

BIOGRAPHY OF VIRGINIA GRACE

Sara A. Immerwahr

When Virginia Grace died in Athens in 1994 at the age of 93, she left behind a remarkable legacy - files consisting of several hundred thousand "records" of the stamps used on ancient wine and oil amphoras from sites in the Mediterranean world, particularly in the Hellenistic period, as well as a catalogue of the 25,000 stamped handles found during excavations of the Athenian Agora, and a neat arrangement in one of the rooms of the Stoa of Attalos of whole jars (the two-handled containers used for the shipment of oil and wine and sometimes fish, both salted and pickled) systematically arranged according to place of manufacture. Although she published very little - a slim volume in the Agora Picture Book series,¹ a dozen or more important articles, and significant contributions to publications of foreign excavations, e.g. Thasos and Delos - almost single-handedly she had created a new field of archaeological study which would contribute to the dating of buildings and deposits and to submerged shipwrecks, and she had done this with very little financial support.

Belatedly in 1989 she was recognized by the Archaeological Institute of America in their awarding her the Gold Medal for Distinguished Archaeological Achievement in which she was referred to as "Die 'Nestorin' der Amphorenforschung" and honored "for her vision in articulating the significance of this special class of artifacts ... her acuity in extracting conclusions from the mass of material she collected and her perseverance through difficult years."² These achievements were the result of a lifetime spent mostly in Athens, where she began work as a student at the American School of Classical Studies in 1927 and a fellow at the newly opened Agora Excavations in 1932. The following biography is an attempt to explain and evaluate her contributions not merely as a "woman archaeologist" (she would have disliked that term), but as the pioneer of an international team of scholars devoted to preserving the archaeological record and deciphering the truth from these *disiecta membra*, the stamped amphora handles.

Virginia Randolph Grace was born in New York City on January 9, 1901, the second daughter of five girls and one son born to Lee Ashley and Virginia Fitz-Randolph Grace. Her father was in the import business (cotton), and their circumstances were "comfortable," if not wealthy, in her earlier years. It was a close-knit family, whose ties were maintained through several generations, some of whom came to visit or assist Aunt Martha or "Mart" as she was known to the family. She had a happy childhood, with many a summer spent in New Jersey where she learned to swim and sail.

The one misfortune in Virginia's early life was a bout of polio when she was two or three. She recovered from this with only a slight limp, further corrected by an operation when she had grown. For most of her life she was not seriously impeded in her activities - she climbed Mount Olympus and knew the location of the choicest wildflowers on Mount Parnes and other Greek mountains. However, in her later life the

"polio syndrome" came to haunt her and affected the other hip, which was operated on, but almost to the end of her life she managed to make the trek down the steps from her apartment on the slopes of Lykabettus to a waiting taxi and to her Amphora workroom in the Stoa of Attalos because her "clients" (as she called those who consulted her about handles found in their excavations) and her assistants needed her. She was also encouraged to make the effort by the feeling that down there at the Agora was where the action was and that something new might turn up, or "walk through the door." As has been pointed out to me, "she was passionate about amphoras and their stamps, with a fierceness that kept her going through thick and thin."

Virginia had excellent educational opportunities for her chosen profession. In New York City she was a student at the Brearley School, for which she felt intense loyalty. There she had five years of Latin and three years of Greek, before entering Bryn Mawr College. She graduated in 1922 with an A.B. degree *cum laude*, majoring in Greek and English. Two professors were especially influential in her undergraduate work: Dr. H.N. Sanders ("Sandy") in Greek and Samuel Chew in English. She had a lifelong interest in literature, was an avid reader with an excellent memory, and could quote poetry to her final days. Her large personal library of fiction and non-fiction contained pencilled notations along with her dates of reading, and was a source of pleasure to people who visited or stayed in her apartment.

After graduation from Bryn Mawr Virginia worked briefly in Prints and Drawings at the Metropolitan Museum, taking over a job held by her older sister. This was followed in 1923 by a grand tour of the Mediterranean accompanied by her young brother Ted, a cruise that included visits to Egypt and Sicily. For the next three years, before she had decided to pursue graduate work, she taught - English for a year and a half at a New York public high school, math for a semester at Brearley, and a year as a private tutor for a seventh-grade student on a California ranch.

