

INTRODUCTION

The first part of this study deals with the vases from graves of the eighth and seventh centuries and the early part of the sixth, in which the Corinthian aryballos and its Protocorinthian predecessor are the commonest and most characteristic types. The graves in which these vases were found are for the most part unpublished, and a preliminary section deals with the methods of burial employed at Rhitsona through this period and gives an account of the individual burials. The earliest of these graves are the earliest so far discovered on the site and go back to the Geometric period; the latest, of the early sixth century, bring us down to the beginning of the period already studied in *Sixth and Fifth Century Pottery from Rhitsona*. In the main pottery section of the present study all the vases from these earlier graves are similarly recorded and discussed from the Geometric of the earliest graves to the Boeotian Black Figure of the latest. In the case of the dominant vase type, the Corinthian aryballos and its close relation the bombylios or alabastron, I have for completeness carried the account down to the period of the mid-sixth-century graves already published in previous reports. The vases are grouped according to their methods of decoration—"orange quarters", bands and dots, animals in pure silhouette, animals with incisions, warriors, floral patterns, etc., with chronological sub-groupings of each main type.

To this main section on the Rhitsona vases I have added, in the form of an appendix, a list of parallels from other sites to the various types of Corinthian aryballos and bombylios from the Rhitsona finds. For the other classes (I–III, V–VIII) of the main pottery section parallels have been quoted only occasionally and rather arbitrarily. The material has either been dealt with in previous studies, or is not sufficiently abundant to justify the appendix form of treatment, and I did not want to overload the report of the actual finds with extraneous material.

The second part deals with the Rhitsona figurines from their earliest appearance at Rhitsona, about the beginning of the sixth century, onwards. These figurines come mainly from published graves, but no article, or even section of an article, has so far been devoted to them. In our earlier publications the individual figurines were briefly described and occasionally illustrated in the catalogues of the contents of the various graves; in our latest and longest publication (*Sixth and Fifth Century Pottery*, 1927) the limited means at our disposal and the mass of the vase material we had to deal with forced us to concentrate exclusively on the vases and to do no more for the figurines than merely list them in our grave catalogues with bare references to their types. I have therefore expanded here the record of the figurines from the earlier graves into a brief account of the whole Rhitsona series.

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In shorter sections that follow, the finds of glass, beads and metal objects are for the same reason treated in the same way.

Finally I have catalogued, in the briefest possible form, largely by means of references to the sections on the various types of vases and figurines, the full contents of each individual grave not previously published.<sup>1</sup>

For the purely Boeotian products, and particularly the figurines of the pappas and horseman types, the report is necessarily thrown back on earlier Rhitsona publications. For the Protocorinthian material I have made free use of Johansen's *Vases Sicyoniens*. The use I have been able to make of Winter's *Antike Terracotten* and of Jacopi's admirably prompt publications of the recently excavated cemeteries at Ialysus and Camirus (*Clara Rhodos*, III and IV, 1929 and 1931) has been limited by the inadequacy of both the illustrations and the explanatory text. Even so, however, the Rhodian reports have proved most valuable for confirming the dates or establishing the non-local character of many groups of the Rhitsona finds.

As regards the main pottery section—that dealing with Corinthian bombylioi and aryballoi—my chronological groupings start from the evidence of the Rhitsona graves, controlled by a comparison with that provided by the cemeteries of Sicily and Italy, to examine which I visited the museums of Sicily in 1929 and various Italian museums in 1930. My conclusions have been reached independently of Payne's *Necrocorinthia*. As that work is likely for its many merits to remain for long the standard reference book on Corinthian pottery, it will be well to say at once that though I find myself in practical agreement with his chronology, my three groups of Corinthian graves do not altogether correspond to his three periods, the principal difference being that his very comprehensive "early" period includes much that I had regarded and still regard as middle. White dots, bounding lines above and below the picture, rosettes with incised centres are all normal on certain groups of Payne's "early" vases. They are most exceptional in the earliest Corinthian graves at Rhitsona (see further under IV. IV. a below, p. 29). Even this difference, however, is largely a matter of approach: *Necrocorinthia* is a study of archaic Corinthian art; in the present study we are concerned almost exclusively with small

