

**A LOST NOTEBOOK FROM  
THE EXCAVATIONS AT  
GOURNIA, CRETE**

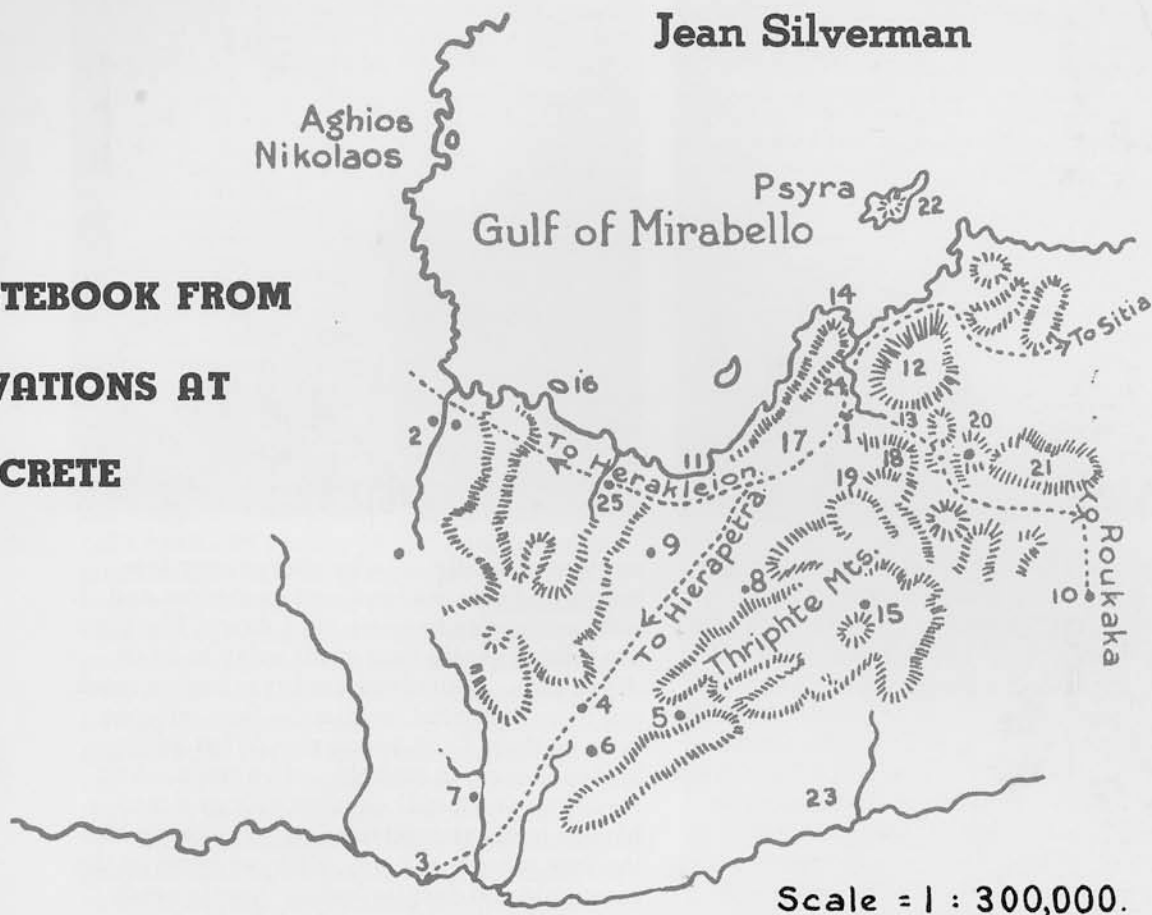


FIG. 2. SKETCH MAP OF THE ISTHMUS OF HIERAPETRA.

