

EDITORIAL

Dame Agatha Christie Mallowan, a Founder Member of the School, died on 12th January. She was long a generous and active supporter of all our work. Her close association with the School's major projects led by her husband, Sir Max Mallowan, finds a fitting tribute in his own dedication to her in *Nimrud and its Remains*, where he tells how she "shared the joys and trials of excavating . . . and lightened our labours through her imagination, her skill, and her kindness". The School as a whole re-echoes this acknowledgment of the great part she has played in the progress of its work in its own tribute to her in this volume.

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At the forty-second Annual General Meeting of the School held at the British Academy on 11th February 1976, a tribute to Dame Agatha was made on behalf of the Council by Lord Trevelyan. At the same meeting the first Gertrude Bell Memorial Gold Medal for outstanding services to Mesopotamian archaeology to be awarded by the School was presented to its President, Sir Max Mallowan, by Emeritus Professor Seton Lloyd, himself also a distinguished Mesopotamian archaeologist and member of Council. Sir Max's archaeological work in Iraq at Ur, Nineveh and at Nimrud, as well as at Chagar Bazar, Brak and in the Balikh valley, is well known and meticulously documented in the pages of earlier numbers of this journal, of which he was for long Editor. His has been a remarkable contribution to ancient Near Eastern studies as a whole. Photographs of the medal, designed by Mrs. Seton Lloyd, are reproduced as the frontispiece of this volume.

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The Annual General Meeting had been postponed to February to enable Mr. Nicholas Postgate, Director of the British Archaeological Expedition in Iraq, to report on his recent season of excavations concluded in December 1975. The substance of his lecture will be included in the report of his work at Abu Salabikh to be published in the second part of this volume of *Iraq*. In Area E on the north-east mound the archaeological context of the early third-millennium tablets, found by the previous Oriental Institute, Chicago, expedition there in 1963-5, was traced. Some additional texts were found *in situ*, setting the whole find in its contemporary stratigraphic sequence, in which appears to be the administrative and residential quarters of a temple. In both Area E and Area A several well-furnished Early Dynastic III graves yielded a valuable assemblage of whole pottery and other objects. The discovery of a large well-constructed building, as well as part of the thick enclosing wall of the temple area or city is of particular architectural importance.

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Other research work in Baghdad in the past six months has included the drawing and photography of the Middle Assyrian seals found by the School's expedition

to Tell al Rimah and of objects from the Umm Dabagiyah excavations. Mrs. Kathryn Tubb has been employed at the Iraq Museum in restoration of the wall paintings lifted from Umm Dabaghiyah (see *Iraq* 37 (1975), 7 ff.), which may well therefore become another major exhibit there or in the Mosul Museum.

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Grants were made last year to Mrs. Rosemary Ellison (Institute of Archaeology, London) for research into the food technology of Ancient Mesopotamia, and to Miss Kathleen Beatty (University of Birmingham) for work on Akkadian texts in the Iraq Museum. A Fellowship has been awarded to Miss Katie Fielden (Institute of Archaeology, London) to study fourth- and third-millennium pottery, using the sequence from Tell Brak. A grant to Miss J. A. Moon (Cambridge University) is for work on Old Babylonian and Kassite pottery, particularly from Aqar Quf and Nippur.