

EXCAVATIONS IN SAMOTHRACE

(Plates 458 - 461)

It is a pleasure to send our sponsors, friends and colleagues the customary spring report on our activities during the past year. They have, again, been two - fold in nature, consisting both of excavation in the Sanctuary of the Great Gods in Samothrace as part of the program of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens and of further work on forthcoming volumes of Bollingen Series LX: *Samothrace*, Excavations conducted by the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University.

This season's campaign was once again divided between the Sanctuary and the nearby South Nekropolis (Pls. 458 - 461). Excavation in the Sanctuary, under the continuing sponsorship of the Charles and Rosanna Batchelor Memorial, Inc., was conducted from mid - June to mid - August under the supervision of our field director, James R. McCredie. He was assisted by the Misses Ellen Davis, Iris C. Love, and Nancy Patterson and Messrs. Philip Oliver - Smith and Samuel R. Peterson. Nicholas D. Ohly and Alfred Fraser served as architects. This year, too, we were fortunate in obtaining the invaluable assistance of Mr. Triandaphyllos Kontogeorgios, chief restorer of the National Museum in Athens. We are grateful to the director of the Museum, Mr. Christos Karousos, for his generous cooperation in making Mr. Kontogeorgios' services available to us.

This phase of our activity was preceded from early May to mid - June by another intensive period of excavation in the South Nekropolis under the joint supervision of Mrs. John Dusenbery and Mr. Andreas Vavritsas, with the assistance of Miss Elaine P. Loeffler and our senior restorer, Georgios Kontogeorgios. They were joined, for some weeks, by Mrs. James Sheridan and Miss Shirley Alexander of the Conservation Center of the Institute of Fine Arts, whose initial participation in our field work we are pleased to announce. As in previous years, we are indebted to a faithful anonymous donor for the means to carry on this portion of our work. Mrs. Dusenbery's summary of the chief results of this final large - scale campaign in the South Nekropolis will follow shortly.

Our objectives in the Sanctuary were two: to pursue the investigation of the great Stoa dominating the Western Hill begun in 1962

and to inaugurate definitive study of the splendid propylon giving access to the Sanctuary from the ancient city long known as the Ptolemaion.

You will recall that the Stoa, one of the largest in Greece, measuring ca. 104.30 x 13.90 m. faced east, overlooking the southern part of the Sanctuary. Built of white - stuccoed poros limestone, apart from its tiled roof and terracotta lateral simas, its chief external feature was the long Doric colonnade that constituted its open façade. On the interior, its walls were stuccoed, painted and moulded to simulate drafted - margin masonry. Quantities of additional fragments of this red, white and grayishblue stucco were recovered, including more pieces bearing letters from the inscriptions stamped and incised on these walls, as we continued our excavation within the building this past summer. By the end of the season, nearly thirteen hundred blocks of its superstructure had been removed from the surface of the Stoa and placed in fields along its eastern, western and southern sides. Only some hundred odd additional blocks lying over the centre of the building await transport to these fields. In the meantime, Mr. Ohly has completed its plan and begun the arduous task of measuring and drawing these hundreds of blocks.

Certain facts of prime importance for the history and reconstruction of the Stoa emerged from our investigations within it. Last year we reported that a trench 2 m. wide and 30 m. long excavated down the centre of the building from its southern foundation northward and carried below the lower surface of its lateral foundations revealed no trace of foundation for an interior colonnade. In 1963, we dug two trenches in the northern part of the building, one 4 m. wide across its full interior width (ca. 8 - 12 m. south of the inner corners of the northern foundation), and a second, at right angles to the first, extending down the centre of the building from 12 - 26 m. south of the northern foundation and having a width of 4 m. They revealed the existence, at approximately 6 m. intervals, of a series of three compact groups or platforms of boulders at a uniform level well below that of the original floor which can scarcely be interpreted in any other fashion than as sub-foundations for an interior colonnade spaced at double the 3 m. intercolumniations of the outer Doric order. François Sal-

viat's suggestion (*BCH*, LXXXVI (1962) pp. 299 f.) that the Ionic drums and capitals found among the blocks of the Stoa should be ascribed to such an interior colonnade is thus confirmed and the building begins to acquire shape as a long, low structure clinging to the wind-swept hill that overlooks the Sanctuary.

