

Schliemann's Mycenae Albums¹

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These three large Albums contain a record of archaeological work done by Schliemann at Tiryns and Mycenae in 1876.² The bulk of the contents consists of photographs; but Schliemann also inserted the originals of the plans made for him, together with water-colours of pottery, figurines and other finds from his excavations, and the oil-painting of the 'mummy' from Mycenae Shaft Grave V. These photographs, plans and paintings were reproduced as line drawings in Schliemann's publication of the results of his work which appeared first in English two years later.³

The writing of the captions to the photographs, and on some of the paintings and plans, appears to be in Schliemann's hand and is in English with a little Greek. The English is remarkably good and correct, apart from a few slight spelling mistakes and some curious expressions and turns of phrase. The scales, meticulously given in English for the photographs of objects from the Mycenae Shaft Graves, are supplemented by ones written in Greek with a finer pen and in a very neat hand which may still be that of Schliemann. The 'Mycenaean Diary' which Schliemann kept from 5th August to 28th November, 1876, while he was working at Mycenae, is also in English.⁴ Schliemann may well have felt that the results of his archaeological work were received with more interest and

treated with more sympathy and respect in England than in his own country.⁵ At the same time he was proud of his American citizenship: 'Citizen of the United States of America' appears immediately after his name and before a list of his previous archaeological publications on the title page of *Mycenae*.

The preface to *Mycenae* was contributed by the English statesman and Homeric scholar, W. E. Gladstone. On April 27th, 1877, Schliemann wrote Gladstone from London asking him for a preface 'at the suggestion of our mutual friend Mr Murray' the publisher.⁶ Gladstone obliged with thirty six pages of print, although he begins by stating that 'It has been with much reluctance that, at the persevering request of Dr Schliemann, I have undertaken to write a Preface to his Mycenaean volume' (Schliemann 1878, v). Even Schliemann's capacity for perseverance might have failed of success if Gladstone had been at the time Prime Minister of England. But this was during the gap between his first term as Prime Minister, which ended in 1874, and his second which only began in 1880.

The Mycenae Albums measure about 422 mm in length by about 350 mm in width. All three are bound in dark green cloth with matching leather corners and spine. MYCENAE is stamped in gold letters on the spine of each volume with the number of the Album

1. Schliemann's Mycenae Albums and their contents are now the property of the National Library of Scotland, which acquired them in August 2008, from the Knossos Trust to which I had given them in 1990. They are in the charge of David McClay, Curator of the John Murray Archive in the National Library. I am grateful to the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland for permission to publish this paper with photos of some of the contents of the Albums. With a few minor changes and additions this is the paper as I gave it at the Conference held in Athens in 1990 to mark the centenary of Schliemann's death. At that time there were many unjustified accusations being made against Schliemann based upon his well-known penchant for describing events in his private life, which either never happened, or not as he described them. Hence the detailed

account here of the visit of the Emperor of Brazil to Schliemann in London, derived from the Times Court Circular of the day. I am grateful to Professor George Korres and Dr Nektarios Karadimas for the opportunity to resurrect this paper. Mrs Rosemary Ostley has kindly typed it for me. I am most grateful to her, and also to Mr Jonathan Dudley, who from my rather poor colour slide has produced a copy of the supposed 'mummy' from Shaft Grave V at Mycenae, made for Schliemann by a local artist while it was in situ before removal to the National Museum in Athens.

2. For a previous description of the Albums, see Hood 1960.
 3. Schliemann 1878.
 4. Calder III and Traill (eds), 1986, 142-228.
 5. Traill 1986, 136.
 6. Meyer 1958, 68 no. 36.

in Roman figures (I, II, III) below it. Album I, which had a number of folded plans in it, is thicker than the other two Albums (110 mm as opposed to 100 mm). It may have been organised some time before Albums II and III, since Schliemann records how on Friday, June 22nd, 1877, the Emperor of Brazil, Dom Pedro II, visited him in his lodgings in London, where 'His Majesty spent two hours in examining with great attention my large Album [in the singular] of Mycenaean photographs, and repeatedly congratulated me on the results of my excavations.'⁷

