

## THE PREHISTORIC POTTERY ON THE NORTH SLOPE OF THE ACROPOLIS, 1937

As a result of the excavations of 1930–1932 on the North Slope of the Athenian Acropolis so much prehistoric material was uncovered that it seemed worth while this year to continue digging in that area. For one month, from March 15 to April 17, I investigated a small area lying immediately below the Sanctuary of Eros and Aphrodite and continuing in a westward direction beyond the prehistoric area cleared by Mr. Broneer.<sup>1</sup> The purpose was to try to find some prehistoric pottery in a stratified site. It was to be expected that much of the pottery would be mixed since the greater part of that slope has been disturbed at various times.

I began digging a small area two metres long, one metre wide, and when stereo was reached I continued digging in the adjoining space, moving in a westerly direction until the entire area cleared measured 6.80 m. in length, from 2.50 m. to 3.50 m. in width, and a depth of 2.25 m. was reached. It was a rectangular area somewhat irregularly shaped because of several large boulders of Acropolis rock which extended into the area.

In the upper level, to a depth of 1.05 m., the sherds were mixed and included modern, Byzantine, Roman, Classical, much coarse ware that was undatable, a few Geometric and a fair number of Mycenaean sherds. Practically all of this material was so poor and valueless that it was discarded. The next level, 1.05 m. to 1.25 m., I designate as Mycenaean because two thirds of the sherds are from that period. The rest included a few Middle Helladic sherds and many pieces of monochrome ware which could be assigned to any period. At this level in the middle of the area (Section A) some faint traces of a floor were found and one complete Mycenaean vase (Fig. 15). The floor seems to have been of clay and hard beaten earth. Ten centimetres lower, but still in the Mycenaean stratum, a large area of black earth appeared in Section D (to the west of Section A). Near it was a very irregular circle of stones, some of which had been blackened by fire. Several monochrome

<sup>1</sup> See *Hesperia*, II, 1933, pp. 330 ff. and especially 356 ff. Hereafter reference to this report will be designated by *O. B.*

I wish here to express my obligation and thanks to Professor Oscar Broneer, director of the excavation, for the privilege of working on the North Slope, and my gratitude to Dr. Hetty Goldman who looked over the more important sherds, and also to Dr. Gabriel Welter who generously devoted much time to studying the material with me.

sherds lying in the immediate vicinity were also blackened by fire. Clearly we have here some meagre remains of a hearth, but unfortunately very badly destroyed. Farther west and close to the modern terrace wall and actually extending up under it we traced a line of four stones belonging to a house wall. All we can conclude is that at this level there were some Mycenaean houses which doubtless belonged to the larger prehistoric settlement which Mr. Broneer found. Unfortunately in the small area which I dug the remains are so meagre that no house plans could be ascertained.

The level from 1.25 m. to 2.05 m. I designate as Middle Helladic because Minyan and matt-painted wares predominate. But in this stratum there were sherds of many other periods—a few Byzantine and classical, many Mycenaean and monochrome, and four Early Helladic sherds. Finally in the lowest level the remaining Early Helladic sherds were found and the pieces of neolithic ware, but even here a few Mycenaean and Middle Helladic sherds occurred, which shows that nowhere did we have an absolutely undisturbed site.

Unfortunately all the material consists of sherds, with the exception of three complete vases (Figs. 6, 7 and 15), and a few partially complete vases (Fig. 11). More than half of the material found was in such bad condition that it was useless and so discarded. The best and most representative sherds will be examined.

### Neolithic Pottery

A small amount of the pottery which was found is definitely of neolithic character. These sherds were at a depth of 2.05 m., where Early Helladic sherds predominated. All of the neolithic sherds, seventeen in number, are of good fabric, with a smooth surface, which in all cases is not polished. The clay is of gray or dull red color, black at the core. Even from such small fragments one shape is discernible, an open bowl. Two sherds (Fig. 1 *c* and *d*) are pieces of rims of open bowls with an inward curved or rolled rim. Both sherds are thick, 0.01 m., of rather coarse clay, which is a deep gray in color. Their outer surface is polished. On one sherd (Fig. 1 *c*) the surface is red and the incisions on the rim are obliquely cut. The other sherd (*d*) is covered with

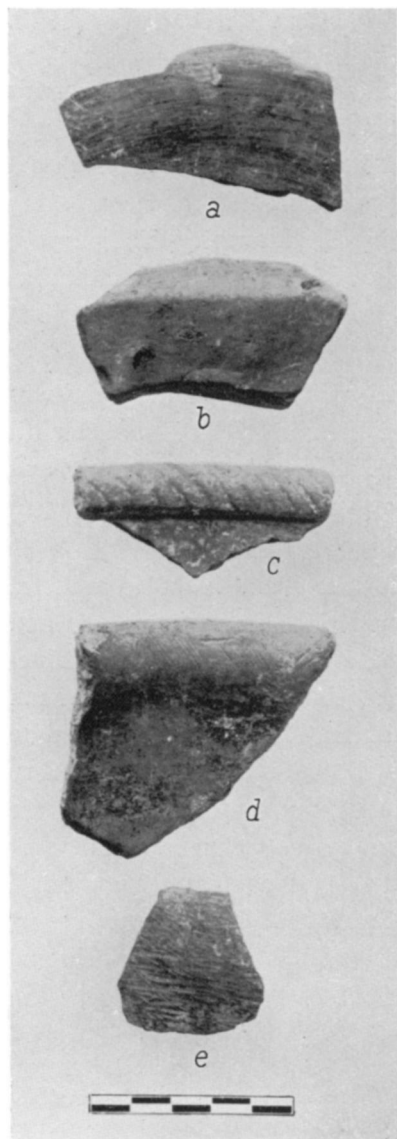


Fig. 1. Sherds of Neolithic Ware

a black slip and is decorated with finely cut lines on the inside of the rim. Some of the sherds are thin, hard, well baked and very smoothly polished (Fig. 1 *a*), while others are unusually thick and heavy (Fig. 1 *b*). One example (Fig. 1 *b*) has string holes for suspending the vase, or possibly, since the holes occur on the shoulder, for tying on a lid. The hole is bored rather carelessly and unevenly, and the aperture on the inside appears at some distance below the rim. Two examples of excellent neolithic ware are seen in

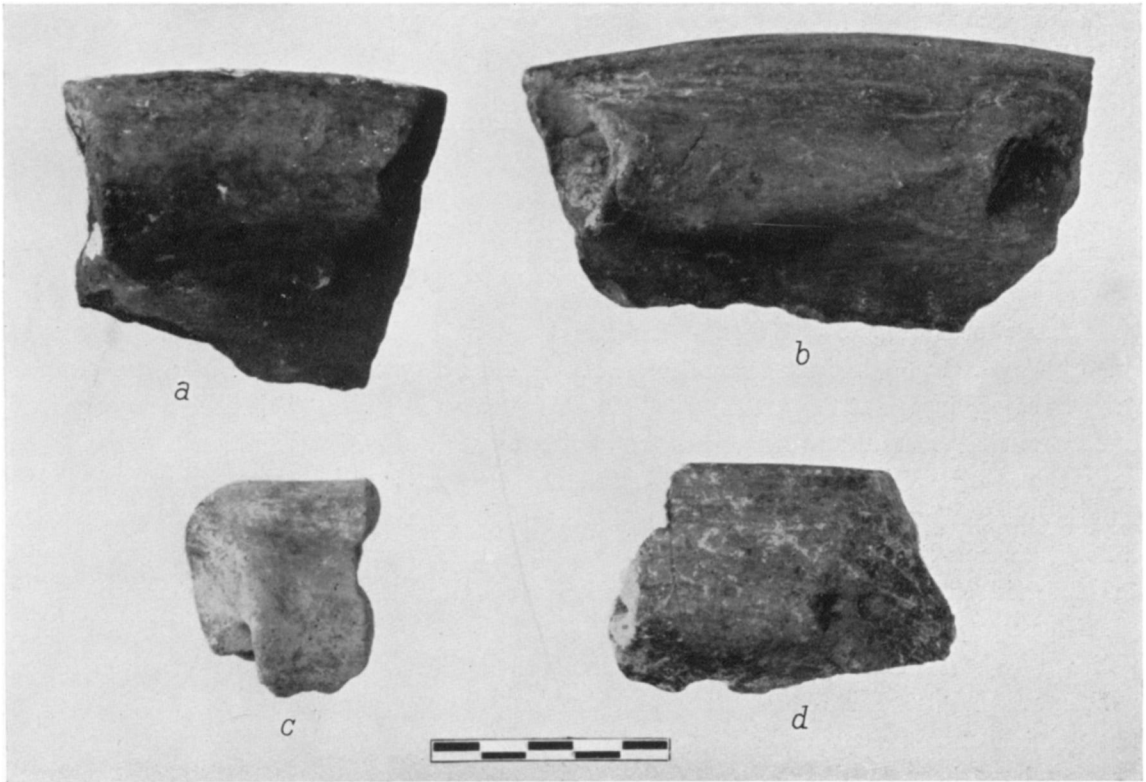


Fig. 2. Sherds of Neolithic Ware

Fig. 1 *a* and *e*. They are parts of bowls and both pieces are thin, fine, and hard, and so highly polished that the marks of the polishing implement are plainly visible. This is especially true of *e* where the polishing implement has left deep marks or grooves.

A common type of neolithic handle is illustrated in figure 2. The large loop handle which is rolled from the rim of the vase continues into the Early Helladic Period where it is fairly common. This particular sherd (Fig. 2 *a*) is of excellent fabric and has a highly polished surface. The clay is mottled red to black, with red predominating. The horizontally pierced lug is commonly met with in this period (Fig. 2 *d*). This sherd is interesting not only for its rolled rim on the inside, but also because its inner surface presents almost a

rippled appearance, due to the marks of the polishing implement. A larger and more pronounced lug handle is seen in figure 2 *b*. This lug measures 0.07 m. in length and is the best example found this season. The thickness and straightness of the sherd suggest a vase of considerable size. This sherd is another good example of a mottled effect, with a dark brown and black on the inside and red to brown and black on the outside. Figure 2 *c* is a small loop handle.

## Early Helladic Pottery

The sherds of the Early Helladic Period include those of polished ware, black and red monochrome, ribbed, plain and incised wares. A fair number of each group was found, chiefly in the lowest level at a depth of two metres and more.

### Polished Ware

These sherds (Fig. 3 *a-d, f*) are extremely well made, hard and thin. The clay is of fine quality and well levigated, and does not contain gritty particles. It is a pale pink or gray in color, darker at the core and lighter on the outer surface. The sherds are well fired and thoroughly baked, and it is their very hardness and thinness which caused them to be so friable. All of the sherds are very small, the largest (Fig. 3 *b*) measuring 0.065 m. in length and 0.04 m. in width. The entire surface both inside and outside was coated with a fine yellow or cream-colored slip. Often a mottled effect was produced by the firing, and the finished surface, as several specimens show, varies from gray to yellow, while a pinkish tinge predominates in a few pieces (Fig. 3 *b*). The finished surface of figure 3 *b* is polished to an extraordinary degree. The marks of the polishing implement, bone or pebble, are plainly visible in fine lines which almost resemble pencil strokes. As Mr. Blegen has pointed out, in these cases the instrument was applied with such pressure that slight grooves have been left.<sup>1</sup>

One shape is indicated by sherd *b*, a sauceboat, which was one of the most characteristic of the Early Helladic shapes and to judge by the material from other sites one of the favorite. Fortunately this small sherd is from the neck where it begins to flare out toward the spout and wide rim.

