**Troy**

**(excerpts *modified* from an article published by the Archeological Institute of America and history.com)**

**Findings**

Major excavations at the site of Troy in 1870 under the direction of German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann revealed a small citadel mound and layers of debris 25 meters deep. Later studies have document more than 46 building phases grouped into nine bands representing the site’s inhabitation from 3,000 B.C. until its final abandonment in A.D. 1350.

Troy at this time had new and vigorous settlers who introduced domesticated horses to the Aegean area. They further enlarged the city and erected a magnificent circuit of cut limestone walls that were 15 feet (4.5 metres) thick at the base, rose to a height of more than 17 feet (5 metres), and had brick ramparts and watchtowers. Inside the citadel, which was now about 650 feet (200 metres) long and 450 feet (140 metres) wide, great houses were laid out on ascending, concentric terraces. Troy VI was destroyed by a violent earthquake a little after 1300 bce. Dörpfeld had identified this stage as Homeric Troy, but its apparent destruction by an earthquake does not agree with the realistic account of the sack of Troy in Greek tradition. Moreover, the city’s date, as indicated by imported [Mycenaean](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1383420/Mycenaean) pottery found in the earthquake debris, is too early for the Trojan War.

Layer VIIa of the excavations, dated to about 1180 B.C., reveals charred debris and scattered skeletons—evidence of a wartime destruction of the city that may have inspired portions of the story of the Trojan War. The survivors of the earthquake quickly rebuilt the town. The ruins were leveled and covered over by new buildings, which were set close together and filled all available space inside the fortress. Almost every house was provided with one or several huge storage jars that were sunk deep into the ground, with only their mouths above the level of the floor. Troy VIIa probably lasted little more than a generation. The crowding together of houses and the special measures to store up food supplies suggest that preparations had been made to withstand a siege. The town was destroyed in a devastating fire, and remnants of human bones found in some houses and streets strengthen the impression that the town was captured, looted, and burnt by enemies. Based on the evidence of imported Mycenaean pottery, the end of Troy VIIa can be dated to between 1260 and 1240 bce. The Cincinnati expedition under Blegen concluded that Troy VIIa was very likely the capital of King [Priam](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/475706/Priam) described in Homer’s *Iliad,* which was destroyed by the Greek armies of Agamemnon.

**(Article found at:** [**http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/606871/Troy/277017/Findings**](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/606871/Troy/277017/Findings) **and** [**http://www.history.com/topics/ancient-history/trojan-war**](http://www.history.com/topics/ancient-history/trojan-war) **)**