This is not one of Schliemann's fantasies, although he may have somewhat exaggerated the length of time Dom Pedro spent with him. Having left Claridge's, where he was staying, without breakfast the Emperor had already spent two hours in the South Kensington Museum, followed by breakfast incognito at the Criterion in Regent (now Piccadilly) Circus and over an hour at the Royal Academy in Piccadilly, before visiting Schliemann in Keppel Street behind the British Museum. After he left Schliemann the Emperor went to the Grosvenor Gallery in Bond Street, and then to Mr Boehm's studio in the Fulham Road. On his return to Claridge's he and the Empress received a number of distinguished visitors, including the Archbishop of Canterbury and his wife and Mr and Mrs Gladstone.⁸

Dom Pedro II, Emperor of Brazil from 1840 until his enforced abdication in 1889, was a remarkable man with an insatiable intellectual curiosity, and never happier, it is said, than when conversing with scholars and men of letters.⁹ He had met Schliemann during the previous year in Turkey and in Greece. On October 9th, 1876, in response to a request from the Turkish government, Schliemann had interrupted his work at Mycenae in order to go to the Troad to guide the Emperor round the sites there and explain his Troy excavations to him. Three weeks later the Emperor and his entourage came to Mycenae where, after visiting the Acropolis, they were entertained to a meal by the light of torches in the Treasury of Atreus.¹⁰

There were some 296 items altogether in the three Albums. Most of these were large photographs, all of

them stuck one to a page, the other side of the page being left blank. Many photos had been trimmed a bit, leading to slight variations in their size, and afterwards stuck onto a background of white card. In these cases the plate numbers and the scales tend to be written on the card and not on the paper of the Album. Captions and plate numbers are written in black ink. There are a few additions in ordinary black pencil. But many of the objects in the drawings and photographs have a number in red pencil against them. These red numbers seem to be in the same hand as the rest of the writing in the Albums. A large proportion, but by no means all, of these numbers are identical with the numbers of the illustrations published in *Mycenae*.

Album I contained six 'Plans' labelled from I to VI. Plan I is that of Tiryns, and Plan II (Fig. 1) that of the Acropolis at Mycenae, which appear in Schliemann's *Mycenae* as Plans A and C. Plan III (Fig. 2) shows a section through the Acropolis at Mycenae at a scale of 1 to 500, and one through the Shaft Graves at 1 to 100 (Schliemann 1878, Plan BB): there is also a key to Plan II here, together with plans and elevations of the Lion and Postern gates at Mycenae and details of different types of Cyclopean walling (Schliemann 1878, 29-35 nos. 17-23). Plan IV gives a plan with elevations of the Treasury of Clytemnestra (Schliemann 1878, Plan E), while Plan V is the drawing of the Shaft Grave Circle which formed the basis for Schliemann's *Mycenae* Plate VI opposite 124, and Plan VI has details of the 'Altar above the IV sepulchre' (Schliemann 1878, Plan F). These 'Plans' had all been backed with linen and, where necessary, folded to fit them into the Album. In 1976 they were removed from the Album and mounted by experts from the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford for their better conservation.

The drawing (or 'Ichnography' as Schliemann called it) of the Shaft Grave Circle (Plan V) is by 'the painter' Dimitrios V. Tountopoulos and is signed by him in Greek.¹¹ The remaining 'Plans' are the work of 'my excellent engineer, the sagacious Lieutenant Vasilios Drosinos', to whom Schliemann pays just tribute.¹² These are signed by Drosinos in Greek under his name and titles in English, except for Plan VI,

7. Schliemann 1878, lvii.

8. The Emperor's activities that day are recorded in minute detail by *The Times* for Saturday, June 23rd, 1877, p. 10 column E.

9. See the appreciation of him in Haring 1958, 56.

10. Meyer 1969, 289 f. Calder III and Traill (eds) 1986, 175-179, 181 f.

11. Schliemann 1878, 351.

12. Schliemann 1878, 366.



Fig. 1. Plan of Mycenae with Shaft Grave Circle A (Album I, Plan II)
(Courtesy of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland).