### Black Monochrome Ware

A few sherds of black monochrome ware were found. They are hard and well fired, varying in thickness from one half to one centimetre. Very few sherds have an entire black surface; most of them present a mottled appearance, the shades varying from gray to

<sup>1</sup> *Zygouries*, p. 77.

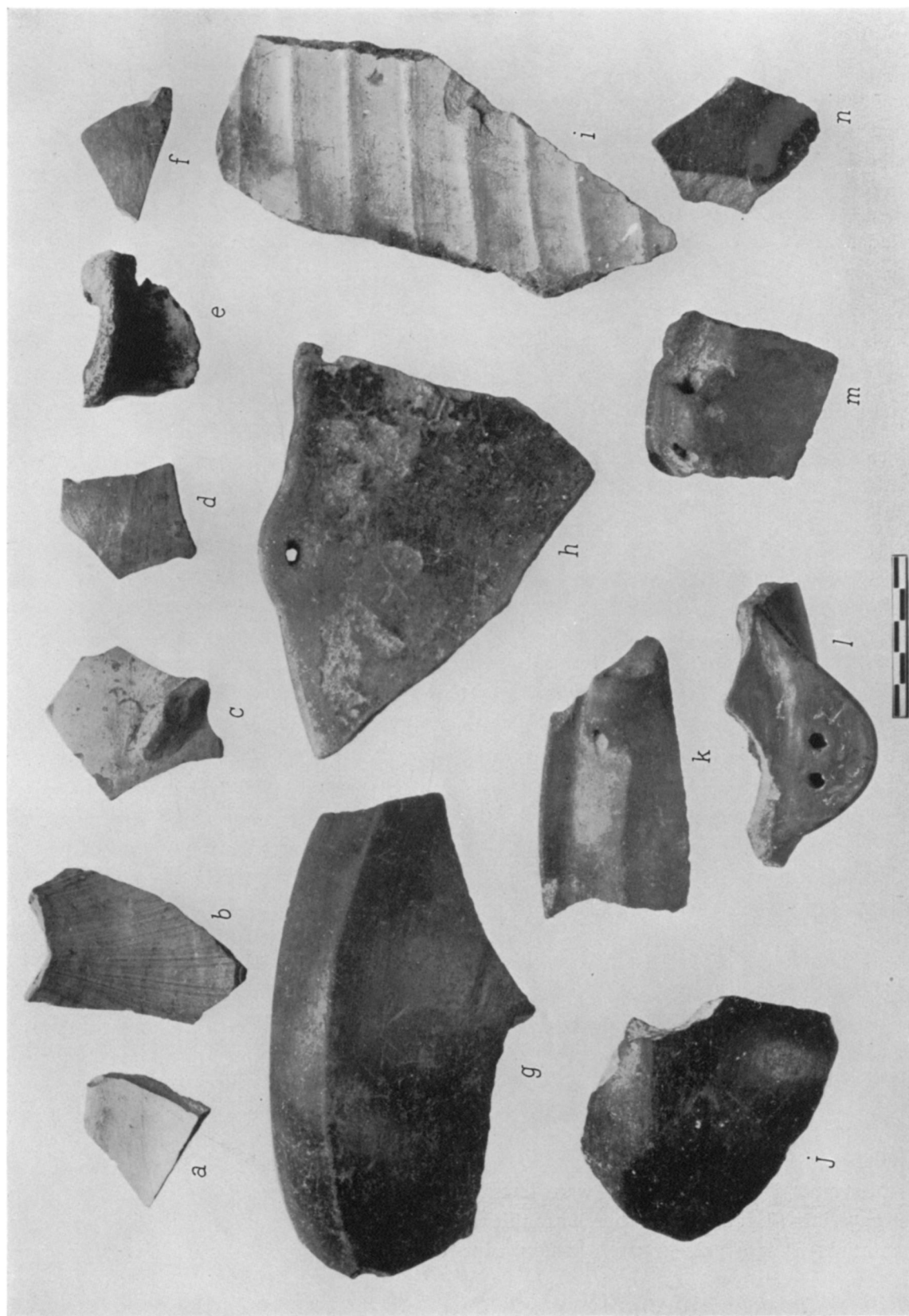


Fig. 3. Sherds of Early Helladic Ware: *a-d, f* polished ware, *e* plain ware, *g, h, k, l, m, n* red monochrome ware, *j* black monochrome ware, *i* ribbed ware

yellow and buff. One sherd is a deep brownish black in color. An open bowl is the common shape indicated. A few sherds have very angular profiles. The sherd here illustrated (Fig. 3 *j*) belongs to a bowl with an inward curving rim. This ware is closely akin to red monochrome ware which occurs in this period.

### Red Monochrome Ware

All the sherds of this ware are well made, of excellent fabric, baked thoroughly, and they have a highly polished surface. A red slip was used to cover the entire surface, both inside and outside, and then polished to a very high degree. Usually the marks of the polishing implement are visible. All of the sherds are hard and fairly thin, varying from one half to one centimetre, but none are as thin as the best pieces of Early Helladic polished ware. The color varies from a pale brick to a deep red, and occasionally the surface has a mottled appearance. On these sherds the red color predominates.

The common shape is a flat-bottomed bowl with gently curving sides, or an open bowl with inward curving rim and rather angular shoulder (Fig. 3 *g*). No. *h* in figure 3 is an interesting sherd although its surface is badly worn and the high polish has almost entirely disappeared. It was broken and mended in antiquity and the meagre remains of a leaden rivet are still visible, both on the inside and outside, about midway on the right hand side of the sherd. The almost straight side and the thickness of the wall, about 0.01 m., suggest a fairly large bowl. The outer side is plain, but a distinct rim is marked on the inside. This rim is decorated with scallops at regular intervals, and a string hole is pierced in each scallop. On the top of the rim a single line, deeply cut, extends up to the scallop, but does not include it.

There are a fair number of pieces from bowls which have a pierced lug handle set horizontally below the rim (Fig. 3 *k* and *m*). On the whole these pieces are well made and even and regular in shape. Occasionally there is some slight irregularity in shape due to the inexperience of the potter in making the vase. Frequently, as here, the small lug handles are set on crookedly.

Another example of a lug is seen in figure 3 *l*. It is a flat elliptical shaped handle, set on horizontally, and pierced with double string holes. Double string holes in this type of lug handle are rather rare.

A good example of a mottled sherd of this ware is to be seen in figure 3 *n*. Across the red surface a wide orange streak appears, and with its black border it resembles three-color ware at first glance.

Both the black and red monochrome wares continue into the Middle Helladic Period.

### Ribbed Ware

Several pieces of this ware were found which seem to belong to large vases, possibly storage jars (Fig. 3 *i*). The sherds are thick, heavy and coarse, and the clay is full of gritty material. It is a pale greenish-buff in color, darker at the core. Sometimes the surface

presents a mottled appearance, varying from greenish buff to dark brown. The only decoration is the evenly ribbed surface.

### Plain Ware

Under this category come those sherds which are rather better than the coarse household ware. Of these the most interesting is part of an askos (Fig. 3 *e*), which shows only a bit of the neck and handle. The clay is a dark gray with a very smooth but not polished surface.

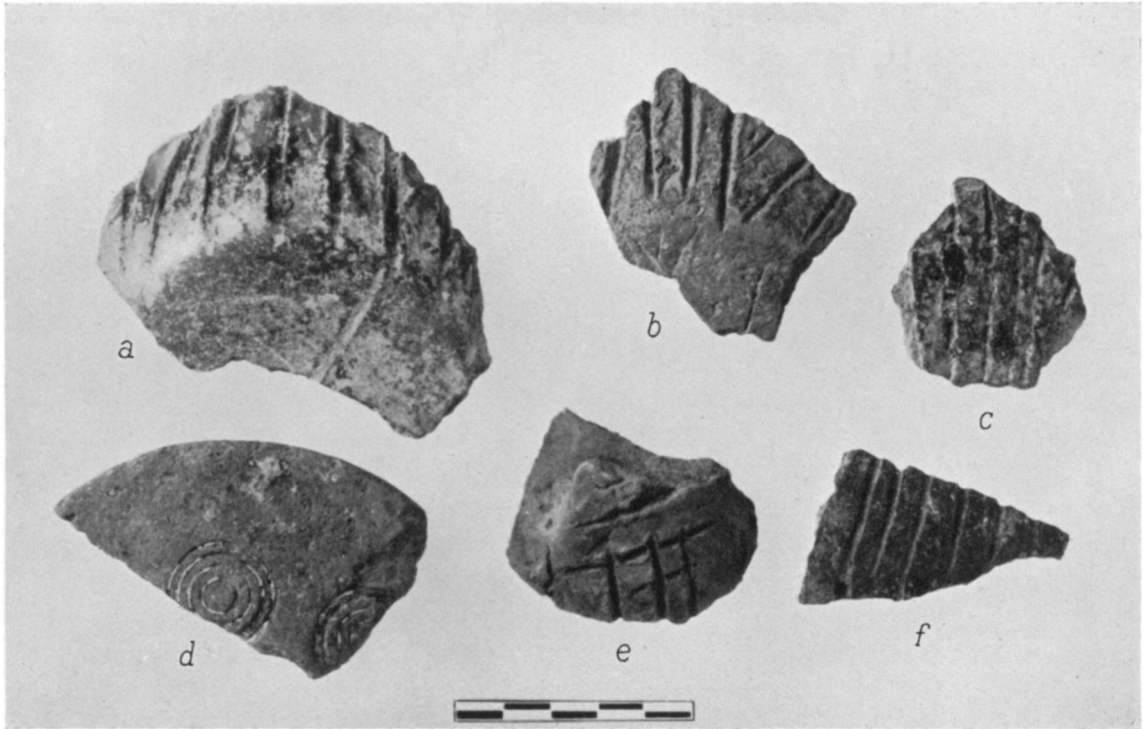


Fig. 4. Sherds of Incised Ware, Early Helladic Period

### Incised Ware

In view of the fact that incised ware is rather a rare type of pottery for the Early Helladic Period it seems unusual to find fifteen sherds in this area, especially when the amount of polished ware was no greater and so few other Early Helladic wares were found.

The most interesting sherd is the lid, presumably for a pyxis, decorated with concentric circles (Fig. 4 *d*). Similar sherds have already been found in this area.<sup>1</sup> This fragment is very coarse and gritty and both the inner and outer surfaces are rough. The clay is a pinkish brown, a pale gray-brown at the core and darker at the outer surface. There does

<sup>1</sup> See *O. B.*, p. 357, fig. 27.

not seem to have been any slip. The incisions were filled with a creamy white pigment, of which considerable traces remain. Around the rim is a row of indentations from which the white filling has almost disappeared. This sherd, if not an importation, shows unmistakably Cycladic influence.

The rest of the illustrated sherds are of coarse, gritty material, with rough surfaces. They vary in color from red (Fig. 4 *b*), gray (*e*), and a mottled red and black shade (*a*). One shape is indicated, a flat-bottomed open bowl. Simple incisions occur on all the sherds. On one (*a*) the lines are wide and deep; again they are merely parallel vertical slashes (*c* and *f*); and again slightly opposing lines (*b*). On one sherd (*e*), a handle, the vertical incisions are crossed by three horizontal lines.

## Middle Helladic Pottery

The Middle Helladic pottery includes black and red monochrome wares, Minyan, matt-painted and plain wares. Minyan and matt-painted wares predominated, and occurred in about equal amounts.