The singular variation in structural technique whereby such sub-foundations were employed in the northern third (or more) of the building but omitted toward the south appears to be but one feature of the careful adjustment of the Stoa to its site. For our transverse trench, dug to the very bottom of the lateral foundations in this northern part of the building, reinforced last year's observations. Here, the inner face of the eastern foundation stands some 3.40 m. high, of the western, 4.70 m., and the latter was built of fourteen courses as opposed to the solitary foundation course required at the southern end of the building. It is apparent that, at the north, the brow of the hill drops sharply, especially toward the westernmost river valley of the Sanctuary, and that the builders of the Stoa were forced to raise and broaden the terrain at the north to accommodate its great length, while, at the south, it could be placed directly on firm natural soil. Hence the need for deeper foundations, whether external or internal, in the northern part of the building.

The same transverse trench and an extension of it carried to the east of the building revealed the existence of a series of walls or foundations, most of them running in an approximately north-south direction, which antedate the Stoa. We hope to clarify the nature and date of these earlier structures that preceded the Hellenistic Stoa on the Western Hill in the course of the coming campaign. The extensive ceramic fragments present in the fill beneath the floor level in this part of the building will also help us to arrive at a more precise date for it than has hitherto been possible. Among them was one delightful earlier object: a black-glazed salt-cellar incised on the under side of the foot with a theta dedicating it to the Samothracian Gods — a tangible illustration of Gallimachus' epigram (47) referring to a poor man who dedicated just such a vessel to these saving divinities.

Excavation of a broad strip along the entire eastern side of the Stoa and of the area immediately to the north of the fieldstone terrace wall

that encloses the Nike Fountain and runs westward behind the southern wall of the Stoa brought to light four of the five bases recorded by our nineteenth-century predecessors (A, C, D, E) and still another, hitherto unknown base directly before the terrace wall and somewhat to the east of the southern end of the façade. Though the bases noted by the Austrians are sadly destroyed and not always correctly placed or located on their plan (Monument E, for example, stood between C and D rather than to the north of them), they, like the two additional foundations that we have uncovered thus far, attest the presence of a dense sequence of marble monuments of varied size and shape before the long, low façade of the building. The newly discovered base (ca. 6.07 m. wide × 1.70 m. deep), which retains a large part of the lowest marble course of such a monument, is situated somewhat to the east of the southern corner of the façade, close to the terrace wall.

In tracing the line of that wall as it passes to the south of the Stoa, we encountered still another lower retaining wall between it and the building. Built to support a terracotta pipeline laid well above the original ancient ground level in this area, it implies more extensive late-antique activity in this quarter of the Sanctuary than we have observed elsewhere, and appears to belong to the dark era between the official closing of the Sanctuary and its destruction by earthquake in the sixth century A.D. Our work in this melancholy area yielded one remarkable sporadic find: a gilded silver brooch in the form of a pelta. Each of the two outer points of the scalloped shield terminates in a helmeted head; the inner projection is surmounted by a child's head and, on axis with it, below the pelta, there hangs a comic mask. The body of the shield was originally embellished with three appliques: a centrally placed krater flanked on each side by a putto riding a dolphin. The figure on the right has vanished. Otherwise this rare piece of late Hellenistic or early Roman jewelry is well-preserved.

Our second objective was to begin thorough investigation of the great Ionic propylon dedicated by Ptolemy II. Like certain other buildings in the Sanctuary, this mighty entrance to it was partially explored by our Austrian predecessors. Yet many significant problems in

connection with its restoration and function, in particular, the fashion in which one crossed the eastern river valley and entered the Sanctuary from it remain to be solved before this unique structure built over a cut - stone barrel vault can be properly published. In the ninety years since its first exploration, the northwest corner of the foundation, including the spur wall toward the valley, has collapsed and the then well - preserved forecourt has been largely stripped of its marble pavement — a graphic example of the local vandalism to which the Sanctuary was subjected before its antiquities were protected. Otherwise removal of vegetation from the ruin and its periphery revealed a picture astonishingly close to that recorded in the Austrian photographs, especially on the southern side of the building, where the majority of blocks spewed out over the irregular terrain lie precisely where they did at that earlier date.

In the course of this first season's work, we cleaned the foundation of the building and of its marble forecourt in order to allow Mr. Fraser to record its plan — a task he virtually completed. We also began to carry off the marble blocks of the collapsed superstructure lying to the north and east of it and to place them in our customary nearby block fields for future study. Some hundred and seventy marbles were thus assembled, including precious fragments of the Ionic capitals, lion's head waterspouts and antefixes, and of the floral akroteria that adorned this building, too, in traditional Samothracian fashion. Among them was a presumably lost portion of the eastern dedicatory inscription bearing the letters *HPΩN* (cf. *Samothrace*, Vol. 2, Part I, 11).

