

Z-29, Z-30, AA-28, and AA-29. One *pukka* verandah related used for paving the edges of the were also seen which, apparently,

to enter the other room and the 1, and length 90cm. The other 11. Here, in its half, was a raised ght of the platform was 0.45m. h a *pukka* floor was unearthed e explored room from the east. y was found, measuring 7.15m 11 fountain. A trench was taken gallery were exposed. None of hips, and a few were plastered. easuring 5.60m in length and r in the west. The latter could south of the big courtyard. It oined a square-shaped water e unearthed. Excavation was rd measuring 29.08m from urrounded on three sides by measured 30.06m in length

taped platform measuring ing steps on three sides viz. ed, leaving its central part ering the whole courtyard as 10.09m x 11.06m. It i was in the centre, with a a depth of 1.065m. The There was a long drain uryard, demarcated by a i where the water ran to red and nicely preserved. on at places.

ts opening towards the ouble-storeyed building ave been another gate



Pl. I. Emperor Akbar, the visionary of Fatehpur Sikri—His new capital

The Royal Kitchen

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Externally almost at the junction of the back wall of the *Diwan-i-Am* and the Royal palace complex, ruins most probably of the Royal Kitchen were brought to light during our salvaging work in that area.

We traced out six big hearths, rather ovens at least in two sets within a rectangular room measuring 11.70m (north to south) $\times$ 5.40m (east to west). This room facing south had 1.50m wide door in damaged condition.

One set of three hearths attached to western wall and close to southern wall was seen which joined among themselves. Each of them measured 0.60m (north to south) $\times$ 0.40m (east to west).

The other set also consisting of three bigger ovens was attached to western wall near the northern wall. Each of them measured 1.50m (east to west) $\times$ 0.85m (north to south). The cooking room most probably had hole or holes in the ceiling to emit smoke over the roof. In the south of the above room, there was a big enclosure or hall for helpers who assisted the cooks and to serve the meals.

The related structures were of different sizes. The area around them was sufficiently cleared to have a clear picture of the Royal Kitchen. It seems that the kitchen complex was built within an enclosure having thick and high walls. Here food was prepared under strict supervision and security, and was sent to the *Khwabgah* complex through the back door. This door opened in the northern wall of the Royal palace which was detected by us after minute observation. The food prepared here was for the Emperor, the queens and other important ladies. As said by Abul Fazl, "The *haram* is guarded by sober and active women, because the Emperor lived in the *haram*, slept in the *haram* and took his meals in the *haram*". Since there was always danger of being poisoned, even drinking water was properly kept under the care of reliable servants and sealed.

Extra precaution was taken in the imperial kitchen. "In the cooking of food, water from Jamna and Chenab and rain water are used mixed with a little of Ganges water".⁴ Abul Fazl writes that, "Trustworthy and experienced people are appointed to this Department... Their head is assisted by the Prime Minister himself... His Majesty appoints a zealous and sincere man as *Mir Bakawal* or Master of the kitchen... and gives him several upright persons as assistants...". "During cooking time and when the victuals are taken out an awning is spread and onlookers are kept away... the cook and the *Mir Bakawal* taste it... The *Mir Bakawal*

attached may be changed. There was a special seal for all the food before serving. The *Mir Bahawal* was always in attendance".⁶

Abul Fazl further writes that in the imperial kitchen "Cooks from all countries prepare a great variety of dishes of all kinds of grains, greens, meats, also oily, sweet and spicy dishes. Every day such dishes are prepared as the Nobles can scarcely command at their feasts, from which you may infer how exquisite the dishes are...." "Sukhdas rice from Bahraich, Dewzira rice from Gwalior, Jinjin rice from Rajori and Nimlah *ghri* from Hisar Firoza, ducks, water-fowls and certain vegetables from Kashmir" were used in cooking.⁷

Stables and Animals Superintendent's House

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It is generally believed that during Akbar's reign, a large number of horses, elephants, camels, *cheetahs* (hunting leopards) were kept within the city area at Fatehpur Sikri. Therefore, a site identified as *Cheetah Khana* on lead of a reference in the *Akbarnama* was taken for excavation at the end of the slope emerging from near the *Hauz-i-Shivm*. To begin with, two small square-shaped cells, probably out of many were exposed, each side of which measured 3.30m, having an entrance in each of them with a height of 1.8m from floor to the ceiling. It is well known that Akbar was very fond of keeping trained *cheetahs* for hunting.