### Black Monochrome Ware

In fabric this ware closely resembles that of the Early Helladic Period, but the shapes show less similarity. The sherds continue to vary greatly in color, from gray to deepest black, and a few present a mottled appearance. Noteworthy in some specimens is the extraordinarily fine polish (Fig. 5 *d*).

The open bowl continues, but now with more pronounced angular profile (Fig. 5 *i*). One bowl has an outward splayed rim (*d*), and another (*i*) has small loop handles which rise above the rim. The broader ribbon handle is also to be seen (*j*). One interesting sherd is illustrated in (*e*) which is part of a bowl with inward curving rim. On the shoulder are two parallel incised lines which had a white filling. In its surface finish figure 5 *n* closely resembles Minyan ware, although its color shades from gray to buff. Certainly the sharp, angular profiles, flat, thin rims, and flat handles give a decidedly metallic effect and are reminiscent of Minyan ware. This is even more true in the case of the red monochrome ware.

### Red Monochrome Ware

In some respects this ware resembles that of the Early Helladic Period in its fine lustrous finish and its high polish, but when sherds from the two periods are placed side by side the difference in fabric and finish is easily discernible. Frequently the sherds of this period have a sort of crackled appearance and in the poorer examples the red slip has worn badly. None of the sherds present that vivid red color which enables one to compare



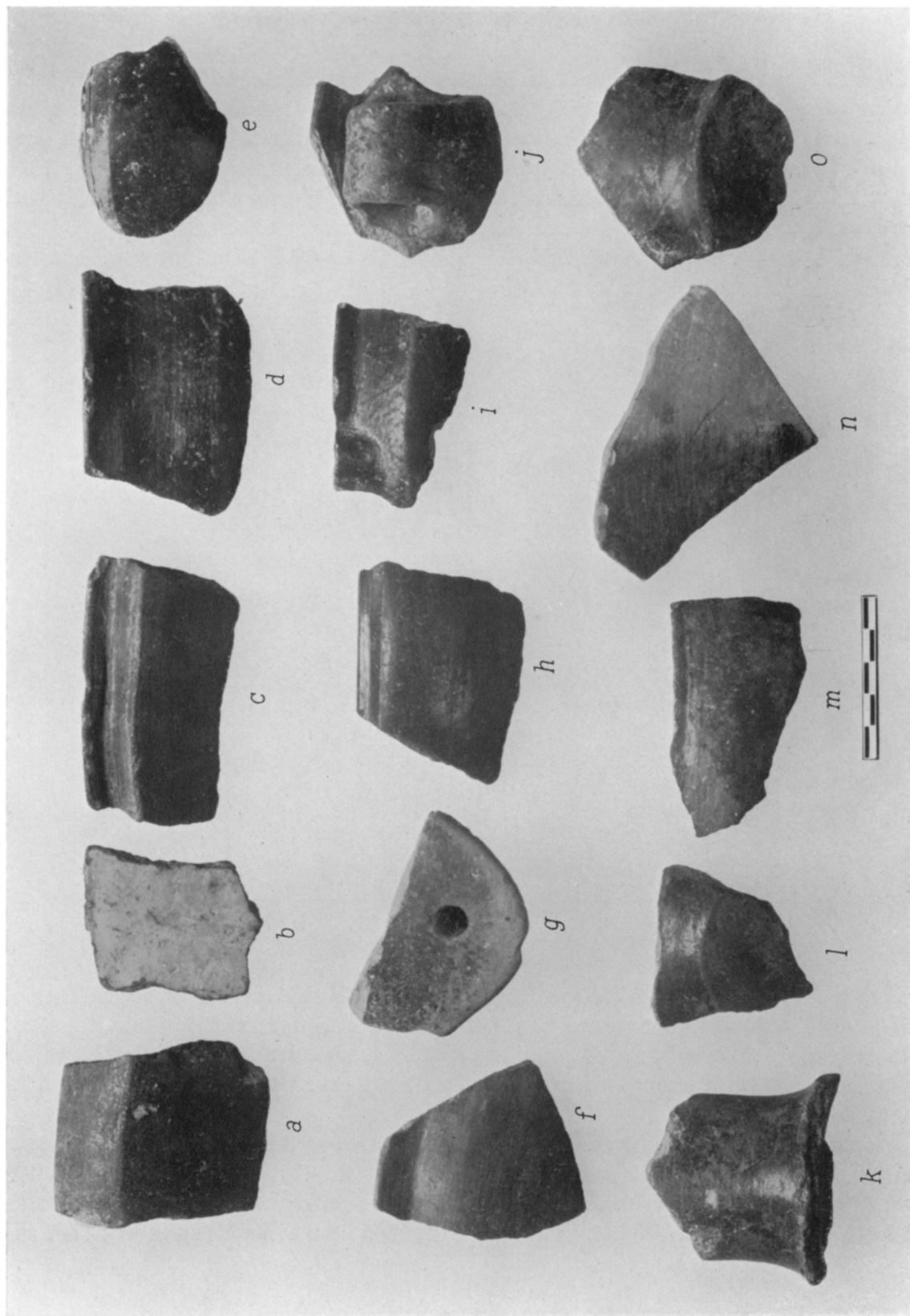


Fig. 5. Sherds of Black and Red Monochrome Wares, Middle Helladic Period

the earlier pieces with the best of Northern Greek red neolithic ware. For this period too many of the sherds have a mottled appearance, but red is always the predominating color.

Besides the familiar shapes—the open bowl with flat bottom and the bowl with inward curving rim—the stemmed vase is found. None of the fragments found this year have ringed stems, but several plain stems occur. One (Fig. 5 *k*) measures 0.05 m. in width at the present top. The extent of its base is uncertain. The high polish is disappearing, but the



Fig. 6. Vase of the Middle Helladic Period

sherd is of excellent fabric. The open bowl with one lug handle is fairly common. The flat elliptical handle, which was set on horizontally, is pierced with one string hole (Fig. 5 *g*). These string holes were bored by a rotating drill, sometimes worked from both sides of the vase, but more often from one side only. When bored from both sides the hole has a bi-conical shape.

An interesting sherd is seen in figure 5 *b*. The outer surface is covered with a deep creamy mattpaint, the inside with a red slip.

Here mention should be made of two good specimens of red monochrome ware. One is a large two-handled jar (Fig. 6). The color is really a deep buff which has been fired un-

evenly and ranges from pinkish tints to black near the base. The surface is beautifully polished but the interior is rough. It stands 0.23 m. high.

In figure 7 we see a low-stemmed Middle Helladic cup or goblet. It is of coarse clay, but the surface is smooth and slightly polished. It stands 0.087 m. high. This red monochrome vase is important in that there are not many specimens of this type from the Middle Helladic Period. The type continues through the Yellow Minyan cup into the Mycenaean Period in an unbroken line.



Fig. 7. Vase of the Middle Helladic Period

### Minyan Ware

A large amount, in proportion to all the prehistoric pottery found this season, was gray Minyan ware and it is wholly in sherds. Very few pieces could be put together and not a single complete vase resulted. On the other hand, in the case of the matt-painted sherds several vases were partially reconstructed. None of the Minyan sherds showed any unusual features. The ware is too well known to be described here in any detail, but a few remarks will suffice.

Some of the sherds are rather thick and the surface rough. They are handmade, but the majority are wheelmade. Most of them are thin and the surface has that smooth, "soapy" feel which characterizes this ware. A few pieces are so thin that the inner side

of the vase must have been pared very carefully. The color of the clay is uniform throughout, but varies from a very light to a deep gray, and in a few instances almost black (Fig. 8 *g*). Pale gray sherds predominate and it is possible that they were in imitation of the light gray color of metal. A few sherds are of light brown color (Fig. 8 *b*).

The common shapes represented are open bowls, smaller bowls or cups with very angular profiles, and goblets with ringed stems. The deep bowl with an outward splayed rim is illustrated in figure 8 *e* and *h*. The former sherd with its dark lustrous surface is one of the best pieces found. Its profile is unusually angular. No. *i* is part of a base of a wide open bowl. The base is low and above it is a single ring.

Both ringed and plain stems occur in the goblets (Fig. 8 *k-n*). There is great variation in the rings. Some are narrow and placed close together as in no. *k*; others are flatter and spaced farther apart (no. *l*); others are less regularly arranged as in no. *n*. Some of these stems recall the North Central Greek and the Thessalian variety with their numerous rings. The stems are hollow.

There is a variety of handles—strap handles, forming loops on the rim (Fig. 8 *a, b*, and *d*); round bow handles set vertically on the rim (*c*); and the flat ribbon handle seen in no. *j*.

On several sherds the ribbing is so faint and fine as almost to resemble rippled ware.

No examples of Argive Minyan were found this year, although Mr. Broneer reported some examples from the previous excavation.

### **Matt-painted Ware**

Although a large amount of matt-painted ware was found it offers little that is new. The bulk of it is in sherds but enough pieces were fitted together partially to reconstruct three vases (Fig. 11). This ware falls into the two groups of coarse and fine ware. No sherds of polychrome decoration were found this year, but some sherds have been reported for the previous campaign. Both the dark matt-paint on a light ground, and the white matt on a dark ground occur.

### **Coarse Ware**

Most of the sherds found belong to this category. The clay varies in color from pale to dark buff, light reddish buff and a yellow green. The fabric is coarse and full of gritty particles and sand. Sometimes it is burned unevenly at the core, and varies in color from pink tints at the edge to palest cream in the centre. The sherds vary greatly in thickness, the widest measuring 0.015 m. A few sherds have a slip, but in many of the fragments there is none and the surface is rough, especially on the inside of the vase. Carelessness of finish is apparent in nearly all the heavier sherds. Several of the sherds have a ribbed surface (Fig. 10 *e* and *f*). The ridges are one or one and a half centimetres apart. This