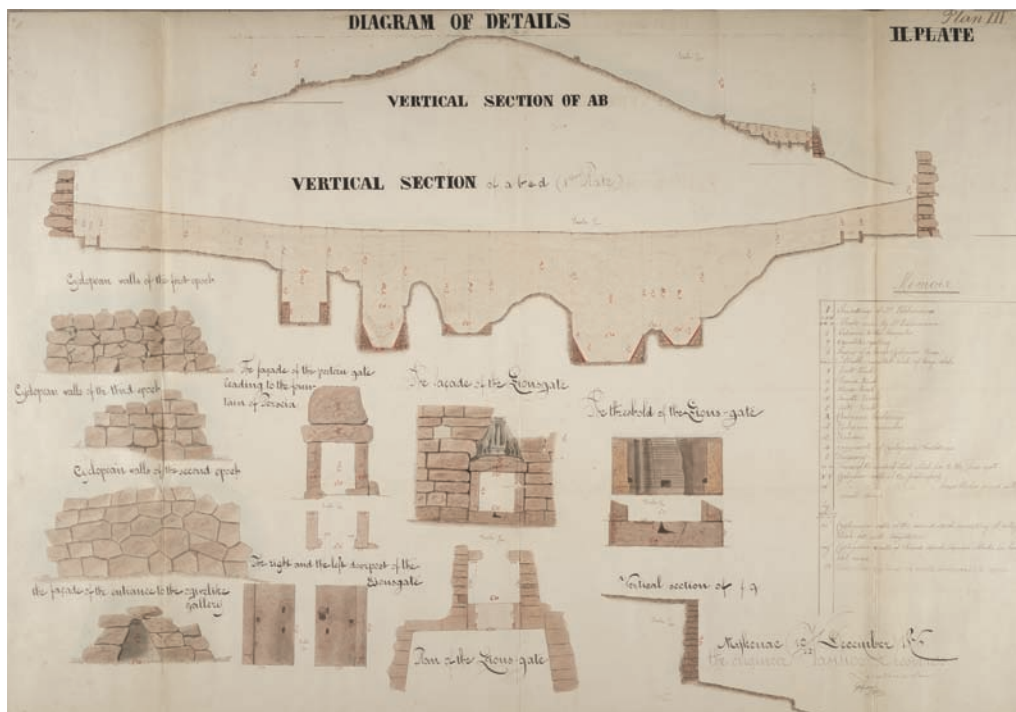


Fig. 2. Section through Shaft Grave Circle A and architectural details (Album I, Plan III)
(Courtesy of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland).



Fig. 3. Drawings of vases from Mycenae (Album I, Plate 10) (Courtesy of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland).

on which Schliemann appears to have written in his own hand 'Mycenae 22 Novbr 1877' (a mistake for 1876?) with 'the engineer Vasilios Drosinos lieutenant' below it. In his Mycenaean Diary Schliemann states that on Friday, November 3rd, 1876 he went to Nauplion where he engaged 'Mr Δροσινός ύπολοχαγός τοῦ μηχανικοῦ, to make the plans of both Mycenae and Tiryns', and describes how on the morning of Sunday, November 5th, Drosinos duly came to Mycenae 'to make me a plan of the acropolis and the treasury' (Plans II and IV in Album I).¹³

The 'Plans' in Album I are followed by 77 Plates of photographs of the excavations (e.g. Fig. 5) and objects recovered from them, together with 16 of water colours of various finds, mostly clay vases (Fig. 3) and decorated potsherds together with the Mycenaean terracotta figurines (Fig. 4) which so much intrigued Schliemann. The photographs here and in the other

Albums are by Messrs Romáides Brothers. 'I do not exaggerate', writes Schliemann with a touch perhaps of hyperbole, 'if I assure the reader that their photographs can hardly ever be excelled'.¹⁴ They remain indeed remarkably good and clear. All are of the old full plate size, except for four large double-plate photographs, measuring c. 477 x 282 mm, without numbers written on them, but inserted between Plates 3 and 8. These large photographs show the Acropolis of Mycenae with the excavation dumps in the left foreground and Mount Profitis Elias behind (Schliemann 1878, Plate II opposite 23); Mrs Schliemann standing in front of the entrance to the Tomb of Clytemnestra, reproduced as the frontispiece to *Mycenae* (Plate V); the Lion Gate, and the entrance to the Treasury of Atreus (Schliemann 1878, Plates III and IV opposite 32 and 43).

