

EDITORIAL

THIS part of the Journal includes a number of articles on topics directly concerned with the current activities of the School as well as others which also add to our general and specialised knowledge of Mesopotamian civilisation. It is encouraging that there is now a queue of articles awaiting publication, a witness to the steady growth of archaeological and historical activity concerning Iraq, for in the early days of this Journal it was often difficult to find a sufficiency of authoritative material at the time of going to print.

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In this issue Mrs. Joan Oates discusses her first investigations of prehistoric mounds near Mandali where, at the time of writing, excavations are about to be undertaken. This work will be officially sponsored by the British School of Archaeology in Iraq in conjunction with the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. It is expected that in the Spring of 1968 Mr. David Oates, the School's Director, will continue the School's primary excavations at the important site of Rimah where fortunately a number of Old Babylonian tablets were found last season.

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In view of the importance of this group of tablets from Rimah and their bearing on the well known Mari archives, the preliminary report of Miss Stephanie Page will be widely welcomed. The School has renewed her Fellowship to enable the study and publication of these texts to be pressed forward.

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The investigation of Mrs. Georgina Herrmann into the sources from which lapis lazuli was obtained in the Early Dynastic period is based on results of her expedition to the mines in Afghanistan. Her discussion is supplemented by that of Mrs. Crowfoot Payne concerning Egypt; it illuminates the study of early trade between ancient Iraq and Iran, and takes account of the changing uses of lapis lazuli in the manufacture of seals and objects of art.

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The School is still actively engaged in the task of producing detailed publications on special aspects of the work at Nimrud. Professor Mallowan, Mrs. L.

Davies and Mr. J. J. Orchard are at present occupied with the production of fascicules describing the ivories discovered at that site—indeed the first fascicule entitled *Equestrian Bridle Harness Ornaments*, written by Mr. J. J. Orchard, was published in 1967. Articles by Mr. Julian Reade and Mr. G. Turner are further contributions which illustrate the wide bearing of these discoveries on Assyrian art and architecture.

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Mr. A. R. Millard's article on some Ashurbanipal fragments from Nineveh supplements the discussion of texts of the same kind found at Nimrud and published by Dr. E. E. Knudsen in Vol. XXIX (1967), 49–69. Moreover it should be read in conjunction with the article by R. Campbell Thompson on "A Selection from the cuneiform historical texts from Nineveh (1927–32)" published in *Iraq* VII (1940), 85–131.¹ This article arises from the work done by Mr. Millard for the forthcoming *Catalogue of the cuneiform tablets in the Kouyunjik Collection* Vol. VII, to be published by the British Museum.

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We are also fortunate in having an article from a distinguished member of the Iraq Antiquities Department, Dr. Behnam Abu Al-Soof, whose interesting discussion of the last prehistoric periods of ceramics in Iraq combines well with Dr. Joan Oates' discussion on Mandali.

¹ Reprinted copies of this volume are now available from the School.