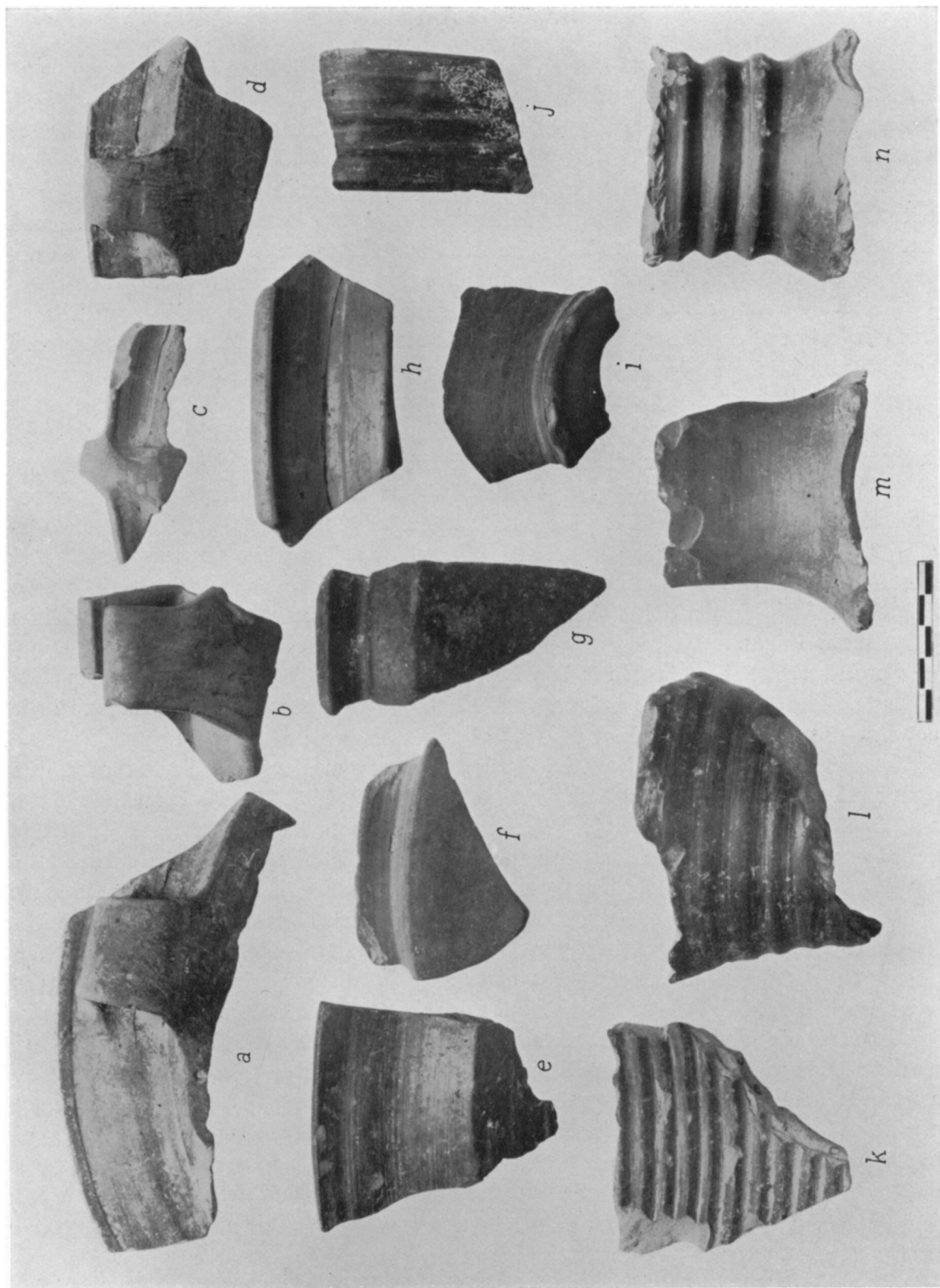


Fig. 8. Sherds of Gray Minyan Ware, Middle Helladic Period

ribbing may be in imitation of Minyan ware, but the ribbing is done in wide sweeps, and the ridges are narrow and flat on the edge. Not all of the surface of the vase was ribbed, as some fragments show. Possibly the ribbing occurs in definite zones as on the shoulder or around the lower part of the body of the vase.

The mattpaint ranges from a deep black to purple, brownish black, and brownish red, but it is always a true matt. On the thicker, coarser pieces the mattpaint occurs in broad lines a little over 0.01 m. wide. The paint is thick and frequently it has been put on unevenly. On the pieces of finer ware the lines are thin and remarkably fine.

Most of the patterns are simple geometric designs; a few are curvilinear, with loops and circles in conjunction with straight lines. There is a fondness for decoration in zones or panels, especially in the larger vases. The simplest patterns consist of single lines, thin or wide, straight or curving, extending across the surface of the vase (Fig. 9). One of the commonest motives is the grouping of parallel lines of unequal width, e.g. a broad band bordered by a narrower one, on either or both sides, and intersected by lines at oblique angles (Fig. 9 *a*, *d* and *f*). Note no. *o* with its eleven thin parallel lines extending downward from a broad band. A checkerboard pattern between unusually thick lines occurs (Fig. 9 *b*) and is reminiscent of the patterns of neolithic red on white ware of Thessaly and Chaeronea. Intersecting lines occur commonly and often in combination with circles (Fig. 9 *h* and *p*). In the ribbed sherds the pattern consists merely of parallel vertical lines between the ridges.

One interesting sherd is seen in Fig. 9 *k* which shows the influence of the Palace style of Crete. The clay is a pale red, covered with a white slip on which appears a simple pattern. Unfortunately the sherd is in a bad condition.

With but two exceptions all of the sherds are too fragmentary to indicate shapes. An open bowl with high ribbon handles is seen in figure 10 *h*; while Fig. 9 *a* is part of the rim and shoulder of a storage jar. The characteristic shape of the small storage jar of this period is a low-bellied jar, with a small, flat base, broad, flat rim, and two large horizontal handles. String holes, usually four in number, are set in the rim and serve for fastening on the lid. The decoration usually covers the upper part of the vase, and falls into vertical panels, separated from one another by vertical lines. The panels are not always symmetrically arranged. We found many pieces of rims of these storage jars, marked by string holes, and decorated by one or two heavy broad bands of black mattpaint around the neck.

Another variety of mattpainted ware consists of rather coarse red clay which is covered on the outside with a thick light colored (white or creamy white) slip. The slip serves as a background for the decoration which is put on in dark mattpaint. This slip is really a wash which rubs off easily. The two storage jars illustrated in figure 11 *b* and *c* are of this type. As Mr. Broneer suggested, it is possible that this ware was treated in this manner so that it would resemble the more common mattpainted variety of pottery.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *O. B.*, p. 361.

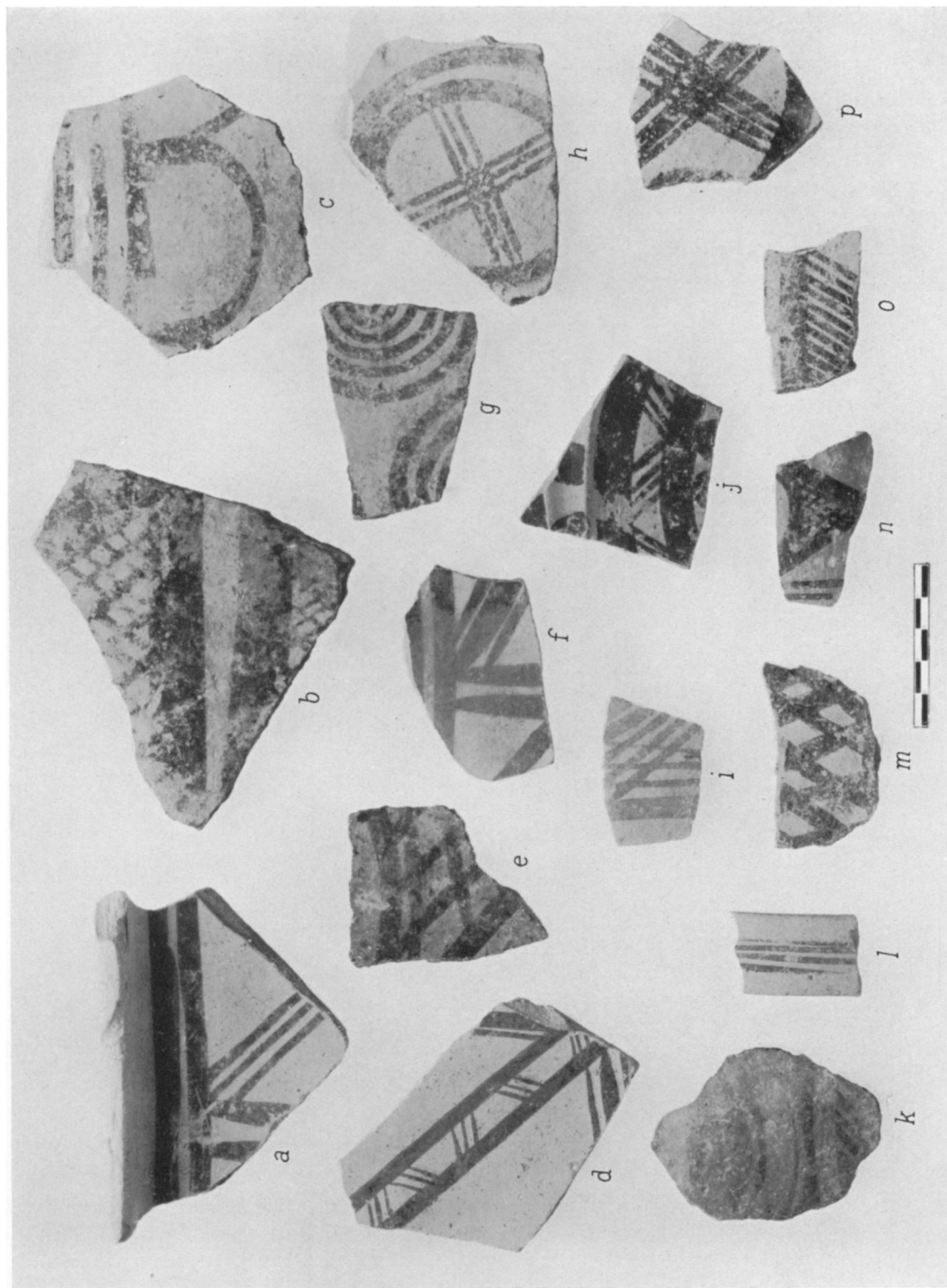


Fig. 9. Sherds of Matt-painted Ware, Middle Helladic Period



Another variety, and a rather rare one, is matt-painted ware with the decoration in white matt on a dark ground. The sherds of this group are from large vases of coarse material. The clay is gritty, fired red on the edges and dark gray to black at the core. The surface varies from red to black; the matt-paint is a creamy white, which is put on thinly. The best example we have is the high-necked jar illustrated in figure 11 *a*. The pattern consists of single lines which sweep across the body of the vase in curves and long triangular figures. A series of short horizontal lines are on the handle. The matt-paint is fast disappearing.

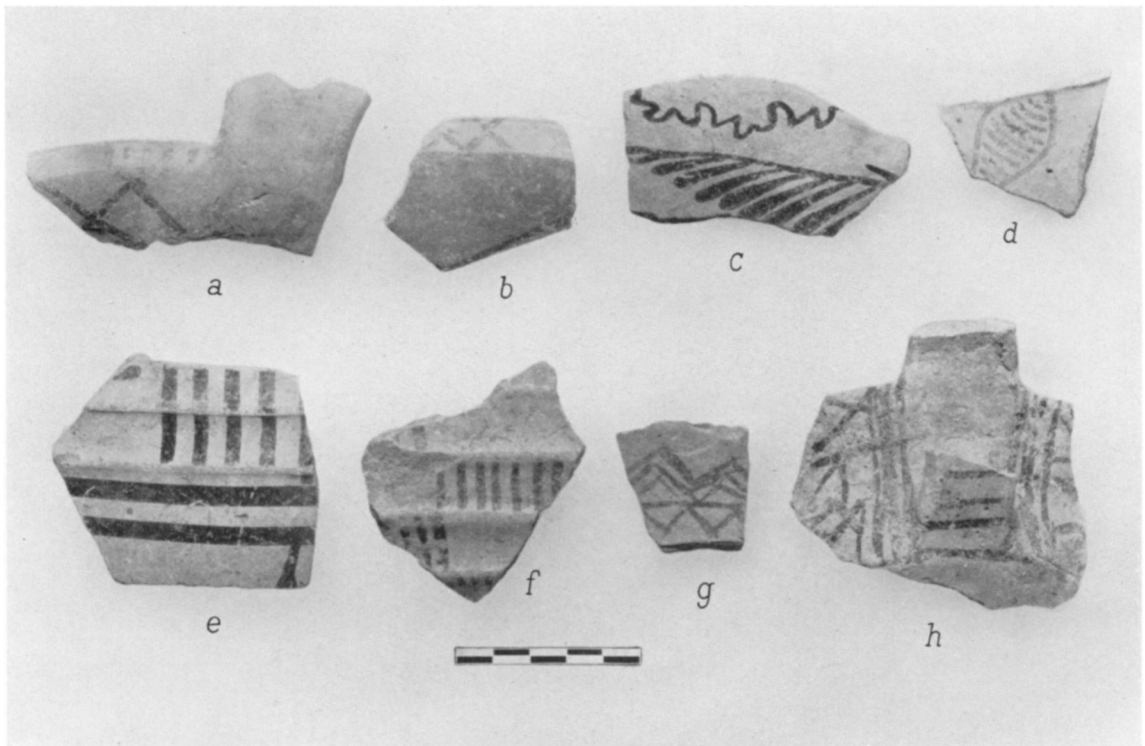


Fig. 10. Sherds of Matt-painted Ware, Middle Helladic Period

### Fine Ware

Most of the sherds of this group are wheelmade, usually small, and much finer both in fabric and decoration than the other matt-painted sherds. The clay has been carefully sifted. It is usually buff or greenish yellow in color. The slip is the same color as the clay and it may be hard and polished or soft and powdery and rubs off easily. The paint is a black matt or dark reddish brown, which has been put on carefully and evenly. The patterns are curvilinear, including spirals, concentric circles, running quirks, wavy lines, etc. The great variety of floral designs and the strong Minoan influence which appear on sherds of



