

EDITORIAL

The year in Iraq has seen a very satisfactory amount of archaeological activity sponsored by the School, and substantial reports from many of our main sites are included in the present volume. In the autumn of 1986, the Assistant Director, Mr. Warwick Ball, conducted a five-month study season in Tell Afar, analysing the results of the spring season's work at Abu Dhahir, the last of our Saddam Dam Salvage Project sites (see Excavations in Iraq, below, p. 234, for a summary).

Concurrently the School's main effort was being transferred to Tell Hawa in the North Jezirah Salvage Project. A two-month survey of the site and its surroundings, mid-October–mid-December 1986, was followed by a two-month excavation season March–April 1987. Soundings identified monumental buildings of the IIInd millennium B.C. and penetrated to the Uruk levels.

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Dr. Trevor Watkins and Dr. Ellen McAdam followed up the 1986 preliminary excavations at Qirmiz Dere on the outskirts of Tell Afar, with a further season in the spring 1987. The site is aceramic Neolithic (see Excavations in Iraq, p. 244).

Dr. Alastair Northedge continued his surface survey of the early Islamic city at Samarra, planning remains visible on the surface and sampling the pottery. A detailed report on his 1986–87 survey season appears below, p. 143 ff.

At Abu Salabikh, Dr. Susan Pollock led a team from New York State University at Binghamton to continue work on the Uruk mound, where pottery of the Jemdet Nasr style was found. Reports on the 1985–86 seasons by Roger Matthews and Nicholas Postgate, and by Susan Pollock, appear below, pp. 91 ff., 121 ff.

Professor David Oates conducted the ninth season of excavations at Tell Brak, March–May 1987. The clearing of the Mitanni Palace was completed, and at the other excavation areas earlier levels (Agade, Early Dynastic and earlier) were investigated. Professor Oates reports on the seventh and eighth seasons, below, p. 175 ff., and Dr. Joan Oates on some notable pottery types, Ubaid and Mitannian, below, p. 193 ff.

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News has just reached us that our Director in Baghdad, Dr. Jeremy Black, has been offered the new post in Akkadian at Oxford. Dr. Black has had two years as Director, during which time he has been engaged on a number of epigraphic projects, notably the preparation of a further volume of *Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud*, to include the Nabu temple literary texts. This is now nearing completion.

In the School, the Secretary-Librarian, Mr. Roger Matthews, besides his administrative duties, has been working on clay sealings and sealing techniques of the IIIrd millennium B.C. The School Fellow for the year was Miss Wendy Knight, who has been engaged on a comparative analysis of IVth millennium ceramic types from north-west Iraq.

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The Expedition House has been host to a large number of academic visitors this year, including: the Hon. Secretary, Mr. Christopher Walker; the Vice-Chairman, Professor David Oates and Dr. Joan Oates (to attend the Babylon Festival); Professor David Stronach (to plan new excavations at Nineveh); Dr. Andrew

George (to collate tablets relating to the Topography of Babylon and the Gilgamesh Epic); Professors Paul Zimansky and Elizabeth Stone (to map the Old Babylonian site of Tell Malih); Professor MacGuire Gibson (to investigate sites in northern Iraq).

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In London the Annual General Meeting was held on 4 December 1986, after which Professor David Oates lectured on his excavations at Tell Brak. The Bonham Carter Memorial Lecture was given on 4 June 1987 by Professor W. G. Lambert under the title "Who were the Assyrians?"

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In June 1987 the School was pleased to be able to take part in welcoming Dr. Mu'ayyad Sa'id Damerji, President of the State Organisation for Antiquities and Heritage, on a two-week visit to the United Kingdom under the sponsorship of the British Council. This presented an opportunity to express our gratitude for the continuing support and cooperation which the programme of excavations and research of the British Archaeological Expedition in Iraq receives from the Iraqi authorities.

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A further volume of archaeological reports, *Abu Salabikh Excavations*, vol. III, will appear shortly. The School also proposes to inaugurate a series, *Iraq Excavation Reports*, which will commence soon with reports of the work at 'Ana (1981–82) and at Rubeideh (Jebel Hamrin, 1978–79).

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Dr. E. Sollberger resigned from the Council of the School after many years of service, for which the School records its gratitude. Dr. Harriet Crawford has been coopted to the Council.