Not far away from the *cheetahs* cells to the west, a horse stable (?) was detected, which, however, could not be fully exposed because most part of it was covered by wild growth and needed clearance. After cleaning, the site brought to light pillars, stone-hooks to tie horses, masonry troughs for fodder and rectangular water tanks of which at least eleven were exposed, which more or less tallies with the sketch and description of about a very large horse stable, given by Peter Mundy, an English traveller who visited the site in early 1630s.

Here a reference may also be made to another structure below the ridge on the right side of the road leading to the Ajmeri Gate and facing the lake. This reminds us of another description by Peter Mundy (which is also alleged to be a *Caravansarai*): "There is also a conceived (ingeniously devised) stable standing on the side of the hill towards the lake which is made into several flats (floors) or degrees, like steps one above another with pillars and arches to support coverings to it". In my view the identification of the above structure with a horse stable is probably wrong as the nature of its construction does not suggest so.

Not far away beyond the *cheetahs* cells was located one camel stable towards the east at a slightly higher level. This has a series of feeding tanks in a row, each measuring 1.65m x 0.7m and separated by each other by 20cm thick partition wall. The existing length of the south wall to which the feeding tanks are attached is 44.7m, having a thickness of 1.00m. Stone-rings to them have also been provided at a height of 62cm above each feeding tank or trough to tie the animal. This stable which is 5m wide is divided into two parts by two rows of heavy pillars, each being 1.7m x 0.55m thick. A major part of its front wall in the north has been damaged and its length at present is 36.9m having a height of 80cm. The rows of the pillars referred to above stand at a distance of 3.74m from the front wall. The arrangement of

stone-rings and the feeder tanks, each having a height of 1.05m, suggest that most probably this was a place for lodging and feeding the camels.

While two cells for the *cheetahs* were fully exposed earlier by us, the remains of third one were noticed later on. These cells measured 3.75m × 3.30m; 3.15m × 3.30m; and 3.75m × 3.30m with a uniform height of 1.8m, each having about 1m wide entrance. Though, in our first operation only two cells were found as said earlier, but existence of more such cells could not be ruled out. As one of the exposed cells indicated, probably all the cells were divided into two parts by a partition wall having an opening at the centre. This was deliberately done not only to shift the animals from one part to another, but also to clean them and provide food and water as is done in our own times in zoos. Behind these cells, remains of a few rooms were also found, the walls of which were almost intact measuring 5.9m × 3.55m. Their exact purpose could not be determined, but they might have been for the keepers and a few for storing food, etc. for the animals.

Excavation was conducted on the slope of the northern part of the ridge behind the *Hauz-i-Shirin* and a third *cheetahs* cell between the above two stables. Here, perhaps like the earlier two, trained animals were also kept. This cell also measured 3.75m × 3.30m, having a height of 1.80m and an entrance of 1m. width as said earlier. Thus, only three cells were so far traced out and excavated. The common back wall running throughout was about 40m in length indicating that there might have been several more such cells, probably all in a row. The well-known *Hauz-i-Shirin*, situated near the upper end of the slope, is a large plastered tank in which the rain water was collected. Once its northern wall suddenly burst and water gushed out with a force, damaging the houses of many commonmen and some of the *cheetahs* stables.

Moreover, it did not only take away lives of many men and animals but also killed one of the animal-keepers. Akbar was greatly shocked on hearing this accident and kept fast for the whole day. One more stable roughly of 125.5m in length was also traced out with much bigger hall-like rooms or enclosures for elephants, not far away to that of the horses in east. Here probably a few selected elephants were kept for the use of the Emperor.