In 1927 she enrolled as a student at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, her interest having been sparked by an article in the *Bryn Mawr Alumnae Bulletin* by a fellow alumna, Dorothy Burr (Thompson). The program that year included seminars and lectures by an illustrious group of scholars: Greek Epigraphy with Benjamin Dean Meritt, Greek Religion with Campbell Bonner, Sculpture with Rhys Carpenter, the Topography of Athens with William Dörpfeld, the Prehistoric period with George Mylonas. Virginia was very attractive, tall and fair with classic features, and there she met her future fiancé, a fellow student who was considerably younger. There was no question of immediate marriage, for Virginia's interest in pursuing an archaeological career was uppermost in her thoughts, and she decided to return to Bryn Mawr for graduate work. She spent two years there, receiving her M.A. in Classical Archaeology in 1930. There she took courses with Edith Hall Dohan and Mary Hamilton Swindler, but also continued Greek with Dr. Sanders. Her first published paper "Scopas in Chryse" (1932) was the result of a seminar report and shows her careful philological training.³

A travelling fellowship from Bryn Mawr sent her back to Greece in 1930, and gave her her first archaeological field experience. Having followed the School's curriculum and having studied for Ph.D. exams, in the spring of 1931 she accompanied a

Bryn Mawr fellow student, Lucy Shoe (Meritt) to Asia Minor where Lucy was beginning her study of Greek architectural mouldings. This was Virginia's introduction to the great Hellenistic site of Pergamon which was to play an important role in her later study of amphora stamps. While there she made friends with the German excavators and was allowed to study the stamped tiles and glimpsed the large deposit of amphora handles, the famous "Pergamene deposit," which would be fundamental in establishing her chronology for the Hellenistic period.

Meantime in that crucial year other excavations summoned her. With Hetty Goldman at Halai in the summer of 1931 she excavated part of a Neolithic village, and in the fall with a University of Pennsylvania Expedition to Cyprus under B.H. Hill she excavated Bronze and Iron Age tombs at Lapithos. There she developed a knowledge and love for the island, which strengthened during her war service years, and produced many lifelong friendships. One of the tombs yielded an imported Middle Minoan I pot from Crete that helped establish absolute dates for the Cypriote Bronze Age. Her publication of this tomb (1940) shows the thoroughness she devoted to a study that was essentially outside her major field of investigation, and its result was so important that she felt compelled to issue an Addendum in 1973 with a full index and inventory.

In 1932 she became a staff member of the recently opened American Excavations at the Athenian Agora, an affiliation that was to last for the rest of her life. At first she did general cataloguing of current finds under the rigorous system of deposits initiated by Lucy Talcott, but before the year was over she had been assigned the stamped amphora handles for special study. This formed the basis for her article "Stamped Amphora Handles found in 1931-32," which was accepted as her dissertation for the Ph.D. degree at Bryn Mawr (1934).

This article was a lucid presentation of the 1545 stamps discovered in those two years and set the framework for her further studies. She classified them according to their place of manufacture (Rhodian, Knidian, Thasian, and Miscellaneous). In it she demonstrated the changing patterns of trade, with the Thasian the earliest, dating from the 5th through the 3rd century B.C., the Rhodian from the late 4th/early 3rd century until late in the 2nd century, and the Knidian from early 3rd to well on in the 1st century and probably into Roman times. Here the context of the Agora handles was important in establishing the sequence of names on the stamps. These stamps were basically of two types, that of the "eponym" or name of the official under whose jurisdiction the amphora was made, and that of the "fabricant" or manufacturer. Some also gave the name of the "ethnic," or indicated it with a device such as the rose for Rhodes. Rhodian amphoras, a select group which had been studied earlier by Martin Nilsson,⁴ were particularly significant because both handles were stamped, giving on one the fabricant and on the other the eponym (the priest of Helios) as well as the month, and these pairs of names were important in building a chronology. She also began her study of the fabrics and distinctive shapes of the amphoras, recognizing the Knidian as a new shape, the Chian as a new class.

She showed an interest in all aspects of amphora production, for instance the material (or materials) for the dies used to stamp the handles, which seem to have been of several kinds (clay, wood, and metal). She experimented and consulted modern potters.

See her article "The Die used for Amphora Stamps," (1935), and her much later discussion of a special group of stamps from engraved rings or gems (1979).

