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Report on the Archæological Survey of Ceylon for 1946

(Dr. S. PARANAVITANA)

DECEMBER, 1948

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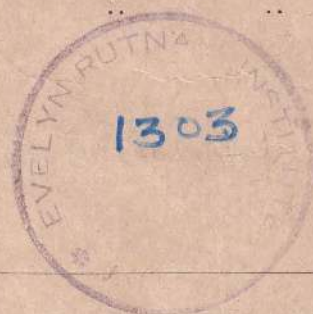
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ARCHÆOLOGICAL SURVEY OF CEYLON.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1946.

PART I.—ADMINISTRATIVE.

INTRODUCTORY.

AFTER four years of temporary sojourn in various places as stated in the last Administration Report the office was once more brought back, in April, 1946, to the premises opposite the Colombo Museum which we had to vacate in 1942. The records, the library, the photographic studio and the collections are once more housed under the same roof but the premises are totally inadequate and not quite suitable to serve as the headquarters of the Department. The ordinary amenities which are conducive to efficient work are lacking and the place is crowded to capacity, there being hardly any room for future additions to the departmental staff. If the department is to function satisfactorily, the first requisite is a reasonably comfortable place for its officers to work in when they return after a strenuous time in the field. As things are at present, the conditions under which the officers of the Department are obliged to work in Colombo are hardly better than those to which they have necessarily to submit themselves when in the field.

PERSONNEL.

2. Mr. D. R. Kannangara, Clerk in the Executive Class of the Clerical Service, was appointed Chief Clerk with effect from June 1, 1946. Mr. D. F. Welgama, Clerk, G.C.C., was transferred to the General Treasury on August 1, 1946, and Mr. G. Kulatunga, Clerk, G.C.C., was appointed to the staff from September 2, 1946. Mr. J. A. Sugathadasa was appointed Stores Clerk with effect from June 1, 1946. Mr. C. L. Wirekoon was appointed to the newly created post of Inspector on May 8, 1946.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 1946.

3. The total expenditure of the department for the financial year 1945-46 was Rs. 166,461·86 distributed under the following sub-heads:—

	Rs.	c.
1. Personal emoluments	49,706	19
<i>Other Charges.</i>		
2. Travelling	11,574	56
3. Stationery, office furniture and office requisites	289	38
4. Conservation and acquisition of ancient monuments and excavation	85,238	10
5. Maintenance of departmental quarters, lines, &c.	8,119	4
6. Publications	441	44
7. Library	206	41
8. Rent	375	0
9. Incidental expenses	1,843	21
<i>Special Expenditure.</i>		
10. Scholarship in Archaeology (Epigraphy)	517	60
11. Training of a Probationary Archaeological Chemist in India (revote)	—	—
12. Remuneration and travelling of Archaeological Chemist from India invited to treat ancient frescoes and that of his peon for 6 months	—	—
<i>New Sub-heads.</i>		
13. Restoration of Archaeological Reserves occupied by the military	6,379	16
14. Moving of office back to Colombo	1,771	79
	116,755	67
Total	166,461	86

4. A sum of Rs. 1,102·10 was received by the Department from the sale of publications, photographs, picture post-cards and maps during the year under review.

LIBRARY.

5. The library, which had been partly housed at Anurādhapura and Polonnaruwa, was brought back to Colombo and the shelves have now been assembled. As in the previous few years, the vote allowed for the library was a meagre sum of Rs. 200 which was barely sufficient for the purchase of preservatives, &c., necessary for the general care of the books. Six new books have, however, been added to the library. As a result of the scarcity of material, the Government Press could not undertake any binding work. No books, therefore, have been bound during the year.

ARCHÆOLOGICAL RESERVES.

6. The Archæological Reserves were cleared and maintained in good condition as usual and the roads and footpaths in them were kept under proper repair. Stray cattle are causing much damage to foundations of brick walls but the cost of material is still prohibitive to undertake the work of enclosing the more important areas at least. The culvert connecting the new road at Mihintalē to the Galkulam road was completed during the year. Much progress was also made in the construction of the motor road round the rock at Sigiriya and a number of culverts were built. Yāpahuva and Arankālē were also cleared and, at the former place, the stumps of trees on the City Wall were removed, making its maintenance in the future a comparatively easy task.

7. The old Dutch Fort at Kaṭuvana was being maintained by this Department, though the site itself has not been proclaimed an Archæological Reserve. A new maternity home has, however, been built very close to the Fort between its wall and the high road. The ground for levelling the site has been cut too close to the Fort walls and access to the monument has also been blocked by the modern buildings. The Department was not consulted when this site was selected for the hospital and, as our travelling was severely restricted at the time, no inspections in that area could have been undertaken till 1946, when this state of things at Kaṭuvana first came to the knowledge of the Department. The Government Agent has been requested to proclaim the site as an Archæological Reserve and to provide suitable access to the monument without the necessity to pass by the side of the hospital atrine as at present.

PROTECTED MONUMENTS.

8. Vijayasundarārāmaya, in the village of Beligala in Beligal Kōralē, Kāgalla District and Dighavāpi Cētiya, in the village of Oluvil in Akkaraṇ Pattu, Batticaloa District, were declared to be protected monuments under section 18 of the Antiquities Ordinance. (See notifications in *Government Gazette* No. 9,624 of November 1, 1946, in the case of Vijayasundarārāmaya and the corrected notification in *Gazette* No. 9,692 of April 18, 1947, for Dighavāpi Cētiya).

9. Of these, the Vijayasundarārāmaya was founded in the reign of Vijayabāhu III. (1220–1224); it played a prominent part in the ecclesiastical history of Buddhism in the reign of Parākramabāhu II. (1225–1269). The *vihāra* is situated in the vicinity of the rock of Beligala on which the Tooth Relic found a place of refuge in the troubled times which followed the fall of Polonnaruwa. A description of the site, which has now passed into private ownership, will be found in Bell's Report on the Kāgalla District. Much of the ancient remains has been obliterated when the site was reoccupied in the last century, but what is still to be seen on the site are of considerable interest, particularly in view of the fact that architectural remains of the Daṁbadeniya period are not very many.

10. Dighavāpi is a *dāgāba* of colossal size and is identified with the *stūpa* of that name founded by Saddhātissa. This identification rests on no conclusive evidence but the size of the *dāgāba* alone is proof that it was of some importance in early days. Its restoration is about to be undertaken by a Buddhist Society and the "protection" of the monument is necessary if this work is to be guided along proper channels. Many ancient stones from the site, it is said, have been removed and utilized in the restoration of neighbouring tanks undertaken towards the close of the last century.

11. Of the numerous *dēvāles* in the vicinity of Kandy, that at Dodanvala in Yaṭinuvara is not second to any with regard to its historical associations. That redoubtable warrior, Rājasimha II, (1635–1687) is said to have received divine aid at this place for one of his victories over the Portuguese and the golden crown gifted to the local god by the grateful monarch is now preserved in the Kandy Museum. The *sapu* tree under which Rājasimha is said to have rested is still shown to the visitor. The *dēvāle* itself is of little architectural value, but the avenue of majestic *Nā* trees which leads to the shrine is of particular interest. It was proposed to construct a motor road along this *Nā* avenue. This proposal, had it been carried out, might not have caused much direct injury to the *Nā* trees themselves, but the hooting of motor horns in the sylvan surroundings of the *dēvāle* would have been singularly inappropriate and would have spoiled the charm which the place now possesses. This matter was brought to my notice by the Public Trustee and at my request the Government Agent, Central Province, had the plans of the proposed road so altered that the *Nā* avenue would be left alone. The trees themselves have been declared to be ancient monuments under Section 17 of the Antiquities Ordinance.

12. *Portuguese Church at Accuwēli*.—The remains of this Portuguese church (Annual Report for 1940–45, p. 17) were conserved after being cleared of the *dēbris* in which they were buried. What is left of the Church House gives one an idea of similar features in other religious establishments of the Portuguese period in Ceylon. The remains of the Church have been exposed to the original floor level and the bases of the pillars are now visible. The complete architectural scheme of the religious establishment at this place cannot, however, be exposed, for a part of the ground plan of the Church is now buried under the modern school building. (Plate I.).

13. *Āmbākke Dēvāle*.—The work of the partial restoration and conservation of the Āmbākke Dēvāle made good progress during the year. The first thing that required attention was to get the new timbers carved in conformity with the old design. In order to test the skill of the men who were entrusted with this work, one of the pieces to be replaced was carved by them for inspection by the Advisory Board. This did not come to the required standard, for the carvers had no clear conception of what was required in a work of this nature. What they were striving after was to produce work of good quality according to accepted taste and not the reproduction of the old work as far as this is humanly possible. In order to achieve a reasonable degree of faithfulness to the original, one or other of two courses was necessary. Elaborate working drawings of the original carvings had to be supplied to the workmen, or the old timber had to be kept by their side, while they were turning out the new work. The latter course was found to be more economical but for this the building had to be dismantled. It was necessary in any case to dismantle the roof for the conservation and restoration of the structure. Additional expenditure was not incurred by having done this somewhat earlier than the conservation work demanded.

