

# EXCAVATIONS AT PHLIUS, 1924 THE PREHISTORIC DEPOSITS

(PLATES 113–118)

IN 1924 the American School of Classical Studies undertook a test excavation at the site of ancient Phlius, which is situated in the Peloponnesos west of the site of ancient Nemea. Designed as a preliminary investigation prior to further excavations, the excavators sank numerous trenches on and around the hill which contains the acropolis of the ancient city. A large amount of material was recovered from the scattered trenches but it was never studied and only an abbreviated excavation report was published.<sup>1</sup> At the end of the season most of the finds from the excavation were packed in wooden boxes, without any preliminary washing, sorting or mending, and stored in the Old Museum at Old Corinth. They rested where they had been placed for forty years until they were unpacked and studied by this writer beginning in the summer of 1964.<sup>2</sup> They were found to belong to practically all periods of Greek history, beginning with the Early Neolithic and extending to the Turkish. The boxes unfortunately yielded thoroughly mixed contents, due to the test nature of the excavation itself and the circumstances of storage where some mixing had occurred through collapses. The prehistoric material could, however, be readily identified and segregated for study and it is with this material that this article is concerned. A later article will treat a Votive Deposit datable to the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. which was also found on the site.

## THE EXCAVATION

The site of Phlius is situated in a broad plain and consists of a long ridge, which extends westwards from the encircling hills, and the plain immediately around it on its north, south and west sides (Fig. 1). The ridge descends towards the west in a series of flat plateaus from a high central terrace with its highest points at its eastern and western extremities.

<sup>1</sup> C. W. Blegen, "Excavations at Phlius 1924," *Art and Archaeology*, XX, 1925, pp. 23-33.

<sup>2</sup> These finds formed the nucleus of my dissertation "Investigations at Phlius" which was submitted to the University of Pennsylvania in 1968 in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. I must here thank Professor Carl W. Blegen, the Assistant Director of the 1924 excavation under B. H. Hill, for permission to study the material. The work was undertaken while I was holding the post of Secretary of the American School from 1964 to 1968, and I would like to thank Professor Henry S. Robinson, then Director of the School, and the Managing Committee of the School for the appointment. Appreciation must also be expressed to the staff of the Corinth Excavations for their cheerful help, to Helen Besi who drew the profiles and to Ero Tranhanatzis who drew the sketch plan of Figure 1. Professor Saul S. Weinberg kindly read the manuscript, which has been greatly improved as a result.

Deposits of prehistoric pottery came to light at several places about the site, both in the plain and on the hill itself. Three distinct areas yielded deposits; in the plain, south and west of the hill (labelled as Area 1 on the plan, Fig. 1), at the east

# SKETCH PLAN OF THE ACROPOLIS OF PHLIUS

## DISTRIBUTION OF PREHISTORIC FINDS

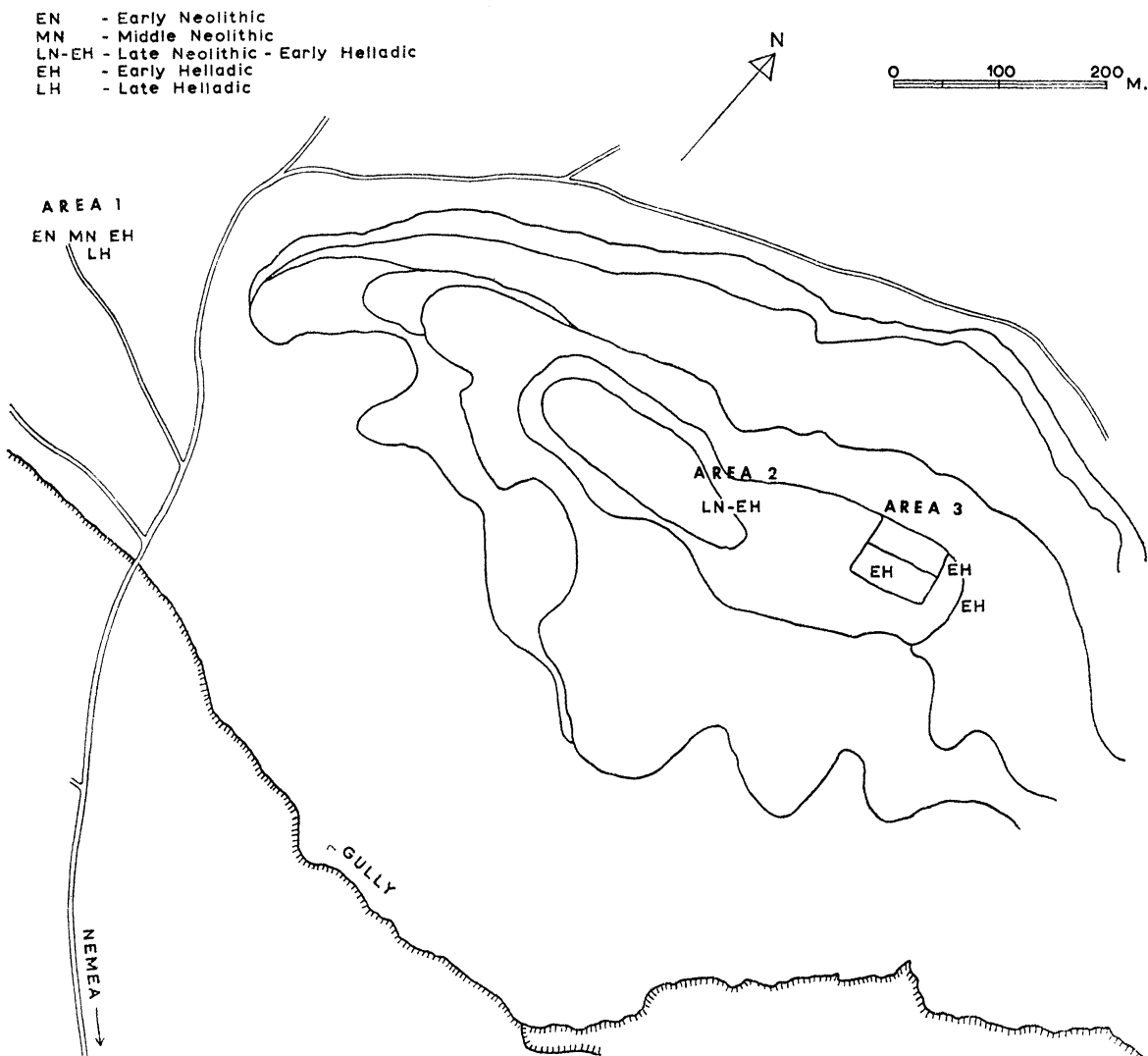


FIG. 1.

end of the upper, western area of the high central terrace (Area 2), and at the terrace's high eastern extremity (Area 3). The pottery recovered belongs mainly to the Neolithic and Early Helladic Periods.

Neolithic remains were found only in the plain and belonged primarily to the Early Neolithic Period, with a few sherds datable to the Middle Neolithic. Only a few sherds datable to the Late Neolithic Period were found at Phlius, mixed with later sherds in a trench on the western portion of the high, central terrace (Area 2).<sup>3</sup> The trenches in general appear to have been thoroughly confused and little stratigraphical information could be obtained. Byzantine sherds as well as the prehistoric were found even in boxes labelled as coming from just above hardpan. The upper levels yielded only Byzantine sherds. No habitation levels were reported between the prehistoric deposit and the Byzantine. Blegen considered the disturbances in this area to be the result of levelling in the Byzantine Period.<sup>4</sup> No architectural remains were reported which could be assigned to the Neolithic Period.

The test trenches of 1924 yielded quantities of pottery assignable to the Early Helladic Period, both in the plain, mixed in confusion with the Neolithic and Byzantine sherds, and also in several trenches on the acropolis itself. Some slight evidence is available in regards to architectural remains for this period. The upper part of the prehistoric fill in the plain was reported to have yielded "carelessly built walls . . . evidently foundations of small houses."<sup>5</sup> Rough walls, one or two courses in height, approximately 0.55 m. in width and bonded with earth were found in a trench sunk at the eastern extremity of the upper terrace of the acropolis. Here, according to the notebook, a "floor, upon which rested broken pots," came to light between two of the walls. The sherds were gathered up and placed in crates labelled "below 1.60," where they were found in 1964. The excavator apparently did not recognize the material as prehistoric and thus no account of the find was published. The sherds from this deposit are identical in fabric, technique and date to those found in the plain and in other trenches on the acropolis. Unfortunately no shapes could be reconstructed.

## THE POTTERY <sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> This material is further discussed below, pp. 446 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Blegen, *op. cit.*, p. 26; not "Hellenistic rebuilding" which has been substituted for what would be the correct "Byzantine rebuilding" by a typographical error in R. Hope Simpson, *A Gazetteer and Atlas of Mycenaean Sites*, University of London, Institute of Classical Studies, Bulletin Supplement No. 16, 1965, p. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Blegen, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

<sup>6</sup> The inventoried objects from the excavation of 1924 are stored in the New Museum at Old Corinth. The context material (Lots 1-11, 25, 29, 32, 33 contain Bronze Age material) has been returned to the Old Museum.

The following abbreviations are used in this article:

*Aghios Kosmas*: G. E. Mylonas, *Aghios Kosmas, An Early Bronze Age Settlement and Cemetery in Attica*, Princeton, 1959.

*Asea*: E. J. Holmberg, *The Swedish Excavations at Asea in Arcadia*, Lund, 1944.

*Asine*: O. Frödin and A. Persson, *Asine, Results of the Swedish Excavations, 1922-1930*, Stockholm, 1938.