As well as the six 'Plans' (I-VI) at the beginning

13. Calder III and Traill (eds) 1986, 183 f.

14. Schliemann 1878, 366.

there are altogether 93 pages of photographs and water colours in Album I. But one of the large unnumbered photographs between Plates 3 and 8 is an extra; and there is one extra page of water colours numbered Plate 1B, together with a group of four pages of water colours numbered Plates 4I B-E. The last Plate in the Album therefore has the number 87. This shows one side of the Warrior Vase (Schliemann 1878, 133 no. 213). The fragments of the other side appear on Plate 88 at the beginning of Album II (Schliemann 1878, 139 no. 214).

Album II has only photographs, numbering 100 in all, and ending with Plate 187. Plates 92 and 93 with the captions 'my excavations in the Acropolis of Mycenae first view' and 'second view' show the Grave Circle after work had begun there with the workmen mostly posed in the background. On Plate 92 (Fig. 5) Mrs Schliemann is in the foreground on the right and Schliemann wearing a white hat in the background to the left of the Grave Circle entrance. On Plate 93 Mrs Schliemann is in the middle distance behind an isolated upright slab, while Schliemann in his white hat is standing on the right by the inner edge of the Grave Circle. These Plates were combined (with 92 on the left and 93 on the right) for the published fold-out panorama of the Grave Circle (Schliemann 1878, Plate VII opposite 148) where Schliemann has been omitted from 92 and Mrs Schliemann from 93. Nearly all the other photographs in Album II are of objects from Shaft Graves II (now I), III and IV.

Album III has 98 items numbered as Plates 188-284. There is a Plate 257a and a 257b. But there is no Plate 236; a page has been left for it, but it is blank. The photographs are mostly of objects from Shaft Graves IV, I (now V), III and II (now I), in a somewhat erratic order. Plates 275-283 show objects from what Schliemann calls 'the tomb on the south side of the great double parallel circle of slabs', that is to say outside the Shaft Grave Circle, noticed by Drosinos and excavated by Stamatakis in January, 1877 (Schliemann 1878, 350-362). The gold dog-handled goblets and jewellery seem like a robber's cache, although they may have been plundered from a tomb in ancient times.¹⁵ The last Plate 284 in Album III has three lentoid gems which Schliemann claims to have bought in the village of Chonika not far from the site of the Argive Heraeum (Schliemann 1878, 362-364 nos. 539-541).

15. Thomas 1938-39, 65-87.



Fig. 4. Clay figurines from Mycenae (Album I, Plate 54)
(Courtesy of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland).

Plate 203 is not a photograph but an oil-painting (Fig. 6). This is the painting made of the supposed 'mummy' burial in Shaft Grave I (now V) which formed the basis for the published engraving (Schliemann 1878, 297 no. 454). It is on stiff card, measuring some 585 mm in length and 382 mm in width, and shows the corpse about three-quarters life size in sombre shades of brown against a lighter yellowish brown background. The engraving omits the lower part of it in which the region of the pelvis and the tops of the femurs are visible. The painting had been folded in half to fit it into the Album, but I had it removed and framed behind glass for its better conservation.

Schliemann gives a long and highly dramatized account of the uncovering of this burial. 'The round face, with all its flesh, had been wonderfully preserved under its ponderous golden mask; there was no vestige of hair, but both eyes were perfectly visi-



Fig. 5. Excavation of Shaft Grave Circle A with Mrs Schliemann (Album II, Plate 92)
(Courtesy of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland).

ble, also the mouth, which, owing to the enormous weight that had pressed upon it, was wide open, and showed thirty-two beautiful teeth. From these, all the physicians who came to see the body were led to believe that the man must have died at the early age of thirty-five. The nose was entirely gone'.¹⁶ In his initial enthusiasm Schliemann even claimed that 'the corpse very much resembles the image which my imagination formed long ago of wide-ruling Agamemnon'.¹⁷