14. From the strictly archæological point of view it would have been adequate if the decayed carved timbers were replaced with new plain timbers. But such a course was not at all acceptable to the Basnāyaka Nilame who represented the worshippers' point of view. And, in this matter, the archæologist's opinion had to be subordinated to that of the devotees of the temple and it was decided that the new pillars and other architectural members taking the place of the old should be carved to match the old work. The work of carving the necessary timber was almost completed by the end of the year under review.

15. *Mahasāya at Mihintalē*.—The work of restoring the Mahasāya at Mihintalē (Report for 1940–45, p. 10) started hopefully and was continued satisfactorily for some time. Though the permit was issued in the name of the Trustee, the work of restoration was managed by a Society which had no legal status. The Vihārādhipati himself became the Trustee in 1945 and his relations with the Society gradually deteriorated and there was open conflict between the two parties on the full-moon day of Vesak 1946. The state of affairs was such that the Public Trustee advised me to cancel the permit for the restoration of the Mahasāya. I was myself convinced that conditions for the smooth progress of this work were lacking and acted in accordance with the Public Trustee's advice.

16. *Ruvanvālisāya*.—The restoration of the Elephant-wall and the Northern *vāhalkada* of this *dāgāba* was continued by the Society under some measure of supervision by this Department. The sub-committee of the Advisory Board on protected monuments dealing with the Ruvanvālisāya paid a visit to Anurādhapura and inspected this work of restoration. In the digging for laying the foundations of the Elephant-wall, a number of interesting finds came to light. Mention may be made here of a seated Buddha image of copper, gilt, which from its style can be assigned to a fairly early date, possibly to the sixth century. As a work of art, too, the image is of considerable merit. A casket of bronze, containing a collection of jewellery, was also picked up in the vicinity of the Elephant-wall. How this came to be here—whether deposited purposely or by accident—there is no means of deciding, for the discovery was not made in the presence of an officer of the Archaeological Department. Such data as would have been material in determining this question have not been recorded. The jewellery, which consists of a lady's nose and ear ornaments and the pieces of a necklace, is of considerable intrinsic value, being of gold and set with precious stones, and affords evidence of the taste in design and mastery of execution possessed by the jewellers who manufactured the ornaments. Mounted in the necklace, which was in pieces, were nine gold coins with legends in Arabic characters. The coins have been identified as those struck in the reign of the Abbasid Caliph al-Muti of Baghdad (946–974 A.D.) by his vassal Ishak Ibn Ibrahim (903–981 A.D.), the ruler of South Arabia. The names of both the Caliph and his vassal are found on the coins. The actual dates occurring in them are 343 and 349 A.H., i.e., 954 and 960 A.D. The coins must have come to Ceylon by way of trade and the jeweller who mounted them was unable to read the Arabic script, for, as mounted, the legends appear upside down. The presence of these coins among the finds sets the upper limit to the date to be assigned to the casket and its contents. The lower limit may reasonably be taken as the beginning of the eleventh century, when Anurādhapura was sacked by the invading Chōla hordes.

17. A few weeks after these objects were brought to light, a discovery of much greater archaeological significance was made at the same shrine. Towards the end of March 1946, the restoration of the Southern *vāhalkada* was taken in hand by the Society. Of the ancient fabric of this edifice the stone facing was preserved to a height of about 10 or 12 feet, but the Society had decided to dismantle and remove the remains of the old work and to build a completely new structure in its place. The preservation of the old masonry and using it as a base for the new work require technical ability of a high order which the workmen engaged by the Society did not possess. The work of dismantling was started without the knowledge of the Department and was carried out without heed to the observation and recording of archaeological evidence that might have been revealed in the course of it. A few days after the work of dismantling was taken in hand, an earthen-ware casket covered with a lid and containing reliquaries of gold and crystal was brought to light by the workmen. This was followed by the discovery of many more caskets, some of lime-stone and others of terra-cotta, with contents of the same type but of varying richness. The contents of the reliquaries were naturally taken by the people to be sacred relics and the discovery created quite a stir, first at Anurādhapura and later, when the news spread, all over the Island (Plates II., III.). Accounts of the discovery eventually reached the newspapers and it was from these that I became aware of it. I lost no time in arriving at the scene and making as systematic records of the discovery as were possible in the circumstances. The greater part of the old edifice had been dismantled at the time of my arrival and the objects found therein had been taken into the custody of the office bearers of the Society. The Society, within certain limits, co-operated with me in the work of having a record made of the discoveries but it was not possible to persuade them to carry out the remaining portion of the work of dismantling in a systematic manner. It had decided to lay the foundation stone of the new structure on an auspicious date not very far off and a number of important people had been invited to take part in the ceremony. The only thing which mattered from the Society's point of view was to have the foundation-laying carried out as arranged without inconvenience being caused to those who had promised to grace the occasion. Compared to this, some damage to old world objects or the loss of archaeological data was of little consequence to them and they could neither understand nor appreciate the fuss made by archaeologists about things of little or

no practical significance. The visit of the sub-committee of my Advisory Board happened to be made in the course of this discovery. It considered the matter in all its implications and advised me a course of action which I subsequently followed.

18. Within the limits thus imposed on me, I prepared drawings and photographs of the positions in which the objects were found and made as exhaustive a record of the objects themselves as it was possible in the circumstances. For the latter work all possible facilities were accorded me by the Ven'ble H. Rēvata, the High Priest of the Aṭamasthāna, and the President and other office-bearers of the Society. After the work of dismantling the old work had proceeded far enough to enable the laying of the foundation stones of the new structure, the Ven'ble High Priest and the office-bearers of the Society allowed the Department to dig in such manner as it desired round the bases of the two stelae which flanked the old edifice. This work was carried out under the supervision of Muhandiram P. Don Ambrose Wickramasuriya and yielded gratifying results.

19. Regarding the light which the discovery throws on the history of the monument and for a brief account of the objects themselves, reference may be made to the preliminary account published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch*, Vol. XXXVII., pp. 3-7. The interest created by the discovery was not limited to Ceylon and a short account of it supplied by me was published with a number of photographs in the *Illustrated London News* of January 11, 1947. I have also contributed to the *Annual Bibliography* of the Kern Institute a paper on the discovery which deals particularly with the purpose in having the caskets and the reliquaries embedded in the fabric of the *vāhalkaḍa*. An adequate treatment of the discovery would require a monograph of some length and it is hoped that the Department would in the near future produce such a work, for which the necessary data have been now collected.

20. Action was taken to have Regulation No. 24 framed under the Antiquities Ordinance so amended that it would be illegal in the future even for a person to whom a permit has been issued under section 21 of the main Ordinance to dismantle any part of the monument under restoration unless it be with the prior sanction of the Archæological Commissioner obtained in writing, and in the presence of the Archæological Commissioner or his representative. However stringent the law may be, it is not practicable to protect the relics of the past at places like the Ruvanvāli Dāgāba unless the Buddhists themselves realise that the preservation of works of art at their historic shrines is as much to their interest as it is to that of the archæologist. The department has taken every opportunity which presented itself in order to drive home this point to influential members of the Buddhist public who have anything to do with the maintenance of ancient shrines. Unfortunately, the prejudice that the Archæological Department is hostile to Buddhist interests dies hard and time is required to create conditions in which it will be possible for those who are concerned with the restoration and maintenance of religious shrines to meet on common ground with others who are anxious to safeguard the cultural heritage of the nation.

21. The ruins of the Eastern and Western *vāhalkaḍas* of the Ruvanvāli Dāgāba are yet intact and one may reasonably assume that objects of antiquarian interest lie buried in them as in the Southern *vāhalkaḍa*. The Northern *vāhalkaḍa* had been destroyed long ago and no one knows whether any antiquities were found therein. It was felt by the Department as also by the enlightened public, that what happened at the Southern *vāhalkaḍa* should not be repeated at the other two.

22. The preservation of the objects brought to light at the Southern *vāhalkaḍa* was also a matter which received similar consideration. According to the law as it is, these are the property of the Aṭamasthāna Committee and if that body so desires there is nothing to prevent the re-enshrinement of the objects. Religious sentiment would insist on certain objects being re-enshrined and there will be little justification in trying to prevent this. But in the case of the vast majority of the finds the intelligent Buddhists themselves are of opinion that these can be of greater value to their religion if preserved as objects throwing light on its past glory than if they were re-enshrined. The general feeling was that if the religious authorities were approached in the proper spirit, a good portion of

these antiquities could be preserved so that they will be available to future students of the Island's history and religion. If an Archæological Museum were to be opened at Anurādhapura in the vicinity of the Dāgāba, one of its wings could be set apart for such antiquities from the Ruvanvālisāya as would be available for exhibition. The antiquities will remain the property of the Aṭamasthāna Committee but they would be in the custody of the Archæological Commissioner who would classify and arrange them for exhibition and would be responsible for their safe-keeping. In this way the demands of religion and science might be reconciled.