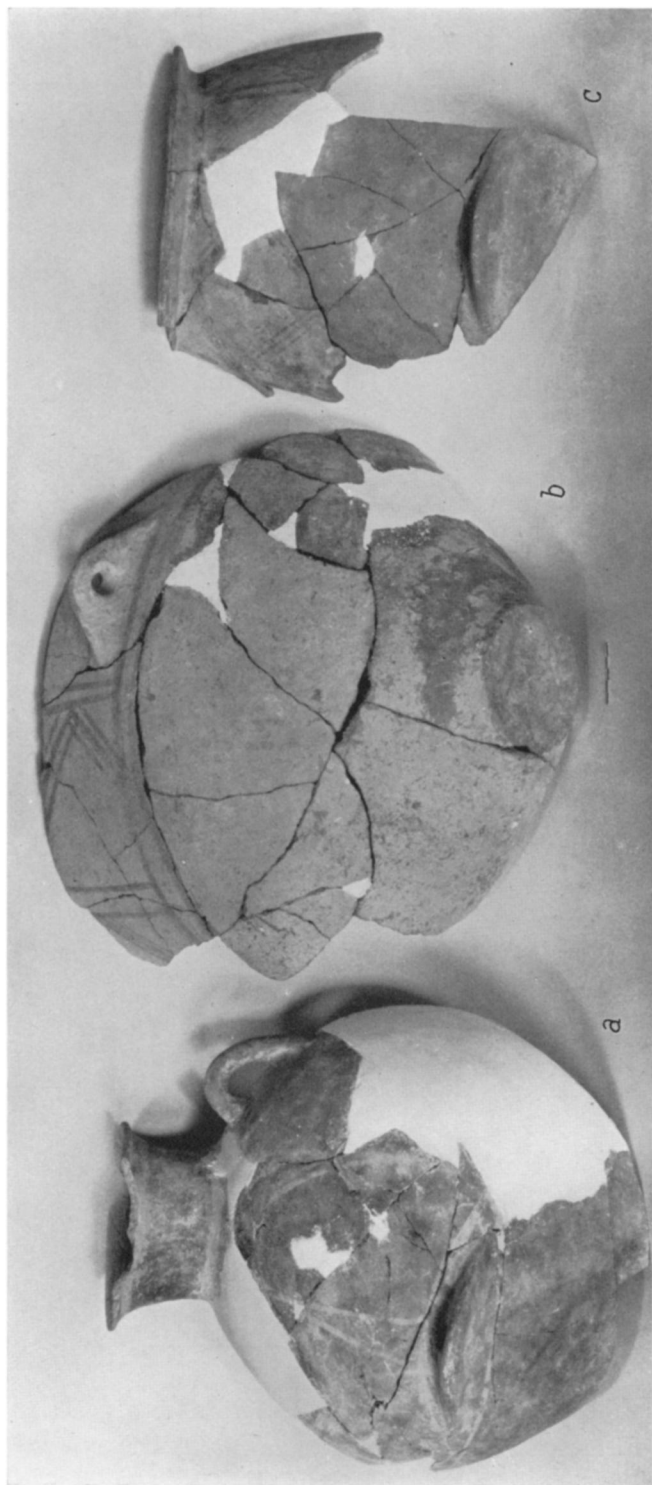


Fig. 11. Vases of Mattpainted Ware, Middle Helladic Period

this group at other sites are not apparent here. We have two sherds which show Melian influence (Fig. 10 *c* and *d*). Two others are fragments of a shallow basin (Fig. 10 *a* and *b*). The vase has a flat base, the sides spread widely outward to the shoulder which is very

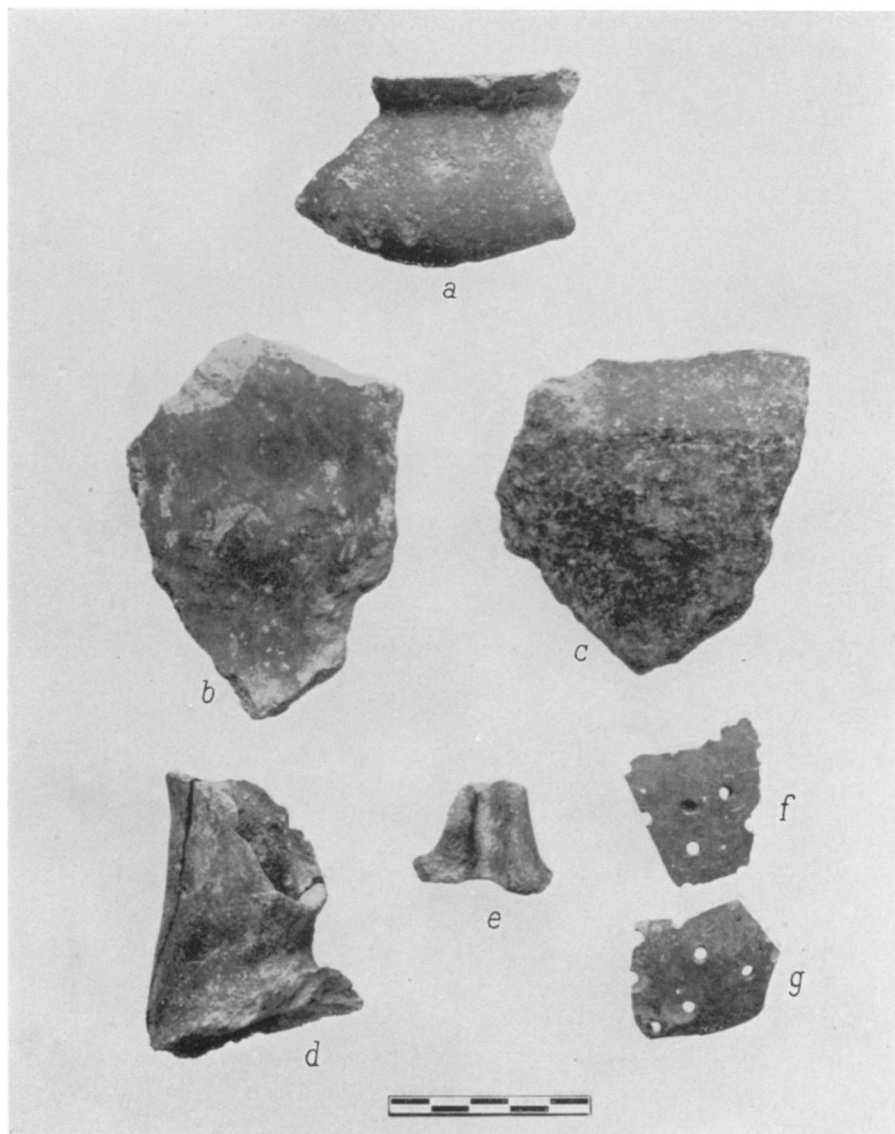


Fig. 12. Sherds of Plain Ware, Middle Helladic Period

angular. Between the shoulder and the rim the decoration appears, a series of crosses and at intervals four parallel vertical lines. One fragment (*a*) has a high handle which rises above the rim.

### Plain Ware

In the same level with the Minyan and matt-painted wares a number of sherds were found which are rather better than those usually designated as household ware. The latter is always a very coarse ware and will be discussed later. Much of this plain ware has a rough texture and thick walls, but always a smooth and in a few cases a polished surface. The clay is not well sifted and contains sand and gritty particles, chiefly mica. However, the vases are nicely executed for household pieces. Two sherds (Fig. 12 *f* and *g*) are thin and hard; the rest vary greatly in thickness. The vases are fairly well baked. The color varies from brown to red and black in different shades, but the clay is frequently of lighter color at the core and burned darker at the outer edges. Many of the pieces show traces of burning in the black patches on the outer surface. Some of the sherds have a slip; none are painted.

A bowl seems to be the common shape indicated by several examples (Fig. 12 *a*). Some of them have an outward splayed rim. A spouted vase is indicated by figure 12 *d* and *e*, while two other sherds are parts of a strainer (*f* and *g*).

### Late Helladic Pottery

The number of Late Helladic sherds which was found this year was relatively small in comparison to the great amount of Minyan and matt-painted wares. By far the largest amount of pottery for this period is Yellow Minyan.

### Yellow Minyan Ware

The sherds of this group illustrate every grade of quality and workmanship. The clay is fine and well levigated, the surface polished. The color varies in shade from yellow to brown, but the great bulk of it is pinkish buff and so markedly that color that to designate it as Yellow Minyan seems inadequate. The sherds vary in thickness; most of them are thin and hard.

The most common shape is a goblet on a low stem. Nearly a hundred examples, none complete, were found. The handle is usually a small loop handle. In figure 13, *l* represents the common type of goblet, while no. *k* shows a heavier type with a thicker, shorter stem.

Another fairly common shape is the flat-bottomed bowl (Fig. 13 *d* and *h*). The sides splay outward widely. There is a variety of handles including the flat ribbon type (Fig. 13 *i*), the small loop handle (*f*), and the wider ribbon type which is set on vertically at the rim (*j* and *m*). Sometimes well marked vertical grooves occur on the handle.

### Late Helladic I Painted Ware

These sherds are wheelmade and of excellent fabric. The clay is finely sifted. It is buff in color but usually with a pinkish tinge and frequently a deeper pink at the core.

