



Arthur Williams

PREFACE

EVERY YEAR SINCE 1969 there has been an article in *Hesperia* by Charles Williams, reporting as Director on the excavations that he supervised the previous season at Corinth for the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. It would regularly appear in the first fascicle, occasionally in the second. The report that begins on page 7 of this volume is the twenty-ninth such report and the twenty-fifth that I have had the pleasure of guiding into print.

From the point of view of an editor, such dependability earns high marks. From the point of view of fellow scholars, such punctuality is of great value and buys indulgence of the inevitable trade-offs: summary presentation of all but the most important objects or the rare instance of a conjecture that will be contradicted a report or two later. Williams has always managed very successfully to balance the temptation to rush exciting new hypotheses into print against the fear of revisions and retractions in following reports, as successive seasons bring different answers along with new questions. Here the frequency of the reports has sometimes allowed the author to postpone interpretation to a second or third return to the same area, and readers are the more willing to wait because they can be assured that they have been presented with the outline and that the blanks will be filled in later.

It is not easy to pull together the findings of a current season with little time to reflect on the problems from any perspective, and excavations proverbially produce as many questions as answers. Cataloguing and photography of significant finds and the preparation of pot profiles and Williams' new or revised architectural drawings are all part of the package, which represents the work of a whole team. Interpretation and commentary are essential and are provided; analysis in depth is sensibly postponed to allow time for further study, by Williams or under his supervision. The yearly excavation report is only part of a busy year fully scheduled with trips to be guided for the members of the American School, lectures on two continents, and excavation training sessions (over 500 students in 30 seasons), as well as performing the many duties of Director and serving as both field director and architect for the actual excavations.

Charles Williams's reports in *Hesperia* are not the only publications to come to this office from Corinth. Other scholars, notably Henry S. Robinson and James R. Wiseman, have supervised excavations there since Williams became Director in 1966, generating a number of articles published by the School. In addition to serving as advisor on 27 dissertations, however, Williams has supervised six volumes in the Corinth series, two numbers of *Corinth Notes*, and a *Hesperia* Supplement. Finally, he has overseen a steady stream of papers on all aspects of the material from the excavations, most of which have already appeared in *Hesperia*. It is consequently a fortunate circumstance rather than a surprising coincidence that the manuscripts next in line for the journal should all concern Corinth. With singular pleasure, then, on behalf of the Publications Committee, the staff of the Publications Office, and not least this editor, this fascicle is dedicated to Charles Kaufman Williams II.

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January 1997