23. These matters were discussed at a meeting of my Advisory Board and with its unanimous approval, a proposal was made to the Honourable the Minister of Education that financial provision be made in the Estimates of the Department for the excavation and restoration of the two remaining *vāhalkaḍas* of the Ruvanvāli Dāgāba by the Department and for the establishment of an Archæological Museum on the lines suggested above. The Honourable the Minister and his Executive Committee viewed this proposal with favour and provision to initiate these two projects was included in the Draft Estimates for 1946-47. But this provision was not found in the Budget as it was finally passed by the State Council. The Archæological Commissioner, therefore, found himself powerless to pursue these matters any farther, at least for the time being.

PART II.—CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH.

A.—ANURĀDHAPURA.

24. *Magul Uyana*.—The scheme of restoring the remains in the Royal Park (below the bund of the Tisā-vāva) and the laying out of the important site was continued during the year under review. The stone facing of the moat which enclosed the rectangular area containing the remains of three octagonal pavilions in the northern sector of the Park (see Report for 1940-45, p. 22), was restored and rebuilt on the southern and eastern sides (Plate IV.). The moat itself on these sides was cleared to its proper depth. These retaining walls had collapsed almost completely, only a few courses of stone having been preserved at the foundation. The stones, which are roughly hewn blocks, were found fallen down in the moat and buried in the silt which had partly filled it in during the course of about seven centuries. The retaining walls on either side of the causeway which gave access to the pavilions had also collapsed. They have also been rebuilt, utilising the old stones picked up in the moat. Thus has been prevented the washing away of the sides of the causeway and also of the two sides of the *maḷuva* on which the pavilion stands. The western side of the moat lies outside the boundaries of the Archæological Reserve and is now used as a paddy field. The restoration of the retaining wall on that side is therefore not possible for the present but action has been taken to add this portion of land to the Reserve.

25. The conservation of Pokuṇa A was taken in hand during the year. This Bath, which is to the north of the one already conserved (Report for 1940-45, pp. 19-25), was found in a much more dilapidated condition than the former. The limestone slabs with which the sides were faced have not stood the weathering so satisfactorily as the granite of Pokuṇas B and C. More stones were missing than in the other Bath and when the site was cleared and excavated some of the loose stones had been thrown here and there so that it was difficult to determine their original position. Muhandiram Wickramasuriya, however, was successful, while making conservation drawings, in determining the original position of a number of scattered stones and it has thus been possible to restore the Bath to a semblance of its original design. Due to the condition in which the Bath was found, it was necessary completely to dismantle its stonework and re-construct it in accordance with the original design. By the end of the year, in addition to the dismantling which had to be done very carefully, the re-laying of the stones of the pavement at the bottom and of the first gangway was completed. An interesting find made during the course of the work on this site was that of three silver coins of the Chēra king Vira-kerala.

26. *Dakkhina Thūpa*.—The mound popularly known as Elāla Sohona, situated to the south of the Bo-tree on the road to Isurumuni Vihāra, is a site to which the

local inhabitants attach much significance, though it hardly ever attracts the attention of the tourist or the pilgrim. As the name implies, popular belief takes it to be the monument erected by Duṭṭhagāmaṇi at the place where his adversary, Elāra, fell fighting. The name is evidently modern, for the word *sohona*, in the old language, never meant "a tomb" or "a monument in memory of the dead". *Sohona* (Skt. *śmaśāna*), in the literary language, means "cemetery" and it is in comparatively recent times that the word has acquired the secondary meaning of "tomb".

27. Mr. Bell, towards the close of the last century, carried out investigations at this site by opening trenches on the eastern and northern slopes of the mound and by levelling its top. The ordinary man of the day, no doubt, considered this work of Mr. Bell as sacrilege of a very heinous character and would have restrained him if he had been able to do so. But what he was incapable of doing he credited the gods with having done. Moved by his resentment, and possibly also acting on their own initiative, the gods, he fancied, decided to teach the impudent archaeologist a lesson that would never be forgotten and sent from nowhere a huge swarm of black hornets at the approach of which Mr. Bell and his men are said to have run away for their very lives and given the place a wide berth ever after. This "discomfiture of an archaeologist" is, to the villager in and around Anurādhapura, as true a narrative of history as the fight between Duṭṭhagāmuṇu and Elāra and is at times given credence even by people who ought to know better. Mr. Bell's own accounts of his work at the "Elāla Sohona" which, needless to say, are quite different from the popular tale and, compared to it, very unexciting, will be found in his Annual Reports for 1896 (p. 4), 1897 (p. 6), 1898 (p. 5), 1899 (p. 4) and 1900 (p. 5).

28. Mr. Bell questioned the popular identification of this mound and gave cogent reasons for taking it as the *stūpa* of the Dakkhina Vihāra—one of the principal monastic establishments of ancient Anurādhapura. Such topographical information concerning the Dakkhina Vihāra as can be gathered from the chronicles tends to confirm Mr. Bell's identification. Mr. Hocart, however, has pointed out that even if it were taken to be a *stūpa* it is not necessarily opposed to the popular view that the mound is the monument built to commemorate Elāra. But he has not made a study of the available topographical information and Mr. Bell's view must be considered as still holding good.

29. For nearly half a century after Mr. Bell ceased operations at "Elāla Sohona", the mound received hardly any notice from the archaeologist, though the site was maintained in a tolerable state of tidiness by having the rank vegetation cleared periodically. The trenches opened by Mr. Bell became partially filled in and, with shady trees lining them on both sides, they became very good substitutes for public latrines for the people who flock to Anurādhapura during the religious festivals in May and June. They also made use of the summit of the mound for the same purpose and the departmental guards confessed failure in preventing this nuisance from being committed by people at a shrine at which their ancestors, many centuries ago, worshipped devoutly and which would again be reverently treated by them when its real character is realised. It was, therefore, decided to make a start with the work of clearing the remains of the *stūpa* of the vast quantity of *débris* in which they were buried. The trees which were on the mound and lent it a picturesque appearance were felled and the work of excavation itself was started in October, 1946. The labourers engaged on this work during the year at no time exceeded 50. The spoil earth had to be taken a considerable distance away to the private lands on the other side of the high road. From the summit of the mound, the base of the *dāgāba* was at a depth of 34 ft. and from the base it was necessary to clear to a distance of 52 ft. in order to remove the *débris* from the platform on which the *dāgāba* stood. The work, therefore, was one in which quick results were not to be expected.

30. In the trenches which Mr. Bell opened on the northern and eastern slopes of the mound was found clear evidence to show that this *dāgāba*, too, like the other great *stūpas* of Anurādhapura, had ornamental frontispieces or altars which are popularly referred to as *vāhalkaḍas*. But of the carved stone work with which these edifices were embellished practically nothing was found *in situ*. There was a slender hope that the old-time vandals who despoiled the monument of its architectural embellishments did spare the other two frontispieces. Digging was, therefore,

started on the southern slope where the *vāhalkaḍa* of the *stūpa* on this side would have originally stood. By the end of the year, the trench was sufficiently broad and deep enough to indicate that the despoilers had busied themselves at the southern *vāhalkaḍa* as well as at the northern and the eastern. This was some considerable time anterior to the collapse of the upper part of the *dāgāba* and the burial in the *dēbris* of the base and the lower part of the dome. But their work here was not so thorough for they have left in position the first course of stones of the moulded base of the *vāhalkaḍa* and the two stelae which flanked it on the west.

31. The larger of the two limestone stelae measures 1 ft. 9½ in. by 1 ft. 4 in. in section and stands to a height of 16 ft. 11 in. above the level of the courtyard. The impact of the crumbling masonry which fell from above had cracked the stele in two places but it remained in a more or less perpendicular position, as it was completely buried in the *dēbris*. The removal of this *dēbris* in the course of the excavation would have resulted in its collapse had we not securely propped it up, pending conservation measures, before the earth which held the pieces together was removed.

32. Two faces of the larger stele—those which were not concealed from view by the masonry of the *vāhalkaḍa* against which it was placed—were covered with bas-reliefs of the type with which similar stelae were ornamented at the other great *stūpas* of Anurādhapura. The decorative design on the front face of the stele is reminiscent of artistic motifs which appear on some pillars of the gateways at Sāñchi and, on grounds of style, the sculpture may be taken as dating from the early centuries of the Christian era. The design consists of a tapering stem springing from a vase, held on the head of a squatting dwarf, with conventionally treated branches spreading on either side. On the branches rest alternately men and animals standing back to back. The animals include the lion, the elephant, the horse, the bull and possibly the *vyāla*. Surmounting the whole is the figure of a deity, seated cross-legged, holding a chank in one hand. The carving has been executed in a vigorous and naturalistic style and is on the whole very well preserved. On the other side is a scroll design of great charm and delicacy. Taken as a whole, the stele is an important addition to what we already possess of early Sinhalese plastic art. The shorter stele is decorated with a many-hooded *Nāga* figure in anthropomorphic form. The carving on this is badly mutilated and weathered. These two stelae go to show that the *vāhalkaḍas* of this *dāgāba* were as elaborately ornamented as any structure of their class so far known to us.