<sup>1</sup> Besides the material from the graves that are catalogued either here or in previous reports, I have included some objects which are listed as coming from graves 15, 105, 117, 136. Grave\* 136 is not a grave but a cluster of objects, mainly of the fifth century, that were found together in the neighbourhood of the Geometric grave 134. Grave 15 is a burnt grave of about 500 B.C. that was partly excavated in 1907 and reopened and cleared by Burrows in 1909 and only partly catalogued by him, doubtless because the mending was not finished when he left Thebes. When I returned to work in the museum in 1922 I could not satisfy myself as to what objects precisely had come from the grave and it seemed undesirable to include this somewhat doubtful entity among our authenticated grave groups. Graves 105 and 117 are burnt graves of the middle of the sixth century in which the vases happened to be particularly damaged and broken and at the same time not apparently of particular interest. As a mere matter of time and expense we did not see our way to turn our mender on to this somewhat thankless task, the more so since his services were wanted by other archaeologists elsewhere. It was, indeed, only by their courtesy and consideration that we were able to employ him as long as we did.

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vases that are all varieties of what is practically one shape, the aryballos, and are dealing with this limited material rather from the archaeological-historical than from the artistic point of view. On the latter the Rhitsona material has little to contribute, but for the history of the more mechanical types, which are comparatively neglected by Payne, it forms a useful basis for a fuller study, and I have accordingly listed somewhat fully examples noted from other sites. Although such lists contribute almost nothing to the history of Corinthian art, they are much needed for the study of Corinthian trade and industry.

As in the case of our previously published graves, the new material here dealt with is all to be seen in the cases of the vase room of Thebes Museum. There still remain a few entirely unpublished graves, whose contents, seeming to us too damaged or too undistinguished to justify the time and expense involved in mending and recording, have been returned to the boxes in which we brought them from Rhitsona and stored, duly labelled, in the apotheke of the museum. Finality is of course impossible in dealing with a mass of material such as that which is to be found on a site like Rhitsona, quite apart from the probability that so much of it is still to be excavated, but with the publication of this report we have now put on record the history of the cemetery from the eighth to the third century B.C., discussed in some detail every class of object so far found there, and, with the few exceptions just noted, published detailed catalogues of the contents of every individual grave.

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(I) THEIR CONTENTS AND SIGNIFICANCE

In the excavations of 1907 and 1908 only six graves were found of a period earlier than that of the (middle and late) sixth-century graves from which come the four-handled Boeotian bowls or kylikes that are the most distinctive of the Rhitsona finds. Of these six graves, published *J.H.S.* xxx, p. 336 f., one (1) belonged to the Geometric period, three (6, 75, 13) to the Proto-corinthian, two (14, 4) to the Corinthian. The finds of 1909 and 1921, 1922 multiplied this number. They cover the same period, but whereas the number of pre-Corinthian graves was only doubled, that of the graves of the Corinthian period was increased tenfold. Not only are the Corinthian graves much more numerous; they are also much more richly furnished. Whereas our pre-Corinthian graves contained on an average only some half-dozen vases each, six of the Corinthian (4, 14, 87, 91, 101 b, 141) contained on an average over thirty each, two (95, 99) over fifty, one (145) nearly one hundred, one (86) nearly three hundred. The total material is therefore now enough to justify conclusions as to some of the more prevalent vase types in these graves and to afford a useful context for discussing some of the more unusual objects.