After returning to Bryn Mawr to complete her Ph.D., she was back in Greece by 1935, and that spring was a member of the Bryn Mawr Excavations at Tarsus, Turkey, under the direction of Hetty Goldman. Her study of the stamped handles found there was published in the final report (1950). She also had a grant from the University of Pennsylvania to continue work on the Lapithos material from Cyprus.

But in 1936 she was appointed a "special research fellow" at the Agora specifically for work on the stamped amphora handles, which were growing in number with each year of excavation. This was the official beginning of the Amphora Project which was her own creation and which became her lifetime career, interrupted only by the war years and those immediately following which she spent as a visiting scholar at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton (1945-48). In her position at the Agora she was funded on a year-to-year basis by the American School of Classical Studies, on a minimum salary with no certainty of its continuation.

It was clear that she needed outside funding to pursue the research that she now envisioned as much more than a catalogue and publication of the Agora material itself in a series of books devoted to the separate classes found there, which was the official policy of the excavators. To do justice to the material Virginia realized would require study of the other great collections: the Rhodian in Rhodes and Delos and Alexandria, the Thasian which were being excavated by the French School in Thasos, those from the Black Sea ports being published by the Russians. Because of the need for cross-dating and comparisons, which would elucidate the development of a whole class, she regarded it as more important to record the existence of the same stamps at other sites than to focus merely on the Agora material. This was the beginning of her catalogue of "records," each of which on 3 x 5 cards had a photograph and rubbings of the stamps and a list of examples.

So in 1938 she applied for and won a Guggenheim fellowship, which enabled her to travel and study other collections, in Alexandria, Antioch, Tarsus, Cyprus, and Corinth. In her application she truthfully reported "I can probably read and date stamped handles better than anybody at present." She later received a senior Fulbright award for 1950-51, which she used primarily in Rhodes, and in 1954-55 she held a second Guggenheim. Otherwise her research was funded by small stipends from the School, some modest grants from the American Philosophical Society, and help from her family. It was essentially a "shoestring" operation.

But soon after her year as a Guggenheim fellow, World War II broke out. This was when I first got to know Virginia. In the spring of 1940 we were together in Cyprus at the University of Pennsylvania excavations at Kourion, living in the beautiful excavation house at Episkopi awaiting the arrival of B.H. Hill and George McFadden on his yacht, the "Samothraki." It was a glorious spring in Cyprus, untouched by the war that had broken out in Europe. The orange groves were in bloom, and the sea was warm enough for swimming. Virginia had been there the year before, and knew what needed to be done before the excavation season began. There were carved marble reliefs from the

altar screen of the Early Byzantine church, which needed to be joined and photographed before being catalogued, so we applied ourselves to this task. It was surprising how many variants of the acanthus scroll existed, and how one needed to be fairly sure of a join before moving a heavy marble block! While we worked, we talked, and I learned of Virginia's family and the death of her fiancé a few years earlier. She was still very lovely looking (Fig. 1), and could clearly have entertained other proposals, but she preferred her independence and the life work she had undertaken. I was impressed by her spoken Greek, with a slight Cypriot accent in deference to our staff, and her friendly familiarity with the people of Episkopi. I also admired her skill at photography, the way in which she handled the Leica she had acquired for photographing amphora stamps and which she now applied to the marble reliefs. We had quite a lot to show when finally Mr. Hill and George arrived on the "Samothraki" and excavation could begin.

As I remember it was a very brief season, perhaps only a week or ten days, excavating two Hellenistic tombs which yielded among other things some stamped handles of local clay which she later connected with the "Kouriaka" mentioned in the Xenon papyrus from Egypt (1979). Then we were off on the "Samothraki" for a ten-day cruise, the purpose of which was to have an American passport renewed in Beirut. For some reason we went first to Palestine (the ports of Haifa and Jaffa and a tour of the Holy Land, Jerusalem, a swim in the Dead Sea, a long taxi ride to northern Palestine where near the Syrian border we were stopped by a road block and had to turn around). At this juncture Virginia ordered me into the middle seat next to the driver, because I was "the mother of the future." Clearly this was no time for tourists abroad! It became even clearer as we were approaching the harbor of Beirut and shots were fired from the shore battery across the bow of the "Samothraki." It seems we were sailing into a mine field, and had not correctly understood the Morse code signals! I was frightened, but Virginia was quite calm. Once we had the passport renewed, we headed back home, to Cyprus and Athens and eventually the United States, for Italy had invaded Albania, and war had come to the Mediterranean.