- |                  |                 |                          |                |                      |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| 1. Kavousi.      | 6. Kato Khorio. | 11. Pachyammos.          | 16. Prasonisi. | 21. Mt. Atzelakias.  |
| 2. Kalo Khorio.  | 7. Kentri.      | 12. Mt. Kapsas.          | 17. Khordakia. | 22. Psyra.           |
| 3. Hierapetra.   | 8. Monasteraki. | 13. Azoria Hill.         | 18. Kastron.   | 23. Aghia Photia.    |
| 4. Episkopi.     | 9. Vasiliki.    | 14. Cape Tholos.         | 19. Vronta.    | 24. Aghios Antonios. |
| 5. Apano Khorio. | 10. Roukaka.    | 15. Mt. Aphendi Kavousi. | 20. Avgo.      | 25. Gournia.         |

Map copied from H. B. Hawes, B. E. Williams, R. B. Seager and E. H. Hall, *Gournia, Vasiliki and Other Prehistoric Sites on the Isthmus of Hierapetra, Crete. Excavations of the Wells—Houston—Cramp Expeditions 1901, 1903, 1904.* Philadelphia: The American Exploration Society, Free Museum of Science and Art. 1908.

In the spring of 1973 a small notebook, titled "Inventory of Gournia Finds. Gournia, by class," was presented to the University Museum by Mr. Alexander Hawes, the son of Harriet Boyd Hawes, who excavated the Minoan town of Gournia for the Museum during the years 1901 to 1904. Finds from the site included tools belonging to the many trades of a small community and an enormous amount of pottery both practical and decorative. The Cretan authorities permitted Miss Boyd to export to the University Museum representative examples of these finds, nearly three hundred objects in all, which form the major part of the Museum's Minoan collection. Unfortunately, Miss Boyd had provided no excavation information about these objects, and for many years an unsuccessful search for the original excavation records had been made. So the inventory notebook was received with great hopes that it would aid in the study of this material.

It is an old-fashioned looseleaf notebook which contains, in addition to the inventory itself, field notes from the excavation of tombs in the vicinity of Gournia, and a few pages from Miss Boyd's diary at the end of the 1904 season. The first six pages list sherds, mostly Middle Minoan, and the inventory proper begins on the seventh, after which the pages are numbered to 190. The finds are organized under sixteen headings, ranging from vessels of clay, bronze and stone, figurines, and ornaments, to weapons, tools, and industrial equipment. The entire notebook is in Miss Boyd's handwriting, with additions and changes supplied at different times. The entries provide succinct but complete information about each item, giving its dimensions, year of excavation, location and registration number in the Heraklion Museum, and findspot, and are usually accompanied by a quick but accurate sketch. Pieces in Philadelphia or illustrated in the publication are so marked.

This is the second article to appear in *Expedition* regarding Harriet Boyd's excavation of Gournia for this Museum and her notebook listing the objects found there. The first was a discussion of Minoan "Fireboxes" by Hara S. Georgiou in Vol. 15, No. 4. There it was noted that, with her marriage to Charles Hawes in 1906, Miss Boyd's field work came to an end.

Of others on the expedition, the "E. H." of the notebook is Edith H. Hall who later married Joseph M. Dohan of Philadelphia. For many years she was Curator of the Mediterranean Section of this Museum; she also taught in the Classical Department of Bryn Mawr College.

"Seager" is Richard B. Seager, an American archaeologist, who for a number of years continued the work begun by Harriet Boyd. His interest in Minoan civilization and in the people of Crete lasted throughout his life and there are still people there who reminisce about him.

