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§ 1.—The Season's Work and Summary of Results

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LACONIA.

I.—EXCAVATIONS AT SPARTA, 1909.

(PLATES I—X.)

§ I.—THE SEASON'S WORK AND SUMMARY OF RESULTS.

THE work of the School in 1909, the fourth season spent at Sparta, was marked by the completion of the excavation of the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia, upon which the greater part of the resources of the School had been spent for the three preceding years, and by the excavation of the building known as the Menelaion on the east bank of the Eurotas. In all the departments of the work the School has always to acknowledge with cordial thanks the support and help of the Hellenic Government, which was ably represented this year at the excavations by Doctor Rhomaïos. Especial thanks are owing to him for his zeal in helping the work and readiness to assist in any difficulty.

The excavation began on March 27th and continued until May 28th. Of the students of the School who were present Messrs. Wace and Thompson undertook the excavation of the Menelaion, Mr. Droop continued his work on the pottery, and Mr. Woodward, who was present for the latter half of the season, completed his search for inscriptions along the late-Roman wall of the Acropolis. Mr. George devoted six weeks to making drawings of the finds and gave the surveying the benefit of his experience. The director was present throughout, except for a short journey with Mr. Droop to Kythera, and, as before, undertook the work at the Orthia sanctuary.

Our foreman was again Gregory Antoniou of Larnaka, and as mender

the same Joannes Katsarakis came to us from Palaikastro. The museum photography was the work of Herr Rohrer, who came from Athens for the purpose.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS.

The more important results of the work at the Orthia sanctuary and at the Menelaion will be found in the report of the Managing Committee of the School which is printed at the end of the volume, and a general summary is here added of the work of the season with references to the sections of the report below, in which the several subjects are dealt with at length.

The Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia and the Menelaion (§ 2, p. 5 and § 6, p. 103).—For a summary of these excavations a reference has already been given to the report at the end of this volume. For two reasons the account of the Menelaion and of the objects found in the course of its excavation occupies the greater part of the space devoted this year to the Sparta report. The first is that this site yielded the majority of the objects found this season, the Orthia site having been already almost exhausted and only the margins of its rich deposits remaining to be explored, and secondly it was resolved to publish everything from the Menelaion in this number of the *Annual*, in order to have this piece of work definitely finished. This publication of the Menelaion must therefore be regarded as final. The report on the Orthia, on the other hand, only gives an account of the excavation itself without any publication of the finds, except a few vases by Mr. Droop (§ 3), and the great mass of objects, both from this and still more from previous seasons, still awaits publication.

Epigraphy (§ 4, p. 40).—The work of clearing the face of the late-Roman wall round the Acropolis in search of inscriptions has now been finished. Mr. Woodward found lying in front of the wall a number of inscribed blocks, which had already been copied by Fourmont, who seems to have pulled them out of the wall and then buried them at its base. It is noteworthy that whilst the accuracy of Fourmont's copies is generally established, his statements as to the provenance of his inscriptions are seldom correct.

The Theatre.—A broad trial-trench cut from the top of the cavea to the orchestra resulted in the discovery that the building had been very much destroyed. The seats had all been removed, and the lower part of the auditorium covered with later houses. The depth near the orchestra is as much as four metres, but the amount of destruction and later building have been so great that an excavation would hardly produce results in any way proportionate to the work involved.

Experimental Excavations.—Besides this trench at the theatre a number of trial-pits were made in different parts of the site. Their positions will be given most conveniently by reference to the numbered and lettered squares of the map of the site of Sparta published in *Annals* XII and XIII.

To the south of the round building on the Acropolis (Square **K** 14 on the map), where the Hellenistic tombs were found in 1907,¹ more than twenty pits were made in the hope of finding further tombs. Only the much ruined remains of one tomb were found with a few Hellenistic vases of the same shapes as those previously published.

On the saddle to the east of the late-Roman wall of the acropolis (**M** 14) trial-pits revealed a few graves, probably mediaeval. These were built generally of Roman tiles, but part of the covering of one was formed of the lower part of an archaic Spartan grave relief in the same style as the stele from Chrysapha now at Berlin, with the dead man seated on a throne, beneath and behind which is a snake. The inscription X]IAΩN below the throne gives ground for the supposition that this stele comes from the sanctuary of the hero Chilon mentioned by Pausanias.

Pits inside the wall of the acropolis to the west of these graves revealed Byzantine walls and pottery, and below these some disturbed Greek remains, and in the same way pits sunk in some slight hollows amongst the olive trees in Squares **L** 15 and **M** 15 resulted only in the discovery of Byzantine pottery.

A number of pits were made between the acropolis and the river (**N** 13). A few small terracotta hero-reliefs were found like those from the Heroön on the bank of the river, and an ancient well.² This was lined with terracotta cylinders placed one above another, each measuring .70 m. inside diameter and .66 m. high. One ring was slightly smaller and had

¹ Published in *B.S.A.* xiii, pp. 155 *sqq.*

² For illustrations of these reliefs see *B.S.A.* xii, pp. 289, 290.

telescoped into its neighbour, and the depth of the well measured to the top of the seventh was 3·80 m. At this point water began to appear and digging had to be abandoned.

The Heroön by the bank of the river, at which an extensive trial excavation with very promising results had been made in 1906,¹ was further examined, but was found to have been too much destroyed for any conclusions to be possible as to its structure, nor did the earth contain anything except a few sherds.

Further trial-pits near the site of the Chalkioikos temple also proved fruitless.

The general result of all the numerous soundings which have now been made in this and previous years, over the greater part of the acropolis and the regions to the south and east of it, and on the strip of land by the river, has been to shew that the remains of the ancient Greek period have been so much disturbed and destroyed by subsequent habitation that the prospect of further discoveries on the actual site of the city is not very great. For the guidance of future workers, however, it has seemed best to publish these details of our search.

R. M. DAWKINS.

¹ *B.S.A.* xii, pp. 288-294.