Virginia and I were to sail together on the American Export liner, the "Excalibur," the last American ship to be allowed in the Mediterranean. We were to share a cabin with eight-year-old Lisa Wace, whose parents Alan and Helen, were sending her to relatives in America for safe-keeping during the war. But a few days before we were to sail, it was announced that children had to be accompanied by at least one parent, so Virginia gave up her place to Helen Wace. This was the beginning of her five-year odyssey during the war, which took her from Athens to Cyprus, to Cairo, Khartoum, Eritrea, Istanbul and Izmir before she returned to America in 1945.

She never talked much about her war work, but I have notes of an after-dinner conversation a few years before her death. She stayed in Athens at the School during the summer and early fall of 1940, presumably continuing with library work on her amphora handles (for the Agora records and objects were no longer accessible, having been stashed away for safe-keeping) until the war threatened Greece.⁵ She was the last to leave in October, going via Istanbul to Alexandretta and thence to Cyprus where she spent two years at Kourion, putting the finds in safe storage in case the island was invaded. She also trained as a Nurses' Aid with the British, caring for evacuated British soldiers whenever she was needed.

She left Cyprus in the middle of April (1942?) with the intention of taking a full-time war job. She had to decide whether to return to the US or remain in the Middle East, "where my training and experience suggested I could best serve." Although she writes that "a large part of my war service was mechanical or little more, I had some extremely interesting experiences." She was sent first to Cairo, where she was a Foreign service clerk with the State Department, filing and decoding documents. She was subsequently evacuated with the other women of the legation to Asmara, Eritrea, where she was loaned to a private firm contracted by the War Department. From January 1944 to January 1945 she worked with the O.S.S.'s Greek Affairs offices in Istanbul, Izmir, and Cairo, as a research and administrative assistant to former archaeological colleagues, Jerome Sperling and Jack Caskey. She was the last person in the Izmir office when it closed, and was told to destroy the documents.

At the end of the war she went back to America on a troop ship that also carried 5,000 Canadian soldiers who hadn't been home in five years. Virginia, who had also been gone for five years, said that her mother hardly recognized her in her "new tailored Ankara suit," but Virginia at that time couldn't discuss her war work. She went to Washington, D.C. to see whether the O.S.S. wanted to send her elsewhere, but they were through with her, and she returned to her Amphora Project. I have sometimes wondered whether her sacrifice of a berth on the "Excalibur" was totally altruistic, or whether she didn't prefer her life abroad.

At any rate she spent the next three years (1945-48) as a visiting scholar at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, where a duplicate set of Agora files had been deposited under the care of Homer Thompson. While there she wrote her article "Standard Pottery Containers of the Ancient Greek World" (1949), which brought up-to-date and showed the accumulated evidence collected since her first article on the stamps (1934). By now the total number of the stamps was approaching 100,000, with over 10,000 from the Agora with documentation on their context of discovery. She stressed the need for a large-scale controlled publication, "since a corpus of amphora stamps was demanded by epigraphists."

In 1949 she returned to Greece for good, with only short visits to America henceforth. With the realization that she needed assistance in dealing with the recording for such a corpus of stamps, she enlisted both paid and volunteer helpers. Maria Savvatianou Petropoulakou and Andreas Dimoulinis were among her first helpers, and are still part-time employees of the Amphora Project, but there have been many others, students, relatives and friends. Some have become professionals in their own right, such as Elizabeth Lyding Will (Roman amphoras) and Carolyn Koehler (Corinthian and co-director of the present Amphora Project). Virginia, who often expressed admiration for the teaching skills of others, was clearly a teacher, if not of the classroom type. Her strength was "through the inspiration she communicated about the fascination of her study and why it mattered."⁶

One of her first collaborative projects, with the assistance of Maria Savvatianou, a recent graduate of the University of Athens, involved putting in order and classifying some 25,000 stamped handles languishing in the Athens National Museum. Then under her Fulbright grant (1950-51) she tackled the material in Rhodes, again with the

assistance of Maria, who later on was joint author of the publication of the stamped handles found in the Maison des Comédiens at Delos (1970). Although part of a French excavation report, this publication remains a fundamental introduction to the field and could be a volume in its own right. Here the stamps were published according to classes, with a general discussion of each class.