The lost marble pavement of the forecourt proves to have rested on shallow rails of poros limestone set at right angles to the eastern foundation and separated from each other by a packing of earth and fieldstones. The same material and a related structural scheme is largely used in the foundation of the propylon itself, there coupled, however, with the grey - brown marine limestone only otherwise employed in the Sanctuary for the foundation of the Altar Court.

The extant blocks of the marble border that once framed the forecourt suggest that the processional road from the city to the Sanctuary was unpaved, for their outer surface is smoothly

dressed. In an initial search for the termination of this road immediately to the east of the forecourt, we uncovered what appears to be a unique pipeline just below the ancient ground level. It consists of an east - west line lying directly opposite the centre of the eastern façade and a connecting north - south line parallel to the forecourt. Set in a carefully prepared clay bedding, both lines are composed of lengths of terracotta piping ca. 0,32 m. long fitted at each joint with broad lead collars, presumably to provide greater pressure. A similar fitting encloses the junction of the two lines. Whether these lines led water from the still copious springs of the city to the Sanctuary or formed part of a drainage system intended to protect the massive substructure of the propylon from damage and deterioration by water seeping down from the sharply rising terrain toward the city remains to be seen. But the downward direction of the flow, whether from east to west or north to south, has been established. Both the northern and eastern terminations of these lines disappear beneath low fieldstone retaining walls whose date and function await clarification.

Throughout this area to the east of the Ptolemaion, we found quantities of fine, if fragmentary, terracotta statuettes of the Hellenistic period. Washed down from some as yet unknown source on the higher slopes to the north and east, they included types previously found in the South Nekropolis (nude seated female figures and boys clad in cloaks and caps) as well as a number of varieties not hitherto known in Samothrace.

I am glad to conclude this section of my report with the welcome news that thanks to the cooperation of the Service of Antiquities and Anastelosis of the Royal Greek Government and especially of its director, Mr. J. D. Kondis, we were able to begin dismantling and rebuilding portions of the eastern wall of the Anaktoron, an action essential for its preservation. The disfiguring props with which the third bay of this handsome polygonal wall had been provisionally retained in the last years have been removed and it has been restored to its original appearance and stability. The speed and success with which this repair was made give hope that the additional areas of the wall requiring such treatment may be equally effectively rebuilt and that, another season,

it will be safe to pursue our investigation of the forebear of this hall for initiation into the mysteries, the Proto - Anaktoron discovered in 1961.

Turning now to our third season of excavation in the South Nekropolis, Mrs. Dusenbery reports as follows:

«According to the program suggested in the nekropolis report for 1962, we continued to extend our excavation upstream, toward the south. To do this it was necessary to acquire some property, and we bought a strip of land about fifty by one hundred feet running east - west, south of and adjacent to our previous excavation site, and moved the boundary fence of the archaeological zone to include it.

The subsoil (hardpan) along the edge of the ravine in this new area continued trending sharply downward south of the sites of the deposits of archaic cremation vases, which constituted such a spectacular part of the finds of 1962. Under the thick layer of topsoil in this section was a depression in the hardpan which formed a kind of tributary ravine, running west to east down into the river. Along its northern edge, aside from the archaic vase deposits, there was a large pyre site, with carbonized matter nearly two meters thick in some places, of which we had excavated a part in 1962. The blackened earth contained a great number of small and sometimes fragmentary objects such as ceramic sherds, including many which were figured, and archaic bronze fibulae, of which we now have a remarkably large and varied collection. In the same area, we found several coins, among them a silver coin of the fifth century B.C., with a head of Athena on the obverse, which may be a hitherto unknown Samothracian type.

Sunk into the hardpan of the banks and the bed of this branch ravine were a number of single cremation burials of the archaic and classical periods which yielded both Attic figured vases and new examples of the important local archaic ceramics.