## NEOLITHIC

The Early Neolithic sherds from Phlius are representative of most of the known types of Early Neolithic wares common in the Peloponnesos. All the material was badly worn and very few whole pots or complete profiles could be recovered; nevertheless, enough could be salvaged to give an idea of the principal types and shapes. The pottery in general is inferior in technique to that of the neighboring sites of Lerna, Corinth and especially Nemea. Although some of the black variety of Variegated (Rainbow) Ware is technically quite fine, most of the sherds are definitely inferior in firing and decoration; this is particularly true in the category of Red Slip Ware.

The largest percentage of the sherds belonged to the type of Neolithic ware known as "Spongy Ware" which has been found at nearly all Early Neolithic sites in the Peloponnesos.<sup>7</sup> The fabric is quite coarse and contains many inclusions of limestone and plant matter which exploded or burnt out upon firing, leaving the surface pitted in such a way as to give the ware its name. The coarseness of the fabric in our examples varies considerably from thick and heavy with many pits on the surface to lighter and thinner examples with fewer pits and containing white inclusions. The color varies from an almost white to brick red, gray, and black-brown. A few examples exhibit red slip on their exterior surfaces but most are simply smoothed on their exteriors. One or two appear to show a thin, colorless self-slip on their exterior surfaces. The shapes are quite simple, mainly large open bowls with gently curving vertical sides, but no complete examples could be reconstituted. The lip usually shows a simple straight profile tapering to the top (Pl. 113, 1); several sherds show a pronounced flaring lip (Fig. 2, Pl. 113; 2, 3); occasionally a rim will

*Corinth*: S. Weinberg, "Remains from Prehistoric Corinth," *Hesperia*, VI, 1937, pp. 487-524.

*Elateia*: S. Weinberg, "Excavations at Prehistoric Elateia, 1959," *Hesperia*, XXXI, 1962, pp. 158-209.

*Eutresis* (I): Hetty Goldman, *Excavations at Eutresis in Boeotia*, Cambridge, Mass., 1931.

*Eutresis* (II): J. L. and E. G. Caskey, "The Earliest Settlements at Eutresis, Supplementary Excavations, 1958," *Hesperia*, XXIX, 1960, pp. 126-167.

*Goniá*: C. W. Blegen, "Goniá," *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, III, 1930-1931, pp. 55-80.

*Korakou*: C. W. Blegen, *Korakou, a Prehistoric Settlement near Corinth*, Boston and New York, 1921.

*Prosymna*: C. W. Blegen, *Prosymna, The Helladic Settlement Preceding the Argive Heraeum*, Cambridge, 1937.

*Tiryns*, IV: K. Müller, *Tiryns, Die Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen des Instituts*, IV, *Die Urfränkischkeramik*, Munich, 1938.

*Zygouries*: C. W. Blegen, *Zygouries, A Prehistoric Settlement in the Valley of Cleonae*, Cambridge, Mass., 1928.

<sup>7</sup> *Corinth*, p. 497; Lerna: J. L. Caskey, "Excavations at Lerna, 1957," *Hesperia*, XXVII, 1958, p. 138; Prosymna: *Prosymna*, p. 369; Haghiorgitika, in the Tegea museum; Nemea, in the Corinth museum.

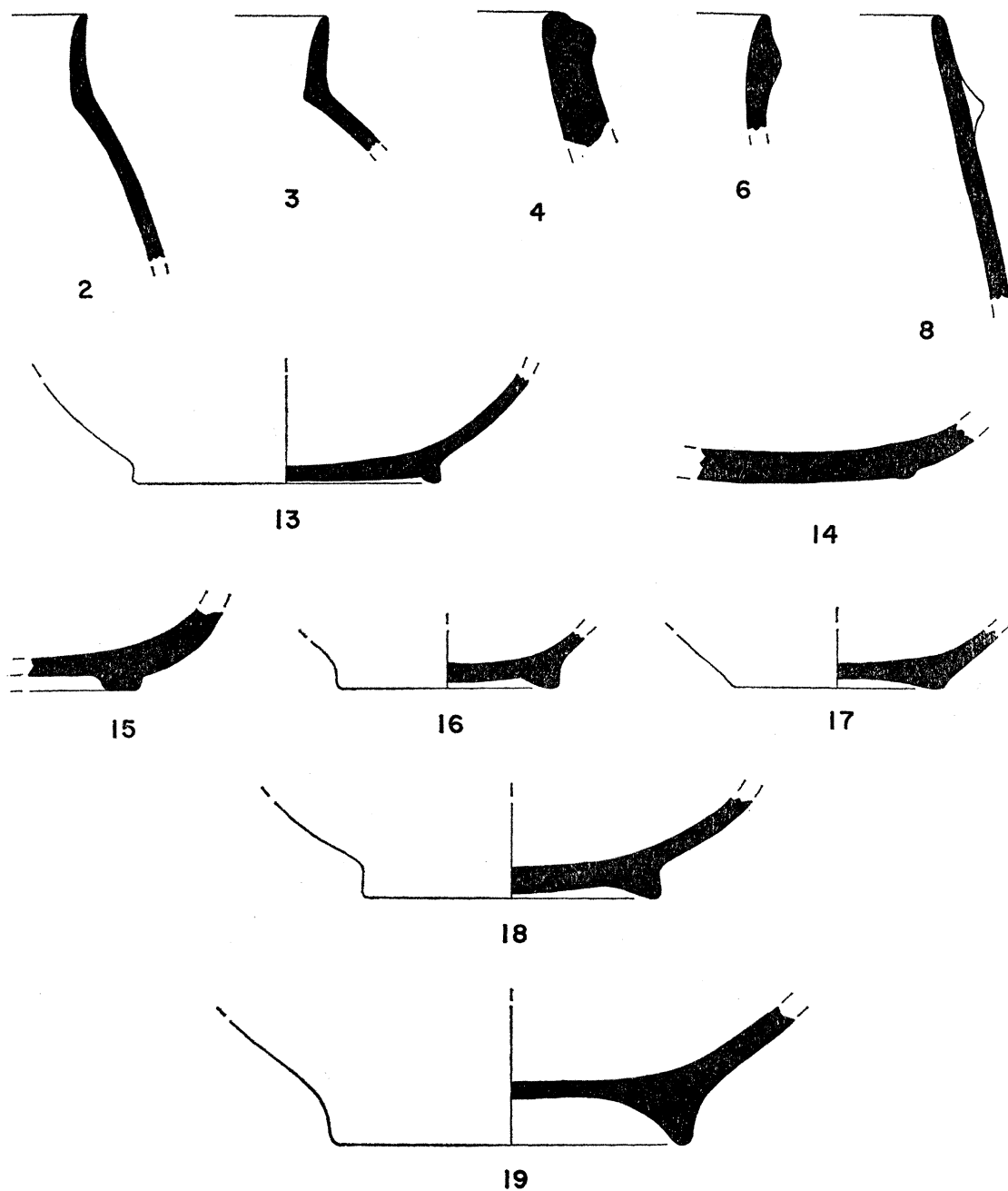


FIG. 2. Profiles of Neolithic Sherds (1:2).

exhibit a rounded bulge on the exterior surface (Fig. 2, Pl. 113; 4, 6). The bases are generally flat, while some have a primitive ring base which is nothing more than a thickening of the fabric to indicate a base (Fig. 2, Pl. 113; 14, 17). A thin strip of clay applied to the bottom of the pot serves as a more advanced ring base (Fig. 2, Pl. 113; 13, 15, 16). Both pierced and unpierced lugs are numerous and invariably set horizontally close below the lip (Fig. 2, 8 [unpierced]; Pl. 113, 8, 9 [unpierced], 10, 11 [pierced]). The only form of decoration found in this category appears on a single sherd of grayish white fabric and takes the form of a single round pellet of clay applied plastically to the exterior surface (Pl. 113, 12).

No more than a dozen sherds were found of the coarse ware known as "Scored Ware" which has been observed at many sites, but apparently not at Corinth.<sup>8</sup> The Phlius examples are indistinguishable from those found on other sites and show the same deep scratches or scoring from which the ware takes its name. The exterior surface is simply smoothed and, in some cases, covered with a red slip. The fabric is very thick and coarse, often containing whole tiny pebbles baked into it. The shapes represented at Phlius appear to be the ubiquitous large open bowl with slightly curving sides.

Variegated Ware, sometimes known as Rainbow Ware, is a distinctive ware characteristic of the Early Neolithic Period and is well represented at Phlius. The fabric is generally good, well levigated, sometimes gray at the core and turning buff to black at the surface. The variegation of color on the surface gives the ware its name, for a color change can appear on a single sherd or pot (Pl. 114, 21). The surface is often covered with a self-slip which imparts a distinctive "soft" feel to the sherds of this category. Some of the sherds bear traces of red slip.<sup>9</sup>

The shapes represented are hemispherical bowls and tall cylindrical "beakers" like those found at Nemea,<sup>10</sup> whose walls rise more or less vertically from ring bases. Ring bases are most usual (Fig. 2, Pl. 113; 18-19), although plain, low bases also occur (Fig. 2, Pl. 113; 17). Pierced lugs are the rule and are of a slightly more advanced shape than those found on spongy ware sherds (Pl. 114, 20, 22).

A black variety of Variegated Ware was found at Phlius similar to that recognized by Weinberg at Corinth.<sup>11</sup> Several fragments were recovered from particularly

<sup>8</sup> Large quantities of Scored Ware most recently turned up at Lerna: J. L. Caskey, "Excavations at Lerna, 1956," *Hesperia*, XXVI, 1957, p. 159, pl. 48, e; "Excavations at Lerna, 1957," *ibid.*, XXVII, 1958, pl. 38. It has also been found at Asea (*Asea*, fig. 45) and at Nemea (unpublished; in Corinth museum). Inventoried sherds of Scored Ware from Phlius have the following numbers: Ph-p-24-28. The remainder are stored in Phlius Lot 1.

