

category of the Assyrian open court building. Though no floor level was found, this structure must clearly be dated to the period after the Assyrian conquest.

(Communicated by Volkmar Fritz)

#### *Yiftah'el, 1982*

Yiftah'el is a PPNB site located in Nahal Yiftah'el, north-east of H. Yiftah'el in Lower Galilee (map ref. 1719 2401). The site, approximately 400 × 100 m. in area, extends along the wadi in a north-east — south-west direction, and was discovered by A. Berman. It was initially examined as a surface site in February 1982 by A. Ronen of Haifa University and M. Lamdan and M. Davies of the Museum of Prehistory in Haifa. A salvage excavation was carried out in September–October 1982 by M. Lamdan and M. Davies with the help of O. Kurtzbard, O. Shurkin, Z. Ayalon and volunteers, and the Department of Public Works.

A large plaster floor with installations was discovered, in some parts showing evidence of two phases of repairs. On some areas of the floor were piles of pulses, cereals and animal bones. Above the floor was a layer of crumbly brick material with imprints of straw and branches, and above it a thick layer of grey clayey soil extending up to the surface. The artefacts included sickle-blades, arrowheads, axes, burins and 'naviform' cores, basalt grinding stones, sea shells, votive jade axes, greenstone beads, a broken female figurine and a piece of a 'white ware' bowl.

On the final day of excavation we uncovered a flexed human (female?) skeleton lacking a skull with flint chips between the fingers of her right hand. The skeleton was buried under a fallen roof made of branches, a layer of brick material and straw and a thin layer of plaster. Piles of lentils, probably set out for drying, lay above the roof layers. The position in which the skeleton was found enabled us to reconstruct the circumstances of the woman's death. She was kneeling on the floor collecting flint chips when the roof fell in, killing her at once. The skull was probably taken, plastered and buried under one of the plastered floors in the Neolithic village.

(Communicated by Modi Lamdan)

#### *Tel Dor, 1983\**

The fourth season of excavations at Tel Dor was conducted in July and August 1983. The excavations were conducted by E. Stern on behalf of the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, and the Israel Exploration Society, in cooperation with H.P. Goldfried of the State University of California, Sacramento, H.N. Richardson of Boston University and Renate Rosenthal-Heginbottom of the University of Göttingen. Also on the staff were I. Sharon and S. Yankelevich (field supervisors); J. Berg (surveyor); Bracha Guz-Zilberstein (registrar); O. Cohen, E. Frank, A. Gilboa, D. Kaufman and A. Kopczick (area supervisors and assistants); R.W. Younker (palaeontology); Z. Radovan (photographer); S. Dahan (administration); E. Dalal (draftsman). Students of the Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University, for whom it was the study excavation, also took part, as did about two hundred volunteers from various countries. The expedition received much assistance from Kibbutz Nahsholim, in particular from K. Raveh, and also from the staff of the Pardess-Hannah Agricultural School and members of the regional council of Hof ha-Carmel.

This year we continued to deepen the three areas opened in the eastern part of the mound in previous seasons in order to uncover large sections of the Persian period and Iron Age strata and to learn more about the plan of the residential quarter and fortifications of the Persian–Hellenistic town.

In *Area C*, the residential quarter which is the northernmost of the three areas, work continued on both sides of the portion excavated last year. On the western side we dug through the Hellenistic levels to reach those of the Persian period. It became clear that most of the Hellenistic walls had been robbed and only the floors were preserved; however, in the Persian phase the walls were found standing to a considerable height. Here we were able to confirm that the orthogonal plan of the residential quarter, comprised of long, narrow structures, had its beginnings in this period. During 1983 we dug below the street separating the two insulae and

\*Cf. above, pp. 117–119.

below the western insula. It seems that during the Persian period, in contrast to the Hellenistic level, the inner space of the houses was divided into long, narrow rooms. External and internal walls were built in the Phoenician style, with pillars of masonry and a fill of field stones in between, utilizing the local *kurkar* (hard sandstone).

At the eastern end of Area C, we extended the excavations into the region outside the Hellenistic city-wall. It was soon realized that the entire area is occupied by a brick construction at least 8 m. wide. We believe that this is the Iron Age city-wall; its exact dimensions will be determined next season. Inside the Hellenistic city-wall we reached the Persian period levels in a narrow trench, and a similar picture to that of the western side emerged; the planning of the streets and houses was identical in both periods.

In Area A, the southern continuation of the residential quarter, we also reached levels of the Persian period. Several superimposed floors were uncovered, as were some of the partition walls which divided the inner space of the house in the same manner as in Area C.

In both areas many finds of the Hellenistic and Persian periods were found, including coins of both periods which will help us to determine the exact dates of the various phases. Of the other finds we will mention here a large painted krater and a large clay lamp consisting of a round bowl with straight walls from which project three large nozzles, both Hellenistic, and two bronze censers of the Persian period. Also discovered were clay and faience figurines and many clay lamps and pottery vessels of both periods.

In the southern part of Area B, the gates area, we excavated below the levels of the Hellenistic period which were reached last year. Here we uncovered two superimposed city-gates (Fig. 1). The uppermost one is a two-chambered gate to which leads a stone-paved square from east to west. Of the gate, which was partially covered by the Hellenistic city-wall, we have uncovered the carefully laid stone paving of the entrance and both chambers, above which was a layer of hard *kurkar*. One socket of the outer door, made of smoothed basalt, was found intact; in the centre of the entrance was found a socket for a bolt

which closed the door vertically (Pl. 30:B). The second door socket is still under the Hellenistic city-wall and we hope to discover it next season. Another stone-paved square was cleared which led from the inner entrance of the gate into the town. During the later phases of the Persian period, additional buildings were erected on the square; in the final Persian phase the entire gate went out of use, leaving only a narrow passage from which a narrow street led into the town.