It now seems that the north bank of this depression marked the southern edge of the thickly congested section of the nekropolis. However, the little gully was apparently in continuous, if sparing, use for burials, to judge from the many fragments of archaic, classical and Hellenistic ceramics and other objects found in its fill. At some time in the early Roman period,

there seems to have been a serious washout which disrupted or destroyed most of the tombs installed there, except for the ones at the very lowest levels. Shortly afterward, the depression seems to have been filled in, and a number of rough stone walls built across it near the surface to retain the fill earth. Here and there a few Roman burials were later installed in this new fill. We can only regret the destruction of the earlier tombs, which caused so many interesting objects to lose their contexts and many more, no doubt, to be washed away.

The south side of this little ravine, of which a band about five yards wide is inside our fence, was only partially excavated. It was a very thin layer of topsoil and probably contains few tombs. Beyond the fence, we carefully explored the surface, as well as the banks and bed of the big ravine, following the course of the river for several hundred yards to the south and southeast of the nekropolis to a point high on a ridge of the mountain. It seems clear that burials continue throughout this area, although it could not be determined from surface indications whether any parts of this continuous burial ground were as densely populated as the section we have excavated. At the top of the ridge, where there are some strangely formed outcroppings of Samothracian marble, graves are visible over a wide area, nearly all of them surrounded by small rectangular or circular precincts of stones.

The most interesting results this year, with important new material, came from the western part of the new sections. Here, as in the western sections excavated in 1962, the subsoil was not far below the surface, and partly sunk into it we found a number of rich and interesting Roman burials. They belong to a slightly later period than those discovered last year, and thus contribute new material in new combinations.

From one of these tombs came the most unusual single object of the campaign: a ceramic bowl on a pedestal decorated with reliefs showing Dionysiac masks and cult objects and covered with golden-yellow lead glaze. From the shape, which may be compared with the Arretine vases known as kraters, this interesting pot may be dated in the period 10 - 20 A.D., and it gives a most useful date for the glass, bone, bronze and ceramic objects found with it.

We also uncovered a remarkable series of at least six tile tombs of the same period. These

were not only richly equipped with glass vessels, jewelry, bone objects and other artifacts, but, instead of being placed helter - skelter like all the other tile tombs we have excavated, were neatly laid out in a hollow square. In this group of tombs we were able to observe evidence of an earthquake which must have occurred not long after their installation. The north side of the square remains to be excavated in 1964.

In 1963, as in previous years, we have been fortunate in finding a large amount of interesting material, most of it from epochs not previously represented. For example, to speak of one realm only, with the 1963 additions our collection of blown glass objects has become quite large and important. The pieces are not only of intrinsic interest, but of particular significance because so many have been found in large and datable groups. The results of the work should cast considerable light on the ill - documented earliest phases of one of the most important of Roman industries. In all, the material promises to amplify greatly our knowledge of life and death in ancient Samothrace».

While excavation was being carried on in the South Nekropolis, Mrs. James Sheridan, staff chemist of the Conservation Center of the Institute of Fine Arts, spent a fortnight in Palaioiopolis to make a field survey of the types of soil and soil conditions characteristic of both the Sanctuary and the adjacent nekropolis. Numerous samples of soil as well as tiny fragments of ceramics and glass were taken to New York for laboratory analysis. The results of this work promise to be of considerable value, especially in connection with the proper handling and preservation of our pottery and glass which, as has long been noted, reflect exposure to unusual physical conditions. We are grateful to the Service of Antiquities and Anastelosis and to our sponsoring institutions, the American School of Classical Studies and the Institute of Fine Arts, for having made this study possible.

It is our expectation that during the forthcoming spring campaign such additional fieldwork as we contemplate in the South Nekropolis will be completed and that our future activities in this sphere will be concentrated on the preparation of Vol. 8, Part II: *The Necropoleis*.

This brings me to the second phase of our work. I am happy to announce that Vol. 4, Part II, *The Altar Court*, by Professor Lehmann and Denys Spittle, with contributions by Iris C. Love, Elaine P. Loeffler and Martha Leeb Hadzi, including an appendix on the inscribed ceramics found in both the Hall of Votive Gifts (Part I) and the Altar Court has just been published. During the summer, Mr. Shaw made progress on his revision of the reconstruction of the Arsinoeion and Miss Love, Mr. Jones, Mr. Oliver - Smith and I continued our work on the Hieron, the next volume scheduled for publication. Two aspects of that work deserve brief mention: reconstruction of the Roman replacement of the original late Hellenistic floral akroterion above the rear pediment and confirmation of the date of the akroterial replacements, both figural and floral. Investigation of the fragments of the floral akroterion in Vienna allowed us to establish its reconstruction. As anticipated, it proved to be a variation on the scheme of its Hellenistic predecessor almost identical with it in height (2.04 m. as opposed to 2.03 m.) but less fragile and open in form. Like the akroterial Nike in Vienna, it can be now dated in the early Imperial age (Augustan - Tiberian) thanks to further study of the ceramic contexts in which the original, replaced akroteria were found and reflects the extensive renovations made throughout the Sanctuary at that time in the wake of widespread damage to the monuments, presumably by earthquake.