The graves fall into well-marked groups which can be arranged in a chronological order based on broad and well-established lines of stylistic development. When so arranged the constant association of certain types or sub-types or, again, their constant absence from such and such a group of graves enables us to date them more precisely than has hitherto been done and to trace the often quite arbitrary variations that they underwent. The changes in question and indeed the types that undergo them are frequently of no aesthetic or stylistic significance; but for historical purposes the dating of these vases is of some importance. They belong to the earliest period at which the Greek world comes into the full light of history. It is a period when literary sources need specially to be supplemented by archaeological, and it fortunately so happens that archaeology finds it comparatively easy to give useful information. We are dealing with the epoch of the greatest diffusion of the free Greek city state. For many of these cities, and especially for the enterprising settlements that formed the outer Greek world, literary evidence is lamentably lacking. Where this is so the sites themselves can sometimes speak to us through the vases and potsherds which have been and still are being unearthed on them. But to understand what these witnesses have to say we must have the most precise information possible as to the time and place of their production. The commoner the ware, the more important does this information become.

One source of such information, at least for purposes of dating, is certainly to be found in our series of graves. There is indeed the question as to how

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far ceramic fashions were uniform in the various parts of the Greek world. Emporiae in Spain or Olbia in South Russia may have been years behind the times at this period just as we know that Olbia was in later days. But the causes that made Olbia so old-fashioned in the post-Augustan period were not yet operating anywhere, and there is a strong case for holding that mass production went with a widespread uniformity of fashion. To go into so wide a question is, however, beyond the scope of this report.

The important fact about our graves is that, like those of later periods already published, each had been normally used but once. In the great majority of cases we find a single skeleton plainly occupying the whole grave and obviously the recipient of its whole contents. In no instance do we find a grave twice used in such a way as to cause confusion between the offerings made at two different interments. One of our graves indeed, 145, occupied the same shaft as grave 139, but the latter, which is some century and a half later, lay so much higher than 145 that the two graves were entirely distinct.<sup>1</sup> In four graves (90, 132, 134, 145) the remains of the skeleton were very scanty, while in two (101 b, 103) there were no traces of bone at all. Of these six graves three (90, 132, 101 b) were pithos burials. It is hardly conceivable that pithoi were reopened and used a second time. The stone grave 134 has also every appearance of having been used once only and never subsequently disturbed till the time of excavation. The only case where a definite element of doubt enters is that of grave 141 and even here the limits of uncertainty are strictly circumscribed. (For details see below, p. 14.) Exceptional instances like this serve to emphasise our good fortune in having so large a series of well-furnished graves each with a number of vases that were unquestionably all buried in a single day.

Relative dates can only very occasionally be established from the relative positions of two graves. The case of graves 145 and 139 has just been mentioned. Grave 88 must be earlier than 90 and 92 since the heavy sarcophagus of 88 could not possibly have been got into position without disturbing the other two if they had been already there. On the pithos groups 101 a, b and 125 a–e see the section on pithos burials immediately below.

(II) METHODS OF BURIAL  
(Plates 1, II and figs. 1–4)

The graves are of three different kinds: (1) simple shaft graves with no remains of coffin or bier, though there is a certain presumption that biers or coffins of wood were employed in them as we know they were in graves of the next period;<sup>2</sup> (2) graves in which the body was enclosed in a sarcophagus or slabs of stone; and (3) pithos burials.

(1) Simple shaft graves: 89, 91, 97, 141 of the early Corinthian period (a, p. 22); 87, 92, 95 of our middle Corinthian period (b, p. 22); 86, 99, 145 of our late Corinthian period (c, p. 22); 103 of the early Boeotian-kylix period. This type of burial goes back to the period of Geometric

<sup>1</sup> See *VI and V Cent. Pott.* p. 6. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 3.

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pottery (see grave 1, *J.H.S.* xxx, p. 341) and early Protocorinthian (grave 6, *ibid.* p. 344). It is used almost exclusively during the last three quarters of the sixth century.