<sup>9</sup> This can be seen on 21 (Pl. 114) which has slight traces of red slip still adhering to its surface. Possibly this use of red slip on variegated fabric was a conscious attempt to accentuate or artificially reproduce the color contrast which had originally been produced by inadequate means of firing which did not allow control of the color contrasts.

<sup>10</sup> C. Zervos, *Naissance de la Civilisation en Grèce*, Paris, 1962, p. 176, no. 122.

<sup>11</sup> *Corinth*, p. 496. Also known at Asea (*Asea*, p. 35); Prosymna (*Prosymna*, p. 369); Nemea and Haghiorgitika (unpublished). Inventoried sherds from Phlius are numbered Ph-p-45-47.

fine straight-sided beakers. These sherds are hard and quite thin (0.005 m. greatest thickness) and taper to the usual rounded lip. The fabric is gray at the core and the surface color varies from black through dark gray-black to almost complete white. The interior surface is smoothed and the exterior lightly polished. The fabric is pitted with small fragments of limestone which in most cases have not burned out as they do in Spongy Ware; these give a speckled appearance to the unpolished interior surfaces of the sherds.

Two simple lugless hemispherical bowls could be completely or partially restored. One could be restored completely (24),<sup>12</sup> but of the other only the profile is preserved (Fig. 3, 25). Only two examples were found of a black burnished ware decorated with plastic strips (Pl. 114, 23 A, B); similar sherds were found in the Earliest Phase at Elateia.<sup>13</sup>

#### RED SLIP WARE

The majority of the Neolithic sherds of fine fabric bear traces of red slip on their surfaces. This slip can be quite brilliant and hard but in few cases is as technically fine as that from Corinth, Lerna, or Nemea. Often it has almost completely disappeared from the surface of the sherds, leaving behind only patches of color. The shapes represented are again open bowls and now collared jugs (Pl. 114, 36-27), from which a good many neck fragments were found, including one sherd which displays a mending hole (27). The slip is applied in a variety of ways; sometimes both exterior and interior surfaces are covered, sometimes only the exterior, and in a few cases only the interior. Occasionally it is applied only in thin strips around the lip of the vessel. The slip varies in consistency and is sometimes almost a thin wash close to the color of the fabric. The fabric itself varies from a spongy consistency to a well-levigated and baked clay similar to the best variegated fabric. The sherds are often gray at the core, although some fragments of coarse pots are buff in color all the way through. Lug handles are still the rule and bases vary from simple flat discs to the more advanced ring base. The only form of surface decoration is clay discs or buttons applied plastically to the body of the pot as in the coarser Spongy Ware.<sup>14</sup>

One large open bowl could be reconstructed from the mass of sherds (Pl. 114, 28). The shape, that of a hemispherical lugless bowl on a ring foot, and its size<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Ph-p-1. H. 0.075 m.; D. (restored) 0.155 m. Reconstructed from seven joining fragments to give profile. Soft, gray fabric, unburnished and unslipped. Marks of tool used to smooth the surface can be seen on interior. Simple, flattened base, which fired lighter than rest of bowl. Thin walled.

<sup>13</sup> *Elateia*, p. 171, pl. 53, d.

<sup>14</sup> Red Slip Ware base and lug sherds from Phlius are inventoried as Ph-p-29-32. Sherds with plastic decoration are inventoried as Ph-p-33-34.

<sup>15</sup> Ph-p-3. H. 0.18 m.; D. 0.362 m. A similar shape in Al Ware from Tsangli in Thessaly is

compare favorably with other known examples although its slip, which is on both the exterior and interior surfaces, is clearly inferior to that employed on Corinthian bowls, which is thicker and of better consistency and color.

Some of these large bowls apparently had spouts (Pl. 114, **29**). Several sherds shaped like small troughs with red slip in the trough area can be identified as spouts on the basis of unpublished examples from Nemea which indicate that the stump projecting from the narrow end of the spout would have been continued in the form of a cylindrical handle which at its other end attached to the body of the bowl immediately below the projecting spout.<sup>16</sup>

Only one sherd from a large open bowl or beaker was identified which appeared to have both its interior and exterior covered with a fugitive white slip.<sup>17</sup>

Similarly only a single sherd of painted ware came to light (Pl. 114, **30**). It is a rim fragment decorated with zigzags in a group of three, running down from the lip and painted in heavy red paint, blobs of which appear on the interior surface. The exterior appears to have been polished after the paint was applied.

This class of pottery is known throughout Greece in Early Neolithic contexts and the decoration on our example finds its closest parallel in similar designs found at Elateia.<sup>18</sup>

Only a few sherds were identified which without doubt belonged to the Middle Neolithic Period. They are decorated with Neolithic "Urfirnis" paint which is in general indistinguishable from the "Urfirnis" paint employed on Corinthian examples. One sherd is a fragmentary collar of a collared jug similar to one from Corinth (Pl. 115, **31**),<sup>19</sup> the other a body fragment with a part of a ladder or net design executed in "Urfirnis" paint (Pl. 115, **32**).<sup>20</sup>

known, but the rim flares slightly outwards (A. Wace and M. Thompson, *Prehistoric Thessaly*, Cambridge, 1912, p. 88, fig. 41, d). There is also an example from Otzaki Magula (V. Milošević, "Hauptergebnisse der Deutschen Ausgrabungen in Thessalien, 1953-1958," *Jahrb. Röm.-Germ. Zentralmus. Mainz*, VI, 1959, figs. 7, 8). A close parallel exists in Variegated Ware from Nemea (unpublished).

<sup>16</sup> An example without connecting handle has been published from Sesklo (C. Tsountas, *Αἱ Προϊστορικαὶ Ἀκροπόλεις Διμηνίου καὶ Σέσκλου*, Athens, 1908, p. 167, fig. 81).

<sup>17</sup> Inventoried at Corinth as Ph-p-7. Sherds with white slip have been reported from Corinth (*Corinth*, p. 493), but the closest parallels are those from Elateia (*Elateia*, p. 168). The lowest levels at Nea Makri yielded white slipped ware which is equated by Theochares with Thessalian A4 Ware which has a creamy or white fabric (D. Theochares, "Nea Makri. Eine grosse Neolithische Siedlung in der Nähe von Marathon," *Ath. Mitt.*, LXXI, 1956, pp. 10, 14).

<sup>18</sup> *Elateia*, pl. 56, a. Painted ware has also been found at: Corinth (*Corinth*, pp. 497-498); Lerna (*Hesperia*, XXVI, 1957, p. 160; XXVII, 1958, p. 143); Prosymna (*Prosymna*, II, p. 152, fig. 623); Nemea (unpublished; in Corinth museum); Haghiorgitika (unpublished; in Tegea museum).

<sup>19</sup> *Corinth*, p. 502, fig. 12.

<sup>20</sup> The design runs parallel to the lug which is now broken away. The design may be similar to some found in Corinth, *Corinth*, pp. 505-506, figs. 18-20.



## NEOLITHIC—EARLY HELLADIC

On the high upper terrace of the acropolis one trench produced interesting material which finds parallels in both the Neolithic and Early Helladic Periods (Area 2, Fig. 1). Surprisingly enough, the Early Bronze Age parallels are mostly from the islands.

The material from this trench was particularly badly mixed, containing sherds as late as Byzantine times. A large amount of Early Helladic coarse ware and EH II glazed wares of rather good quality was however present.<sup>21</sup> Sherds from large bowls with slightly incurved and offset rims (Fig. 3, Pl. 115; **33**, **34**)<sup>22</sup> are represented.

The surfaces appear to be burnished and occasionally a few specks of heavy red slip are found still adhering to them. The fabric is coarse. A single sherd was found which apparently came from a straight-sided beaker with a rolled rim (Fig. 3, Pl. 115; **35**). An applied band of "scalloped" rope decoration runs down vertically from the lip. Similar decoration was employed on burial jars from the Kephala cemetery on Keos.<sup>23</sup> A handsome sherd is that of an open bowl with an incurved angular rim, whose surface appears to have been polished; slight remains of a reddish slip are still to be seen (Fig. 3, Pl. 115; **36**). A horizontally pierced vertical lug is set just below the angle and is somewhat reminiscent in shape of the so-called "elephant head" lugs found by Caskey on Keos.<sup>24</sup> Similar lugs are known from Thessaly<sup>25</sup> and from the Agora at Athens, but they are generally more elongated than our examples.

The incurved angular rim is known in later Neolithic both from Thessaly,<sup>26</sup> and from Macedonia.<sup>27</sup> However, the closest parallels seem to be from the islands, especially among the Early Bronze Age examples from Thermi.<sup>28</sup> A sherd from a ribbed bowl completes the list of finds from this trench (Fig. 3, Pl. 115; **37**). The fabric is coarse, the surface smoothed and polished; some traces of a red slip are still to be seen. Relief ribs are attached to the body but extend only part way down. No

<sup>21</sup> The context material from this trench is stored in Corinth as Phlius Lot 25. For the inventoried sherds, see the concordance at the end of this article.