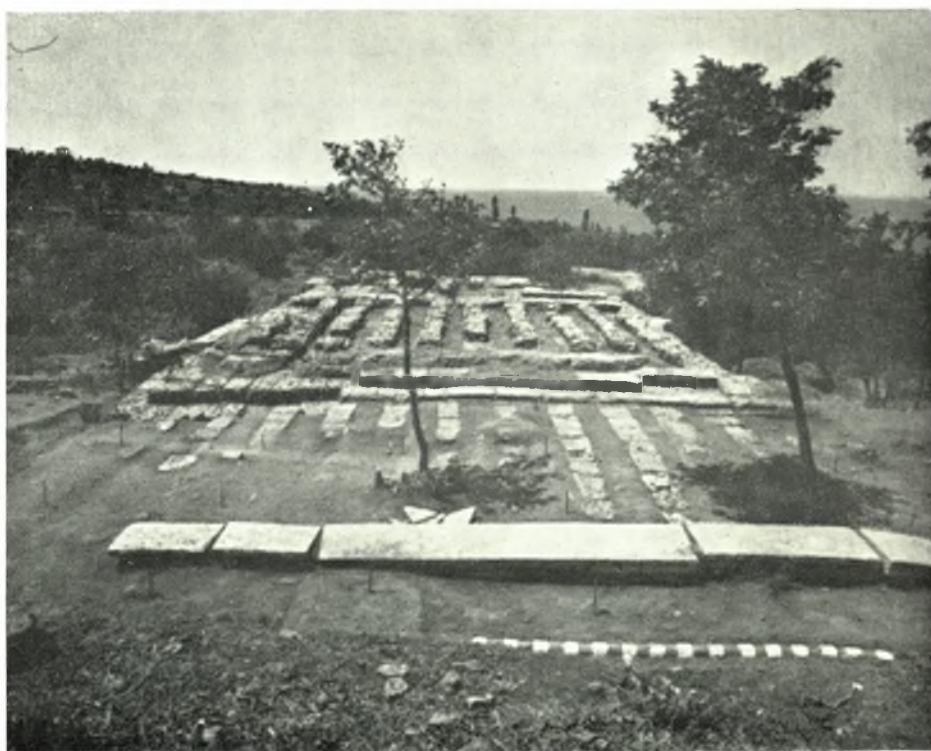
Finally, let me say that a detailed report on the campaigns of 1962 - 63 will be published by Mr. McCredie in *Hesperia* late this year and that the first of a pair of articles by Mrs. Dusenbery on the work of the last two seasons in the South Nekropolis will appear in the autumn issue of *Archaeology*.

It was our pleasure to welcome an unusual number of professional visitors to Palaioiopolis last summer and to benefit from their comments and reflections on the site. We hope that many more of you will visit us in the coming months.