(2) Stone slabs are used for one of our two Geometric graves (134, below, pp. 14, 88). The stone sarcophagus of the Protocorinthian grave 88 (pl. 1) is the only one so far found at Rhitsona. It is also unique in having as part of its covering a stone that had previously been part of an olive press (pl. 1). Stone slabs are used for the late Protocorinthian grave 13 (*J.H.S.* xxx, p. 346). After that none occur for about two centuries. Possibly the inscribed tombstones that came in soon after may have used up the limited available supply of suitable slabs (see, e.g. *Black Glaze Pott.* pl. xix). The practice of enclosing the body in stone slabs reappears towards the end of the fifth century and is common in the fourth: see e.g. *ibid.* graves 52, 55–60 (56, pl. xiv), 30, 33, 34. It survived into the third century (*ibid.* graves 66, 67, 68: 67, pl. xviii) and with it the Protocorinthian practice of using second-hand material (see *ibid.* pl. xix, the slab inscribed EVDDVΛOS, borrowed for grave 67 from a gravestone of probably fifth century date).

(3) Pithos burials (90, 96, 101 a, 101 b, 125 a, 125 b, 125 c, 125 d, 125 e, 132: 90 and 132 Protocorinthian, the rest Corinthian). These show some variety both in the matter of the jars used and in the way the body was disposed in them. Most frequently one large pithos is used with a smaller vase to act as lid: so 101 a and 101 b (fig. 1), 125 c, d, e (figs. 2, 3). The lid vase in this case is normally a smaller edition of the big pithos (e.g. 101 b. 40, pl. xii), but in 101 a it is the unusual vase 101 a. 4 (pl. xii), which was obviously made for some quite different purpose (dairy?). Sometimes two pithoi of about the same size are placed mouth to mouth: so 125 a, figs. 2, 3. In all cases both burial vases are lying on their sides. For grave 96 three pithoi seem to have been used, the bottom of the middle pithos being knocked out, to allow the head to find a resting place in the third jar (see further, p. 10).

In grave 96, as also in 125 b and 125 d, the body lay full length or at least as near full length as the mode of burial allowed. In graves 101 a, 125 a, 125 c, 125 e the body lay huddled up. Elsewhere the bones were too fragmentary to allow of any conclusion. Pithoi were not used exclusively for the burial of infants. The skeleton found extended in grave 125 d had thigh bones .035 m. thick and measured 4 ft. 2 in. (1.26 m.) with the extremities missing; that of grave 96, as roughly sketched by Burrows, extends almost the full length of the burial pithoi which is just 5 ft. (1.49 m.); that of grave 125 e measured 3 ft. (.90 m.) in a huddled position, and one of the long bones was .03 m. thick. In others, where the bones were too ill-preserved to measure the skeleton as a whole, there were fragments of leg bones which even if almost complete indicate something more than an infant: e.g. grave 101 a, .23 m.; 125 a, .26 m.; 125 b, .30 m.; 125 c, .24 m. Grave 132 is that of a small child, as is shown by the double teeth without roots.

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It seems that, with reservations, we can trace the history of burial practices at Rhitsona from the eighth to the third century. It is, however, interesting and important to note how very local this history is. At Halae in the neighbouring and generally friendly country of Locris, where between 1911 and 1914 American archaeologists excavated 280 graves that dated from the middle of the sixth century to Roman times, funeral fashions followed a different course: "Monolithic sarcophagi predominated in the sixth and fifth centuries... Pithoi are common at all times".<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *A.J.A.* 1915, p. 424.

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(III) THE INDIVIDUAL GRAVES

GRAVE 86 (pl. II, showing skull and east vase mass): Shaft grave with side ledges. Nothing was found above the ledge level except burnt earth at a depth of .90 m. At each end of the grave was a vase mass extending .40 m. towards the middle of the grave. The ends of this grave were not cleared until the middle had been completely dealt with.<sup>1</sup> On the floor of the grave between the two vase masses a single skeleton lay extended, its skull, which lay on its left cheek, close up to the east vase mass with several aryballoi protruding right over it, the body lying on its back down the middle of the grave. The feet were gone but the lower end of the shin bones were .28 m. distant from the beginning of the west vase mass.