'The news that the tolerably well preserved body of a man of the mythic heroic age had been found, covered with golden ornaments, spread like wildfire

through the Argolid, and people came by thousands from Argos, Nauplia, and the villages to see the wonder. But, nobody being able to give advice how to preserve the body,' Schliemann telegraphed to Nauplion for an artist 'to get at least an oil-painting made, for I was afraid that the body would crumble to pieces. Thus I am able to give a faithful likeness of the body, as it looked after all the golden ornaments had been removed'.¹⁸

Schliemann does not give the name of the artist; but he describes how 'to my great joy' the body 'held out for two days, when a druggist from Argos, Spiri-

16. Schliemann 1878, 296. The excavation of the 'mummy' burial is not covered by Schliemann's *Mycenaean Diary*.

17. In his release to the Greek press, Calder III and Traill 1986, 234 no. 14.

18. Schliemann 1878, 297. Calder III and Traill 1986, 234 no. 14.

don Nicolaou by name, rendered it hard and solid by pouring on it alcohol, in which he had dissolved gum-sandarac'.¹⁹ It was then lifted with some difficulty and transported to Athens, where I can remember seeing it on the bottom shelf of a glass case in the Mycenaean room of the National Museum on my first visit to Greece shortly before the Second World War. Schliemann duly acknowledges that 'all the trouble and expense of *drugging* the body so as to render it hard and solid, and raising it from the sepulchre' and transporting it, were incurred by the Archaeological Society at Athens.²⁰

Most of the objects of which photographs appear in the Albums have of course been republished since with superb illustrations.²¹ The photographs, however, may still prove useful for throwing light on points of detail, since they were taken before the objects were restored (e.g. Fig. 7) and in some cases, it would appear, before they were fully cleaned. In



Fig. 7. Gold 'cup of Nestor' as found (Album II, Plate 149) (Courtesy of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland).



Fig. 8. Pottery fragments from Mycenae (Album I, Plate 46) (Courtesy of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland).

this connection it is fair to say that they do not lend any support to the theory, which is difficult enough to defend on other grounds, that Schliemann salted his excavations in the Shaft Graves with forged gold objects including perhaps the mis-called Mask of Agamemnon.²²

The main interest of the Albums, however, apart from their curiosity value, may lie in the photographs of fragments of decorated pottery, nearly all of them Mycenaean (e.g. Fig. 8) and evidently found at Mycenae. Some 44 out of a total of 274 photographic plates show rows of potsherds as on Fig. 8. Nearly a thousand fragments of pottery are illustrated in these photographs. While many of these fragments were shown in drawings by Schliemann, and others were published by Furtwängler and Löschcke in *Mykenische*

19. Schliemann 1878, 298.

20. Schliemann 1878, 298 note at bottom.

21. Notably in the great work by Karo 1930-33.

22. Traill 1986, 133-135.



Fig. 6. Painting of 'Mummy' from Shaft Grave V (slightly improved in photoshop). Plate 203 removed from Album III (Courtesy of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland).

Vasen (1886), some are still unpublished. The National Museum in Athens has copies of all these photographs which may help in the identification of potsherds from Mycenae in the early collections there.

Apart from any potential use in this way these photographs testify to the emphasis which Schliemann placed upon the importance of potsherds for dating sites and the structures associated with them. This is forcibly expressed in a long letter which he wrote to Gladstone, dated June 27th, 1875, after his first soundings on the Acropolis at Mycenae.²³ 'What particularly excited my astonishment in Mycenae', he continues, 'are the thousands of millions of potsherds with which the ground is every where covered and whose paintings have lost nothing of their freshness, though they have been for more than 2300 years exposed to the burning oriental sun, to the rain and to

the wind.' In this letter Schliemann also comments upon the existence of undecorated vases and describes what were evidently plain kylikes. The fragments in the photos have numbers from 1 to 7 written on them in ink. These evidently record in metres the approximate depth from the surface at which they were recovered.

In his regard for potsherds and his recognition of their importance for dating, as in many other ways, Schliemann was a pioneer. In recent years his shortcomings and psychological disabilities have attracted much notice; they are indeed intriguing and of interest, as scandal always is. 'The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones; so let it be with Caesar';²⁴ but not one hopes with Schliemann upon this occasion of the 100th Anniversary of his death.

23. Meyer 1958, 33-36.

24. W. Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, Act III, Scene II, lines 78-79.

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