PHYLLIS WILLIAMS LEHMANN
Acting Director

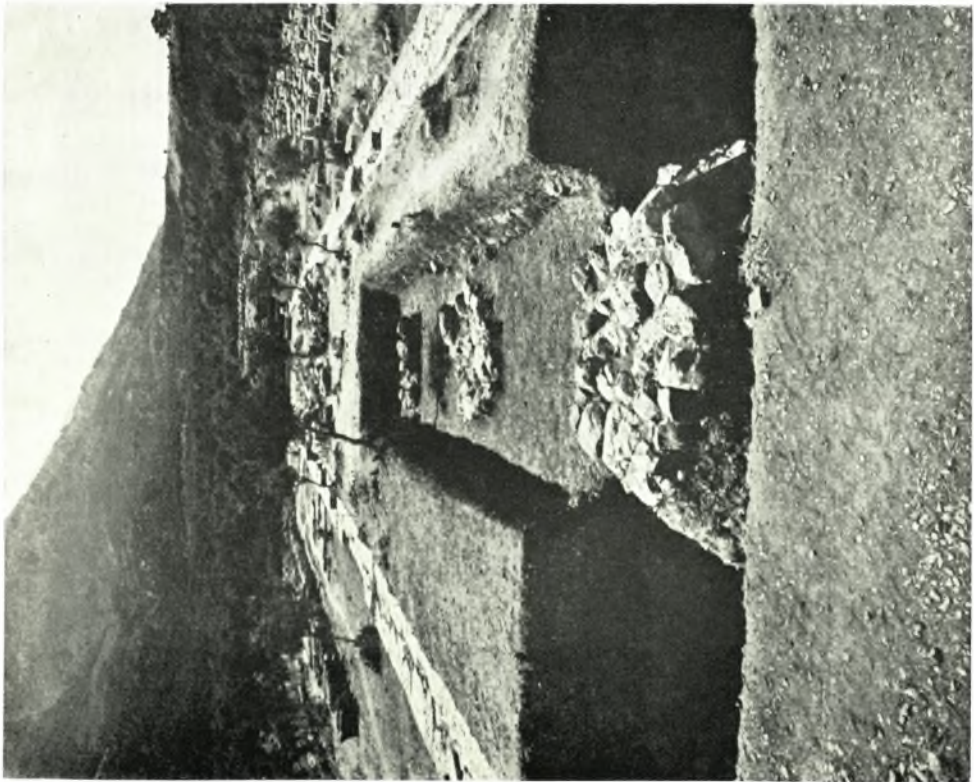
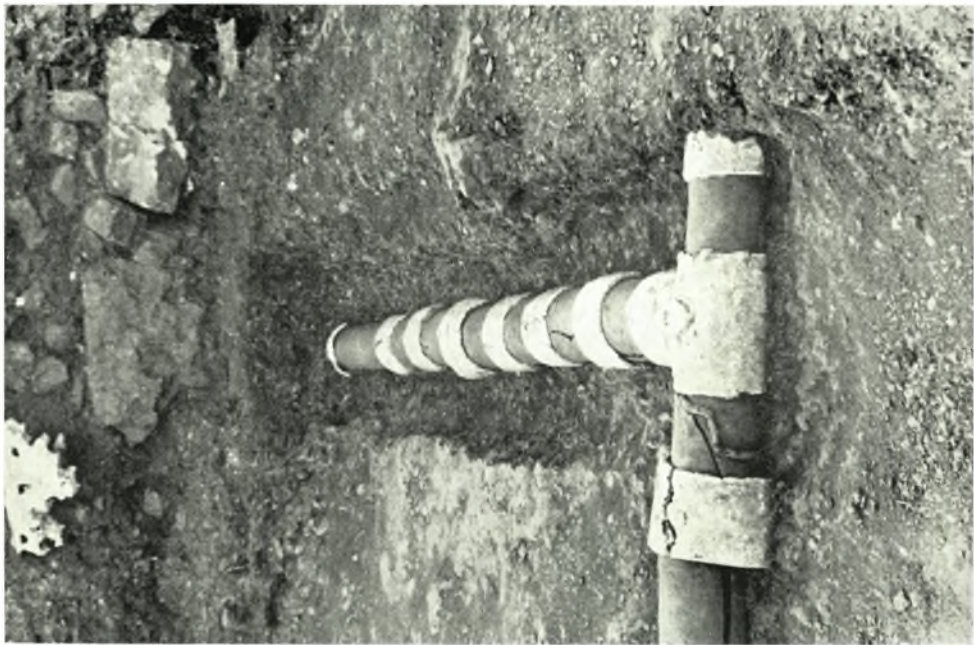
Haydenville, Massachusetts
April, 1963

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Samothrace. a. View looking across the Ptolemaion (middle ground) toward the western hill of the Sanctuary and the Stoa, b. View of the Ptolemaion and its forecourt after excavations in 1963

PHYLLIS LEHMANN



Samothrace. a. Detail of the subfoundations in the Northern part of the Stoa (seen from the South),
b. Detail of the Pipeline outside of forecourt of the Ptolemaion

PHYLLIS LEHMANN



Samothrace. a. View of the Ptolemaion in 1963 before removal of vegetation, b. View of the Ptolemaion in 1963 after removal of vegetation

PHYLLIS LEHMANN



Samothrace. a. View of the Stoa, from the South, after the excavations of 1963, b. Gilded silver brooch.
Late Hellenistic or early Roman

PHYLLIS LEHMANN