

News & Notes

The Oriental Institute

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FIELD REPORTS FROM ARABIA, EGYPT, AND IRAN

Haradh, 15 March 1976

Dear Friends,

The political geography of the Middle East in our own day has imposed important but little noted constraints on the understanding of its ancient past. Only on rare occasions, to be sure, has this pivotal world region been a less fragmented, more seamless web of human intercourse than it is today. But the traditional patterns of isolation and linkage were different ones than those we take for granted. The shifting mosaic of ethnic, religious, linguistic and political divisions that probably has always existed was never so effectively congealed as by the overlay of modern national frontiers.

The Arabian peninsula provides a case in point. Far back into antiquity its harbors sheltered ships devoted to Indian Ocean commerce, and by no later than Hellenistic times the arteries of the spice trade can be traced along its length and breadth. But while Classical sources external to the area allow us to speak of this passage of goods, they provide little insight into the local institutions and arrangements by which it was implemented. As an artifact of our comparative ignorance, therefore, ancient Arabia remains a void until Islam seemingly boils up as an enigmatic, rootless impulse. In turn then, Islam's worldly influence, and even its stature as a faith, seem difficult to trace to their origins. Instead they often tend to be regarded as in large part a later accretion, achieved only after Arab domination of — and close interaction with — the older heartlands of Oriental civilization.

Archeology has an important, perhaps decisive, part to play in filling the void of our ignorance about earlier Arabia, and thus providing the means to test these and similar assumptions. Clearly, a massive, prolonged effort will be required before it can do so. The first important steps in this effort began to be taken already in the 1950's, and credit for them belongs to a series of expeditions from Aarhus University in Denmark under the leadership of Geoffrey Bibby. Centering on the small island of Bahrain but also ranging into the Arab emirates along the Gulf coast and into coastal sectors of the Saudi Arabian Eastern Province, the Danes blocked out an archeological sequence that runs, not without interruptions, from the stone age well into medieval times. Equally important among their findings was the essential distinctiveness of the remains unearthed in their excavations on Bahrain and elsewhere. The expected interconnections with Mesopotamia and even India were indeed given some documentation. But it was even more interesting to learn that the imported materials occurred in the context of vigorous local traditions that were in no sense slavish imitations of the larger civilizations that presumably initiated the contact.

Next upon the scene were a number of individuals associated with the Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco). Professional archeologists tend to deprecate the work of amateurs, and in this as in other examples amateurs have indisputably been responsible for a great

deal of more or less casual looting of tombs and other subsurface remains, as well as the even more extensive removal of the broken surface pottery that otherwise might have helped to guide future studies. But amateurs (as well as professionals!) form a continuum in skills and outlook, not a uniform category. Here as elsewhere, the best of them have entirely eschewed coffee-table collecting and have readily contributed their information to the common pool from which all scholarship must draw.

Chicago's involvement with the story begins at about this point. Abdullah H. Masry came to us on a Saudi government fellowship as a graduate student in anthropology. He received his doctorate in 1974, basing his dissertation on excavations in the Eastern Province that shed important light on the late prehistory of that region. Afterward he returned to Riyadh, and soon assumed the directorship of the Department of Antiquities here. Under his influence a whole program is unfolding, the first of its kind in this country. In rapid succession an antiquities law was framed and promulgated; planning for regional museums as well as a major national museum was begun; students were recruited for specialized training abroad; and restoration was undertaken of some of the wells, caravanserais, and other facilities commissioned by Zubeida, wife of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, along the old pilgrim road from Iraq to the holy cities of Arabia.

The full story of this complex and far-seeing enterprise is still unfolding, and in any case is not mine to tell.

2 This brief reference to it is only to provide a setting for what McGuire Gibson, Curtis Larsen and I are doing here, although we are reasonably confident that our contribution to the larger whole will be a significant and perhaps even crucial one. It is a reality of our times that the opening of the door to a nation's past is a part of the process of national emergence. That consideration, together with the scale of activities that will be necessary before an area as large as the U.S. east of the Mississippi can take its full place in the known world of the archeologist and historian, assures at least the comparative limitations of our effort. Our own role, in short, will probably be to provide early advice and guidance, and then to withdraw by stages while many new hands take up what is surely among the most ambitious archeological tasks ever set.