In addition to these stables, a grand house complex was exposed on the northern end of the ridge overlooking the lake and opposite to the *cheetahs* cells and adjacent to other stables (see the house plan). It measured 48.10m × 32.80m situated almost at the end of the Fatehpur Sikri town. This complex most probably was meant for the Superintendent (*Darogha*) of animals. This house had an entrance in the east with three courtyards, two large and one small and a *hammam* located in the south-western corner of the house. The courtyard adjacent to the entrance of the house complex had eight large rooms besides several verandahs and platform. The important feature of the house is a set of flower-beds in the courtyard of the house near its entrance. These are 16 in number and circular in shape, in varying diameters of about 1m. To the south-eastern portion, a masonry tank (measuring 7.00m × 4.30m) and 1.30m deep on a raised platform, was exposed along with a portion of the original floor made of lime and concrete with two flights of steps on either side of the tank. However, its floor if any, was not

found though at places the original rock surface was left untouched. The recovery of a large number of broken tiles in and around the tank suggested that most probably it belonged to a *hammam* which had a roof over it. There was a long verandah also facing south outside the Superintendent's house which had an entrance 2.14m wide as well. Probably this was the place where any member or members of staff related to stables could meet the Superintendent to receive his orders and instructions.

more, probably most reliable persons were posted to check and ensure the entry of only bonafide persons whose presence was needed before the court (the Emperor). At present, however, there is only one gate to the east for entrance, the door of which was made of iron bars having two plies.

It may be added here that perhaps we have been successful in discovering the inner boundary of the royal palace enclosing the royal buildings within the city wall at Fatehpur Sikri. This boundary wall was made most probably for security purposes and to distinguish the royal buildings from the other buildings of the town.

3. Toilets and Drains

A brief account of the above may be worthwhile. Every large house complex, particularly those of the nobles had at least a set of dry latrines. In the Nobles' complex not far away from its kitchen and near the *hammam* (referred to above) towards the south-east corner within an enclosure, there were three latrines respectively for males, females and children. In front of each latrine for adults there was a raised masonry round stool for keeping a vessel (*lotah*) with water for personal hygiene. Most of the latrines were with planned drainage system to carry the soiled water which ultimately joined with the bigger drain, through which the entire dirty water was flushed out into a big waste-water tank. Almost similar type of arrangements probably were present everywhere too. Special attention may be made to a unique type of toilet having 34 latrines (*kadamchey*), attached to the respective four walls of the toilet room. Its entrance was through its front wall in the east. A shallow open drain ran throughout in front of the *kadamchey* to flush out the dirty water. Most probably one *kadamchey* (latrine) here was assigned exclusively for the use by one of the maid servants who were in the service of the family members of the nobles.

Mention might be made of one hexagonal beautiful fountain which was in the courtyard of this house with an efficient drainage system. Attention may also be drawn to the fact that there was no water clogging of the drains at any point. We ourselves examined this fact by pouring down a few buckets of water at different points of the drain, to check their flow. We found that the flow of the water everywhere was smooth. It appeared that all the drains were interlined under the floor giving them smooth flow.

It would be worthwhile to refer here to a well-planned toilet system found in the extended *haram-sara* recently exposed by us. In the south-east corner of its courtyard measuring 8.5m x 7.5m, there were two latrines, one for adults on a platform measuring 6.0m x 2.77m, having three seats, and another for children having two seats on a lower level. Just below these latrines there was probably a kind of soak-pit as well. The seats of latrines for adults were made in sloping fashion for the easy passage of the excreta into the pit. Three earthen jars for water were placed on two small platforms just outside — two on one side and one on the other, attached to the eastern wall of the room of the extended *haram-sara* along with an earthen bowl to take out water from them. Some space was left at the back of the latrine to provide facility to the person who cleaned them going through a low-roofed gallery with an opening in the north.

Many more drains, fountains, cisterns and toilets were also discovered in different areas during the course of excavations. They need not be discussed here to avoid more or less a kind of repetition. However, those interested in knowing more about them may find a brief account of a few of them in the volumes of the *Indian Archaeology - A Review* published by Archaeological Survey of India during the period of our excavations.