GRAVE 87: Shaft grave, exceptional in having the ledge which runs down the sides continued round the short ends, and in having a second ledge at the short ends .07 m. above the continuous ledge. The skeleton lay with its head to the east, the skull resting on its right cheek. The top of the skull was .34 m. from the east end. There were no traces of bones below the knees. The vases, only twenty-eight in number, were scattered over the whole extent of the grave.

GRAVE 88 (pl. I): Sarcophagus of stone (direction 100°) with stone olive press as cover of the head and middle: the part of the lid that covered the lower part of the body consisted of a separate stone that was found smashed. At the foot end of the coffin two large rough stones were found inside, that perhaps originally formed part of the lid. The sarcophagus itself was .25 m. deep inside, .37 m. outside; outside breadth at head .79 m., at bottom .53 m.: the sarcophagus narrows by curving slightly inwards from about half way down; the foot too runs in a slight curve; total outside length 1.82 m.; the olive press part of the lid (see pl. I) is .17 m. thick: on its under side as placed on the sarcophagus it shows a round sinking .06 m. deep and .61 m. inside diameter, .66 m. outside, and a sunk channel running to the edge of the stone as shown in the figure; the fragments of the other part of the lid show a rim all round of .07 m. depth. The sarcophagus is now in the court of the museum at Thebes. The skeleton lay stretched out, the skull lying on the right cheek: total length 1.60 m. The vases were found, no. 1 by the left shin, no. 3 by the left hip, nos. 2 and 4 by the right hip; the fibulae lay above the shoulders, no. 5 on the left side, no. 6 on the right.

GRAVE 89 (pl. I): Shaft grave with side ledges. The skeleton lay with the head at the east end of the grave, the skull resting on the right cheek. The whole skeleton lay considerably nearer to the south than to the north side

<sup>1</sup> This was done, and steps were cut some way down the middle of one side of the grave as being the best way to prevent the vase masses at the two ends being damaged during excavation. The objections to it are (1) that the vases are not always confined to the two ends, and (2) that in many cases this method would prevent the skeleton being photographed or examined as a whole. In excavating a large cemetery it is, however, certainly right to vary the method of excavation.

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of the grave, though the skull, by rolling over on to its right cheek, had come to rest midway between north and south. The bones of the right arm and of the legs down to the ankles were in their normal positions, but the rib bones were found clustered on the south side of the grave in the region of the left shoulder and upper arm, and next to them but nearer to the left thigh bone were the vases. Length of skeleton from top of head to ankles 1.48 m. A strange white substance was observed on the floor of the grave in the south part of the space between the skeleton's legs.

GRAVE 90: Pithos burial, .23 m. due east of grave 88 (pl. 1). The pithos was in fragments of which the highest were found .10 m. and the lowest .46 m. below the level of the top of the grave 88 sarcophagus; greatest length of the pithos remains .70 m.; greatest breadth .57 m. Nothing was found inside the pithos except one little Protocorinthian lekythos, much worn.

GRAVE 91: Shaft grave. Owing to the situation of this grave, which led to its being opened from the side, it was not possible to ascertain whether it had a ledge. The grave was exceptionally narrow. The skeleton lay with its head to the east, the skull resting on its right cheek, and the crown of the skull lying .23 m. from the east end; the bones of the body were badly perished, especially on the right side, but their traces were discernible in the earth. The Protocorinthian lekythos no. 1 was found just below the jaw of the skeleton.

GRAVE 92 (pl. 1): Shaft grave. The skeleton lay on its back just to the north of grave 90 and the eastern part of grave 88, the head lying 1.18 m. east of the east end of grave 88, the legs extending .46 m. along its north side; the feet and lower part of the shin bones lay between the north side of the grave 88 sarcophagus and the skull of grave 85; length of bones preserved (from top of skull to right ankle) 1.70 m. Burnt earth was observed before the leg bones were uncovered. Six aryballoi, including the "bucchero" no. 16, show signs of burning.

