

foundations of a modern house, as well as several things missing, which we should expect to find.

The first surprise in digging was the enormous size of the villa. The piece of land at first enclosed was 300 feet square, but it was soon found that the walls extended beyond this in every direction. The enclosure was increased to 450 feet square, and the foundations were found to cover the greater part of this extensive area. It is, indeed, the largest Roman villa that has yet been discovered in England.

Its outer walls are two feet in thickness and built of flint with layers of tiles, and faced with plaster.

One of these tiles, on being measured, was found to be fifteen inches long, eleven and three-quarter inches wide, and two and a half inches thick.

The general plan of the house consisted of a long suite of rooms, extending from east to west for a length of 380 feet. Corridors ran along the back and front; one the whole distance, the other only half-way. The space in front of the long corridor was divided into two large courtyards, separated by an apartment ninety feet in length, the use of which is uncertain. It is eleven feet in width, and had walls four feet in thickness. At the end of it is a semicircular tank, once lined with lead, and having a water-way leading into it. The lead has long since gone, but the character of the interior shows clearly that it was once so lined. No other Roman villa yet discovered has a similar apartment, and hence the uncertainty as to its use.

Starting at the eastern end, the first thing to be noticed is the elaborate arrangement for heating the rooms. Coming from sunny Italy to this country, one of the things they felt the most must have

been the coldness of our winters. They still continued the practice of their own country, to keep one part of the house for winter, and to reserve the cool, shady rooms for summer use. No less than six rooms at the north and east of the Darenth villa have these underground arrangements for heating the rooms called hypocausts (heated from below).

The floor of the room was supported either by columns of tiles about eight inches square, as the room in our illustration shows, or by flue tiles about two feet in height, or else by parallel rows of chalk blocks with spaces between for the fuel. The hot air thus passed under the whole floor and up the walls, by means of flue tiles.

Nearer the centre of the house are the rooms set apart for bathing, some heated by hypocausts, and some for cold baths. The bath was an important part of the daily life of the Roman, the wealthy nobles often spending some hours a day at the baths. One of the baths at Darenth contains a trench which seems to have been for the feet of the bathers. The leaden pipe for carrying off the water from one of the baths is still preserved. There is also a large swimming-bath, about fifty feet long and twenty feet wide, which is reached by a descent of four steps, which are carefully rounded so that the bathers should not scratch their limbs.

Towards the west are other rooms, which show that water was let in at one end of the series, and after passing through them was let out again by a channel which probably led to the river. It has been suggested that these rooms may furnish a clue as to the probable occupation of the owner, say tanning, or dyeing.

The flooring of the various rooms is of various materials. In