4. Quarters of the Workers and the Labour Class

Near the Delhi Gate and Chadrapol excavations were conducted in the year 1981-82. At the former, interesting results were brought to light that is the habitation area of the working and labour class. Here the courses of the walls of different sizes were found which most probably belonged to their quarters. The rooms of their houses varied in size, mostly ranging between 9 and 12 feet in length, and 7 to 9 feet in width. They were generally made by the rejected material of the palace construction. There appeared no planning of these dwellings. However, each unit generally included a kitchen, one and sometimes two rooms having a verandah, a courtyard and a toilet. However their exact specification could not be determined. This area is quite extensive. Most probably their houses had thatched roofing.¹⁵

5. Nobles' Complex

Excavations at Fatehpur Sikri brought to light many interesting features about the house complex of the nobles. Though they have been described in detail elsewhere in this Report, the attention of the readers here is drawn towards its salient features. Generally, they preferred to build their houses either by the bank of rivers or lakes, and where it was not possible, as at Fatehpur Sikri, they built their houses anywhere else but not far away from the river or lake. Their one set of house usually had a *Diwan-i-Khas*, the main sitting room, ladies common sitting room and a guest room. Besides these, there were many living apartments too for the ladies, generally in a row, facing their door openings in a long common gallery built in front of their rooms. At the back of their rooms there was also a narrow gallery for the female attendants who were always available for the service. Every house unit in most cases had a terrace, generally on the eastern side, to be used as a summer resort or for other purpose.

Within the boundary of the house there was invariably a garden having a cistern or a fountain just in front of the residential apartments in which the waste or used water got collected and, in turn, used to irrigate the garden. Besides the things described above, generally towards the east, there was a set of latrines, one each for gents, ladies and children separately made within an enclosure. Externally, adjacent to the enclosure, there was a passage leading to one of the grand *hammans*, situated not far away from the complex. Immediately after the passage towards north, there was a kitchen further north and associated with it a storeroom, with an opening towards the kitchen, the latter having only one exit door.

The houses of the nobles were generally built with the rejected material which was left after the construction of the palace. Though the walls of their houses were nicely built with

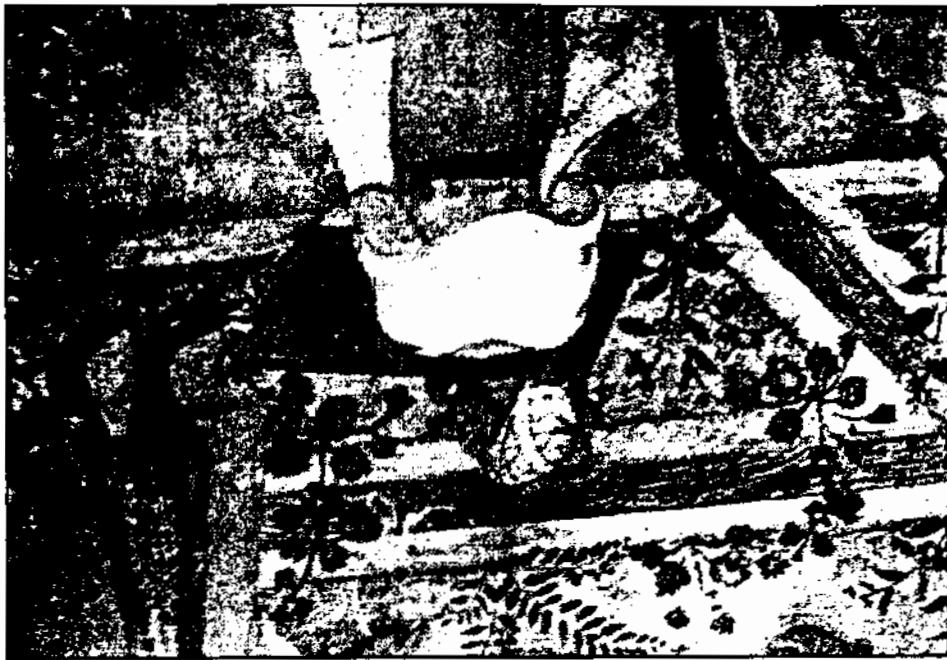


Pl. CXI. Another view of Fatehpur Sikri
construction (in progress)



Pl. CX. Fatehpur Sikri being built. (*Albarnama*,
Victoria & Albert Museum, London,
No. IS 2-1896, 91/117)

Pl. CXIII. Supervising plan of garden on grid (detail in *Baburnama* housed in Victoria & Albert Museum, London, No. IM 276-1913)



Pl. CXII. Block of stone being split (detail in CX above)