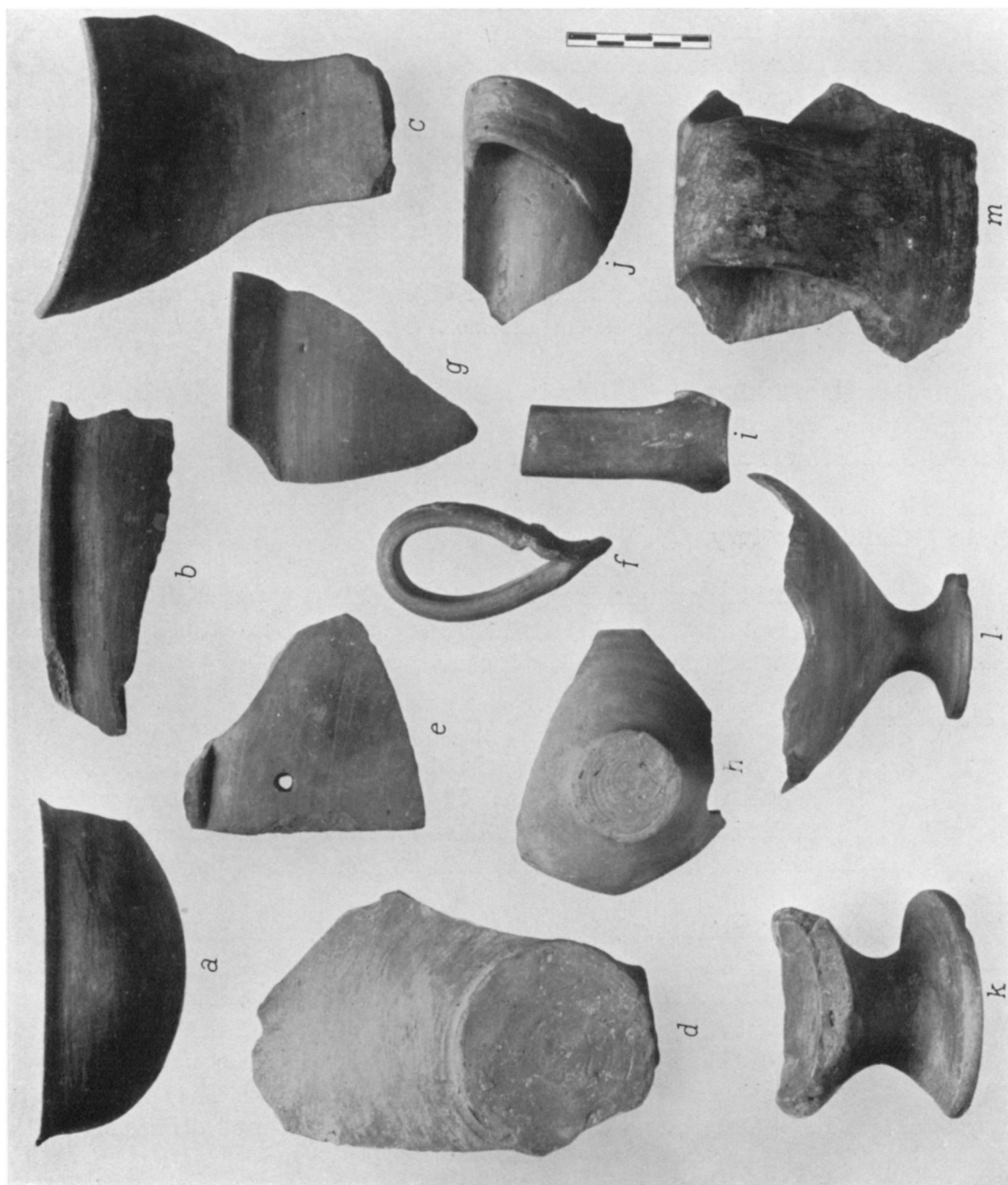


Fig. 13. Sherds of Yellow Minyan Ware, Late Helladic Period

The sherds are well baked, thin and hard, the surface finely smoothed. It is covered with a slip, usually of the same color as the clay. The paint has flaked off on some of the sherds; in others it is lustrous and of good quality. The color of the paint varies from red to dark brown and black.

The patterns present a great variety, but none are new. Since this is the great period of the spiral it is not surprising to find many sherds showing this decorative motive. The spiral usually starts with a central eye and continues in well drawn lines of four or five revolutions before it ends (Fig. 14 *c*, *d* and *i*). Occasionally the central eye is lacking (no. *h*). The spirals are arranged in a row, or in a belt or zone, and may be connected by a wavy line (Fig. 14 *g*). The festoon is another decorative motive, bordered by several parallel lines (Fig. 14 *j* and *k*). Such a network often covers the upper part of the vase.

### Late Helladic II Painted Ware

The sherds of this group continue to show the same good quality as those of Late Helladic I. The spiral continues to appear but it is not so well made as in the preceding period. The central eye often is lacking, the coils are heavy and not so carefully executed. Not only is the line broader but the number of revolutions are fewer, and the general effect produced is not so successful (Fig. 14 *m*, *n*, *t* and *u*). On the other hand the spirals may be combined into an elaborate pattern (Fig. 14 *n*). Divisions into belts or zones continue and horizontal bands are frequent, not merely to mark divisions, but also to form part of the pattern itself (Fig. 14 *b* and *r*). This motive continues into the Mycenaean Period where the bands become a most common decorative device (Fig. 15). Festoons continue to appear, and a variation of the running quirk pattern (Fig. 14 *r* and *l*). Naturalistic floral designs and marine patterns are very common. Here we have the conventional leaf and ivy patterns (Fig. 14 *p* and *q*). A field of dots or a single row of them serves as a background (Fig. 14 *o* and *r*). In the so-called "thrush's egg" pattern the whole surface of the vase is stippled in reddish brown color and a speckled effect is produced (Fig. 14 *s*).

Deep cups (Fig. 14 *a* and *b*), bowls (*i*, *l*, *s*, *t*, and *u*) and squat jugs (*q*) are the shapes indicated.

### Mycenaean Ware

In his report Mr. Broneer has mentioned and illustrated all the complete Mycenaean vases found and there is no need to repeat. In this year's work only one whole Mycenaean vase (Fig. 15) was found on the meagre traces of a floor level (p. 539). The vase is of buff clay, standing 0.23 m. high. It has a smooth, polished surface. It is decorated on the body with two horizontal bands of red which have almost disappeared, one band on the base, three on the shoulder and one on the neck.

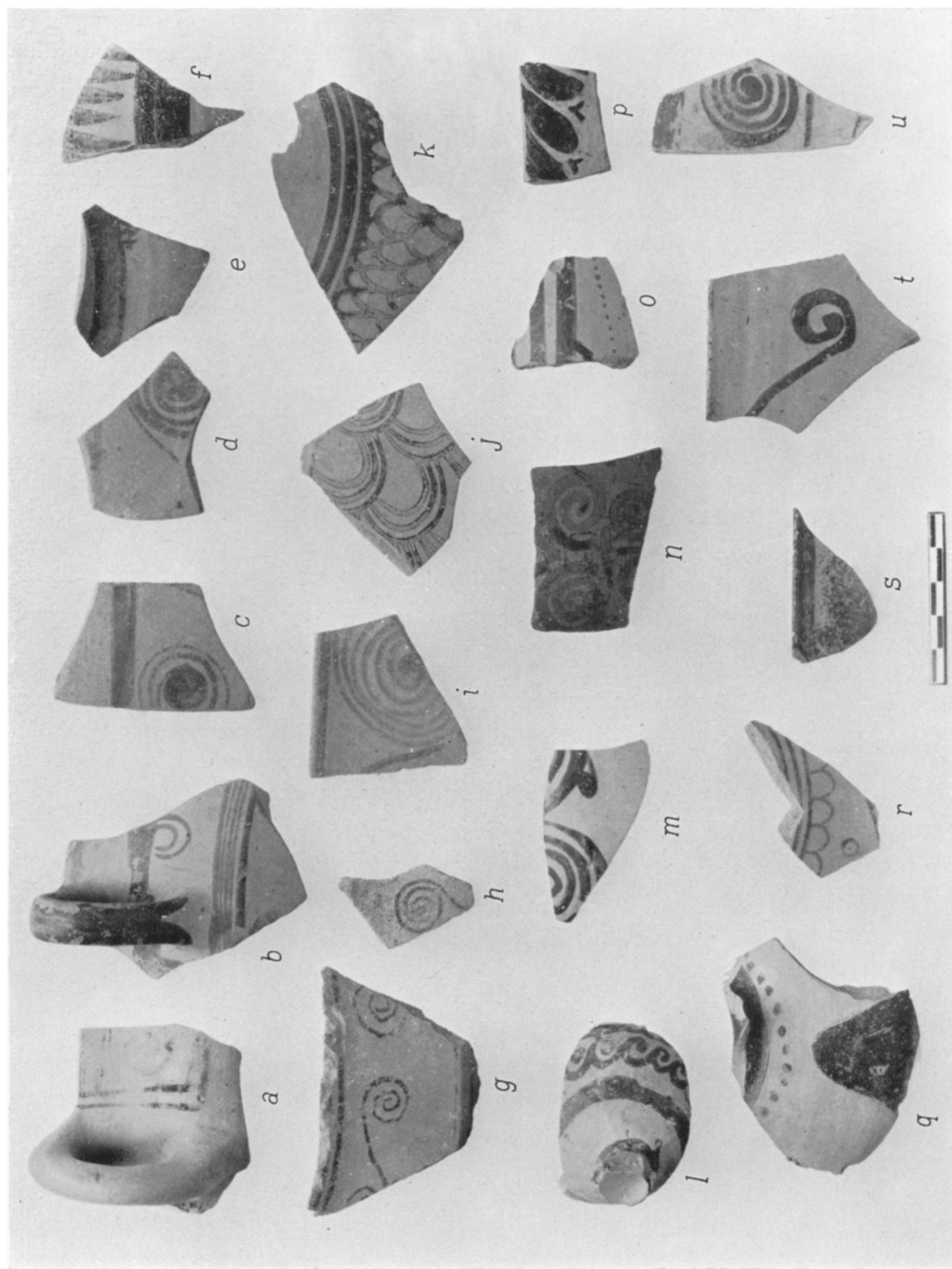


Fig. 14. Sherds of Late Helladic I and II Periods

A few comments on the sherds will suffice. They are fairly abundant, but no division into an early and later group can be made such as Mr. Broneer made for the material found in the floor levels at the top and bottom of the Mycenaean stairway. Since the Mycenaean



Fig. 15. Mycenaean Vase, Late Helladic III Period

sherds were scattered through all the levels any division made would have to be based on differences in fabric, technique and decoration.

Most of the sherds are thin and wellmade. They are covered with a slip of the same color as the clay. The surface is smooth and polished. A few pieces which were intended for domestic use are thick and coarse.

The patterns were put on in a good red or black (frequently dark brown) paint, which was applied thinly and evenly. The well known decorative motives appear, in panels or zones, set off by a group of vertical lines. The spiral in many variations, wavy lines sweeping over the surface of the vase, and bands of horizontal lines are common (Fig. 16).

### Household Ware

The pottery of this class consists of vases of coarse material intended for domestic use. In fact, many of the sherds show traces of fire. In all they are the largest group of pottery found this year and they represent about one fifth of all the sherds found. They range in size from tiny sherds to almost complete vases, but unfortunately no whole vase was found or could be reconstructed. Several shapes, however, are indicated.

Most of this ware is heavy and thick. The clay is not sifted and usually it is not thoroughly baked. The uneven firing often shows in the variegated coloring of the sherd, ranging from different shades of red, reddish brown, dark brown to black. All the vases are handmade and roughly executed, with none showing a perfectly regular shape. Sometimes they were distorted in the baking, and some specimens are so badly baked that they crumble easily. All the vessels were intended for household use and consequently no attempt was made to produce good pieces. Many of the sherds are without paint or slip, but in a few cases the fabric is rather good for such ware.

The most common shape is an open shallow bowl of varying size and exhibiting a great variety of workmanship. Some bowls have a smooth surface and are rather evenly shaped with thin walls; others are of very coarse material and irregular with thick walls. A flat base and fairly perpendicular sides go with this shape (Fig. 17 *b* and *c*). Other bowls are so carelessly made that they stand unevenly (Fig. 17 *e*). The inward curving rim still persists.

A great many legs of cooking pots were found. In every case they are broken off so far below the vase that no idea of the size or shape can be obtained. Most of them are flat and rectangular (Fig. 17 *f* and *h*); others are round or taper downwards (Fig. 17 *g*, *i* and *j*). All the pieces are of very coarse fabric, undecorated, with rough surface. They vary greatly in size, the largest measuring 0.17 m. in length, 0.05 m. in width, and 0.03 m. in thickness (Fig. 17 *f*). There are also a number of legs of miniature size, averaging 0.04 m. in length, 0.025 m. in width (Fig. 17 *j* and *k*). These tiny vases could not have served any useful purpose and in all probability were children's toys.