<sup>22</sup> For incurved rims (**33**) cf. *Eutresis* (I), p. 102, fig. 133, no. 7 (Early Helladic); W. Lamb, *Excavations at Thermi in Lesbos*, Cambridge, England, 1936, p. 81, fig. 29, 1-4. For offset rims (**34**) cf. V. Milošević, *Samos, I, Die Prähistorische Siedlung unter dem Heraion—Grabung 1963 und 1965*, Bonn, 1961, pl. 38, nos. 44-53, especially no. 44. Also known in Macedonia, W. A. Heurtley, *Prehistoric Macedonia*, Cambridge, England, 1939, p. 145, no. 54.

<sup>23</sup> J. L. Caskey, "Excavations in Keos, 1963," *Hesperia*, XXXIII, 1964, pl. 46, i.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 316, pl. 47, a-e.

<sup>25</sup> Wace and Thompson, *Prehistoric Thessaly*, p. 131, fig. 79, 1, o.

<sup>26</sup> Milošević, *Jahrb. Röm.-Germ. Zentralmus. Mainz*, VI, 1959, p. 47, fig. 17, no. 9.

<sup>27</sup> Heurtley, *Prehistoric Macedonia*, p. 151, no. 108.

<sup>28</sup> Lamb, *Excavations at Thermi in Lesbos*, fig. 26, shapes 1A, 2A; fig. 29, shape 3C; pl. 35, nos. 2, 64; pl. 11, 4. A similar profile, but lugless, is known from Tigani on Samos, cf. A. Furness, "Some Early Pottery of Samos, Kalimnos and Chios," *Proc. Preh. Soc.*, XXII, 1956, p. 10, fig. 8, no. 8.

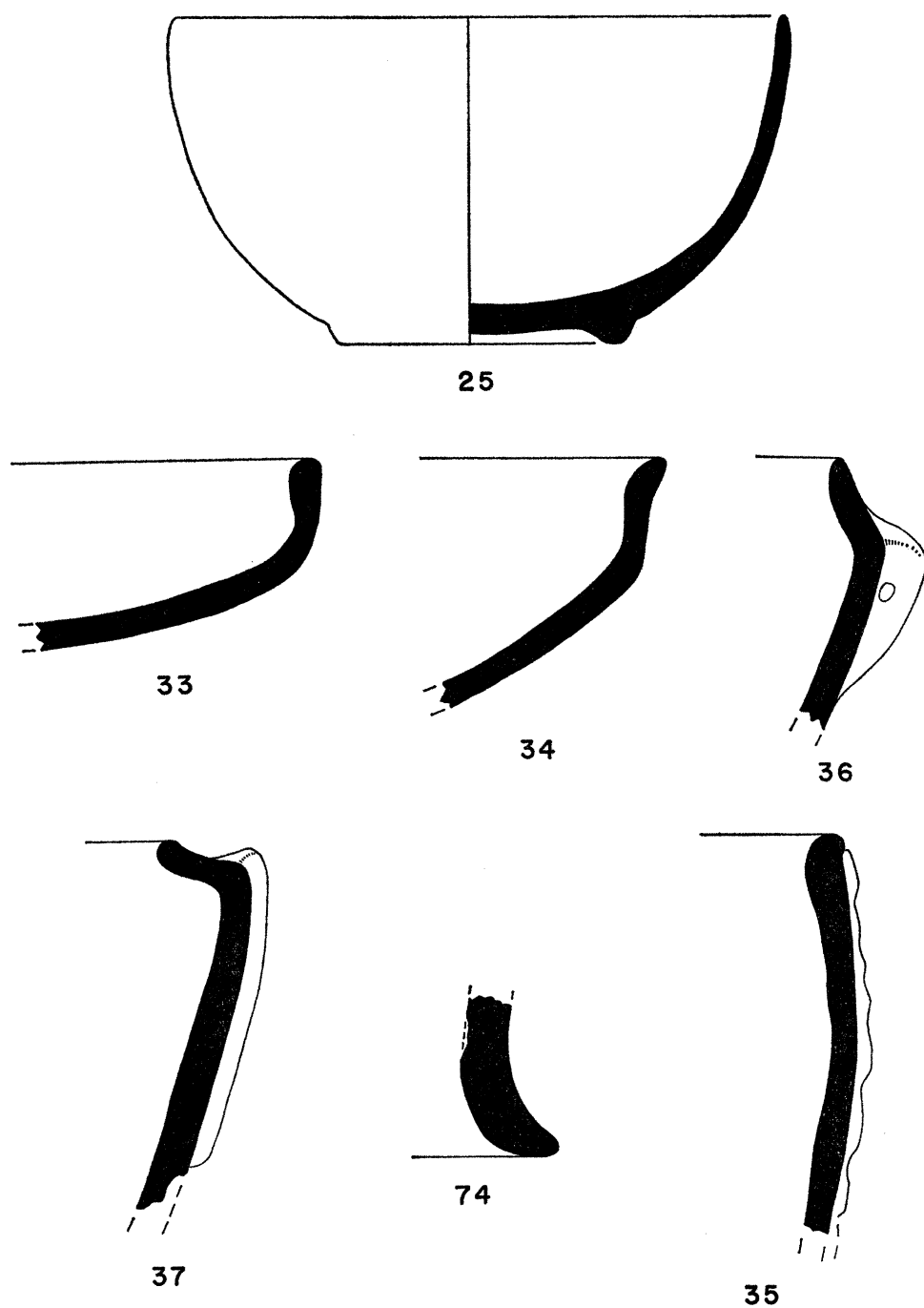


FIG. 3. Profiles of Neolithic (25) and Neolithic-Early Helladic Sherds. Base (?) Sherd (74) (1:2).

published parallels for this shape are known to me, although applied ribs are known from Early Cycladic times.

### EARLY HELLADIC

The mass of the prehistoric pottery from Phlius belonged to the Early Helladic II period. No sherds were recognized which could be dated either to Early Helladic I or Early Helladic III. The pottery is in all instances typical of Early Helladic II in the Argolid and shows the closest parallels to that from the near-by site of Zygouries, but it is slightly inferior technically, rarely attaining the fine shiny type of glaze known from that site and from Corinth.

Only a few sherds of slipped and polished ware were recognized. They are mostly from bowls with incurved rims of the type common in glazed wares, and the fabric is buff throughout. The red slip is quite highly polished, but, as in the case of most of the prehistoric material, badly worn, so that little remains of individual sherds. They are stored at Corinth in Phlius Lots 6, 9.

Quantities of Early Helladic glazed, "Urfirnis," ware were identified. The fabric of this class of pottery at Phlius is well prepared and fired and is generally quite thin, although it can be thick and somewhat coarse. The exterior and interior surfaces of open shapes are completely covered with a layer of glaze of varying quality, sometimes nothing more than a poor wash. The glaze was applied in long strokes and generally the marks of the brush can easily be seen. The color varies from red through brown to black, sometimes on the same pot.

Among shapes, the askos and the sauceboat are well represented. Sherds of the latter were most numerous (Pl. 116, 38-40), but no complete shapes could be recovered. All the fragments of sauceboats were covered with a black glaze of differing quality. Ring bases are the rule, and horizontal high swung handles are prevalent (38), although an occasional vertical double handle was found (Pl. 116, 41).<sup>29</sup>

Askoi were represented by many fragments of handles, both the flat ribbon type (Pl. 116, 44) and the flanged type with incised decoration as known from Zygouries<sup>30</sup> (Pl. 116, 42). A portion of a red-brown glazed askos jug could be reconstructed (Pl. 116, 45). The pot, if complete, would offer a very close resemblance to a black glazed askos jug from Goniá.<sup>31</sup>

Many fragments were found of large basins or bowls with flattened rims and decoration consisting of a ledge of clay set below the lip (Pl. 116, 46). The ubiquitous

<sup>29</sup> This shape probably imitates metal prototypes. For other examples, cf. *Tiryns*, IV, pl. 20; *Eutresis* (II), pl. 48, VIII. 36, VIII. 37; *Asine*, p. 221, fig. 161 (Polished Ware).

<sup>30</sup> *Zygouries*, pl. 6, nos. 5, 6. Also known at Asea (*Asea*, p. 63, fig. 66, c). Both these examples are of the slipped and polished category while our examples may have been covered with glaze. The surfaces are so worn away that it is difficult to tell if the fragments of color still adhering to the surface of the sherd are slip or glaze.

<sup>31</sup> *Goniá*, p. 70, fig. 20.

bowls with incurved rims are also represented in thin, well levigated fabric (Pl. 116, 47, 48) and also in larger, coarser examples (Pl. 116, 49). Large open vessels with ring bases and jars with high necks were also noted in somewhat coarser fabric (Pl. 116, 50-51). In addition, many fragments of large, glazed dippers with ring handles were also found, which paralleled exactly those from Zygouries (Pls. 116, 43, 117, 52-55).<sup>32</sup>

Only three sherds (two joining) of a dark-on-light patterned ware were found among the Early Helladic material. The shapes and decoration indicate that they do not belong to Blegen's C-1 Patterned Ware at Zygouries<sup>33</sup> which has been shown to belong to the Early Helladic III Period.<sup>34</sup> They should be classed, rather, as Early Helladic II Patterned Ware, small amounts of which have been found on several sites (Pl. 117, 56-57). The sherds preserve, on their interior concave surfaces, designs of parallel lines, probably hatched triangles, drawn in black glaze on a smoothed surface which once may have had a white slip. The exterior of No. 56 shows the remains of a red glaze. On the other hand, the exterior of No. 57 is covered with a streaky black glaze; it also has a flattened rim with a narrow groove below the rim on the exterior. These sherds probably belong either to open bowls, or, more probably, to the class of painted Early Helladic sauceboats known from the islands and also found in mainland Greece.<sup>35</sup>

The Phlius sherds are almost identical in shape and decoration to a fragmentary painted sauceboat found in Corinth in 1965.<sup>36</sup> The form of the rim of No. 57 seems to be peculiar for a sauceboat unless it is from the rear of the pot, at the position of the handle. It may belong to a bowl rather than a sauceboat.

