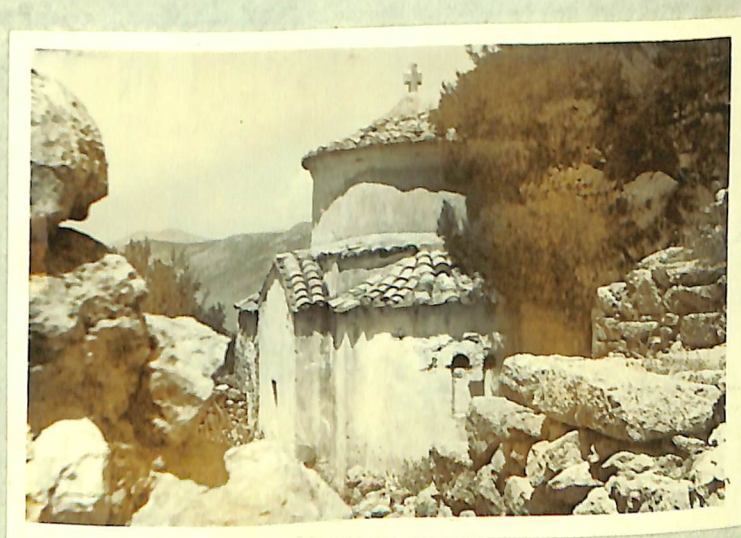


FIG. 6

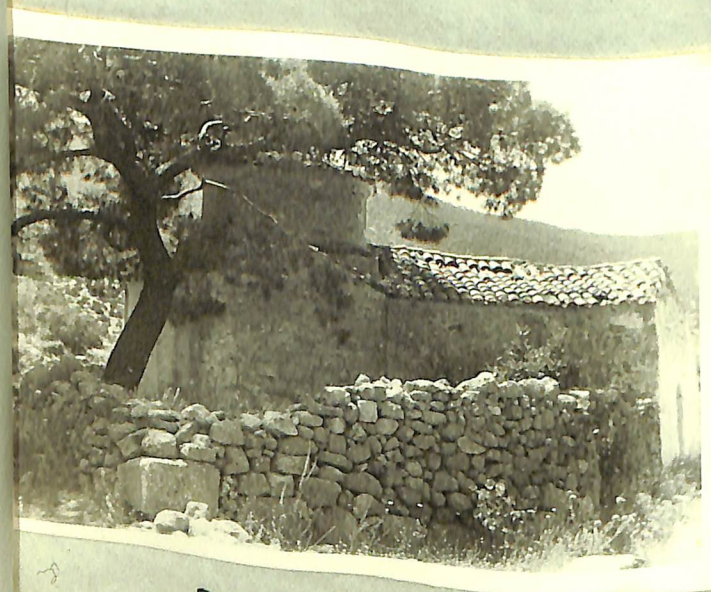


FIG. 7



FIG. 8

PLATE 3



FIG. 9



FIG. 10



FIG. 11



FIG. 12



FIG. 13



PLATE 4



FIG. 14



FIG. 15



PLATE 5



FIG. 16



FIG. 17



FIG. 18

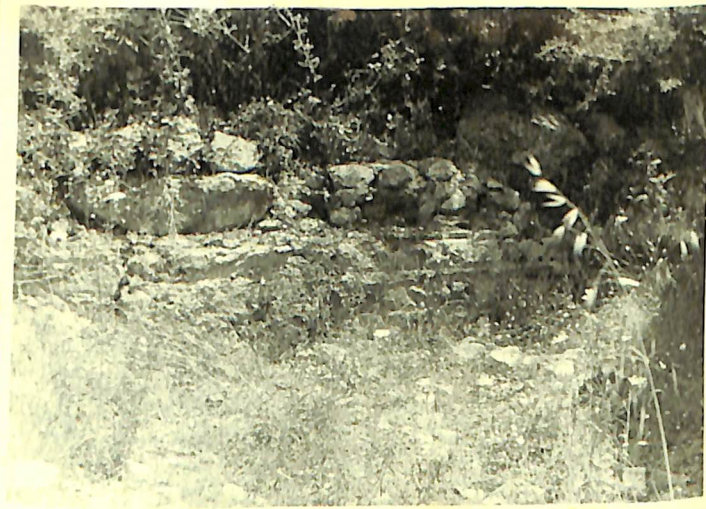


FIG. 19



FIG. 20



FIG. 21

PLATE 6



FIG. 22



FIG. 23

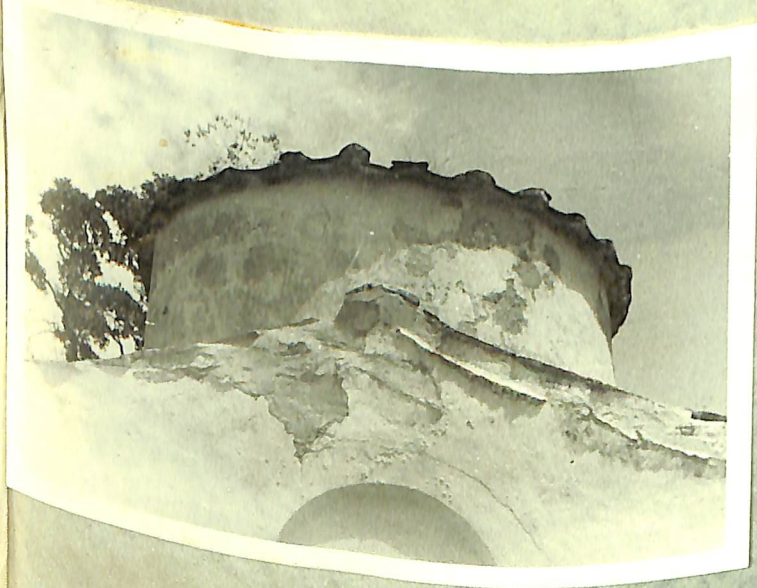


FIG. 24



FIG. 25

PLATE 7



FIG. 26



FIG. 27

PLATE 8



FIG 28



FIG 29



FIG. 30



FIG. 31



FIG. 32



FIG 33