

Recent Publications

IVORIES FROM NIMRUD

FASCICULE III—FURNITURE FROM SW.7
FORT SHALMANESER

Commentary, Catalogue and Plates

by Max Mallowan and Georgina Herrmann

120 pp. + 111 plates, 14 line drawings (1974). £10.50.

The Journal **IRAQ** Vol. XXXV Parts 1 and 2 (1973). £6.50.

The Journal **IRAQ** Vol. XXXVI (1974) £6.50. In honour of
Sir Max Mallowan

CUNEIFORM TEXTS FROM NIMRUD

I: THE NIMRUD WINE LISTS

by J. V. Kinnier Wilson

167 pp., 54 pls. (1972). £5.00.

II: THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE ARCHIVE

by J. N. Postgate

283 pp., 98 pls. (1973). £8.00.

BRITISH SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY IN IRAQ

(Gertrude Bell Memorial)

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

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REPORT & ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31st MAY, 1974

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THE FORTY-FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SCHOOL WILL BE HELD IN THE ROOMS OF THE **BRITISH ACADEMY**, BURLINGTON HOUSE, PICCADILLY, W.1., ON **FRIDAY 29th NOVEMBER, 1974**, AT 5 p.m., TO HEAR MRS. DIANA KIRKBRIDE HELBAEK; 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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REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

The School in Iraq received the approval of the Iraq Government (Gazette No. 2253 of 9 June 1973) to its application for permission to continue work. Our registration was made under Articles 6 and 8 of Law No. 132 of 1972 by which all cultural institutions, both Arab and Foreign, were required to register with the Government. It is with deep regret, surprise and disappointment, therefore, that we have to report that on 12th August 1973, by decision of the Revolutionary Command Council of Iraq, the British School of Archaeology which had conducted archaeological research in Iraq since 1932 was closed. No reasons for this action have been given us but we were asked to close the Hostel and Library which have been and at present remain closed. The School's Fellow Mr. Peter Farries and Grantees Miss T. H. J. Firbank and Mrs. A. Kuhrt continued to receive every assistance from the Iraqi authorities in completing their work.

Nevertheless we are glad to report that we have been encouraged to continue scientific work under the title of the British Archaeological Expedition in Iraq, and this year, with the full co-operation of the Director General of Antiquities and his staff and under the sponsorship of the Institute of Archaeology of the University of London the Director, Mrs. Diana Helbaek, has undertaken a final full season's work at Umm Dabaghiyah. Meanwhile the Assistant Director Mr. Nicholas Postgate, was in residence from October and has continued to work on the Nimrud texts. Miss T. Newbould, the Secretary-Librarian in Baghdad since 1969, left in November. We owe a debt of gratitude to her for all she has done for us especially in reorganising the Library and looking after the needs of many visiting scholars. The Vice-Chairman visited Baghdad in December to discuss our excavation projects and matters related to the closure.

The houses on the bank of the River Tigris occupied by the School and its Director since 1956 are now scheduled for demolition to make way for a public park and new road. Mr. Nicholas Postgate has rented a house in Jaderiyah. Meanwhile the Director's house has been the base for the Umm Dabaghiyah expedition which included among its staff Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Postgate, Messrs. Adrian Ball, Martin Eade, Richard Markham and the Representative Sd. Zuhair Rajib.

School Fellowships were granted to Miss Kathleen Beatty for the study of texts relating to the goddess Inanna-Ishtar in the Iraq Museum and to Miss Yolande Steger for the study of Mesopotamia's Western contacts in the Early Neolithic period.

A memorable event for the School was the presentation to our President, Sir Max Mallowan, on his seventieth birthday of a special volume of *Iraq* (XXXVI) in his honour. Contributions were written by twenty-five colleagues and friends and this volume in a deluxe binding, was presented to him by Lord Trevelyan on behalf of the Council at a reception at Magdalen College, Oxford, on May 13th.

The School has published *The Governor's Palace Archive* by J. N. Postgate as the second in the series of *Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud*.

Umm Dabaghiyah Excavations

The final season had a delayed start owing to exceptionally heavy late Spring rains which caused wide-spread flooding and brought down all the bridges across the Wadi Tharthar, thereby making it impossible to reach the site until mid-April, a month late.

The objectives of the season were to excavate the domestic quarter of the site, as distinct from the large storage blocks we had so unexpectedly found the previous year, and to find out as far as we could the lay-out of the earliest village. Although it was not possible to finish the site, in particular the earliest level of all was reached only in small areas, nevertheless the season brought spectacular results, important beyond all expectation for our knowledge both of the later Neolithic period in Iraq as well as our understanding of this period in Western Asia, and for the history of architecture.

In this, the domestic architecture, the houses give the most spectacular results, while those of Level III give the fullest picture. With walls mostly standing about a metre high, the houses are very small, usually with two, but sometimes more, rooms. The individual rooms keep to the canon of proportion used in the storage rooms so they are very small, only about 1.50 x 2 metres with tiny doorways leading from one to another. These doorways usually have arched lintels, though a minority are straight. They are only about 60 cm wide and under a metre high, so the inhabitants, when indoors, must have squatted in the little rooms and wriggled through the doors when necessary. The floors, walls, arches and fittings are finely plastered, the walls sometimes with many layers superimposed.

In most houses one room was reserved for the business of living, cooking and so on, the other(s) empty, perhaps for sleeping. The permanent fixtures, as also walls and arches, were made of packed mud and covered with plaster.

The living rooms contain hearth-lips of ovens built through the walls with their domes sticking out beyond the wall exteriors, while inside are plastered chimneys masking the flues that rise up slight

depressions in the interior faces of the walls. The chimney plaster flares out and down to meet the hearth curbs thus forming a hood. In most cases a little plaster shelf lies on one side. These seem to be the earliest complete chimneys yet found. Other fixtures include small plastered cupboards, in one case in two stepped tiers. Small food preparation depressions with low plaster curbs were found in the floors near the hearths. Round plastered windows, sometimes with their blocking stones still in position are set into exterior walls, and many small circular recesses, all plastered, set into the walls perhaps to hold special objects. That good use was made of the roofs seems to be indicated by some houses having in a corner of one room either one or two plastered steps and then in the wall above plastered toe-holds such as are used when digging wells. These toe-holds are arranged in twos and threes in alternate wall faces of the corner. Presumably some kind of hatch was situated above the steps which could be opened from them, and then one hoisted oneself through the opening by means of the toe-holds. The tiny size of the rooms, the little arch-spans and the substitutes for ladders all indicate the lack of timber in the environment.

In addition to the long architectural tradition so evident in all the buildings, some of the houses had fragmentary paintings on their walls. One frieze of five onagers within a possible enclosure is of particular importance. Another fragment shows a tantalising scrap of an onager hunt, others had strange totem-like creatures. Many were of simple wavy lines, some with dots, and not unlike the motifs on the painted pottery. As these paintings are at least a millennium earlier than the previous earliest murals in Iraq, their presence is of importance.

The general plan of the site reveals the houses lining the western and south-western perimeter, with a few in the centre. Courtyards of different usage and walled enclosures, perhaps for retaining domesticated animals at night, lie outside, and the main bulk is made up by the storage blocks. Unfortunately we could not finish, but this Type Site of a previously unknown culture shows facets of an importance quite out of proportion to its size and situation.

On behalf of the Council,
D. J. WISEMAN,
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Baghdad Excavations:				
Tel Rimah	200			12
Umm Dabaghiyah	7,000			22
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			8,605	17
			3,629	62
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