B.—MIHINTALE.

33. At Mihintalē were excavated the remains of an interesting edifice on a terrace of the main hill situated to the south of the Kanṭaka Cētiya (Plate V.). This terrace is separated by only a few yards from the ancient paved path recently brought to light, of which a brief account has been given in the last report (for 1940–45, pp. 26–27). But there does not seem to have been direct access to this edifice from the paved path. On the other hand, steps incised on the living rock to the east of the edifice indicate that access to this site in ancient days was through the group of buildings on the hill-side between the Bhōjana-sālāva terrace and the Nāga-pokuna. The site in question had not been cleared in recent times and trees of large size were growing on the mound formed by the ruins of the building, from which a number of pillars jutted out.

34. The edifice measures externally 34 ft. 6 in. north to south by 26 ft. east to west. A flight of steps formed of four risers of stone gave access to the building through a small porch, measuring 8 ft. by 6 ft. on its eastern side. The plinth is elaborately moulded, the details from the foundation stone being cyma recta, semi-torus, fillet, fascia, fillet, cyma reversa and beak. The coping of the plinth runs round the whole building as a gangway and the base of the wall which rises from it is also moulded in the following order:—cyma recta, semi-torus and fillet. The walls were about 1 ft. 8 in. in thickness and are preserved to a height of about 2 ft. at places.

35. The interior of the building measures 24 ft. 5 in. by 16 ft. 6 in. and consisted of one single apartment. Fourteen stone pillars supported the superstructure of wood. Of these, 10 pillars were embedded in the masonry of the walls while only four are free-standing. The edifice probably contained an upper storey; a finely chiselled slab of stone at the south-eastern corner of the ground floor probably functioned as the base of the wooden stair-case. From the landing stone at the head of the flight of steps, one entered the interior of the building through a stone doorway, the tastefully moulded jambs and lintel of which are now lying prone. The lintel is dovetailed to the jambs as in a wooden door-frame. Outside the four corners of the building had been planted short stone pillars—a feature which has been noticed in the monastic buildings of the Pācīna-tissa-pabbata Vihāra at Anurādhapura and is also to be seen in the buildings on the terrace facing the Lion Bath at Mihintalē.

36. The ground to the east of the building is laid out in three terraces, one above the other, with retaining walls consisting of three courses of plain stone—a slab placed flat at the base, another placed on it on edge lengthwise and a third laid flat as the coping. The coping stones of these retaining walls are for the most part missing. The lowermost of these terraces is returned and continued to the north of the building. The flights of steps leading to these terraces are in line with the flight of steps of the building as well as with that cut on the rock.

37. No evidence bearing on the identity or purpose of this edifice has come to light either in the course of excavation or before it. No minor antiquities of any interest were found. The absence of any cult object within the edifice may perhaps indicate that it was not a shrine. The terrace on which the edifice stands is a secluded one and it contains no other buildings. Though it was of modest dimensions, the edifice had a certain architectural dignity and much care had been taken in laying out its precincts. One may, from these circumstances, surmise that the edifice had been built to serve as the residence of a *thēra* of eminence. The precise date of the building cannot also be ascertained.

C.—POŁONNARUVA.

38. The rebuilding and conservation of the retaining wall to the east of the Laṅkātilaka were nearing completion by the end of the year. The removal of the spoil earth from the upper terrace to the east of the Laṅkātilaka was also brought to a completion. The excavation of the ruins of monastic residences on this terrace was taken in hand and the ground plans of two structures on the northern side were laid bare. The labour and funds at the department's disposal being required for works of a more important character elsewhere, the progress made in the clearing of the Ālāhana Pariveṇa during the year was not much.

D.—SĪGIRIYA.

39. The excavation was completed during the year of the southern gate of the City to the west of the rock at Sigiriya (Plate VI.). As has been remarked in the last Report, the ramparts and moats which defended the City of Sigiri are not surpassed in magnitude and strength by any similar works of antiquity to be found elsewhere in the Island. The excavation and conservation of the Southern Gate were undertaken as part of a programme of works designed to give the visitor to this ancient fortress some idea of the defence works with which ancient cities of Ceylon were provided.

40. The passage which gave access to the fortified area through this gateway is 16 ft. in breadth and 63 ft. in length. The length of the passage is not to be taken as the thickness of the rampart at its base, as one may surmise, for the passage is not a mere opening through the rampart. It leads through two platforms of solid brick masonry abutting the rampart and at right angles to it. On the inner side of the rampart, these two platforms project from its face. But how far it has not yet been ascertained, for the excavation has not proceeded far enough on the inner side of the gateway. The platform on the left, as one enters, is 20 ft. in width; that on the right 18 ft. On the outside, the two platforms are built as a continuation of the base of the rampart; they, however, rise vertically while the rampart has sloping sides. The sides of the platforms bordering the passage were also built

with vertical faces. They were constructed of roughly hewn blocks of stone to a height of 2 ft. 7 in. and above that of brick. The facing of the brick wall has crumbled down on the left, while it is preserved to a height of 3 ft. 4 in. on the right. On the outside, too, the platform was built of blocks of stone to a height of about 5 ft. but was faced with brick. The brick facing has disappeared on the right hand platform. It is not possible to ascertain to what height the platforms were originally built. At present their height is about 15 ft., but some of the brick work at the top has crumbled down.

41. It is reasonable to assume that the space between the two platforms was bridged by cross beams overhead and that these beams formed the base of a wooden structure. Such structures or gate-houses are referred to in Sanskrit literature by the term *pratoli*, in connection with ancient Indian cities and are represented in the sculptures from Sāñchi and Bhārhut.

42. The rampart on either side of the gateway is built vertically with blocks of stone to a height of 5 ft. from the ground and faced with brick. The brick facing has crumbled down on the right-hand side. Above this the rampart slopes and is faced with brick to a height of 6 ft. Again it assumes a vertical face and is built of blocks of stone. How it was continued above this, it has not yet been investigated.

43. Projecting from the outer face of the two platforms, roughly in line with their sides abutting the rampart, are two walls, the one on the right preserved to a length of about 13 ft. and the other about 17 ft. The wall at the right hand side is 4 ft. in thickness to a length of 7 ft.; its thickness is thereafter increased to 6 ft. There is a somewhat similar difference in the thickness of the other wall also.

44. Urgent conservation measures had to be carried out following the excavation of the remains of this gateway. During many centuries, a good part of the volume of rain water flowing down the sides of the rock had found an outlet through the passage of this gateway. It had caved underneath the stone work on either side of the passage and the blocks of stone on the wall to the left had all been displaced and scattered about. Of the wall to the right, the lowermost course had been thrust out, while the upper courses and the brickwork above them were held in position by reason of the cavity having been filled in by the silt brought down by the rain water. The wall on the left hand side had to be rebuilt with the old stones and on the right side the stones thrust out had to be put back into position. The brickwork had been badly affected by the roots of trees. It had in many places to be dismantled and rebuilt; in some places, pointing alone was sufficient.

45. After the conservation, the draining of the rain water which passes through the passage had to be dealt with. As mentioned above, it has been found necessary to take the new circular motor drive through this gate and it was obviously not advisable to allow the water to pass over this road; nor was it practicable to open side drains without affecting the stability of the stone work bordering the passage. It was, therefore, decided to pave the passage with rough slabs of stone. This has introduced a feature which is foreign to the old work, but the paving was done in such a manner that the visitor will not mistake it as an original feature of the gateway. Moreover, when the road is in use the paving will be gravelled or tarred over.

E.—MĀDIRIGIRIYA.

46. The work of conserving the Vaṭadāgē was continued during the dry weather of the year under review. By testing how the stones fit together according to the manner in which they had been cut, the *dissecta membra* of the two wing walls which flanked the main flight of steps were collected, in so far as they have been preserved, and were put together tentatively to ascertain the positions which they originally occupied in the structure. This laborious task was made still more difficult by the fact that some of the stones are missing. Most of the missing stones were from that portion of the walls flanking the landing which divided the stair-case in two; we are, therefore, in doubt as to the manner in which the coping of the wing walls was treated to be in harmony with the level space serving as the landing. It has also not been possible to ascertain precisely how the wing walls were joined to the low parapet which ran round the outer edge of the terrace on which the Vaṭadāgē was built.

47. The rebuilding of the outer retaining wall was continued on the western side of the Vaṭadāgē. As this wall was built with its original mouldings and as the old moulded bricks to be picked on the site were not many, ordinary bricks had to be shaped by rubbing to fit the various parts of the moulding. This was a tedious task involving much time; but the other alternative was to have new bricks burnt of the same shape and size as those used in the building. It was, however, considered more desirable to carry out the conservation work by utilising the old material instead of introducing anything new.

48. The site of the *pīḷimagē* to the north-west of the Vaṭadāgē was taken in hand and, as a preliminary to conservation, the remains of the shrine were cleared of the *débris* in which they had lain buried for several centuries (Plate VII.). Before the excavation of the site was undertaken, there were to be seen fragments of two colossal Buddha images of limestone. The excavations revealed the feet of these two images on their pedestals. Another colossal Buddha image, which had also broken at the feet, was found lying prone buried in the *débris*. The torsos and the pedestals of two smaller images were also discovered. All these five Buddha images of limestone stood on pedestals placed against a wall towards the back of the shrine.