A number of sherds were found which were unpainted, unslipped, and merely smoothed. The pottery in general is of too fine a nature to be considered coarse ware and Blegen named it "unpainted ware."<sup>37</sup> The fabric is gray-white throughout.

<sup>32</sup> *Zygouries*, p. 96, fig. 84. Other examples: *Asine*, p. 224, fig. 164, no. 3; *Tiryns*, IV, pl. 22, nos. 7, 8, and from Corinth (unpublished).

<sup>33</sup> *Zygouries*, pp. 101-106.

<sup>34</sup> J. L. Caskey, "The Early Helladic Period in the Argolid," *Hesperia*, XXIX, 1960, pp. 292-295.

<sup>35</sup> Patterned sauceboats are known from Naxos (C. Zervos, *L'Art des Cyclades*, Paris, 1957, fig. 152; A. Wace and C. W. Blegen, "The Pre-Mycenaean Pottery of the Mainland," *B. S. A.*, XXII, 1916-1918, pl. 7); Rafina, Attica (D. Theochares, *Ἀνασκαφή ἐν Ἀραφῇνι*, Πρακτικά, 1951, p. 82, figs. 5, 9); Aghios Kosmas (*Aghios Kosmas*, pp. 111-112, fig. 160); Athens, South Slope (D. Levi, "Abitazioni Preistoriche sulle Pendici Meridionali dell' Acropoli," *Annuario*, XIII-XIV, 1930-1931, p. 472, fig. 64, bl. 2); Korakou (*Korakou*, p. 10); Eutresis (*Eutresis* [I], p. 121, fig. 166, 5-7); Tiryns (*Tiryns*, IV, p. 60, fig. 46, 4); Lerna (Caskey, *Hesperia*, XXIX, 1960, p. 292). Another example from the area of the Corinth Canal (Kalamaki) will be published by William Donovan in a study of EH painted pottery.

<sup>36</sup> J. Wiseman, "Excavations at Corinth, The Gymnasium Area, 1965," *Hesperia*, XXXVI, 1967, pp. 25-26. I am indebted to Professor Wiseman for his suggestions and permission to study his material.

<sup>37</sup> *Zygouries*, pp. 106-111.

although a few pieces are gray at the core, turning to cream in color on the exterior. Most sherds show no surface covering at all but exhibit obvious scratch marks where the surface was smoothed when the pot was in a leather-hard condition. Only a limited repertory of shapes in this ware was observed, and no whole examples could be reconstituted. Large shapes with flaring lips were the rule (Pl. 117, 58) and bases either made by simply flattening the bottoms of the pots or by slightly hollowing out the underside to form a crude ring base (Pl. 117, 59). Many large loop handles similar to those from Zygouries were found (Pl. 117, 62-64).<sup>38</sup> One example is similar to the flanged askos handles in glazed ware and bears incised lines as decoration (Pl. 117, 61).<sup>39</sup>

At Zygouries a great many small dishes of patera shape were found. Each one had a button or boss of clay attached to the floor on the interior, seemingly in imitation of an omphalos.<sup>40</sup> Although no examples of this type of patera came to light in Phlius, a sherd of a similar dish was found (Pl. 117, 60). Here, however, the central boss is not formed by a separate button of clay as in the examples from Zygouries, but was pushed through from underneath with the finger while the dish was in a leather-hard condition. Thus was formed a true omphalos as is known in the omphalos bowls of later periods. Whether or not our fragment is the bottom of a dish or of a small bowl it is difficult to tell in its broken condition; in any event, it is clearly an early example of the omphalos bowl idea.

Fragments of large, coarse pots with knob handles, made of heavy, thick clay and containing many inclusions, make up the category of coarse domestic ware at Phlius. Some of the shapes found amongst the better made fabrics appear to be repeated in the coarse ware, such as the large open bowl with a ridge of clay below the lip (Pl. 117, 67, 71) and bowls with incurved rims (Pl. 117, 68). Often the coarse fabric is covered with a glaze which is more often a thick, heavy red than black in color. Exterior decoration consists of ropes of clay elaborately "scalloped" by the use of thumb and forefinger and applied generally just below the lip of large open vessels (Pl. 117, 65, 69, 70). Occasionally, a thin strip of clay was merely nicked to resemble a rope as on a coarse handle similar in shape to askos handles (Pl. 118, 72). Several cylindrical fragments ending in knobs (Pl. 117, 66) perhaps belong to the type of object which has been variously described as a stand, a spit support, or a pot support, and which is known from various Early Helladic sites.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111, fig. 99.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. *Asea*, p. 76, fig. 78, a.

<sup>40</sup> *Zygouries*, p. 107, fig. 93. A few other Bronze Age examples of omphalos bowls are known, mostly from the East and in metal (H. Luschey, *Die Phiale*, Bleicherode am Harz, 1939, pp. 31-38). To these may be added bronze examples reported from Miletos from the "late Mycenaean Period" (A. Frickenhaus, *Tiryns, Die Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen des Instituts*, I, *Die Hera von Tiryns*, Athens, 1912, p. 98).

<sup>41</sup> Similar objects are known from: Tiryns (*Tiryns*, IV, pp. 64-66, fig. 51; p. 55, fig. 41;

Only one sherd of Late Helladic pottery was recognized, a Mycenaean kylix stem of common shape (Pl. 118, **73**).<sup>42</sup> The fine gray-white fabric shows some faint traces of black glaze. This sherd and the steatite whorl or button mentioned below are the only objects found datable to the Late Helladic Period.

#### PROBLEMS

The trenches in the plain produced several pieces whose exact date or identification poses problems.

A fragment of a foot of semi-coarse fabric, containing large amounts of yellow or "golden" mica and covered with a shiny red polished slip, is unlike any of the other sherds from the site and is likely to be an import (Fig. 3, Pl. 118; **74**). "Golden" or "yellow" mica is generally taken to be a Cycladic or Eastern phenomenon and when present on mainland sites is regarded as evidence for importation.<sup>43</sup> The shape could be a fragment of a flaring foot of a fruitstand;<sup>44</sup> the profile is also similar to those of feet of EH II saucers from Eutresis.<sup>45</sup>

What appears to be a handle, ending in an animal's head and covered with red slip (Pl. 118, **75**), is paralleled by unpublished examples from Haghiorgitika and Black Polished Ware loop handles from the Chalkidike labelled as "Late Neolithic."<sup>46</sup> Early Helladic examples are known from Tiryns<sup>47</sup> and are there identified as both spouts and handles of sauceboats.

A large (preserved height 0.11 m., diameter of base 0.10 m.) cylindrical fragment of very coarse fabric shows mat impressions on its foot (Pl. 118, **76**). Objects similar to this have been identified as stoppers for large pithoi. The more nearly complete examples show that the body would have continued upwards until it was "capped" by an oval disc set at right angles to the shaft. One partially reconstructed object of this type is on view at the Tegea Museum. It was found at Haghiorgitika and bears the provisional number ASCS 12.

A single terracotta loomweight was found (Pl. 118, **77**). It has the shape of

pl. 25, 10-12, "pot support"); Aghios Kosmas (G. Mylonas, "Excavations at Aghios Kosmas," *A.J.A.*, XXXVIII, 1934, pp. 274-275, fig. 20, "spit support"); Eutresis (*Eutresis* [I], p. 195, fig. 267, "restored as tripod"; Asine (*Asine*, fig. 169, 6, "tripod"); Rafina (D. Theochares, *Πρακτικά*, 1951, p. 81, fig. 4 " . . . ὡς καὶ τεμάχια τετραποδικῶν πηλίνων σκευῶν σχέσιν ἐχόντων πρὸς τὴν πύραν "); Nemea (J. P. Harland, "An Early Helladic Kitchen Utensil," *Studies Presented to David M. Robinson*, St. Louis, 1951, I, pp. 106-107, pl. 30, pot support); Galaxidi, (C. Vatin, "Un site helladique ancien à Galaxidi," *B.C.H.*, LXXXVIII, 1964, pp. 563, 566, fig. 4, no. 2).

<sup>42</sup> Cf. *Zygouries*, pp. 151-153.

<sup>43</sup> *Aghios Kosmas*, p. 14 (cemetery); *Zygouries*, pp. 94, 122, 212.

<sup>44</sup> *Corinth*, pp. 504-507, fig. 22.

<sup>45</sup> *Eutresis* (II), p. 154, fig. 11, VIII. 13.

<sup>46</sup> Heurtley, *Prehistoric Macedonia*, p. 157, fig. 24.

<sup>47</sup> *Tiryns*, IV, p. 14, pl. 5, 1-5.

a truncated cone and finds parallels both in the Neolithic and the Early Helladic Periods.<sup>48</sup>

Only a few stone objects were found and a collection of obsidian and flint cores and blades is shown on Plate 118, 78. The steatite whorl or button (center) is of a shape often considered Late Helladic,<sup>49</sup> and if true this would make this our second Late Helladic object besides the kylix stem (Pl. 118, 73). A similar shape, however, is known from the Early Helladic Period in a larger terracotta whorl.<sup>50</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The excavation of 1924 has shown that activity at Phlius can be traced back to Neolithic times. Although no architectural remains were found, a mass of pottery datable to the Early Neolithic Period and found in the plain to the west of the hill indicates probable habitation at this time. Only a few sherds were found which are datable to the Middle Neolithic Period. No typically Late Neolithic wares were identified except for the few sherds from the saddle of the acropolis which it appears were mixed with Early Helladic material.