The diary pages reveal Miss Boyd's gift for evoking in few words character, landscape, or mood. There is a vivid account of a journey across the isthmus to the village of Agios Joannis to investigate some caves containing burials, dated June 16, 1904. "At about 4 o'clock horses . . . loaded w. beds, tinned food, blankets etc—we start. E H & I mounted; Aristes George and Michael Paviadakes on foot. . . . Cross Isthmus fr. Vasiliki west of Monastiraki. Ascend rocky path stubby pines, in every ravine or dry watercourse tens of thousands of oleanders in full bloom. As we rise Mirabello Bay to north, Libyan sea to south, magnificent panorama. . . . Reach Ag. Joannis usual white village perched on rocks. We find it deserted save former Vasiliki schoolmaster—comment allez-vous?—& father our government epistates. All at Katharais harvesting. We wind slowly down path meeting families returning—typical, father walking w. babe in arms, mother riding donkey w. 2 yr old in lap, sheep, goats, pigs driven by small boys and girls—11 small boys escort us for certain distance fr. village—people fine physique—we meet two women who are *great beauties*, & many pretty ones. At sunset reach coastal plain Katharais. . . . Beautiful evening after glow—we eat—men then gather near & sing—tale of sister who went to kapphenion w. her lover & therefore was killed by her brother etc. etc.—Our beds are set up on threshing floor: comparatively clean but a hurricane. We move from beds under lee of wall fr. which masses dirt were blown upon us to bed of boughs E.H. & I together. Such a night, dirt pebbles, grain blown into our eyes if we star-gaze, bed too 'knubbly' for sleep till we doze toward morning but must needs rise at about 4 a.m." Three days later she describes an exceptionally vivid sunrise. "Dawn—Gray headlands. Ledges of pudding stone slanting up to rt. a few scrub pines, steep break down to sea. Scattered rocks in sea, a point beyond & back of this one point reaching out beyond

Early Minoan	I	3000-2600
	II	2600-2300
	III	2300-2200
Middle Minoan	IA	2200-2000
	IB	2000-1900
	IIA	1900-1800
	IIB	1800-1700
	IIIA	1700-1620
Late Minoan	IIIB	1620-1570
	IA	1570-1500
	IB	1500-1450
	II	1450-1400
	IIIA	1400-1300
	IIB	1300-1200
	IIIC	1200-1100

another distantly . . . a bright red over the points and sea, the headland in shadow and saffron clouds above—such a dawn! The boys are talking gently then move away to let us dip in sea. . . . Now feathered gray fingers reach out fr. ones behind headland—then millions gray feathers flung across sky. What fields—horses grazing in stubble—olive trees—Aristes brings fresh milk in large tin cup & mulberries in his stained hands—" However, like the true scholar she was, with her mind on the essentials and despite feeling "pretty seedy," at Agios Joannis she writes of the Early Minoan burials they had excavated, "It is worth all our trouble to have found the 2 unmistakable exs. of Vasiliki ware, the little grey vase with string handles & early geometric Pelos type together. . . ."

When the notebook first reached the Museum, one of its most promising aspects was the record of findspots for nearly all objects, including many in the Museum collection. Unfortunately, the system for referring to location is completely different from that used in the final publication, and this notebook provides no key to explain it. Careful correlation between the two systems has established a number of references on the published plan, and also revealed that the notebook is not internally consistent in the manner of their use. There seems no way to extrapolate from the present incomplete information the original system, but even the limited understanding now achieved has been of considerable use.