GRAVE (?) 93: The vase and fragments catalogued under this grave number were found some .40 to .50 m. above the contents of grave 92; but as Burrows' day-book states that they appeared and were removed after the removal of the contents of grave 92, these "grave 93" objects must have lain somewhat to the side of the lower finds.

GRAVE 95 (pl. 1): Shaft grave. The position of this grave, like that of grave 91, necessitated its being opened from the side, and it was therefore not possible to ascertain whether it had a ledge. The skeleton lay extended with its head to the east; length of bones preserved 1.60 m. On the bones of two of the fingers were bronze rings. Three Geometric fragments were found at the bottom of the grave with the Corinthian vases. They plainly come from an earlier burial disturbed by the diggers of grave 95, and must have fallen or worked their way down to the position they were found in at the time of the grave 95 interment. The illustration in pl. 1 is from a

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photograph taken when only a cluster of aryballoi from this grave had been unearthed. The skull lay just north of this cluster and slightly lower down.

GRAVE 96: Pithos grave. The body was laid out in three pithoi, the easternmost and smallest (diam. .40 m.) containing the skull, the middle pithos (diam. .50 m.) containing arm bones and ribs; and the westernmost and largest (diam. .76 m., see pl. 1) the leg bones. The total length of the pithoi as they lay in the ground was 1.49 m. The two larger were laid mouth to mouth, and the end of the middle pithos was no doubt knocked out to give passage to the head. When discovered they were all much broken. The pithoi lay in a rectangular grave 1.90 m. long, 1.10 m. broad, at a depth of 2.30 m. There was no ledge. Direction 71°. Nothing was found in the small pithos except the skull, in the middle pithos was the quatrefoil aryballos 1, in the large pithos were the aryballoi 2, 3, 6 and the horseman 8. The aryballoi 4 and 5 and the horse 9 were found outside the large pithos. The position of 7 is not recorded.

GRAVE 97 (pl. 1): Shaft grave with ledges. The skeleton lay outstretched with the skull resting on the right cheek; length from crown of skull to furthest remains of leg bones 1.67 m., of which the last .47 m. consisted of nothing more than traces. The cooking pot 12 was found in the middle of the extreme west end; the oenochoe 1 between the upper ends of the thigh bones; most of the other vases were scattered between the legs.

GRAVE 99: Shaft grave, apparently without ledges. The skull was apparently that of a small child. The highest finds were at a depth of .86 m. An iron nail .09 m. long with head .02 m. broad was found right at the bottom of the extreme west end of the grave.

GRAVES 101 a and b (pl. 11 and fig. 1). The top sides of both pithoi appeared at a depth of about .80 m. The stone (S), of which the fragment found standing upright *in situ* kept the lid vase of 101 b in position, originally stretched farther north and rested also against the bottom of the 101 a pithos.

101 a (pithos shown in pl. 11; see also fig. 1): length of pithos .99 m., greatest width, as measured *in situ*, .68 m.; width of mouth .45 m., direction 80°; skull (A), very much crushed, rested on bottom side of neck of pithos, facing south, fragments of it were found in the vase which served as a pithos lid, some teeth (B) in a break in the neck of the pithos, hand (?) bones (C) and long bones (D, .21 and .23 m. long as preserved) right on the bottom side of the pithos. The three vases lay just outside the pithos, close up to its neck, no. 1 on the south side, nos. 2 and 3 on the north.

101 b: length of pithos .90 m., greatest width as measured *in situ* .86 m., thickness .025 m.; the material is inferior to that of pithos 101 a; direction 88°; no remains of bones. Inside the pithos several shells, two much like winkles, the others (some very tiny) long and thin, and one leg of figurine