Definite evidence for occupation begins in Early Helladic II when an apparently large settlement extended over the site both in the plain and on the acropolis. Here some rubble house walls were associated with the pottery, but no buildings were cleared. The general similarity of the pottery found to that from other Early Helladic sites in the Argolid indicates a cultural similarity.

The last two periods of the Bronze Age do not seem to be represented at Phlius. No sherds were found which could definitely be attributed to either EH III or the Middle Helladic Period and only a single sherd and possibly a steatite button which could belong to the Late Helladic Period. It would appear then that the site may have been abandoned, perhaps as early as the end of the Early Helladic Period, only to be reinhabited in Protogeometric times. This is perhaps to be expected, for, according to the ancient authors, especially Pausanias and Strabo, it would appear that a "pre-Dorian" settlement to be identified with the Homeric "Araithyrea" existed in the Phliasian plain. It is said to have been some thirty stades distant from the later town site.<sup>51</sup> Despite repeated attempts to identify this town with various remains in the plain, its position has never been positively identified.<sup>52</sup> The absence of Late Helladic material from the test trenches of 1924, aside from the two objects already

<sup>48</sup> This is paralleled at Eutresis (*Eutresis* [II], pl. 53, VIII. 64, 68), but possibly Neolithic in shape (?): *Asea*, p. 119, fig. 113, no. 2. (Professor Thomas W. Jacobsen informs me that loomweights of the same shape have been found at Porto Cheli in EH contexts.)

<sup>49</sup> *Zygouries*, pp. 61, 65, 207-208; *Prosymna*, p. 318; *Aghios Kosmas*, pl. 170, nos. 67-72.

<sup>50</sup> *Eutresis* (II), pl. 53, VIII. 69.

<sup>51</sup> *Iliad*, II, 571; Strabo, VIII, 6, 24; Pausanias, II, 12; Apollonios Rhodios, I, 115.

<sup>52</sup> Recently R. Hope Simpson has noted evidence of possible Mycenaean habitation on a small mound southwest of the site (*Gazeteer and Atlas of Mycenaean Sites*, p. 27).

mentioned, makes it seem likely that the present hill was virtually uninhabited in this period.

It must be emphasized, however, that the foregoing conjectures rest primarily on negative excavation evidence. Although many test trenches were sunk in 1924, several areas were not investigated. Similarly, the prehistoric deposits which were found were by no means exhausted.

The prehistoric period at Phlius has thus only begun to be investigated. The trial trenches of 1924 have shown that there exists a considerable amount of prehistoric material. A more complete understanding of its relationship to other sites and of its own extent and character could without doubt be achieved if more extended excavations were to be instituted.

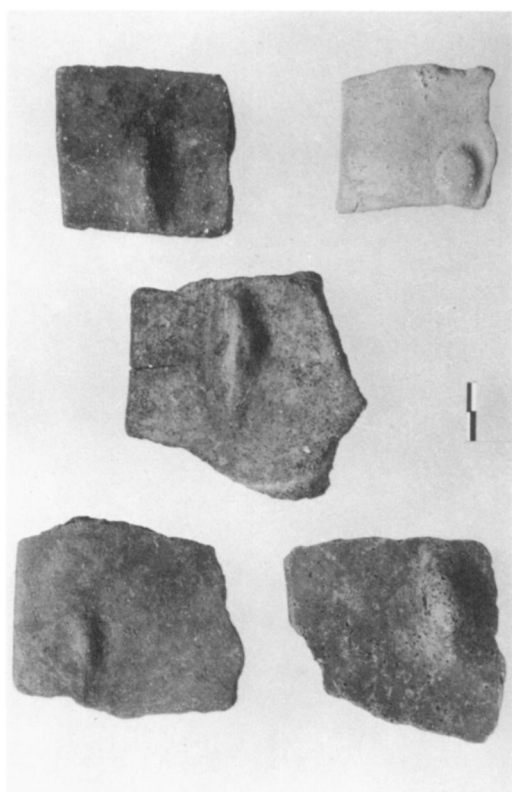
#### CONCORDANCE

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| 1                 | Ph-p-8              | 21                | Ph-p-42             | 40                | Ph-p-78             | 60                | Ph-p-58             |
| 2                 | Ph-p-9              | 22                | Ph-p-41             | 41                | Ph-p-101            | 61                | Ph-p-52             |
| 3                 | Ph-p-10             | 23A               | Ph-p-43             | 42                | Ph-p-81             | 62                | Ph-p-54             |
| 4                 | Ph-p-11             | B                 | Ph-p-44             | 43                | Ph-p-83             | 63                | Ph-p-55             |
| 5                 | Ph-p-12             | 24                | Ph-p-1              | 44                | Ph-p-82             | 64                | Ph-p-53             |
| 6                 | Ph-p-13             | 25                | Ph-p-2              | 45                | Ph-p-80             | 65                | Ph-p-70             |
| 7                 | Ph-p-14             | 26                | Ph-p-35             | 46                | Ph-p-63             | 66                | Ph-p-72             |
| 8                 | Ph-p-15             | 27                | Ph-p-36             | 47                | Ph-p-64             | 67                | Ph-p-71             |
| 9                 | Ph-p-16             | 28                | Ph-p-3              | 48                | Ph-p-65             | 68                | Ph-p-73             |
| 10                | Ph-p-17             | 29                | Ph-p-4              | 49                | Ph-p-86             | 69                | Ph-p-91             |
| 11                | Ph-p-18             | 30                | Ph-p-6              | 50                | Ph-p-87             | 70                | Ph-p-92             |
| 12                | Ph-p-19             | 31                | Ph-p-98             | 51                | Ph-p-88             | 71                | Ph-p-90             |
| 13                | Ph-p-20             | 32                | Ph-p-99             | 52                | Ph-p-59             | 72                | Ph-p-260            |
| 14                | Ph-p-21             | 33                | Ph-p-283            | 53                | Ph-p-62             | 73                | Ph-p-95             |
| 15                | Ph-p-22             | 34                | Ph-p-284            | 54                | Ph-p-60             | 74                | Ph-p-93             |
| 16                | Ph-p-23             | 35                | Ph-p-108            | 55                | Ph-p-61             | 75                | Ph-p-50             |
| 17                | Ph-p-37             | 36                | Ph-p-48             | 56                | Ph-p-74             | 76                | Ph-p-5              |
| 18                | Ph-p-38             | 37                | Ph-p-49             | 57                | Ph-p-75             | 77                | Ph-p-79             |
| 19                | Ph-p-39             | 38                | Ph-p-76             | 58                | Ph-p-57             | 78                | Ph-st-1-8           |
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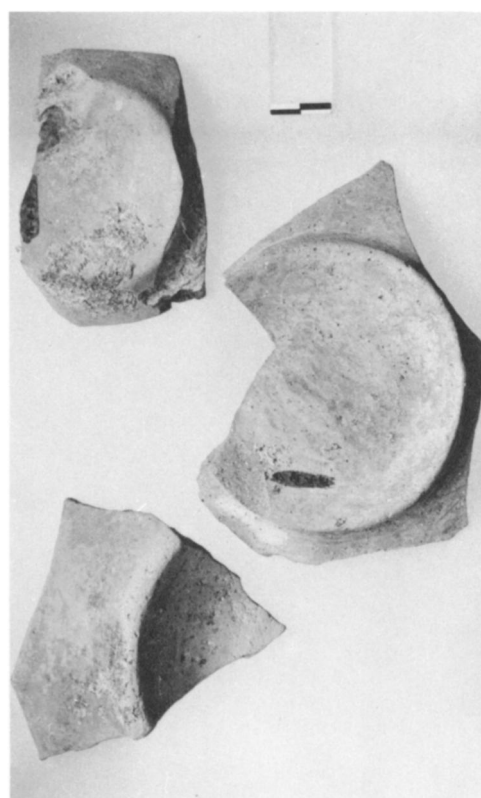
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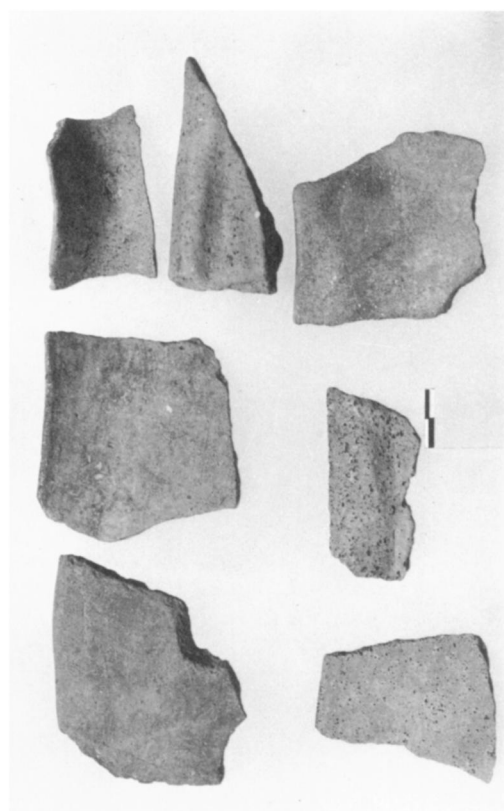