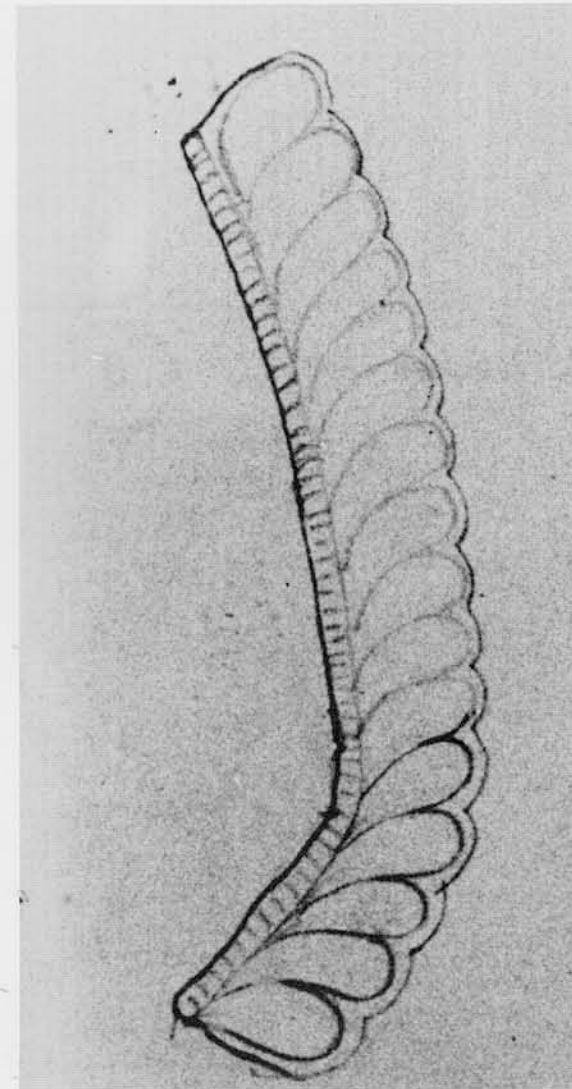
Turning to the finds themselves, it is possible to illustrate for the first time a scrap from a fine bronze vase recorded in the notebook under the heading "Bronze Vases de Luxe." It is a fragment from the rim of a shallow bronze bowl, stated to have come from G.37, which is known to be room D29 of House Dd in the southeast quarter of the town. It is described as "same as rim large bronze basin w. handle . . . pub. BSA 9, fig. 78 . . ." Perhaps Miss Boyd meant this fragment was

- 1 Drawing of bronze rim, from the notebook.
- 2 Middle Minoan I "plume jugs" from House Ek.

exactly the same as the Knossos bowl with its distinctive layered rim, the more so since the figure she cited gives a profile drawing, in which case it might be another product from the same bronze-smith shop. However, it is also possible that the comparison is only with the rim decoration. The find context of the Gournia bowl provides a date for this type, since all the known pottery from that room in the final publication and the notebook is MMIII—early LM IA. A second fragment, the handle of a bronze jug found in the Palace, lacks an accompanying sketch, but is compared to the jug from the same Knossos hoard.

