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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS IN THE GATE BUILDING OF PÕLTSAMAA CASTLE

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In the summer of 1998, archaeological rescue excavations took place inside the gate building of Põltsamaa castle, on the inner side of the castellum-type wall of the fortress. The investigated area lay in the north-western part of the gate building, i.e. north of the door opening. The rescue excavations were connected with the Põltsamaa town government project which intended to reconstruct the ruins of the gate building into an office building.

On the site of the excavation, ruins of a brick building, older than the gate building, were discovered, built against the castellum-type wall. The north-eastern wall that formed the façade of the building continues behind the north-western wall of the gate building; fragments of it can be seen above ground level.

A 6.4-m-long part of the north-eastern wall of the brick building was uncovered. The preserved part is 2 metres high from the foundation. The latter is formed by two rows of granite stones laid on the ground without mortar; the space between the stones is filled with clay and sand. After laying these two rows of stones, a 10-20-cm-thick layer of sand and clay had been heaped up against the outer side of the wall, i.e. inside the castle yard. Excavating this layer produced no finds. The house was built using bricks 28-29 cm long, 14-15 cm wide and 8-9 cm high. The diameter of the outer wall was 1.3 m; it had a window opening growing narrower on the outward side, as well as two niches in it. In the window opening there had been a window-sill trimmed of limestone. The site of the door in the

outside wall could also be uncovered. At least the inner wall of the brick building has been whitewashed. The floor of the building was erected on the ground directly. The area was covered with a 25-cm-thick layer of lime mortar with small pieces of bricks in it. The surface of the floor was very firm and even. Just on the inner side of the doorway, full bricks were laid parallel to the threshold into the pavement. The cylindrical stove erected against the castellum wall seems to be as old as the brick building. The stove was built of bricks, using lime mortar, on a rectangular brick footing erected on the floor. The south-western part of the stove was destroyed; bricks from its other parts had become crumbly because of heat. The circular inner part of the stove was filled with ashes, charcoal and grime, as well as with pieces of bricks and mortar. Since the stove remained outside the excavation, it was uncovered only partially and its detailed construction remained unclear. According to the finds, the brick house was erected not earlier than in the 15th century, but more likely it was built in the 16th century.

A new floor, similar to the previous one, was erected above the older floor. The new layer of lime was up to 45-cm thick; pieces of roof tiles and bricks could be found in this layer. A regular pavement with bricks existed only by the doorway in the façade. No finds could be traced in this layer, summer to the second one. At the same time the yard in front of the building seems to have been levelled by using similar lime mortar dust. In front of the building the layer of lime mortar is 25-cm thick.

Above the floor, erected during the second exploitation period of the building, there was a 60-cm-thick black cultural layer, with charcoal and ashes in it; there

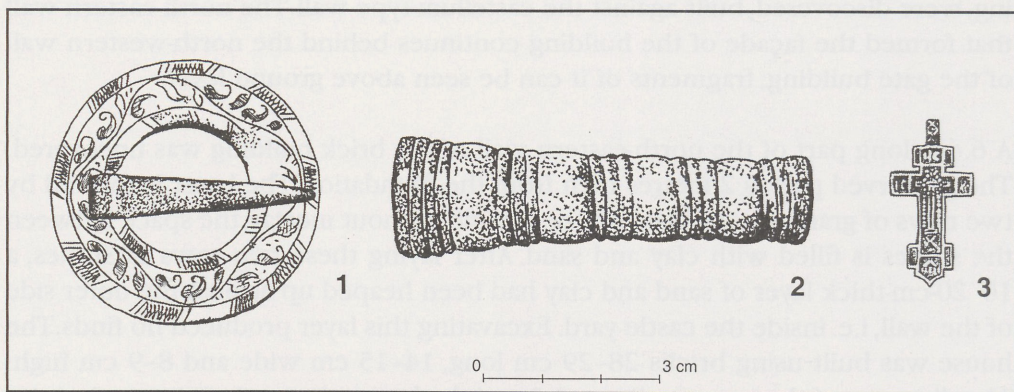


Fig. 1. Finds from Põltsamaa. (TÜ 714: 148, 153, 152.)
 1. Silver brooch. 2. Silver needle-case. 3. Cross-shaped pendant.
 Joon. 1. Leiud Põltsamaalt.
 1. Hõbedast rõngassõlg. 2. Hõbedast nõelakoda. 3. Ristripats.

were many of finds in this layer. A similar layer exists in front of the building. The earlier part of this debris layer was 35-cm thick, with signs of burning; this layer began from the floor. Pieces of bricks and mortar, charcoal, small rotten pieces of wood, animal bones, etc. could be found; potsherds were found in large amounts. From this level a silver brooch (Fig. 1: 1), a needle-case made of silver (Fig. 1: 2), a glass bead (TÜ 714: 157), Russian silver kopecks, a cross-shaped pendant of Russian origin (Fig. 1: 3) and a knife with a bone handle (Fig. 2) were found. The large amount of broken window glass and some fragments of window-frames made of lead show that the building had glass windows with lead framing. The objects found, as well as pottery, prove that the lower level of the burnt layer should be the result of a burning that happened in the late 1570's or early 1780's.