49. The shrine which housed these images is itself of more than average interest. Its length is 50 ft. and the breadth 33 ft. On plan it comprises a rectangle with a projection on the eastern side. Unlike the general plan of old shrines in Ceylon, of which the projection forms a porch through which access is had to the doorway leading to the *sanctum*, in the shrine we are dealing with at Mādirigiriya, the main rectangle and the projection together formed one hall not separated into compartments. There were no doorways, therefore, in the interior of the building. Besides the main entrance facing east, there was a subsidiary one facing north.

50. No direct evidence of the date to be assigned to this shrine was discovered in the course of the excavations. But there is reason to attribute it to the third or the fourth century A.D. The moonstones and the guardstones at the flights of steps of this shrine are in that peculiar arrangement noticed in the buildings brought to light at the moated site near Nuvaravāva (see Report for 1940-45, p. 25). The shape and size of the bricks used in the building also are similar to those from the Nuvaravāva site. Bricks of this pattern, to my knowledge, have not been found in any other site in Ceylon. As this shrine shares two peculiarities with the buildings at the Nuvaravāva site, we may reasonably assume that it is not far removed in date from the latter. And we already know that the Nuvaravāva site is the Pācīna-tissa-pabbata Vihāra founded by Jetṭha-tissa (*circa* 263-273 A.D.).

51. In re-installing the restored images, it was necessary to set their pedestals on a firm foundation and this in turn made it necessary to shift them temporarily from the position which they had occupied for several centuries (Plate VIII.). In the course of this work, interesting evidence came to light of the practices followed by the ancients in the setting up of Buddha images.

52. Each pedestal rested on a roughly fashioned slab of stone which served as the lid of a stone receptacle with a number of holes—the type referred to in Bell's Archæological Reports by the term *yantragala*. The receptacle under the pedestal of the central image is a square slab of limestone measuring 2 ft. 6 in. square and 6 in. in thickness. It was divided into 25 compartments, five in each row. Each compartment had been grooved into a hollow and in a number of these were found various auspicious objects originally deposited in them. Numbering the compartments from 1 to 25, starting from the south-west corner, numbers 1, 3, 7, 11, 12, 13, 17, 20-25 were found to be empty. In the rest the following objects were found (Plate IX.):—

No. 2.—Round shaft with rounded top on circular pedestal, flanked with two fishes, made of copper. Height $2\frac{3}{4}$ in.

No. 4.—A shell.

No. 5.—Wheel symbol, made of copper, ornamented on either side with the design of a six-petalled lotus and garlands hanging from the hub on both sides, placed on a circular pedestal. Height $2\frac{1}{4}$ in.

No. 6.—Circular shaft, made of copper, with rounded top, on pedestal. The head of what appears to be a serpent projects out somewhat above the middle. Height $2\frac{3}{4}$ in.

No. 8.—Marble plaque, $2\frac{3}{4}$ in. by $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. by $\frac{1}{2}$ in., showing the figures of two bulls in low relief.

No. 9.—Thin copper plaque, $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. by $1\frac{1}{4}$ in.

No. 10.—Copper *svastika* on circular base. Height $2\frac{1}{2}$ in.

No. 14.—Marble plaque, $2\frac{3}{4}$ in. square, $\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick, depicting the figure of a lion in low relief.

No. 15.—Figure of deity in copper, attended by two dwarfish figures. The whole composition is 3 in. in height and $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. in breadth. The main figure, which is wearing ornaments and a head-dress, stands with the upper part of the body slightly inclined to the left and the left foot placed forward. The right hand is held forward and appears to have carried something, which is now missing. At the feet of the main figure, on either side, are two dwarfish figures. A spike held in the left hand of the deity has pierced through the head of the dwarf on that side and stuck in the ground behind him. The back is crudely finished. (Plate IX. Top).

No. 16.—Crude figure of a deity, made of copper. Height $1\frac{3}{4}$ in.

No. 18.—Fragment of a marble plaque with a figure of an elephant in low relief. One side of the plaque, which has been fractured diagonally, measures $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. and its thickness is $\frac{1}{2}$ in.

No. 19.—Crude copper image of a deity holding a noose in the right hand. Height $2\frac{1}{4}$ in.

53. The receptacle itself was placed over a brick-lined pit, 1 ft. $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 1 ft. $\frac{1}{2}$ in. and 1 ft. 10 in. in depth. The pit was filled in with silt brought in by the water which percolated into it during the course of the centuries and particles which had dropped down from the limestone slab placed over it. At the bottom of the pit was placed a conchshell which had been fashioned into the shape of a vessel by the cutting and removal of the core, the narrow end of the chank serving as a spout.

54. Under the lotus pedestal of the Buddha to the right of the central image was also placed a receptacle of limestone, 1 ft. 5 in. square and 5 in. in thickness, covered by another slab. Of its 25 partitions, four, on the four sides of the central one, have been left without having been grooved in. Numbering the grooved partitions in the same order as in the preceding receptacle, the following objects were found deposited in them :—

No. 3.—Crude image of a deity, made of copper, height $2\frac{1}{2}$ in.

No. 4.—Chank, made of copper, $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. in length.

No. 5.—Circular lump of copper, in diameter 1 in.

No. 6.—An *ankusa* of copper, in height $1\frac{1}{2}$ in.

No. 8.—A small figurine of a horse, length $1\frac{1}{8}$ in.

No. 10.—*Svastika* of copper, one arm damaged, $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. in height.

No. 15.—Crude copper image of a deity, $2\frac{1}{4}$ in. in height.

No. 20.—A *nandipāda* symbol, made of copper, height $1\frac{1}{4}$ in.

55. The receptacle under the lotus pedestal of the image to the left of the one in the centre was similar to that under the image on the right, its dimensions being 1 foot. 6 in. square by $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. in thickness. Of its grooved compartments only two contained any objects deposited in them. In compartment No. 12 was a crude figurine of copper and in No. 13 were four similar figurines at the four corners.

56. The two smaller Buddha images at either end of the row were also placed on lotus pedestals under which were receptacles each divided into 25 compartments which, however, contained nothing but shapeless lumps of a greenish clay or some organic substance.

57. It has long been known that receptacles of this type were placed in ancient times under the pedestals of standing images of the Buddha and that in the compartments were deposited auspicious objects. But these receptacles have more often than not been ransacked by treasure hunters and their contents abstracted from them. Similar receptacles of stone or brick have been found in the relic chambers of *dāgābas* and their contents have been recorded. But this appears to be the first instance in which a *yantragala* under the pedestal of a Buddha image has been systematically investigated by an archæologist.

58. It is worthy of note that many of the compartments of the three main receptacles contained no objects deposited in them and those of the other two were also empty, if we do not take into account the crude lumps of what appears to be some kind of clay. This may be due to one of two reasons: either these compartments were left empty when the receptacles were deposited in their places originally, or their contents had been abstracted at a later date. I am inclined to favour the acceptance of the second possibility. There is definite evidence to show that the images have undergone repair and re-installation at some date subsequent to the original foundation of the shrine. One of the arms of the central image appears to have been broken and the pieces pinned together by means of an iron rod. The hand having disintegrated into small fragments when the image fell down at a still later period, the iron rod is now seen jutting out from the fragmentary arm. It is possible that this shrine shared in the misfortunes that befell Mādirigiri and other Buddhist shrines during the period of Chōla occupation in the eleventh century and the images were then thrust down from their pedestals. The repair of the broken images and their re-installation were probably effected in the reign of Vijayabāhu I. (1058-1114) when, according to the *Mahāvamsa*, the religious buildings at Mādirigiriya were restored. The deposits under the pedestals of the images could have been disturbed when the shrine was in an abandoned condition under the regime of the Chōlas or when its restoration took place in the reign of Vijayabāhu I.

59. There is also reason to believe that the objects found in the receptacles were not in the order they were originally deposited therein. The marble plaques with representations of animals found in the receptacles under the pedestal of the central Buddha image were obviously placed in accordance with a well recognised scheme.

60. As they were actually found, the plaque showing the lion was in the hole immediately to the east of that in the centre; the plaque with the figure of a bull in relief was in the hole to the north and the fragmentary one depicting an elephant in that to the south. On moonstones as well as on the stelae flanking the *vāhalkaḍas* of *stūpas* the horse also is met with in association with these three animals. There is therefore little doubt that a plaque showing the figure of a horse, too, was originally deposited in the receptacle though it was not to be found. The hole immediately to the west of the central one was empty.

61. Now, it has been clearly demonstrated by the late Mr. Bell that these four animals represented the four quarters. And in accordance with the order in which the figures of these four animals were found buried in the porches on the four sides of a shrine at Vijayārāma in Anurādhapura, the scheme is shown to have been: the elephant on the east, the horse on the south, the bull on the west and the lion on the north. It is reasonable to take that in the receptacle at Mādirigiri, too, the four animals were placed in the same order. They were, however, found in a different order. Moreover one of the animals is entirely missing and of the elephant plaque, there is only a fragment. It is therefore evident that the objects have been subsequently disturbed.