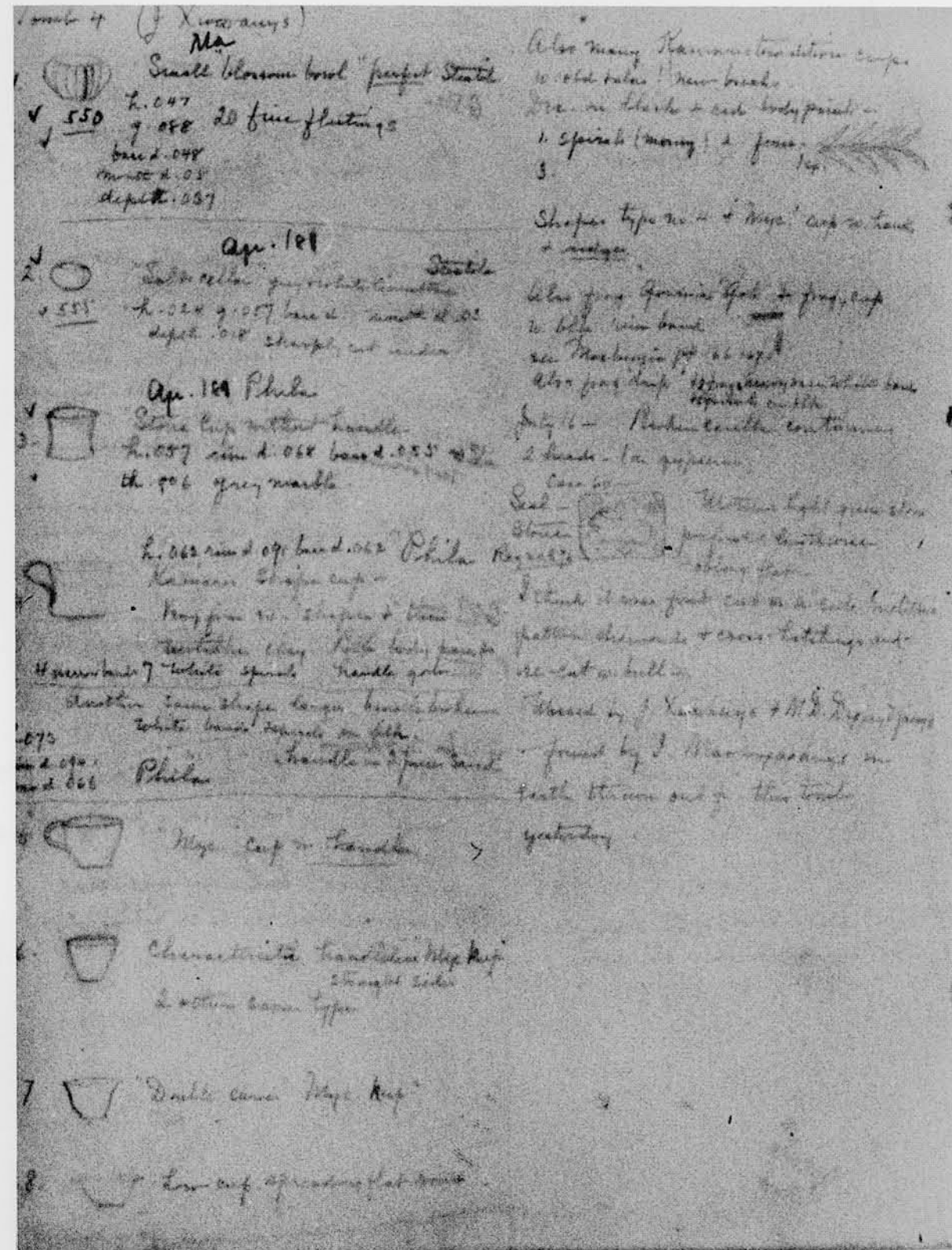
In addition to the published bull's-head vases, the notebook records a number of small animal figurines, unfortunately without any drawings. A hare, a lizard, and a complete cat's head add variety to the more common goats and bulls. The description of the cat's head matches two cats found at Palaikastro and Zakros equally well, and all three are probably from one workshop in the region. Two small wild goats' heads, described as having been once attached to vases, recall the goat-headed rhyta from Palaikastro. The additional find of a goat's-head mold suggests that such vases were also made at Gournia.

Three substantial Middle Minoan deposits beneath the LM I town are well documented in the notebook, supporting the published account. Two of these are remains of houses, and the whole pots from them are fully represented, being largely utilitarian vessels like the MM I "plume jugs" from House Ek on the west slope. The third, called Deposit A, was