Many lids were found, some with a hole in the centre, others pierced with string holes near the rim. Two were covered with a creamy white mattpaint and must have been intended for the storage jars of the Middle Helladic Period. Another has a handle extending across it (Fig. 17 *a*).

No complete storage jars of the well known types were found but a great many sherds, of which the greater number are bases. These bases are very small, but the pithoi doubt-



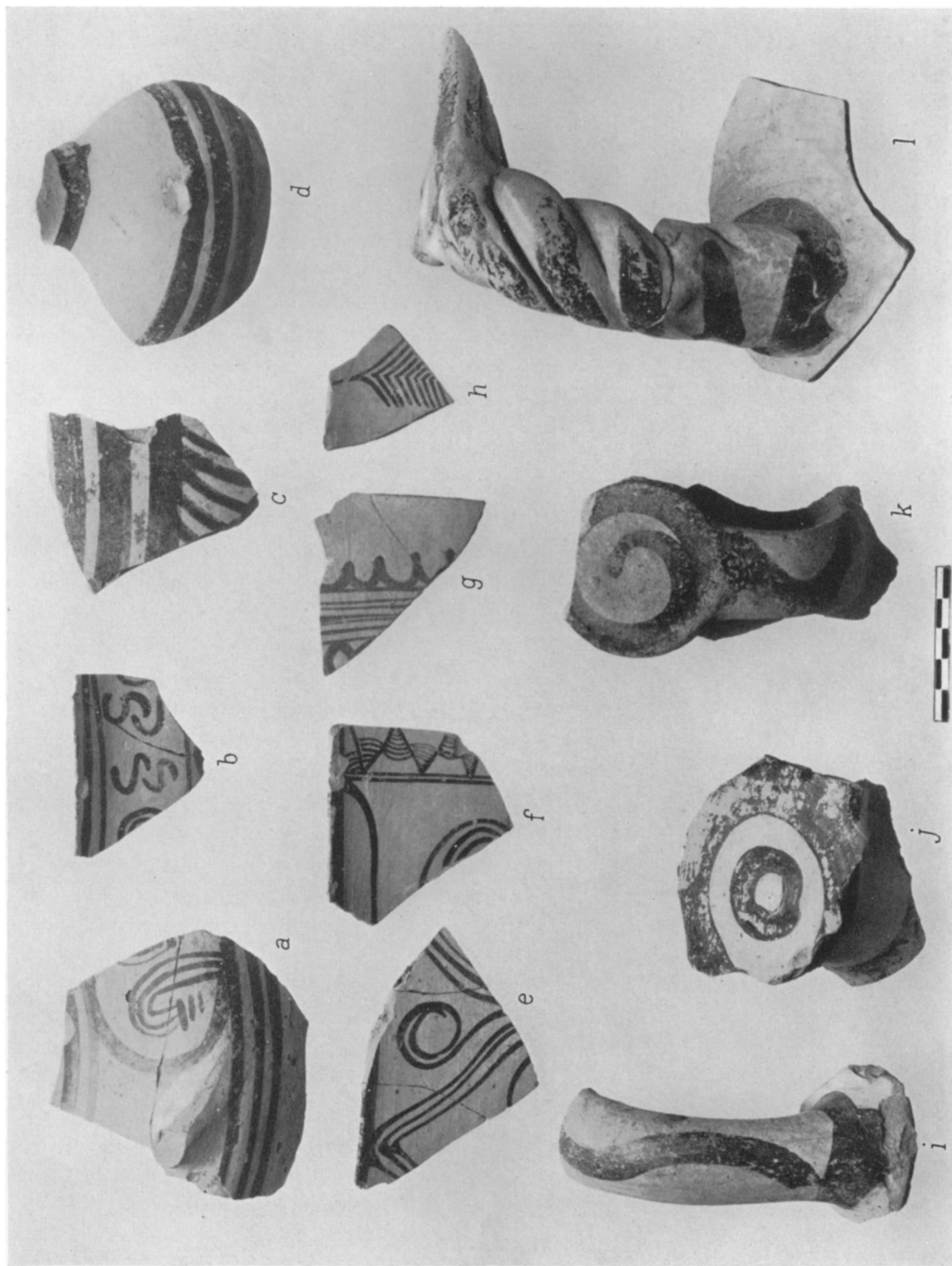


Fig. 16. Sherds of Mycenaean Ware, Late Helladic III Period

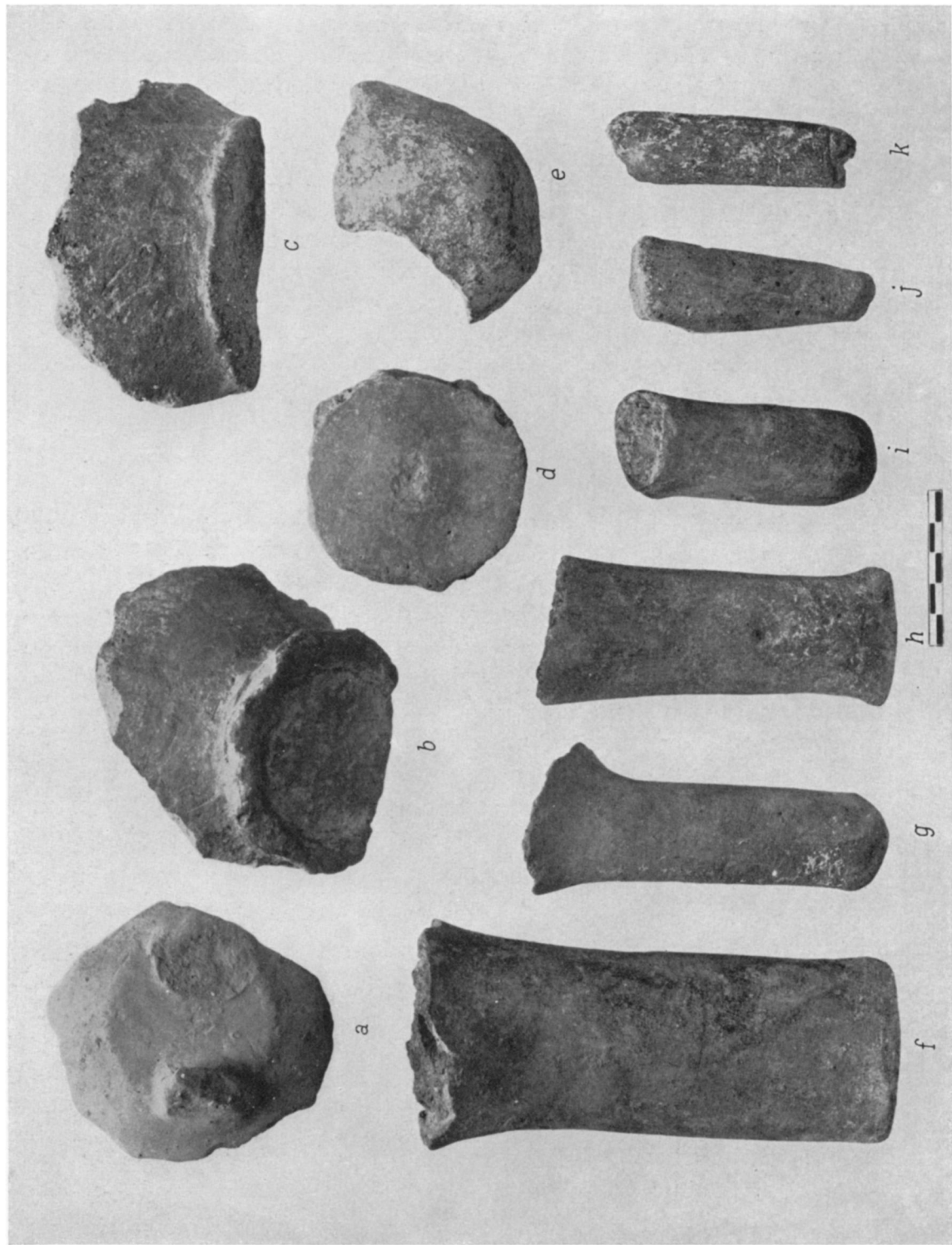


Fig. 17. Household Ware

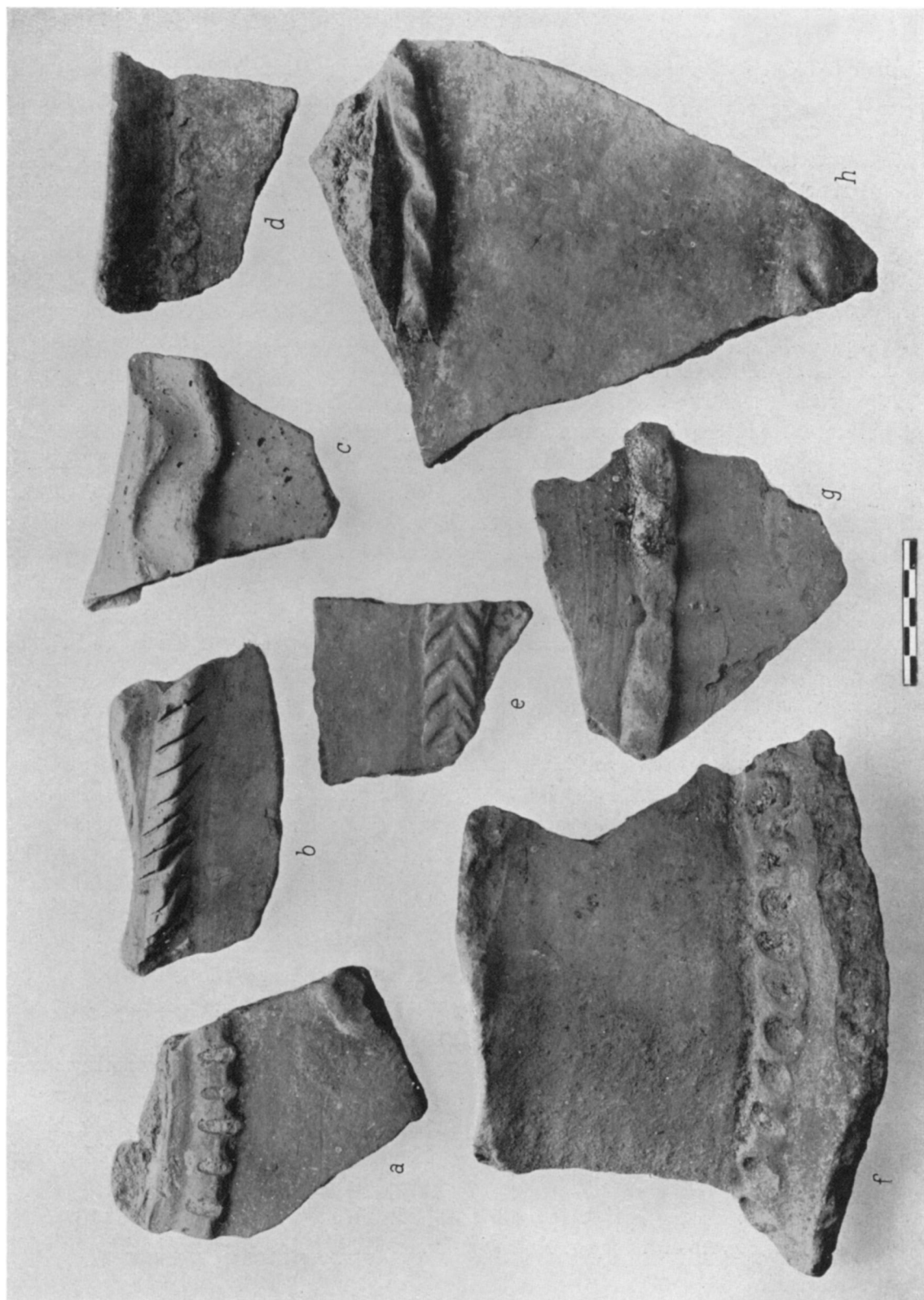


Fig. 18. Sherds of Storage Jars

less were fitted into hollows dug into the floor or they could have been supported with stones piled up around them. In any case they stood firmly and it did not matter if the base was too small to support so large a vase.

