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BRITISH SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY IN IRAQ

(*Gertrude Bell Memorial*)

31-34 GORDON SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1



REPORT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31st MAY, 1966



THE THIRTY-THIRD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SCHOOL WILL BE HELD IN THE ROOMS OF THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, 1 KENSINGTON GORE, ON WEDNESDAY, 28th SEPTEMBER, 1966, AT 5 p.m., TO HEAR MR. DAVID OATES; TO CONSIDER THE ACCOUNTS, THE BALANCE SHEET AND THE REPORTS OF THE COUNCIL AND THE AUDITOR; TO ELECT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL; TO APPOINT AN AUDITOR; AND FOR ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH MAY PROPERLY BE TRANSACTED.

BEFORE THE MEETING THERE WILL BE A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

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*\*Member of Executive Committee.*

## REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

We deeply regret to record the deaths of Sir Albert Stern and of Mr. J. M. Wilson, who had both served on the Council of the School since its foundation.

At the Annual General Meeting held on 17th November, 1965, Lord Salter relinquished the office of President of the School. We record with gratitude his great services to the School during ten years of office.

At the same meeting the following elections were made: Sir John Troutbeck to succeed Lord Salter as President; Lord Salter and Mr. C. J. Edmonds as Vice-Presidents; Professor M. E. L. Mallowan as Chairman and Professor D. J. Wiseman as Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee. It was also reported that Sir Richard Beaumont had accepted the position of Vice-President on his appointment as H.B.M. Ambassador in Iraq in succession to Sir Roger Allen. After the conclusion of business Mr. David Oates reported on the excavations at Tell al Rimah, 1965.

An increase in the School's grant from H.M. Treasury has made it possible for the first time to create a post of Resident Director in Baghdad, thus bringing the School into line with other British Schools abroad. Mr. David Oates has been appointed to this post and took up residence in Baghdad on 1st January, 1966. At the same time the School's library and hostel were transferred to a more modern building, 90/1 Karradet Mariam. Our former premises at 76/1 Karradet Mariam have been retained as the Director's house, and rooms in it have also been set aside to accommodate the School's sherd collections, which now include material from more than eighty sites.

A School Fellowship was awarded to Mr. J. E. Wootton of the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, and grants were made to Professor D. J. Wiseman of the School of Oriental and African Studies and Miss Barbara Parker of the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, to enable them to visit Iraq for shorter periods.

During this session the School organised a series of lectures on "Assyria", which were delivered by kind permission of the Director General of Antiquities in the lecture hall of the new Iraq Museum. The lecturers were the Director, Professor Wiseman and Miss Barbara Parker.

The third season of excavations at Tell al Rimah, again conducted by the School in association with the University Museum, Philadelphia, lasted from 1st March to 30th May, 1966. The School was assisted by grants from the British Academy, the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and the Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels. The staff included the following members: from the British School; the Director, Professor D. J. Wiseman (epigraphist), Miss Barbara Parker (epigraphist and photographer), Miss Elizabeth Dowman (registrar in charge of conservation), Mr. J. E. Reade, Mr. J. Bellingham, Mr. G. E. Turner (archaeologists); from the University Museum, Mrs. T. H. Carter (Assistant Director), Miss Mary Ellen Didier and Mr. D. H. Crownover (archaeologists), and Mr. and Mrs. A. S. Trik (architect and draughtsman). We were assisted for shorter periods by Mr. R. H. Adrian (surveyor), Mr. A. S. Robertson Pearce (photographer), and Dr. C. Vita Finzi, who was reconnoitring the area for evidence of post-glacial climatic changes. The Representative of the Directorate General of Antiquities was Sayyid Yasin Mahmud, who took a full and valuable part in the recording of the excavations.

The most important discoveries of the season were made in the temple area (Area A). The state of preservation of the buildings, standing in places over twenty-five feet high, had previously enabled us to identify extensive remains of vaulting and of elaborate decoration with engaged half-columns of mud-brick. This year we found a monumental stairway leading to the roof of the temple; the second flight of steps was supported on a series of stepped vaults of progressively increasing height, a striking illustration of the facility and assurance with which the builders handled the technique of radial vaulting on this provincial site in the nineteenth century B.C. An example of pitched-brick vaulting dated to the Early Assyrian period was also found, the earliest example above ground of this distinctive Mesopotamian technique. The decoration of the building proved to be even more elaborate than we had supposed. Not only was every external and internal façade adorned with engaged half-columns, to a total of more than 270; we found that each of the larger columns had been built in the form of a deep-cut spiral or of a palm-trunk, and that these effects had been produced by the use of a standard series of pre-formed segments of mud-brick. The two great columns that flanked the main entrance each consisted of a cluster of four shafts, with two palm-trunks at the rear and two opposed spirals on the outer face.

Work on the temple was complemented by a detailed examination of the ziggurat. A chamber in the middle of the structure was excavated to its foundations, a depth of over forty-five feet. It had been filled with earth soon after its construction and sealed with a vault; its purpose, in common with other shafts ranged around the circumference of the ziggurat behind the façade, was probably to facilitate the drying of the core. The plan of the first terrace of the ziggurat is now clear and some evidence of the form of the second stage has been recovered, although no trace remains either of the upper terrace or of any building that may have stood upon it.

Important additions were made to the corpus of Middle Assyrian economic texts from Tell al Rimah. These included further records of the dealings of a group of merchants in grain and other commodities, including large quantities of tin. These tablets also furnished dates in the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta I, which now enable us to date the final abandonment of Tell al Rimah as a town towards the end of the thirteenth century B.C. The only other inscription of importance was badly defaced by weathering. It was found on a relief, depicting a goddess standing between two palm trees, on the outer face of a block of calcite which had probably adorned one of the doorways of the original temple. The names of the goddess and the dedicant are unfortunately lost.

We must once again offer our sincere thanks to the Director General of Antiquities, Dr. Faisal al Wailly, and the Inspector General of Excavations, Professor Fuad Safar, and their staff for their generous assistance and advice in every aspect of the School's archaeological activities.

On behalf of the Council,  
M. E. L. MALLOWAN,  
Chairman of Executive Committee.

D. OATES,  
Director.  
G. E. DENT,  
Hon. Treasurer.

13th September, 1966.