This collaboration between the American and French Archaeological Schools had followed an agreement between their directors that amphora material from the various sites excavated by the two schools could be published jointly. Such a collaboration had been especially fruitful in the publication of the stamps from Thasos by M. and Mme. Bon (1957), which benefitted from comparison with the Agora stamps, where the Thasian constituted an important early class and yielded interesting evidence on the nature of the dies used.

Another large project of the 1950s and 1960s dealt with the recording and classification of the largest private collection of stamped amphora handles in the world, that of Lukas Benaki in Alexandria, which consisted of some 66,000 pieces collected over forty years, and their transfer to the Museum in Alexandria. This feat was accomplished with support from the American Research Center in Egypt and several grants from the American Philosophical Society. For this task Grace utilized two student volunteers, "who together could process about two hundred handles in an eight-hour day." One volunteer was the young daughter of old friends, Philippa Wallace, who has now become the co-director of the ongoing Amphora Project (see "Stamped Amphora Handles - the Benachi Collection" 1966).

The 50s and 60s also saw changes in Virginia's life in Athens. In 1956 the rebuilt Stoa of Attalos was opened as a museum for the finds from the American excavations in the Agora, and the material she had worked on for over twenty years was transferred to more spacious quarters - a display of whole jars in Shop IV, other amphoras in storage in the basement, the handles themselves in neatly arranged drawers in the South Workroom with Grace herself installed with her files in an adjoining office, marked "Amphoras" (Fig. 2). Here she could preside over her collection and be consulted by visiting scholars. This is the set-up she described in her Agora Picture Book, *Amphoras and the Ancient Wine Trade* (1962, rev. ed. 1979).

This period also saw a significant change in her personal life. Up to then she had lived in small quarters, a room or two in the tower of the School's main building, and some of her friends worried that Virginia would have no place in which to spend her old age. However, following the death of her mother, she came into a small legacy that gave her enough money to design and buy a small apartment in a new building that was going up on the slopes of Lykabettus at 33 Ploutarchou. It was a perfect little jewel of an apartment, a retiré with a view from the living room balcony of the Acropolis, and on a clear day all the way to the Saronic gulf and Aegina. Although small she loved it, and was able to entertain her friends at Sunday lunches, and at occasional large parties that spilled over onto the small balconies. She had great social grace, and was much in demand as a last minute fill-in for the Director's dinner parties. In her new quarters she was also able to garden in pots on her balconies, where she had a veritable succession of blooming plants given her by various friends - narcissi from the Holy Land, pink lilies

and blue agapanthus brought by the Megaws from Cyprus, roses, jasmine growing by the door, a Scotch pine and another evergreen that served as a Christmas tree. It was a gathering place for many informal School functions, and a retreat for troubled students or administrators, for she genuinely liked people and had a gift for listening. Although she never became an adept cook, this apartment gave her a chance for domesticity and she was well taken care of by one or more elderly Greek women who tended her needs and made it possible for her to stay in her own home up to her death in 1993.

But there are many other accomplishments to record from the intervening years. Her articles became more complex as she puzzled over the problems of Hellenistic chronology. In her article "Notes on the Amphoras from the Koroni Peninsula" (1963), she questioned the dating of the recent excavations that had connected the fortification with the Chremonidaean War (265-261 B.C.), for her evidence at that point was based largely on three Thasian stamps and the Rhodian amphora shape which she believed were "consistent with a date before 300 B.C." However, she had not yet processed all the Rhodian material from Alexandria, and when it had been integrated she had more names in the eponym sequence and was able to revise her original conclusion, arriving at a date of 280-70 B.C. for a group of eleven eponyms, including three from the Koroni deposit. Thus, she argued the amphoras could still have been in use as water jars in 265 B.C. and she was willing to change her opinion ("Revisions in Hellenistic Chronology," 1974).

Perhaps her *chef d'oeuvre* dealing with Hellenistic chronology involved the dating of the Middle Stoa of the Athenian Agora, which she offered as a tribute to Homer Thompson ("The Middle Stoa dated by Amphora Stamps," 1985). From the evidence of about 1500 handles found in the building fill of the Middle Stoa, she arrived at a date in the second decade of the 2nd C. B.C., and a more precise date of 183 or 182. The building she believed was a royal gift of Pharnakes I, son of Mithradates of Pontus, to serve as the granary of Athens. Here again the eponyms on the Rhodian handles, which constituted the majority of the pieces, were important but perhaps even more critical for dating the filling itself were the Knidian, and her results affected not only the date of the building but the chronology of Hellenistic pottery groups.