Below the two-chambered gate were discovered the remains of a four-chambered gate with a tower flanking each side of its façade. The gate was only partially excavated but its plan, which closely resembles that of the four-chambered gate of Megiddo, is clear. There is, however, a striking difference between the two; the construction of the gate at Dor is much more massive. The width of one of the inner piers, which was entirely uncovered, was 2.5 m.; it was built of two huge limestone boulders probably brought from the Carmel range. The western side of the pier, facing the city, was covered by well-dressed orthostats. The chambers were filled with brick material and their openings onto the gate passage were closed by a wide wall, evidently to strengthen the construction. It seems that the entire stone base of the gate was built at one time to carry the heavy superstructure of bricks. The gate is preserved to a height of about 2 m. This is apparently the first known example of the monumental Phoenician architecture of the Iron Age; other such structures have not yet come to light in Phoenician centres in the eastern Mediterranean.

We may assume that the four-chambered gate was in use during the ninth and eighth centuries B.C.E. and was destroyed by the Assyrians at the end of the eighth century. In the two-chambered gate was found only material of the Persian period and there can be no doubt that it was in use at the beginning of that period. It is, however, logical to assume that its construction and first use took place in the Assyrian period, and that only material of its last phase is represented. Below the four-chambered gate was found a layer dating from the tenth century B.C.E., which we reached only in small sections.

At the western end of Area B we opened a number of new squares along the main Hellenistic and Roman street leading into the town. Here

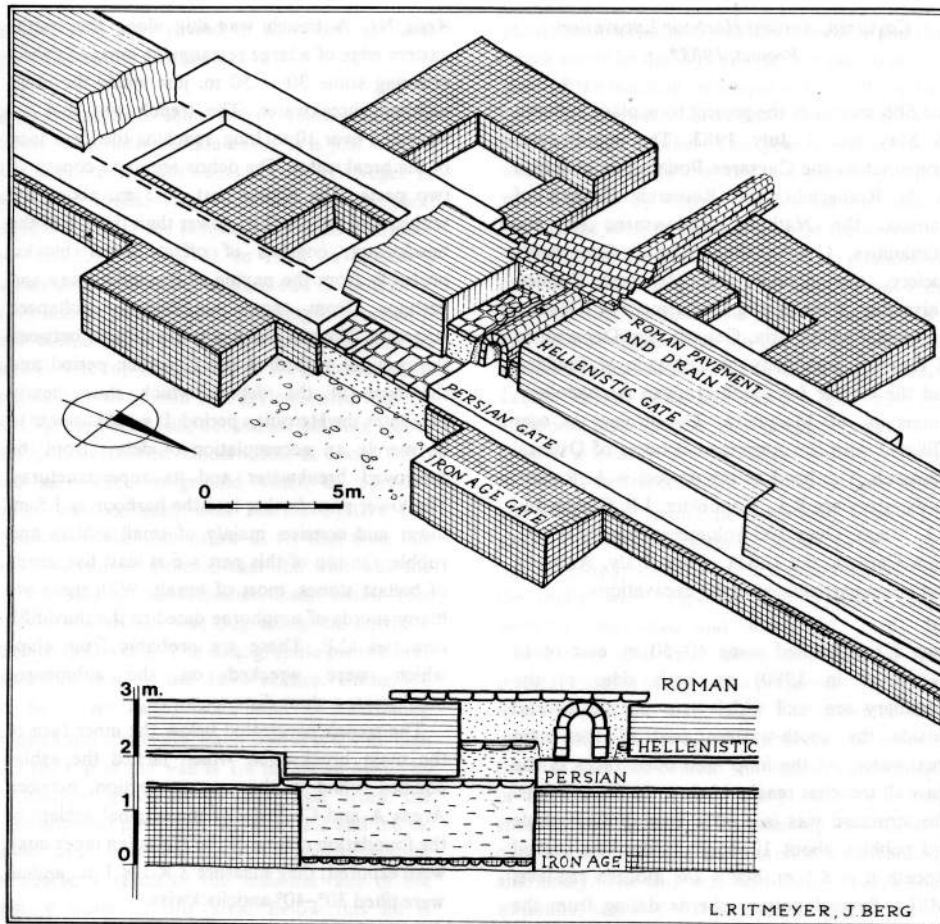


Fig. 1. Tel Dor, isometric view and section of the gate area.

more parts of the beautifully constructed Roman stone drain were cleared, as well as the extension of the street. We found here an Assyrian stamp seal out of context and a small hoard of Roman coins in a jug.

In the northern part of Area B we have worked through four phases of the Iron Age, the earliest of which probably dates from the tenth century B.C.E. This area, located close to and north of the city-gate, was at that time a residential quarter. In the lower phases, where the building remains are better preserved, one may discern a

coherent plan; a line of rooms was probably attached to the city-wall, and was flanked on the west by a narrow street on the other side of which were additional houses.

In this area were recovered many pottery vessels and sherds, some local and others imported, and a unique find in the shape of an oval Iron Age stamp seal made of an animal's horn and depicting two stags standing on mountain-tops (Pl. 30:C).

*(Communicated by Ephraim Stern)*