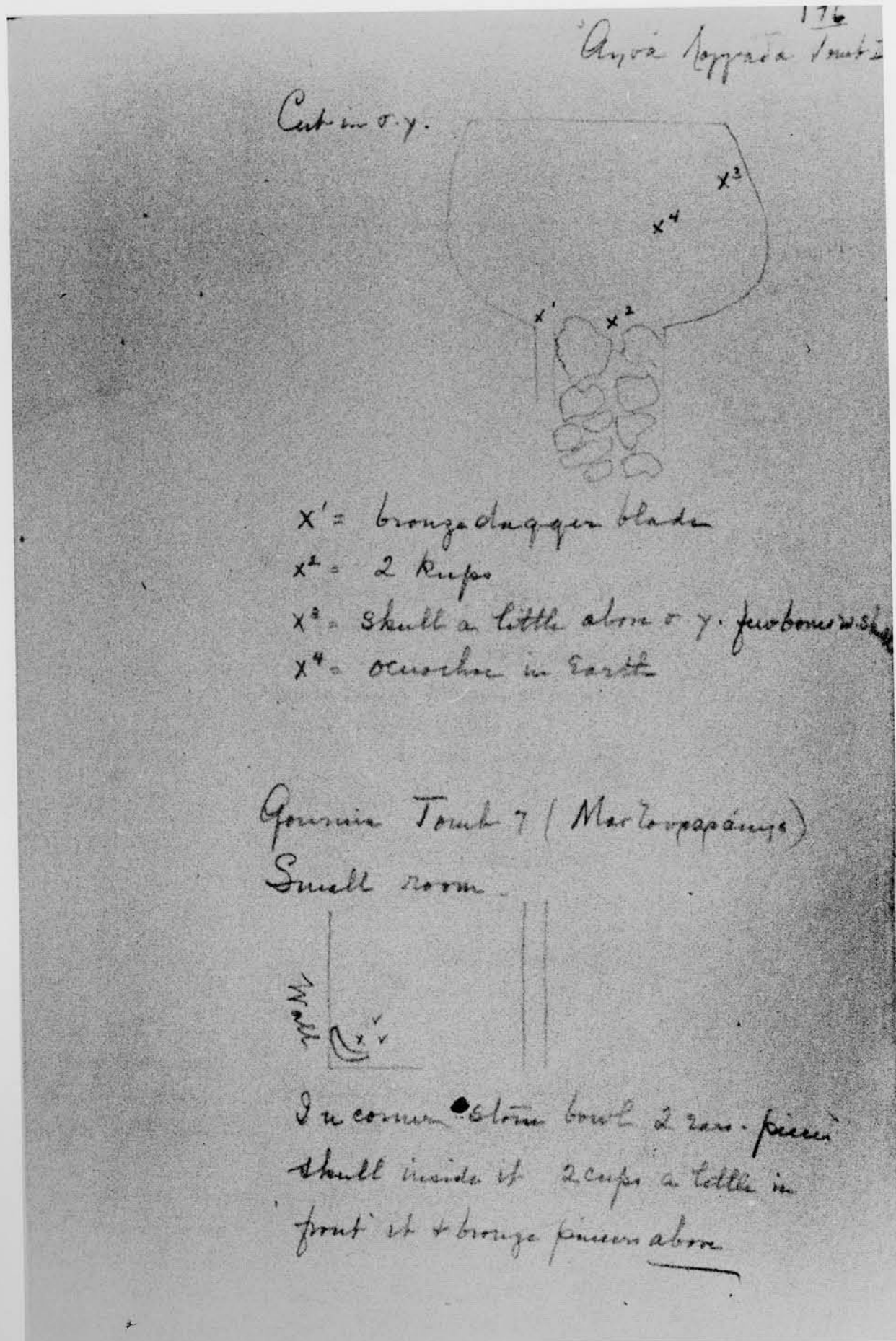


apparently not associated with any construction but used as fill when the later town was built. Its size may be judged by the remark in the notebook that "... Seager reported more than 400 cups from this [deposit]." Of this vast amount only fourteen pieces of fine ware and three plain cups are listed in the notebook. Some were published, though without find-spots, and a few can be identified in the University Museum collection. The plain cups are of the type shown here, which is listed with them but not attributed itself to this deposit. Two "plume jugs" and numerous sherds with MM I dark-on-light and trickle decoration accompanied the polychrome sherds. They range in date from MM IA through the MM II Palace Style, thus giving a date in the MM IIIA period for the rebuilding of the town, when the deposit was covered over.