Her mind was always inquiring and as has been pointed out in the obituary by C. Koehler,⁷ she was a perfectionist in that "in all her writings, every word was carefully weighed, lest it state less than her full knowledge or imply more than she knew to be true." It was for this reason that she wanted to make a trip to Samos in the summer of 1971, and my husband and I had the good fortune to accompany her. She had already written her article on "Samian Amphoras" (1971), which was a clever piece of detective work based on the account of a schoolmaster in Tigani and his father's collection of some 4,000 handles in Syme, which she had had Maria Petropoulakou record, but she wanted to verify her conclusions. We visited the grotto at Spilianoï above Tigani where this early collector was said to have found some of the stamped handles which he identified as Samian. Although the descent was slippery and we ourselves stood on firm ground fearful for Virginia, she insisted on descending, carefully with her stick, and came back with several stamped handles. She also canvassed the streets of Tigani looking for ancient amphoras used as water jars, and discovered several of the distinctive Samian shape, one of which was purchased for the museum. She was then content that her article had been founded on fact, and not just upon her sleuthings through hearsay evidence.

The arrangement of the photographic plates for every article was also a matter of greatest concern, their consistency in scale and their clear labelling, for she believed "they should tell their own story." She must have cost her editors many a pain, and woe betide them if they attempted to "improve" her English!

It is perhaps no wonder that the four or five "blue books" that she had originally planned to be part of the series *Excavations from the Athenian Agora*, one each on Knidian, Koan, Rhodian, etc., never got written, although the evidence for them was all there on her little 3 x 5 cards, which listed every occurrence of the same stamp, "laboriously cross-referenced by each name and device that appears on a stamp," and filed according to class and site.⁸

By the time she had collected the evidence, she did not have time to sit still and write these books. By then she was in great demand as a consultant to other excavators. Among her "clients" were the underwater excavators, the new field that had sprung up with the use of sophisticated diving equipment. She was consulted by Peter Throckmorton, Michael Katzev, and George Bass, all seeking dates for the cargoes from their submerged ships. She was also called in to furnish a more precise date for the old Antikythera shipwreck with its famed cargo of bronzes, marble statues, glass bowls, etc. for which the humble amphoras on board indicated the decade 80-70 B.C. (1965).

As Koehler has pointed out in her obituary, Grace's earlier study of the Canaanite amphora which she offered as a tribute to Hetty Goldman (1956) was a prescient anticipation of the Uluburun shipwreck currently being excavated by George Bass and Cemal Pulak and their team. For in that article of forty years ago she gauged the extent of commerce from East to West going back into the Bronze Age, and the importance of the coarse ware amphoras, some even stamped, in that commerce. The rich Mycenaean tomb from the Agora excavations contained one such Canaanite amphora, which unfortunately I did not quite do justice to in my publication. She was a gentle, but firm critic but wanted to set the record straight. She told me that I had misunderstood what she said in her article about the two types of Canaanite amphoras, that it was not a question of chronology as I had implied but of the geographic part of Lebanon that dictated whether the shape was rounded, like ours, or angular.

Her last article dealt with the amphoras from a recently discovered wreck. It was presented at a "Table ronde" at the French School in Athens, which was devoted entirely to the field she had created and was thus a tribute to her and to the close cooperation she had established between the two schools. This wreck off Serçe Liman off the west coast of Turkey was dated to 270 B.C. on the basis of the Thasian jar among its more representative amphoras, the Zenon Group, so called because of the Greek letters *zeta* and *eta* in some of their stamps. These she connected with Zenon of Kaunos, secretary to Apollonios, who had an estate in the Fayum and served as finance minister. She argued an Egyptian provenance for the group because of other stamps in the series with the Greek letters *nu* and *phi* which she connected with the Egyptian *nfr* "good" referring to the quality of the wine (1986). As with all her articles, she was not content with merely presenting the evidence, but always attempted to set it in a broader, humanistic context, a reflection of her philological and historical training.