62. Thus, one may suspect that the compartments which were empty did also originally contain objects deposited in them, that those objects were removed at a later date and that the objects so removed were intrinsically of greater worth than those which were allowed to remain.

63. The copper figurines of deities deposited in the receptacles are of crude workmanship. There was evidently no need to waste any effort in imparting artistic quality to these figurines which were meant to be buried under the feet of the Buddha and thus hidden from view for all time. An exception, however, is the copper figure found in compartment No. 15 of the receptacle under the pedestal of the central image. This is evidently a work of considerable artistic merit.

64. It is not possible to say with certainty what god the figure was meant to represent. It occupied the central position on the northern side of the receptacle and, assuming that it was found where it was originally deposited, it may be taken as an image of Vaiśravaṇa or Kuvēra, the Guardian of the Northern Quarter and the Lord of the Yakṣa host. Kuvēra is represented in later Indian iconography as of unprepossessing physical form in conformity with his name which signifies "deformed body". But figures identified as Kuvēra in early Buddhist art in India

represent a deity who is presentable enough and do not show the abnormal size of the god's abdomen, which is the distinguishing mark of his images in Hindu iconography. This bodily trait is probably the consequence of the god's attainment of the office of Lord of Riches—an office not much emphasised in connection with Vaiśravaṇa as conceived by the early Buddhists.

65. The symbols, no doubt representing popular pre-Buddhist religious beliefs and practices, are generally of better workmanship than the figurines representing deities. Among these are such familiar symbols as the *svastika*, the discus and the *nandipāda* which need not detain us.

66. Two of the symbols are of unique character, for they have not previously been found, so far as my knowledge goes, on any ancient site in Ceylon or India and therefore merit a few comments. With regard to the standard flanked by two fishes, it may be pointed out that the double fish was the emblem of the Pāṇḍyan royal house, but there is no conceivable reason for the Pāṇḍya emblem to be buried under the feet of the Buddha in company with images of deities and religious symbols. The fish is also the emblem of the Hindu God of Love who is often referred to by such epithets as *Mina-ketana* and *Matsya-dhvaja*, meaning "the Fish-bannered One". This god is also called *Māra*. The name of the Evil One whom the Buddha had to vanquish before attaining enlightenment is also *Māra*. This symbol may therefore be taken as that of *Kāma-dēva* or *Māra*, personifying Lust and Desire. As he and his hosts were vanquished by the Buddha it is quite appropriate to have his symbol buried under the feet of an image of the Great Teacher.

67. The purpose in burying these images of gods and religious symbols under the feet of the Buddha image also deserves consideration. It could not have been for the purpose of showing any respect to them, for the position they occupied can hardly be called a dignified one. The average worshipper who came to pay homage to the image of the Buddha would not have suspected their presence in that position. The likely explanation is that the figurines of the deities were buried as a symbolic act to proclaim that these pre-Buddhist gods and godlings whom the average man continued to believe in were reduced to the position of humble servants of the Buddha—the God of Gods, and that the symbols were placed in the positions they occupied to denote the contempt which the true Buddhists entertained for the cults and superstitions associated with them (in Pāli *koṭṭhala-maṅgala*).

68. It is worthy of note that it was only under the pedestal of the central image that a brick-lined pit was met with. The chank which was the solitary occupant of this pit was obviously one which had been specially prepared for the purposes of lustration. A similar object picked up in the *débris* of the Saṇḍagiri Vehera at Tissamahārāma is preserved in the temple attached to the great *dāgāba* at that place. From literary references we know that ancient Sinhalese kings were anointed with a right-whorled chank. The specimen found at Mādirigiriya, however, does not appear to be one of this rare and highly prized variety. It is, nevertheless, possible that this particular chank shaped as a vessel was actually used in the anointing of a king and was deposited by that king in the position where it was found in token of his humble devotion to the Buddha.

EPIGRAPHY.

69. On the preparation of the Monograph on the Sigiri Graffiti was spent as much time as could be spared from work of a more urgent nature. Considerable progress was made and a number of graffiti were deciphered for the first time, while some others, which were imperfectly understood, have now been correctly interpreted. This work, however, is of such a nature that its results will be available only after the lapse of several years.

70. Mainly on account of the lack of material for preparing estampages the collection of inscriptions was not undertaken on an extensive scale, but the department secured impressions of such epigraphs as were brought to its notice for the first time during this year. Among them, the following deserve notice :—

71. Two inscribed slabs, one measuring 1 ft. 2 in. by 6½ in. and the other 1 ft. 4 in. by 9 in., were found close to the surface at the base of the western stèle of the

Southern *vāhalkada* of the Ruvanvāli Dāgāba. The inscriptions are concerned with grants of stone slabs (*pahaṇa idaki*) to the Mahācetiya. The donors figuring on the larger slab are a king named Naka (Nāga) and an *upāsikā* named Cittā. The *upāsikā* mentioned on the same slab as the king perhaps had some relationship to the latter, though not stated. If the stone slabs granted were for the work of building the *vāhalkada*, as may be inferred, the inscriptions are of importance in establishing a date for that edifice. The conclusion thus arrived at would be in accordance with the evidence furnished by the inscription painted on the lid of one of the limestone caskets discovered in the *vāhalkada* itself (see *J. R. A. S., C. B.*, Vol. XXXV., pp. 3-7).

72. A stone slab, measuring 2 ft. 9 in. by 2 ft. 2 in., bearing an inscription of the 1st year of Kaniṭṭha-tissa (Maḷu-Tisa) was also recorded during the year from the Ruvanvāli Dāgāba. The slab, it is said, first came to light in 1939. It had been at that time wilfully broken into four fragments by being struck with a hammer. A plausible excuse was given for this treatment of the epigraph, but the real reason must have been to get at the treasure supposed to be within it; for, to most people, old letters have only one significance and that is the indication of concealed treasure. The fragments were mixed up with others in a heap of odd stones near the southern gate and remained unnoticed in that condition for seven years until some one informed me of their existence when I was engaged in recording the discoveries at the Southern *vāhalkada*. I put the four pieces together and had an estampage prepared. The record deals with donations of land to the Mahāthūpa (Ruvanvāli Dāgāba). By some strange caprice of Fortune, the hammer blows fell on the name of the donor and have almost completely obliterated it. Little did the pious donor of ancient times imagine, when he had a record of his benefaction engraved on stone to last for all time, that he would become nameless through the agency of people of a later age who had the glorification of the shrine, which he endowed, as their professed aim. I suggested to the temple authorities that the inscribed stone so inconsiderately treated in its place of origin be removed to a place where it would receive the respect which is its due. But they would not listen to any proposal of removing even the smallest bit of stone belonging to the sacred shrine outside its precincts. It is to be hoped that in the future the inscribed stone will succeed in winning for it greater respect from the temple authorities than it was able to do in the past. With regard to the subject-matter of the epigraph a point of interest in the statement is that the document relating to the gift of the land referred to therein was deposited in the Treasury of Lohapāsāda.

73. A stone slab bearing an inscription of Vijayabāhu I., dated in the 50th year of that monarch's reign, was discovered near the northern wall of Poḷonnaruva in the area between the Northern Gate and the trunk road. The record does not furnish us with any historical information hitherto unknown but should be of interest as one of the few known documents dating from the long reign of one of Ceylon's greatest kings. It embodies an order issued by Nungamalagalaṇā Kitā, the Keeper of *divel-pot* (the Register of Maintenance Lands) by which a field had been assigned for the maintenance of the image-house in the religious establishment known as Vatakaru-piriveṇa of the Mahāvihāra.