Other Middle Minoan finds come from the house tombs at the rocky northern edge of the town. Bound in at the back of the notebook are field notes from the excavation of these and the other burials in the area, which give a rather brief description of the actual digging together with a numbered inventory of the finds. Two new facts emerge from these records. In what is published as room 2 of House Tomb II a number of Vapheio cups and six plain cups were found. A great many fragments of Vapheio cups with spiral or fern-like decoration were also found, as well as a seal-stone. Originally all the Gournia house tombs were dated to MM I, but with a fuller illustration of their contents, the finds from this room are seen to be clearly later. Vapheio cups with spirals and ferns were found in the town together with early dark-on-light ware of the LM I style. The plain cups, whose form is clear from the drawings in the notebook, are paralleled by cups from a MM IIIA stratum in a house at Mallia, while a bowl like #8 (opposite) was found in a grave at Mavro Spelio dated to MM IIB. The seal, added at the end of the pottery list, is recorded as found by one of the workmen in the earth thrown out from the excavation of this tomb. Its best parallels are perhaps the sealings from the Temple Repositories at Knossos, especially for the architectural background. It is certainly not earlier than the style represented by the Hieroglyphic Deposit. All available evidence points to this burial having occurred within MM IIIA, certainly the latest burial in the old house tombs.



1  
Sherds from Deposit A.  
2  
Plain cup from Deposit A.  
3  
Notebook page describing House Tomb II with record of Philadelphia location for pottery.



2



3

1 Drawings of the LM III grave Aisa Langhada IV (top) and the second room in House Tomb I (bottom).

2 Stirrup jar from Alazomouri I burial.

3 Miniature stirrup jars from Alazomouri I burial.

The notes on House Tomb I show that it also was divided into two rooms. The first, Tomb 6 in the notebook, contained only the silver kantharos and two small stone bowls. The second, originally Tomb 7, "the small room," was described and sketched. When excavated, a shallow stone bowl was found in one corner of the room with two fragments of skull inside it, a pair of bronze tweezers above it, and two MM I clay kantharoi set in front. This is the same kind of ritual secondary burial that was discovered during cleaning operations on the site in 1971, and provides added confirmation for this practice. Such clear and precise information serves to correct the published description of the tombs as "full of bones and skulls in disorder, a veritable charnal house." In fact, in the notebook there is no mention at all of the bones from these tombs.

During her search for burials at the close of the 1904 season, Miss Boyd excavated six LM III graves, two on the hill known as Alazomouri near the village of Pachyammos, and four on the slope to the southeast of this, called Aisa Langhada. The notebook contains accounts of the excavations and a complete inventory of the finds, accompanied by sketches and museum registration numbers which make it possible to reassemble the original tomb groups. The first to be discovered was Alazomouri I, a collapsed rock shelter containing two painted larnakes. For this burial the notebook has only an inventory of the pottery found. Of the twelve vases, three are in the University Museum collection. The others, five stirrup jars, three miniature jugs, and a plain amphora, are sketched well enough to be dated quite clearly to LM IIIB.





Aisa Langhada II burial pithos in the University Museum.



Pyxis containing infant burial from Aisa Langhada II.

Two other deposits of pottery found along the same ridge were the remains of burials. Aisa Langhada III consisted only of a plain spouted jug, a small stirrup jar, and a spouted bowl. The fourth grave contained a plain trefoil-mouthed jug, two plain cups, a bronze dagger blade, and some bones. A drawing of its ground plan (no dimensions are given) shows a paved approach and a truncated oval pit. From the incomplete or missing skeletons and the disorder of the finds it is probable that the burials along this ridge also were plundered. All six graves are exactly contemporary with the reoccupation of the town, from LM IIIA into LM IIIB, after which the site was uninhabited.

Further information remains of course to be gleaned from Miss Boyd's notebook in addition to what has been mentioned here. It can in places confirm or correct her published accounts. It serves as a check on the University Museum collection, and can in most instances identify and provide contexts for this material. It also raises several interesting questions, such as the matter of the goat-headed rhyta mentioned above, which might be answered in the Heraklion Museum. The marginal notes indicate that complete excavation records were kept by all the excavators, and tantalize the reader with references to the "Find Book," "Miss Hall's notes," and so on. Should these records be found again, they would be invaluable for the study of the site. But even without them, this single notebook has contributed both knowledge of Gournia and insight into the archaeologists who worked there. **21**



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