Many of the pieces of the pithoi are decorated with simple stamped and incised patterns. The commonest are variations of the rope pattern, made with a plastic horizontal band which has slanting impressions of a finger (thumb) or of some blunt instrument (Fig. 18 *d*, *f*, *g*, and *h*). Sometimes the effect produced is that of the twisted strands of the rope (Fig. 18 *h*). Other pieces show the plastic band cut slantwise with broad thrusts (Fig. 18 *a*), or again with strokes finely cut by a sharp instrument (Fig. 18 *b*). Again a plastic wavy line is the only decorative device (Fig. 18 *c*). The patterns are not elaborate, although one represents a leaf pattern (Fig. 18 *e*).

An amazing number of lugs were found at all levels. They occur on the coarse pottery and their size and shape vary considerably. Many are large enough to serve as handles. This is especially true in the neolithic sherds (Fig. 2). The long horizontal lug, which is pierced, is fairly common (Fig. 19 *d* and *g*). Some lugs are simply small, round knobs, slightly pulled out from the body of the vase (Fig. 19 *c*). Such small protuberances resemble the knobs at the base of the Minyan handle, which in itself is suggestive of a metal rivet. Large flat round lugs occur (Fig. 19 *a* and *b*), in one case being decorated with incised lines. This type of lug is known in the Early Helladic Period. On the larger vases of thicker, coarser ware the lugs are rather carelessly made, and occur singly or in pairs (Fig. 19 *e*, *h* and *i*). Such a lug as shown in figure 19 *j* actually served as a handle.

Twenty-one pieces of spit supports were found (Fig. 20 *c* and *g*). The larger pieces have a wide base and thick walls which grow thinner toward the top. The surface is very rough and in most cases there are traces of burning from the fire. Some of these fragments are so small and the holes for the beams so low that it is difficult to imagine that they could have served any practical use.

We have nine pieces of perforated clay fragments whose purpose is unknown (Fig. 20 *a*, *b*, *d*, *e*, *f*). Two of the pieces were found last year, the others this year at different levels. One small piece was in the top fill of the area, three pieces were in the Mycenaean level, and the remaining fragments with the Middle Helladic deposit. In the largest piece (Fig. 20 *a*) the perforations go all the way through the clay, but this is not true of any of the other pieces. The largest piece might have served for a strainer, although its wall is straight and very thick (0.025 m.). One part is slightly depressed. In all the other fragments the holes extend only part way through and this precludes the possibility of the pieces belonging to strainers or sifters of any sort. In one fragment (*b*) the holes are but very slight depressions and are badly worn. In another (*d*) they are carefully punched or stamped. In another (*f*) they are unusually small. Fragment *f* shows that these holes are on the bottom of the object, which has a flat base and rather straight walls.

Mention might be made of a few other objects which were found with the pottery. They include one piece of a very shallow stone vase. It is a flat-bottomed basin with walls



Fig. 19. Lugs

measuring 0.035 m. in thickness. Both the inner and outer surface is weather worn and the rim badly chipped. It was found in the Middle Helladic level. One almost complete millstone and parts of four others are numbered among the household implements. It is the usual saddle-quern, with a roughly elliptical end. The top is curved and slightly hollowed out longitudinally. The edge is badly broken and the surface worn smooth from use, but the material itself is hard and coarse-grained, somewhat resembling conglomerate. Five pounders and grinders were found, but in a very fragmentary condition, and pieces of four celts, one of which was bored.

From this brief survey of the prehistoric pottery it is easily seen how important this area is, and the present investigation has shown, if nothing more, how wide is the range of material available on the North Slope. Until the entire area is cleared no final study can be made, but each year's investigation helps to widen and to clarify the picture of prehistoric Athens and of Attica. At present we know very little about the early periods of habitation in this region. Our earliest picture of prehistoric Athens comprised only a Mycenaean settlement until the Italian excavation on the South Slope of the Acropolis revealed neolithic material.<sup>1</sup> In these more recent years pottery both from the Early and Middle Helladic Periods has been found on the North Slope and in the examination of the site this year more (late) neolithic material was brought to light. Thus little by little the picture grows and becomes clearer but it also becomes increasingly apparent that the final word is yet to be written. Moreover, not only Athens but other Attic sites ought to be investigated and studied in their relation to Athens and to the Aegean region as a whole. This is indeed a very great need now that the Athenian area is becoming better known.

Although no new wares were found this year the pottery revealed some interesting features. Certain local wares were far more prominent than had hitherto been thought. The abundance of black and red monochrome ware is worthy of note, and the existence of both varieties in the Early Helladic as well as the Middle Helladic Period. Mr. Broneer had reported this monochrome ware only for the Middle Helladic Period and makes no mention of the black monochrome ware; but some of those red monochrome sherds are now known to be Early Helladic. The important feature is that sherds of both varieties were represented in both periods. Another interesting point to be noted is the great amount of Minyan and matt-painted wares, indicating a fairly long Middle Helladic Period, and possibly one of some degree of prosperity. Most of these wares were locally made and the Minyan sherds are a paler gray than usually occurs at other sites. Finally, the curious pinkish buff color of the Yellow Minyan sherds doubtless points to local production.

Much of the North Slope pottery shows influence from other sites. The presence of the red and black monochrome ware of both the Early and Middle Helladic Periods in Aegina

<sup>1</sup> See A. Della Seta, *Annuario*, IV-V, 1921-1922, p. 490; *Bollettino d'Arte*, IV, 1924-1925, pp. 88 f.



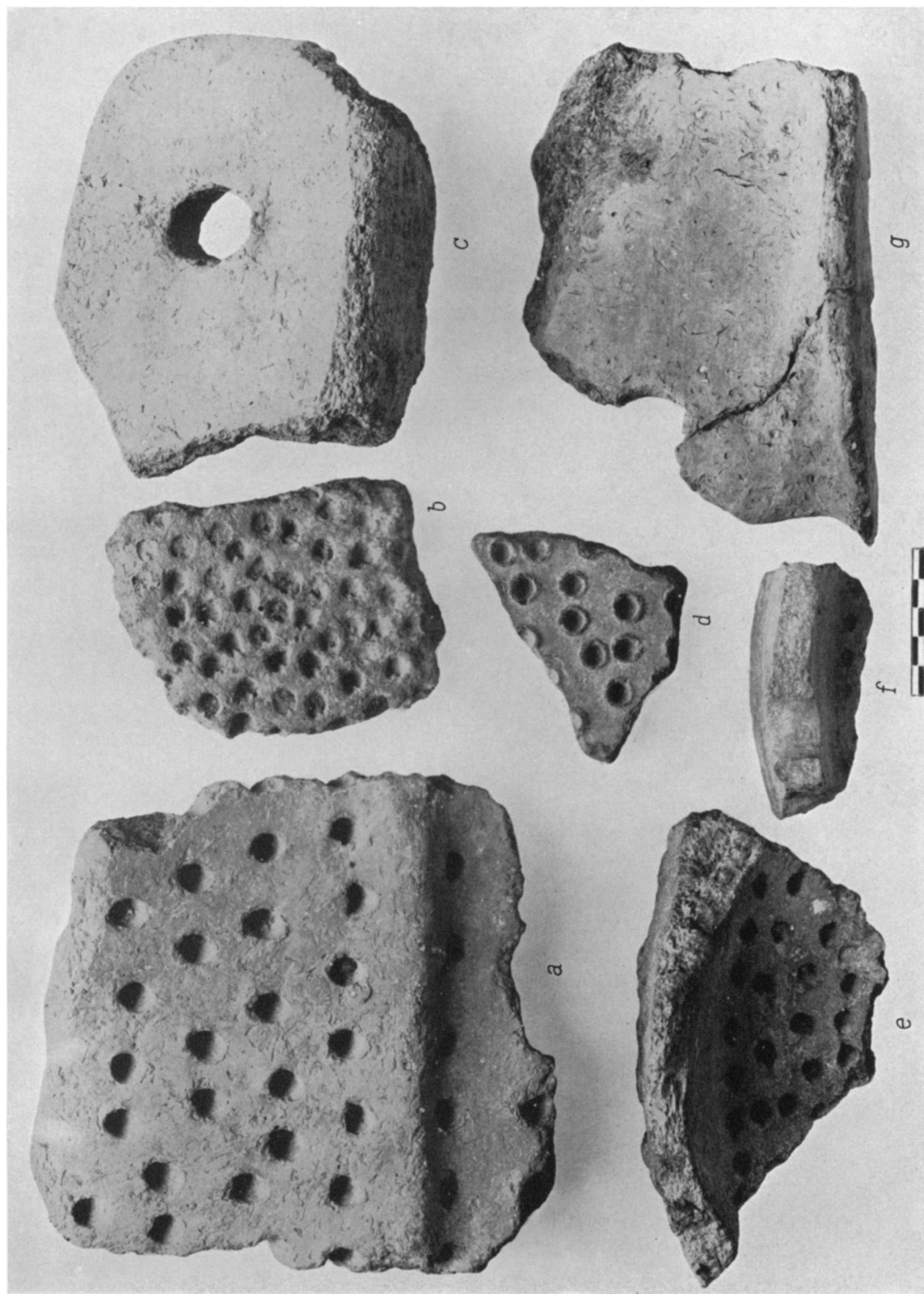


Fig. 20. Sherds of Household Ware

must not be overlooked.<sup>1</sup> This material is very abundant on the island and there are many complete vases, which aided us in the restoration of our material. For example, our sherds included rims of bowls and horizontal pierced lugs (Figs. 3 and 5), but until the Aegina pottery had been seen we did not know whether the bowl should be restored with one or two lug handles. All the examples in Aegina show a single lug handle. Mr. Blegen had already reported two Middle Helladic vases of this ware from Korakou.<sup>2</sup> In the excavation of the Agora this season similar material was found.<sup>3</sup>

Athens was not without its influence from the Aegean isles. Cycladic influence has already been noted in the sherd of an Early Helladic pyxis.<sup>4</sup> In the Middle Helladic Period Melian influence is seen in the interesting sherds illustrated in figure 10 *c* and *d*, and there is one sherd (Fig. 9 *k*) which suggests Cretan influence. These same spheres of influence exerted themselves on the material in Aegina with even greater prominence. In any survey of the prehistoric material of Athens, and of Attica, the close connection between Athens and Aegina must not be forgotten. The wares of the two places are largely identical, but on the island there was greater prosperity, as the abundance and excellence of the pottery testifies. Thus far Athens seems to have been but a poor community, possibly importing a few wares, while those of local production, with a few exceptions, show only mediocre quality. Nevertheless, it is a community well deserving of further study.

<sup>1</sup> I have the kind permission of Dr. G. Welter to mention this material from Aegina, which is not yet published.

<sup>2</sup> *Korakou*, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> *The Illustrated London News*, September 11, 1937, pp. 430 ff.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 546.

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