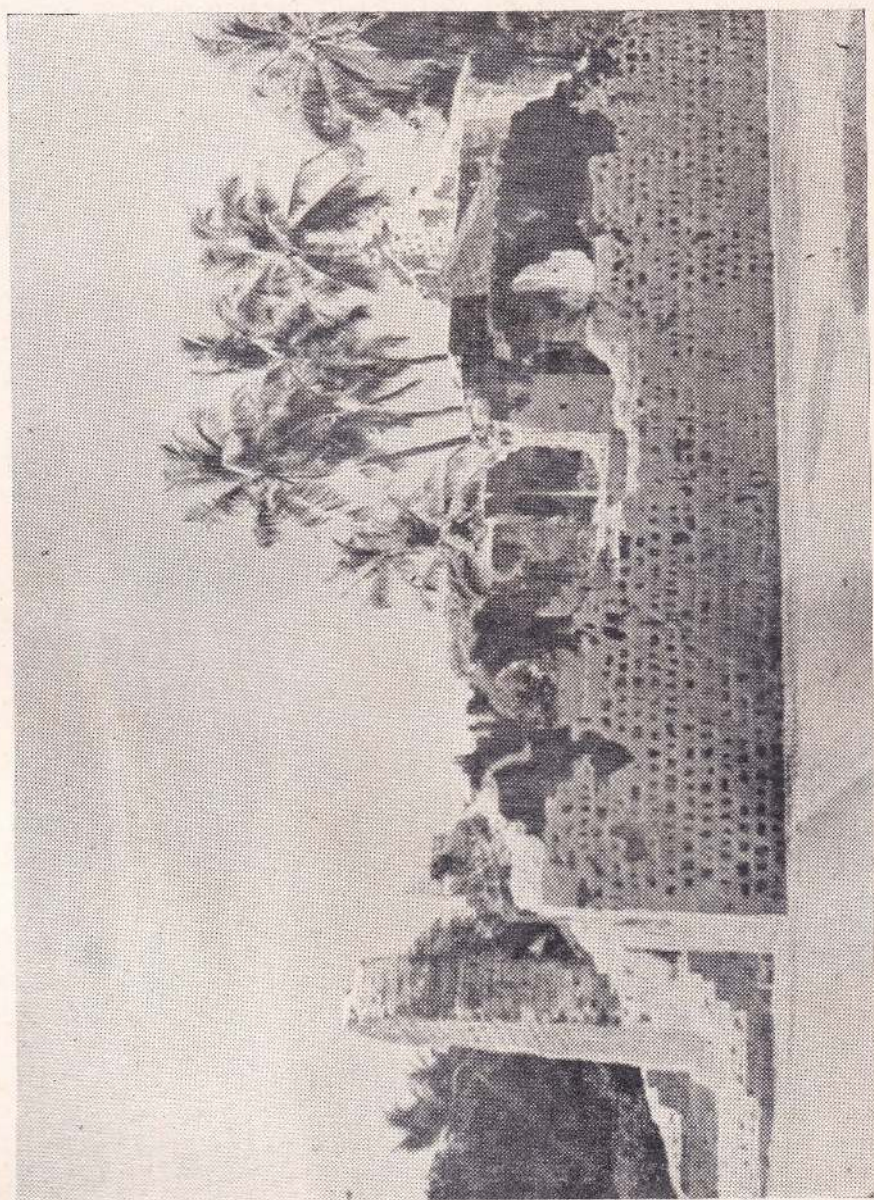
74. A fragment of an inscribed door jamb found in excavations within the Fort at Trincomalee was also copied by the Department during the year. Some stone images of Hindu deities were also found at the same place. The images and the inscribed stone have been removed from the Fort and are now kept in the premises of the Kaccēri at Trincomalee. The preserved portion of the record contains the first two lines of a Sanskrit verse in the Sragdharā metre and the beginning of the third line. It states that in the year Saka 1145 (*Sambhu-puṣpa*), when the sun was in the house of Aries, on the day of the constellation Hasta and at a time when the *Mēsa lagna* was in the ascendant, a prince named Coḍagaṅga came to Ceylon and had something to do (missing portion) at Gokarṇa. The details of the date point to Friday, the 14th of April, 1223 A.D. The *Mēsa lagna* was prevailing in the early hours of the morning. Coḍagaṅga of this inscription cannot be identified with any prince of that name known to us from other historical records of Ceylon or India. The name suggests that he was a scion of the Eastern Gāṅga dynasty of Kāliṅga. Gokarṇa figuring in the inscription must be the ancient name of Trincomalee. We know from the *Mahāvamsa* (Chap. 37, v. 41) that a place of this name (in Pāli *Gokarṇa*) existed

on the eastern seaboard of Ceylon in ancient times. Skt. *Gokarṇṇa* and Pāli *Gokanna* correspond to Sinhalese *Gōṇa*, in which form the name must have been in use among the Sinhalese population of the area before they were displaced by the Tamils who adopted the old Sinhalese name and pronounced it in their own way. In the Tamil form of the place name, Tirukkonamalai, *Tiru* (meaning auspicious) may be prefixed to any name which one wants to honour. *Malai* means "hill" and the essential part of the name is *Kōṇa* which is merely the transliteration in Tamil characters of the Sinhalese *Gōṇa*. The old Sinhalese population of the area must have referred to Trincomalee as *Gōṇagala*.

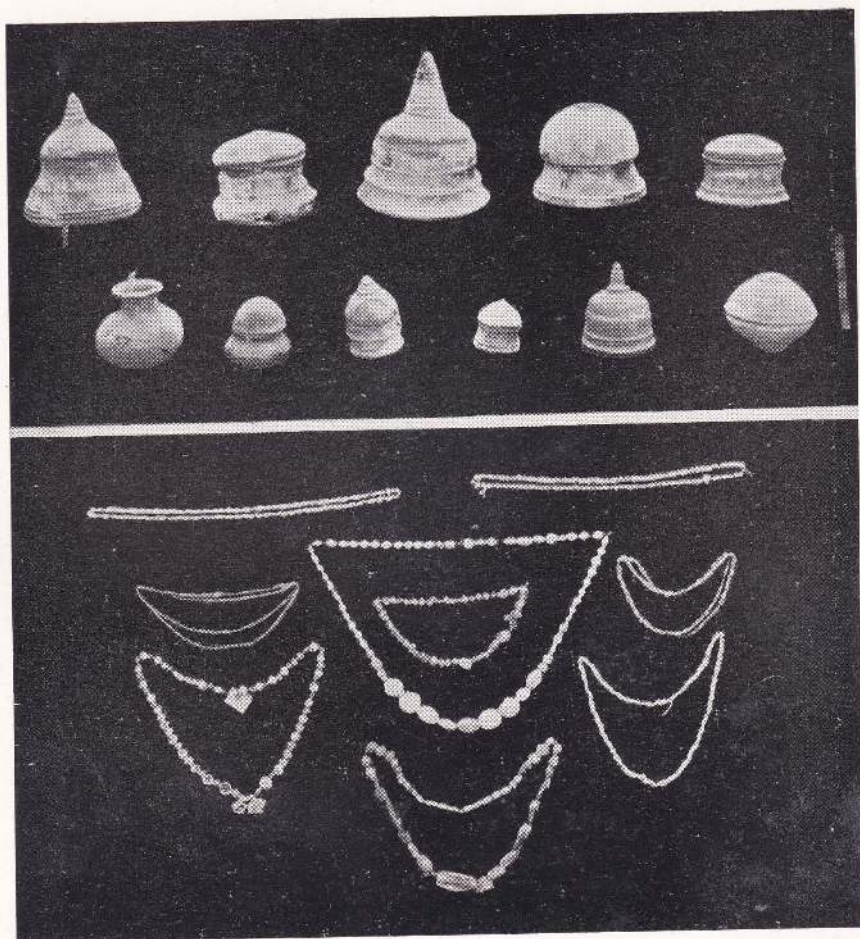
75. With regard to the surmise that Codaganga of this inscription was an Eastern Gaṅga prince, it is interesting to recall that the family deity of that dynasty was *Iḡvara* of Gokarṇṇa. If there had been regular intercourse in early days between the east coast of Ceylon and the Kāliṅga country, the name Gokarṇṇa might have been applied to Trincomalee by settlers from Kāliṅga who brought the worship of that deity to Ceylon with them. The *Mahāvamsa* and its commentary inform us that Gokarṇṇa even in early days was a stronghold of the adherents of a non-Buddhist faith.

S. PARANAVITANA,
Archæological Commissioner.

Office of the Archæological Survey,
Colombo 7, July 15, 1948.



ACCUVELLI : RUINS OF PORTUGUESE CHURCH.



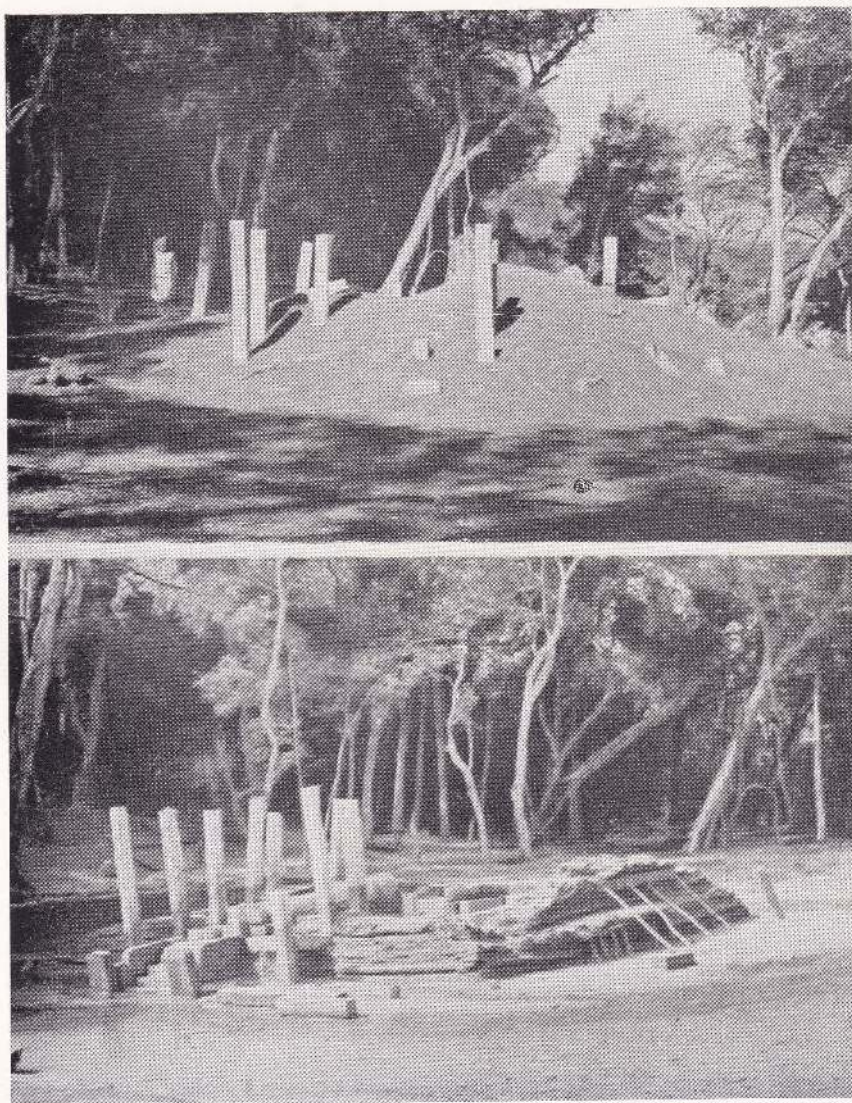
ANURĀDHAPURA : SOME FINDS AT S. VĀHĀLKADA, RUVANVĀLISĀYA.