After the destruction, a one-brick-thick partition wall was constructed over the debris layer. The bricks used were of exceptional dimensions (22 x 15 x 9 cm).

A new stove was constructed at the same time. This was a 1.9-m-long and up to 1.7-m-wide *keris* stove, built on a brick footing that was laid on the debris layer in the western corner of the building, against the remains of the older stove. The new stove was built of granite and bricks, connected with clay. The bottom of the burning chamber has been smoothed with clay also. In front of the stove there was a rectangular hearth surrounded with stones, its dimensions being 50 x 130 cm. The steps in the doorway and pavement in the yard should date from the same period. The pavement consists of bricks, limestone and granite; there was no layer of sand below it. The pavement seems to have been laid

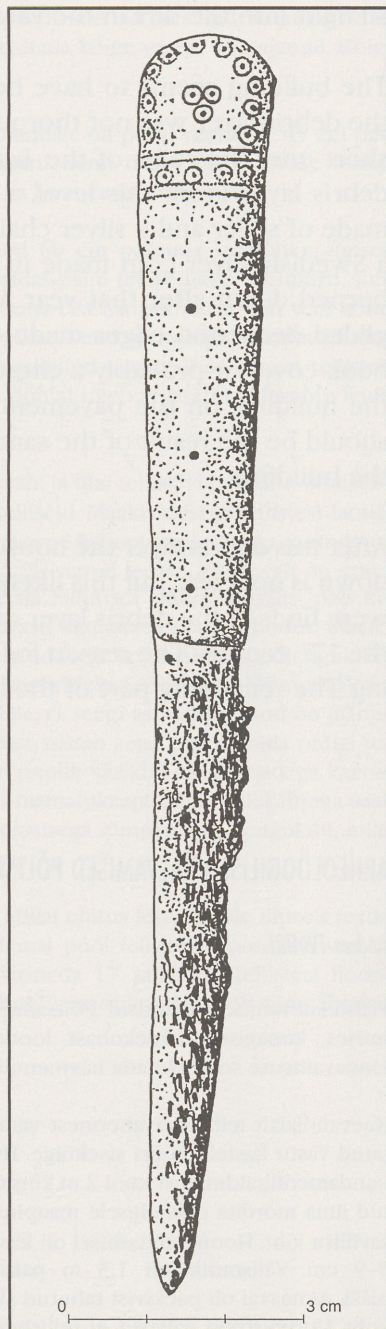


Fig. 2. Knife with the bone handle. (TÜ 714: 222.)

Joon. 2. Luust käepidemega nuga.

straight into the dirt in the yard.

The building seems to have been fitted for indispensable living purposes; even the debris layer was not thoroughly removed. This exploitation period was also a short one. The ruins of the *keris* stove and the stairs were covered with a new debris layer. From this level, a coin of Courland dating from 1576, a spiral ring made of silver and a silver chain (TÜ 714: 149) were found. In front of the stove a Swedish silver coin made in 1585 came out. We can conclude that the house burned down after that year. A fragment of a grinding-stone (TÜ 714: 309) and gilded decorated edges made of bronze (TÜ 714: 163–165) belonging to some book cover or probably a chest were also discovered. The debris layer in front of the building, on the pavement, is up to 60-cm thick with signs of burning and should be the result of the same fire. The findings are very similar to those inside the building.

After this debris layer the house was not used. The date that the house was pulled down is not clear, but this likely happened in the 17th or 18th centuries, since there were finds in the debris layer on both sides of the outer wall that might date from the 17th century. The reason for pulling down the house might be that it was sinking. The remaining part of the brick wall is clearly outwards askew.

ARHEOLOOGILISED KAEVAMISED PÕLTSAMAA LINNUSE VÄRAVAHOONES

Andres TVAURI

Päästekaevamised toimusid Põltsamaa linnuse edelamüüri siseküljele ehitatud väravahoone sise-muses, kunagisest uksekohast loode poole jääval alal. Kaevamiste põhjuseks oli Põltsamaa Linnavalitsuse soov ehitada hävinenud ehituse varemetele uus hoone.