As mentioned earlier, Grace received the Gold Medal Award for Distinguished Archaeological Achievement from the Archaeological Institute of America at the Boston Meeting in 1989. She was unable to make the trip from Athens, and the medal was received by a niece, Judy Grace Stetson, who had worked with her one summer in Athens, and who had much the charm and grace of Virginia in her younger years. She read Grace's acceptance speech expressing her thanks "for the very welcome token of your belief in the results, gradually received, of my research of many years." Her achievements had been accomplished with the slimmest of means.

In the earlier 1980s two younger colleagues, who had received their training from Virginia, Carolyn Koehler and Philippa Wallace Matheson decided the time had come to use the computer in dealing with the mass of evidence collected in Grace's files. At first they met with considerable resistance: the computer couldn't preserve the nuances of her pencilled notations on those little white cards, and what about the rubbings and the photographs? And she also "worried about the havoc that would result from pulling out the cards for xeroxing and wondered whether this was merely 'pushing buttons' and not scholarship." But in the end her attitude was one of "resigned tolerance."⁹

And thus the present Amphoras Project was born. This too is operating on a year-to-year basis with marginal funding from the American School, the Amphora Room and the files still intact in the Stoa of Attalos, and two very parttime assistants to answer queries and prepare plates for publication, with the co-directors spending whatever time they can in Athens to oversee the operation. The project now has a page on the World Wide Web, with a description of the project, an extensive amphora bibliography, links to amphoras in ancient texts and to other web sites mentioning amphoras, and -very soon to come - actual data, i.e. the published examples from the Athenian Agora and the Corinth excavations (without illustrations for the present).¹⁰

Scholars recognize the need for an endowed Amphora research center, but funding has been difficult. From the sixty or more letters of support and appreciation, it is clear that Grace's research has had, and will continue to have, truly international implications. Letters have poured in not only from expected quarters - Americans, British, French, Germans, and Greeks - but from Israelis, Swiss, Spanish, Italians, Austrians, Danes, all of whom testify to the patient assistance of Virginia Grace in interpreting and dating their excavations. Worth noting in the context of this publication is the fact that only five or six have come from women, and yet I never heard Virginia complain about the imbalance of the sexes in controlling field archaeology. She was much too interested and excited about the scientific results of her research to quibble about who received the honors.

She was truly an ambassador of good will to the international community, and after her death in Athens on May 22nd, 1994, there was a gathering of the Athens community for a memorial service in the garden of the American School, at which a number of people spoke. A few months later her family and close American friends gathered for the interment of her ashes in the cemetery at Cold Spring Harbor, NY where her fiancé had been buried almost sixty years earlier. She was a romantic, and this was part of her will. Seldom has there been such an outpouring of admiration and affection,

for she was much more than a scholar or "woman archaeologist." She was a real friend, much beloved by students and colleagues alike.

Although her final resting place was in America, her life had been lived in Greece and she was passionately involved with the islands she visited in pursuit of her studies - Samos, Rhodes, Delos, and others (Fig. 3). At the end of one of her technical articles (1973) I found the following passage which shows the totality of her involvement:

Referring to life on Delos after 75 B.C., "Too meager we cannot consider it, if sea lilies still gave freshness to the Delian summer, and a small yellow flower still scented the paths; and in the bright days of north wind, the sea glistened and foamed over the islands in the stream."

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Sara A. Immerwahr

Select Bibliography

(A complete bibliography through 1979 can be found in *Hesperia* 51 (1982), 365-67, a fascicule entitled "Hellenistic Studies" in honor of Virginia Randolph Grace and Dorothy B. Thompson, edited by Carolyn G. Koehler and Susan L. Rotroff).

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¹ *Amphoras and the Ancient Wine Trade* (Excavations of the Athenian Agora, Picture Book No. 6, Princeton, 1960, 2nd ed. 1979).

² See *AJA* 94 (1990), 293-94.

³ For the full citation for this and the following articles, see the Bibliography at the end, arranged according to date.

⁴ M. Nilsson, "Timbres amphoriques de Lindos," *Exploration archaéologique de Rhodes* V, 1909.

⁵ See Louis E. Lord, *A History of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1882-1942*, Cambridge, 1947, 243-44.

⁶ Her teaching is thus described by Carolyn Koehler.

⁷ *AJA* 100 (1996), 153-55.

⁸ As reported to me the plates for the Koan volume are complete, and those for the Knidian are half finished, and the catalogues for both now exist on computer.

⁹ Thus characterized by Carolyn Koehler.

¹⁰ Again information from Carolyn Koehler.