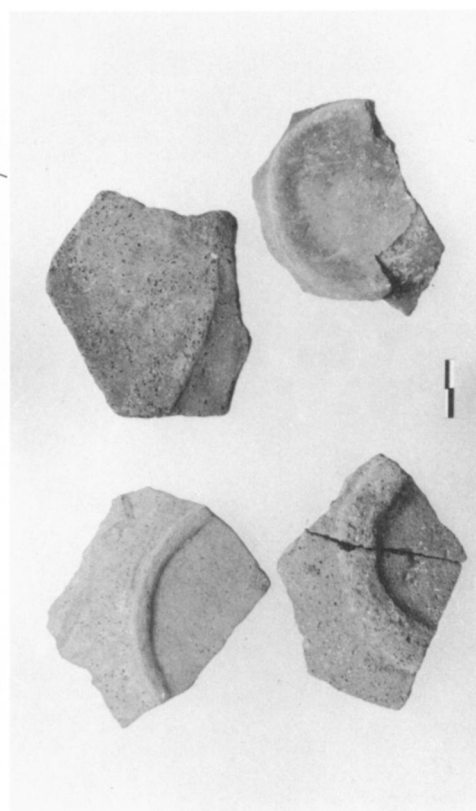
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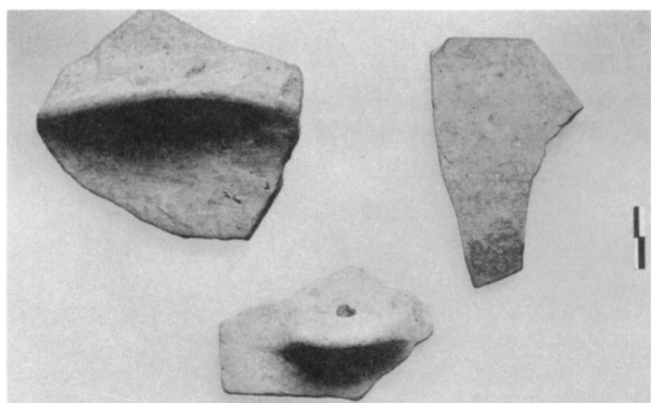


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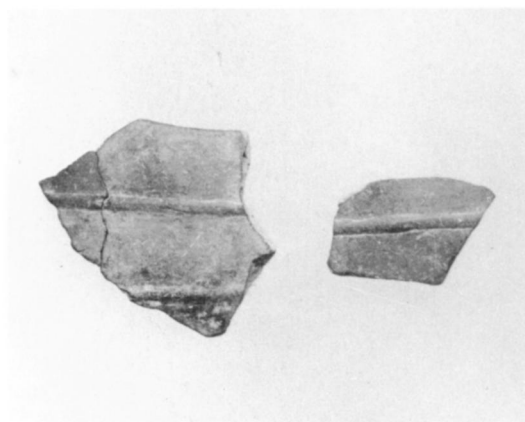
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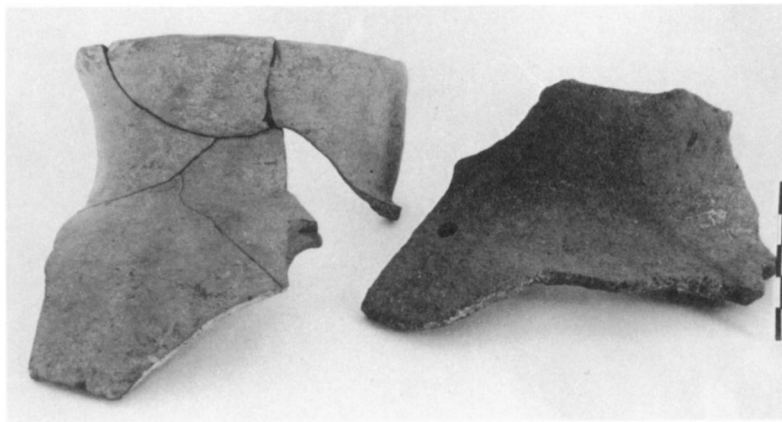


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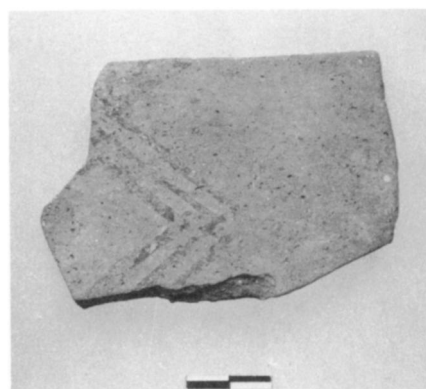


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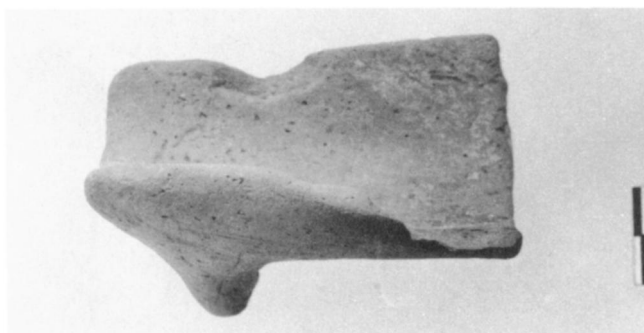
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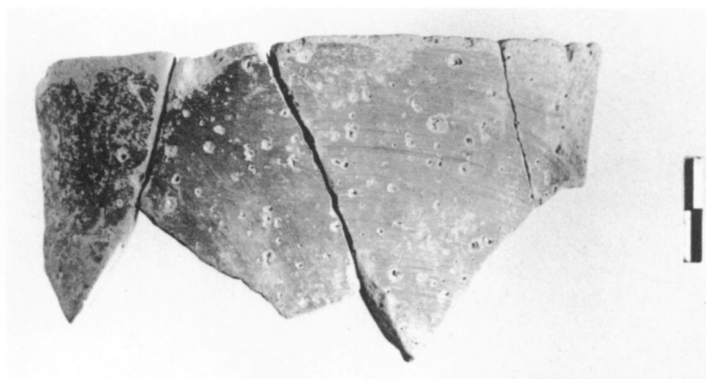
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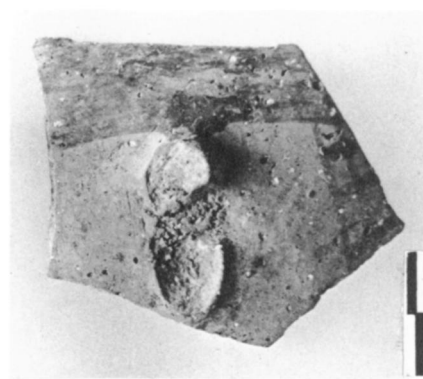
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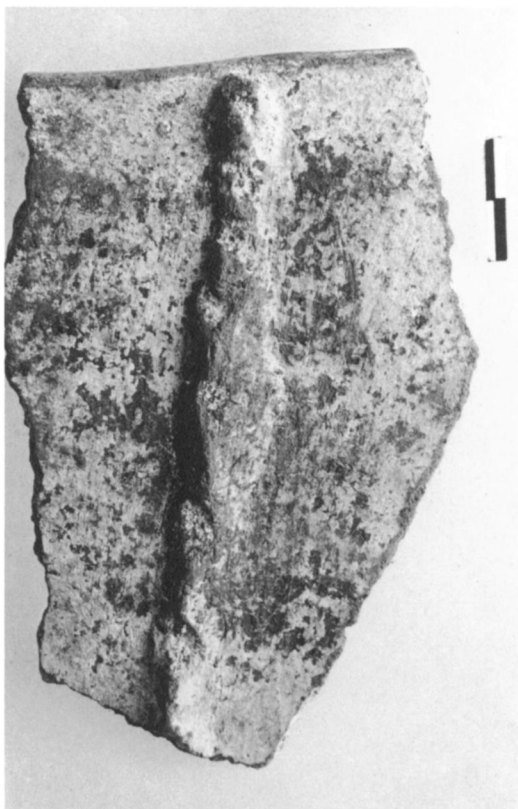


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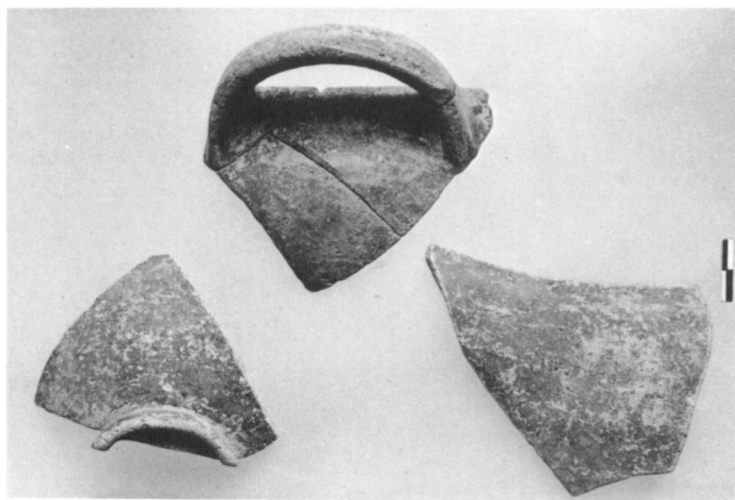
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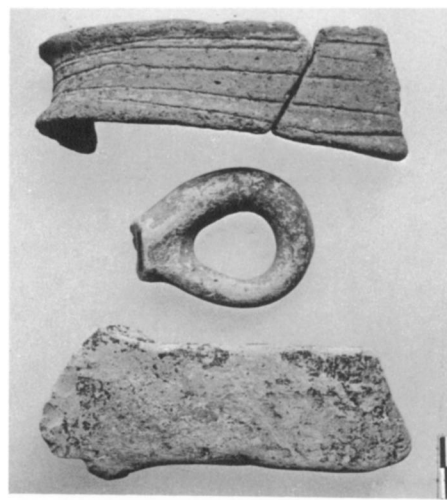
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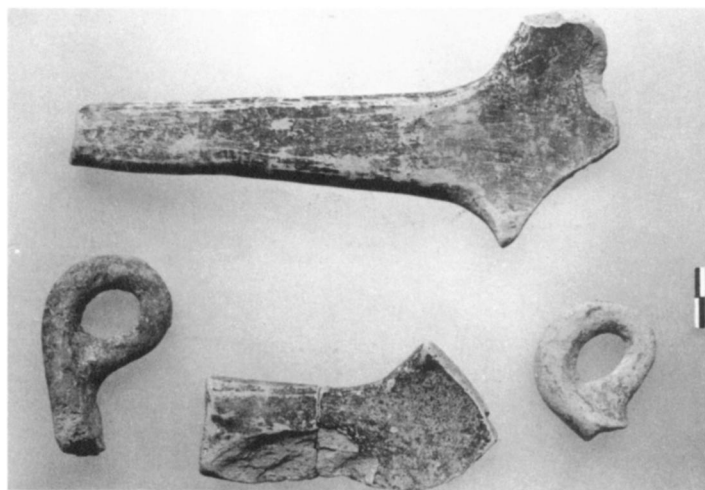