ANURĀDHAPURA : IVORY STATUETTE FOUND IN A CASKET AT S. VĀHAIKAPA,
RUVANVĀLISĀYA.

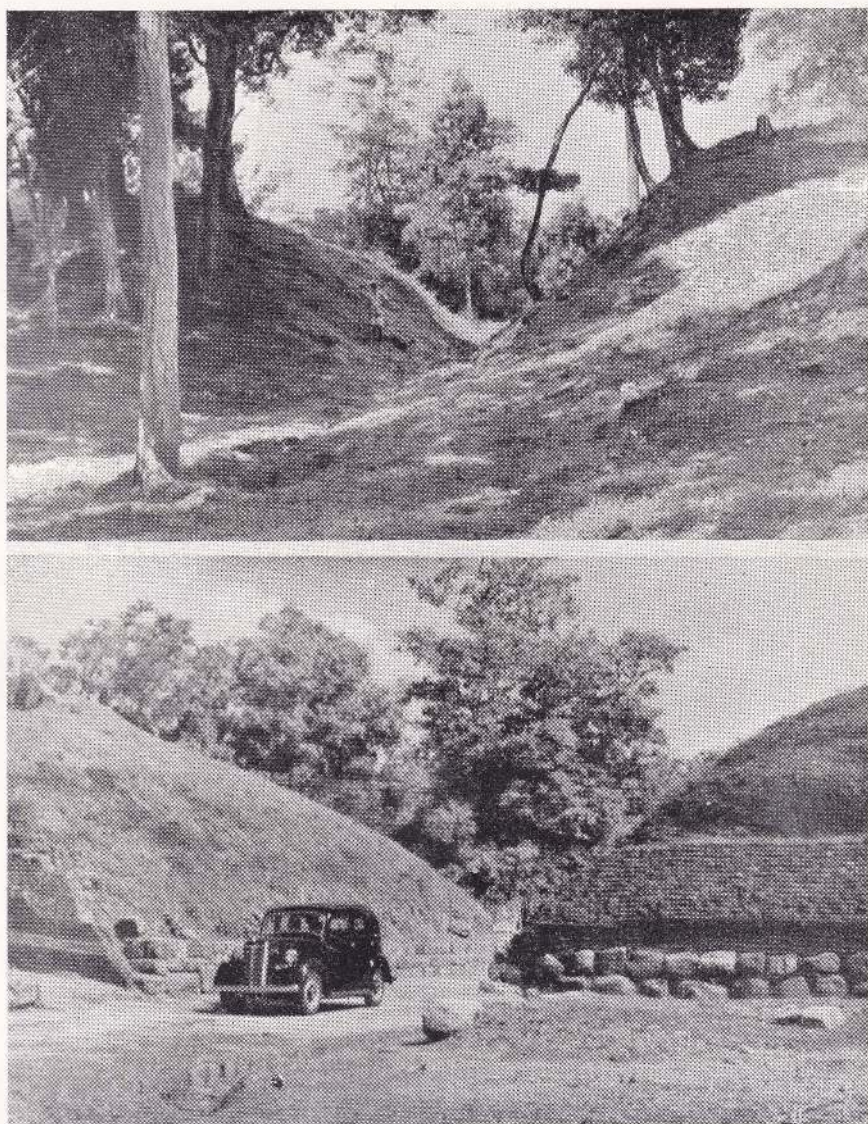


ANURĀDHAPURA: MOATED SITE IN MAGUL UYANA, AFTER CONSERVATION.



MIHINTAIĒ : EDIFICE ON HILL TERRACE.

TOP : BEFORE EXCAVATION.
BOTTOM : AFTER EXCAVATION.



SĪGIRIYA : SOUTHERN GATE OF THE CITY TO THE WEST OF THE ROCK.

TOP : BEFORE EXCAVATION.

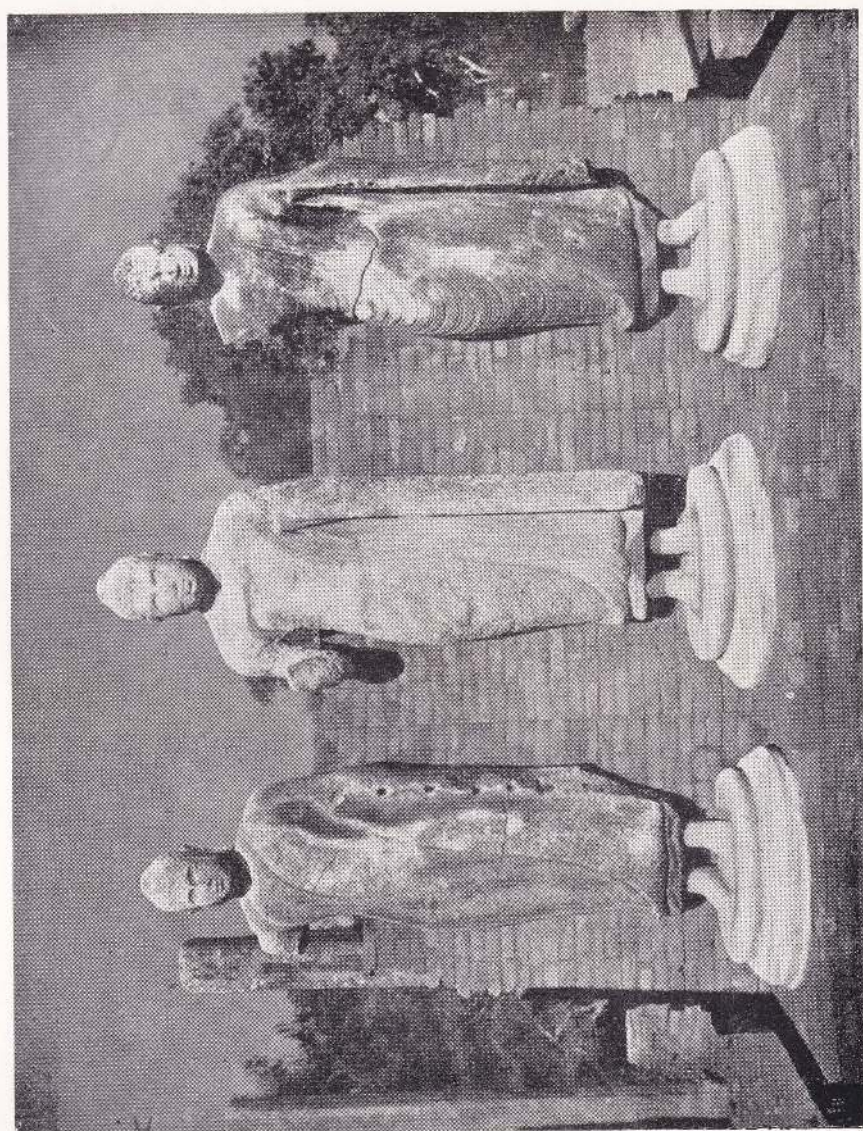
BOTTOM : AFTER EXCAVATION AND CONSERVATION.



MĀDIRIGIRIYA : PILIMAGĒ N. W. OF VAṬADĀGĒ.

TOP : BEFORE EXCAVATION.

BOTTOM : AFTER EXCAVATION.



MĀDIRIGIRIYA : RESTORED BUDDHA IMAGES IN PILIMAGE, N. W. OF VAṬADĀGĒ.



MĀDIRIGIRIYA : FINDS AT PILIMAGE.
TOP : COPPER FIGURE OF DEITY.
BOTTOM : FOUR OF THE OTHER FINDS.