Our specific objective is to contribute to a rapid initial reconnaissance of the entire Kingdom. Ours is one of two Saudi/foreign teams that have been established for this purpose, and the first focus of concern in our case is the Eastern Province. Fundamentally, these surveys are intended to produce a relatively rough but servicable inventory of the archeological resources on which later, less hurried, more adequately staffed phases of the Antiquities program here may draw. We also expect, however, to illuminate at least a few major problems which have already been identified. Small-scale soundings are included in our repertory (we have already made a number of them), but the main avenue of attack is the grinding routine of desert survey aided by aerial photographs.

A survey can only be rapid in a relative sense, of course. At least during this first campaign many problems have had to be untangled with exasperating slowness. We are also learning a healthy respect for logistic difficulties stemming from the demanding climate, thin population, and immense physical distances. A high wind has brought choking clouds of sand as this is written, for example, so that the typewriter can only be used within the enclosed cab of one of our reconnaissance vehicles. Outside my colleagues and the camp workforce are tightening tent ropes to keep the whole place from blowing away. To think of completely accounting for what this Kingdom has to offer archeologically within a measurable span of years while having to contend repeatedly with such conditions would make no sense at all.

We are camped currently on the edge of the Wadi Sahaba, a broad, shallow gouge in a desolation of sand and gravel that must have been cut during the Pleistocene by torrents flowing northeastward from what was then a much better watered Arabian interior. Today it is the scene of a lavishly funded but limping irrigation project, using deep underground reservoirs that are also relics of the Pleistocene. Unlike the margins of the al-Hasa oasis, our previous campsite, this one provides no ready access to markets and other urban facilities. Still to come is the small Yabrin oasis on the northwestern margins of the Empty Quarter, not a permanent settlement at all although it is the seat of the powerful al-Murra tribe. Thus by stages we are acquiring the social and other disciplines

that are needed for an aggregation of individuals to become an effective research unit under desert conditions.

The prevailing wind, for example, is an omnipresent determinant of life. We are gradually learning that it must control where anyone dumps garbage or butchers sheep if the fly population for the camp as a whole is to be kept at a tolerable level. Water has not yet been in short supply since we are accompanied by our own tank truck, but even a tanker will not long meet the needs of eighteen people as the onset of summer heat intensifies all forms of its consumption. How do we cope with dysentery and other illnesses (not to speak of accidents) when help is so remote as to be unavailable in less than a full day or so of arduous travel? Our four-wheel drive reconnaissance vehicles are new and sturdy, and we are certainly not neophytes at the business of desert navigation in them. But the empty distances here are much greater than in Iraq, and the hazards of misjudging whether a sand dune surface will support a car, or of a breakdown, are correspondingly increased. Even the bedouin, on whom one used to be able to rely for aid, now seem to be turning rapidly away from the desert. They are reportedly among the principal customers for the hordes of little Japanese pickups that clog the roads (sometimes barely managing to stagger along with a pair of camels as their cargo!). Many of them have yet to learn, to judge from the carnage along the highways, that machines lack even a camel's rudimentary instincts for survival.

It would be premature to discuss the findings of this initial phase of reconnaissance. We are locating sites, to be sure, and beginning to identify historical and environmental meaning in the sequent patterns they form. But in some respects this is as much a learning experience for us as for Ali Mughannum, my Saudi co-director, and our other counterparts on the scientific staff from the Department of Antiquities. Mac Gibson and I are "civilizational" types, accustomed to the dense aggregations of substantial mounds that occur in southern Iraq. Curt Larsen, partly a geomorphologist, is at least more at home than we in mapping and running levels on Pleistocene river terraces. But all of us have needed to learn how to deal with sites that were probably thinly occupied to begin with and that have often been entirely deflated by the erosive force of the wind into mere scatters of sherds and flint tools on the surface of desert blowouts.