Kaevandialalt leiti väravahoonest varasema, tellistest laotud keskaegse maja jäänused, mis oli ehitatud vastu kastellimüüri sisekülge. Hoone kirdepoolsest seinast puhastati välja 6,4 m pikkune ja vundamenditaldmikust kuni 2 m kõrgune müürilõik. Maakividest müüri kaks alumist kivirida oli laotud ilma mördita otse algele maapinnale. Vastu müüri väliskülge oli kuhjatud 10–20 cm paksune saviliiva kiht. Hoone ehitamisel oli kasutatud suuri telliseid, mille mõõtmed olid 28–29,5 x 14–15 x 8–9 cm. Välismüür oli 1,3 m paks ja selles avastati väljapoole ahenev aknaava ning kaks nišši. Aknaaval oli paekivist tahutud aknalaud. Puhastati välja ka samas müüris paiknenud välisukse koht. Uurimistööd näitasid, et tellishoone sisesein oli lubjatud. Põrand oli rajatud looduslikule pinnale nii, et algne maapind kaeti üksikuid tellisetükke sisaldava, kuni 25 cm paksuse lubjamördi kihiga. Ukseava siseküljele oli põrandasillutisse asetatud paralleelselt lävepakuga telliseid. Ilmselt kuulus

tellishoonega samasse aega ka vastu kastellimüüri, nelinurksele alusele laotud silindrikujuline tellisahi. Otsustades leiumaterjali põhjal, võidi nimetatud hoone ehitada kõige varem 15. sajandil. Kõige tõenäolisemalt pärineb see ehitus siiski alles 16. sajandist.

Varasemaga sarnane uus pörand oli ehitatud nii, et vanale pörandale oli peale veetud u. 45 cm paksune lubjapuru kiht. Selles kihis leidus ka telliste ja nn. munk-nunn tüüpi katusekivide tükke. Samaaegselt uue pöranda ehitamisega on ilmselt tasandatud ka hooneesist õuepinda.

Ehituse teise kasutusjärgu ajal rajatud pöranda peal oli kuni 60 cm paksune leiurohke, ilmselt tulekahjust pärit süsine kiht. Analoogne põlengukiht, mis sisaldas palju tellisetükke, lubimörti, sütt, pehkinud puutükikesi, loomaluid ja savinõukildude, oli ka hoone ees. Samast kihist leiti veel hõbedast sõlg ja nõelakoda, klaasist tahuline helmes, vene hõbekopikad, vene päritoluga ristripatsid ning luupeaga nuga (joon. 1 ja 2). Pliiraamide osad ja rohked klaasikillud osutavad sellele, et tellistest hoonel olid olnud pliiraamistusega klaasaknad. Leiumaterjali põhjal tuleb arvata, et tulekahju leidis siin aset 1570. aastate lõpus või 1580. aastate alguses.

Pärast hävingut on rajatud läbi ruumi, tulekahjukihi peale, uus ahi ja ühe telliskivi paksune vahesein, milleks on kasutatud erandliku mõõduga (22 x 15 x 9 cm) telliseid. Maakividest ja tellistest laotud ning saviga seotud 1, 9 x 1, 7 m suurune kerisahi paiknes hoone läänenurgas. Saviga tasandatud koldepõhja ees oli 50 x 130 cm suurune nelinurkne kividega ääristatud leease. Arvatavalt on samal ajal ehitatud ukse ette ka trepiastmed ja sillutatud majaesine ala. Sillutises leidus nii tellis-, pae- kui ka maakive. Siiski näis, et tegemist on olnud tulekahjus tugevasti kannatada saanud hoone üksnes hädapärase kohendamisega eluruumiks, milleks pole eemaldatud isegi kogu rusu- ja põlengukihti. Kerisahju jäänuseid ja trepiastmeid katnud uus rusukiht, millest pärinevad 1576. aastal Kuramaal vermitud münt, hõbedast spiraalsõrmus ja hõbekett, osutab sellele, et seegi asustusperiood on jäänud lühikeseks. 1585. aasta Rootsi hõberaha, mis leiti kerisahju eest, näitab aega, pärast mida pidigi toimuma järjekordne tulekahju. Samast põlengukihist saadi veel poolik käsikivi ning kirjadega kaetud kullatud pronksplekist ääristused, mis kaunistasid kirstu- või raamatukaant. Sama tulekahjuga saab seostada ka majaesisele sillutisele ladestunud kuni 60 cm paksusega rämpsuga ja põlengukihiga, mille koostis ja leiumaterjal on sarnane hoonesisese põlengukihiga.

Pärast viimast põlengut tellistest hoonet enam ei kasutatud. Millal ehitus lõhuti, pole täpselt teada. Ilmselt on see toimunud alles 17. või 18. sajandil, sest mõlemal pool tellistest hoone välismüüri jäänuseid leidunud rusukihist saadi esemeid, mis võiksid pärineda 17. sajandist. Tellistest hoone mahalõhkumine võis olla tingitud selle vajumisest, kuna välismüürist säilinud osa oli silmnähtavalt väljapoole vajunud.