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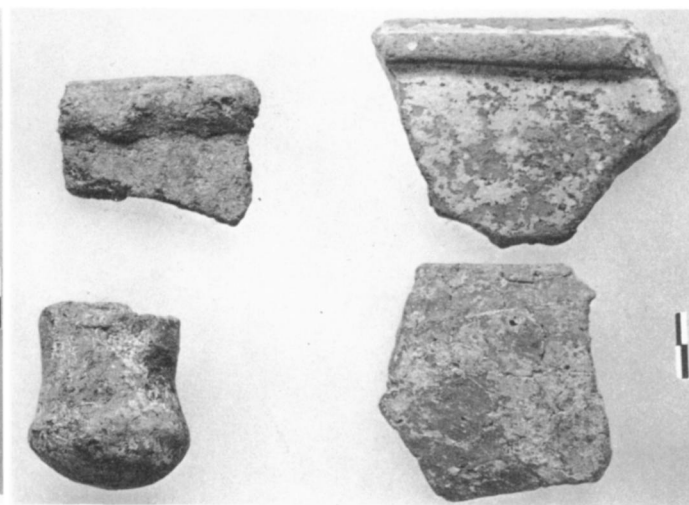




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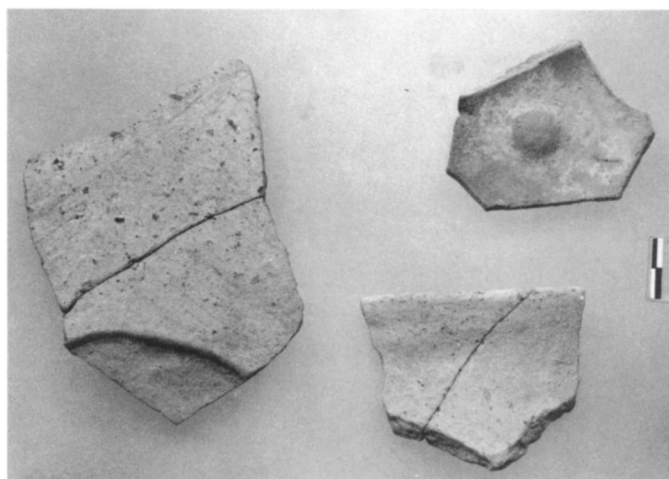
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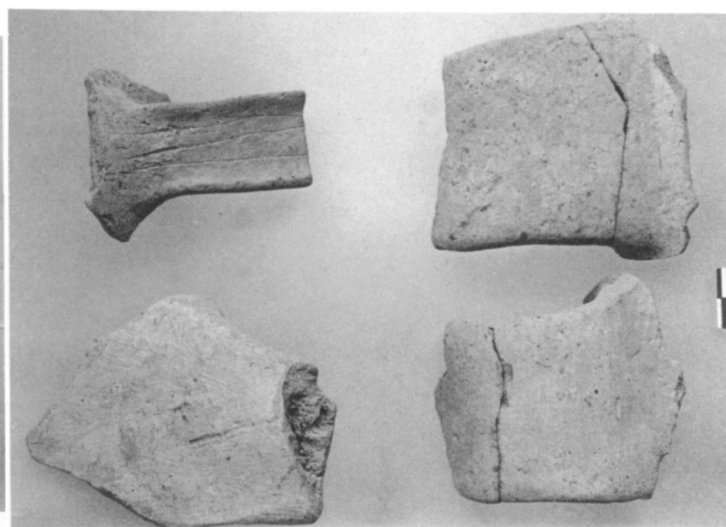
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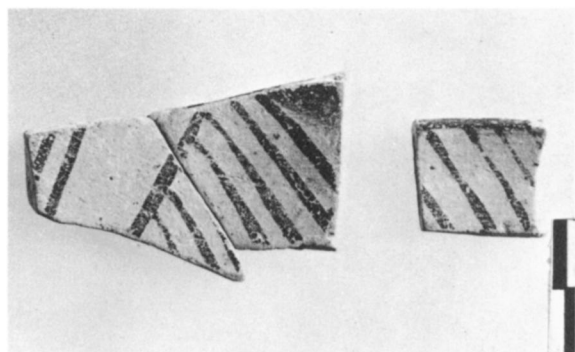
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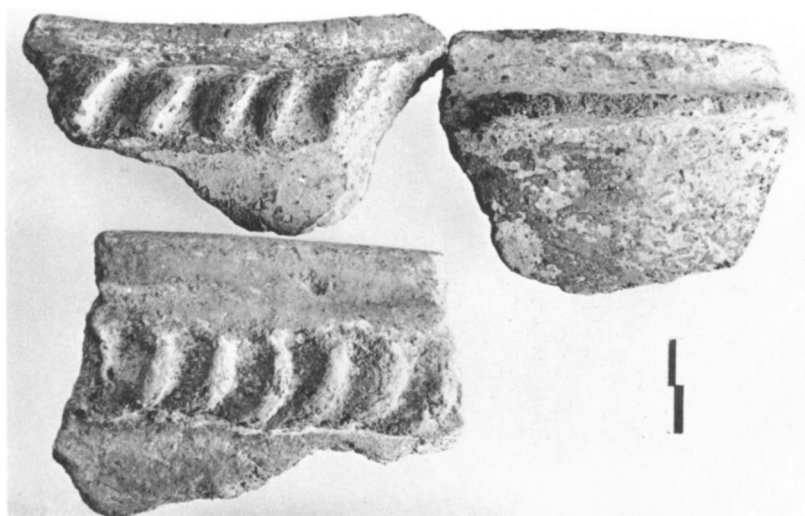
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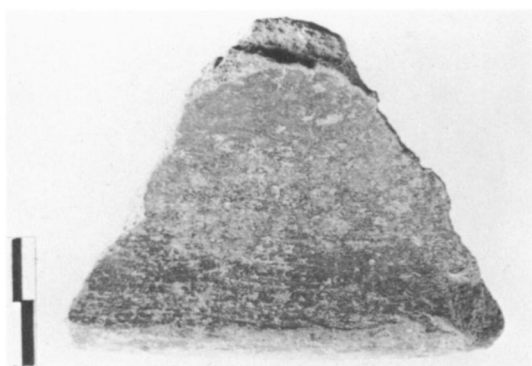
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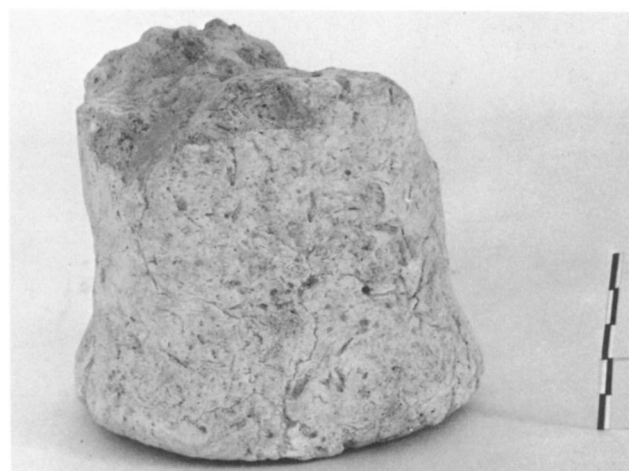
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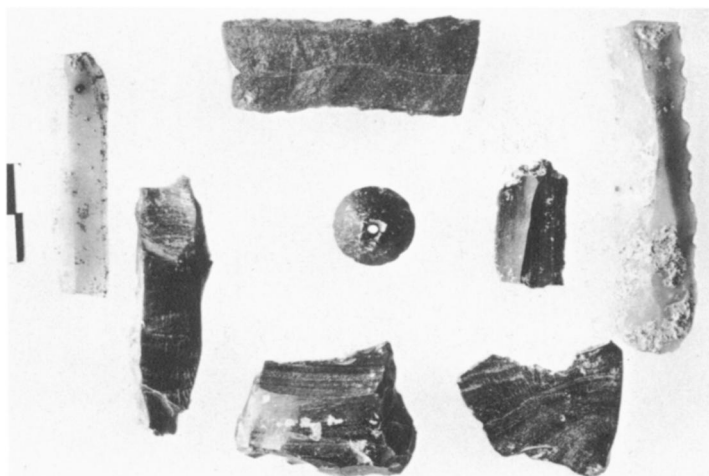
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