The al-Hasa oasis was at least a partial exception to this, as well as a reminder of the powerful engines of economic development that have been fueled by the sale of the Kingdom's petroleum. A network of new concrete flumes carries water from its abundant springs into lush date orchards that have greatly expanded in recent years, and the principal town of Hofuf bustles with commercial activity and is building a new university. The oasis is set like a green jewel into grey-ocher surroundings of dunes and low, wind-eroded crags, baking beneath a fierce sun by day and partly illuminated even at night by the flares of escaping gases at dozens of nearby well-heads. The springs, we now believe, were probably much more

Luxor, 8 March 1976

Dear Friends,

It is almost the end of our fifty-second season. It has been an extremely good and productive one, and I am pleased to report that two projects of the Epigraphic Survey have been completed and that two others are already well underway. For the first time in the Survey's history we can now look forward to the publication of major Egyptian monuments at the rate of one volume a year.

The next survey volume to appear will be the first of several on the Temple of Khonsu. Dr. Wente has been guiding *Khonsu I* through the prepublication stages, and we in Luxor have been checking photographs, drawings, and translations for *Khonsu II*. Both will appear shortly. Work on *Khonsu III* will resume in a season or two, and we look forward there to the participation of the Centre Franco-Egyptien in an architectural study of the Temple to accompany our drawings and analyses of its reliefs.

The superb relief scenes are carved by Seti I in the Nineteenth Dynasty at Karnak's Temple of Amon, considered by many to be among the finest examples of monumental Egyptian narrative art—and certainly to be included among that dynasty's most important historical documents—have now been completely recorded. The "Chicago Method" of recording, meticulously placing every line of a relief on a scale photograph of the scene, has paid especially great dividends on this wall: not only has it resulted in some of our most aesthetically pleasing and epigraphically accurate drawings, but it also has produced a number of answers to some perplexing Egyptological questions about the reign of Seti and his son Ramesses II.

For example, five small figures carved immediately behind figures of Seti have long been the basis of a widely accepted argument for royal succession. This argument held that the figures and the accompanying titles originally were those of an older brother of Ramesses II. When this brother died or was pushed aside, the figures and titles were then erased and replaced with those of Ramesses as a formal affirmation of his legitimate right to the throne. Our staff has found, however, that the figures erased by Ramesses were not those of a prince at all but of an official, a man named Mehy, who apparently was rewarded for his services to the King by being included in these relief scenes. With this discovery, the argument for an older brother of Ramesses II even having existed loses much of its support.

The texts and name rings on this wall are among our principal sources for the study of ancient geography and Egyptian military history, and considerable time was spent this season studying the peculiar way in which these rings had been carved, erased, and carved again. Here, the former belief that a list of Asiatic place names had been replaced with an African list has proved to be the opposite of the truth. (Why so much work was put into making this change remains a puzzle.)

An interesting feature of the figures of Seti making offerings before the god Amon is that the artists responsible

for carving them recut the figures several times before plastering and painting them. Each time, they made the figure of the king appear to bow slightly lower before the god. Needless to say, it is tempting to see in such changes more than just artistic preferences, and one of our epigraphers has been engaged in a search through other walls and temples for parallels to this phenomenon.

The publication of the Seti reliefs will be a significant contribution to Egyptology, and in order to make the volume as useful as possible, we will include, along with the customary translations, commentaries, and plates, a paleographic index, a word list, detailed notes on the many traces of color remaining on the wall, an architectural study of the newly-discovered east wall (see *News & Notes* no. 15, March, 1975), and a number of detail photographs to illustrate the techniques of carving and recutting so frequently found here.

As work at Seti came to a close, our staff of artists and epigraphers turned their attention to the famous scenes of the Feast of Opet in Luxor Temple. These reliefs, too, are of considerable interest both historically and artistically, and, because of their very badly weathered state, represent a real challenge to Chicago House. For example, we have had to draw the reliefs at a scale considerably larger than usual in order to be able to accurately show the many subtleties of carving and the minute traces of texts just barely visible in areas of heavy damage. Here, too, as with Seti, our work has been accompanied by a systematic search of surrounding fields for loose blocks that might have fallen or been taken from the wall. At Seti, we had located over ten such fragments (which will help us reconstruct parts of a missing upper register), and at Luxor we have located over thirty blocks with a promise of more to come from areas as yet unexplored. Together with the Opet scene itself, we also will include in our publication other scenes in this Colonnade and near its doorway. There are several reasons for enlarging the project in this way. One of the most compelling is that it will better enable us to trace the architectural and artistic history of the Colonnade.

In spite of some serious financial problems (which forced the postponement of work on the tomb of Nefersekheru), our planned archeological map of the West Bank got underway this season, and a trial sheet of one area (about a quarter of a mile square) was completed. It will be distributed to our colleagues for suggestions and comments. There is no doubt that such a map will be of great value to Egyptologists: not only have we been able to locate the numbered tombs of Thebes more accurately (many of them have been "missing" for years), but we also have been able to note the condition and contents of all tombs, an important first step in making any plans to conserve or record West Bank monuments. The plan, which shows not only surface topographical features and tomb entrances, also includes interior tomb plans, a useful addition for those interested in the development and layout of New Kingdom funerary monuments. On one hillside last surveyed fifty years ago, where four small tombs were shown on the 1921 map, we have located 25 tombs. And almost all of these 21 "new" tombs contain frag-

ments of decoration and texts.

Our library has been growing this year, and its use by visiting scholars and friends has increased fivefold. We are delighted with this: a library, after all, is meant to be used, and we are pleased that it serves as a valuable asset for our colleagues.

It has been an especially busy year, with many visitors: we have been delighted to receive over 500 guests this season. Of particular note were the visits of America's Secretary of the Treasury and his Egyptian counterpart, who showed great interest in our work; Dr. Daniel Boorstin, the Librarian of Congress and a former University of Chicago faculty member; several members of the University's Board of Trustees; and, of course, the Oriental Institute's Egyptian tour, led by Dr. Silverman. We enjoy showing our work to such interested guests and we look forward to another Institute tour in the near future. Our staff epigraphers, James Allen, William Murnane, and Frank Yurco; our artists, Reg Coleman, Frank Howard, Martyn Lack, and John Romer; our librarian, Andree Bichara; and the others on our staff join me in inviting all members of the Institute to visit our Egyptian headquarters.

Respectfully, Kent. R. Weeks

Ghaleh Khalil near Chogha Mish, March 26, 1976
Dear Friends and Colleagues:

It hardly seems possible that we have already reached the end of the season, that extremely trying time when it is hardly feasible to finish all that somehow must be finished. The work of this season, probably more than any other, has been governed by the weather. Within the memory of the villagers here there has never been a winter of such continual rain. Fortunately in recent weeks the intervals of sunshine have been sufficient to bring the grain up high. The greyish-green barley heads are already bending in the wind, more advanced than the wheat. The whole countryside is a tapestry of green, mixed everywhere with flowers of many hues. All the villagers are pleased at the prospect of a good crop, but for us the saturating rains have meant that we are not able to proceed in the East Area of the terrace where the first few days of excavation brought such rewarding results. Neither were we able to reopen Gully Cut, where the two lowest layers of the Archaic Susiana period are ready to be dug.

One of the events marking a long rainy spell early in February was the short visit of Mr. James Knudstad. As some of you may know he was for many years the Oriental Institute architect. He was also a member of the Archaeological Reconnaissance Expedition directed by Professor P. P. Delougaz in the summer of 1961. Together with H. G. Gütterbock we drove in a Landrover through eastern Turkey and western Iran to Tehran. From there, Professor Delougaz, Jim and I came down to Khuzestan for the first trial excavation at Chogha Mish. Unfortunately after only about two weeks Jim was called away to the Oriental Institute Nubian Expedition. Ever since Professor Delougaz and I had been hoping to get him back with us, either as a regular member of the expedition or at least for a visit. Now he came, as he said, a year too late. He had been spending some time with friends in Shiraz en route between his work with the Smithsonian Helmand Sistan Project in Afghanistan and the beginning of a new project in Saudi Arabia. The winter weather conditions and a destroyed bridge had prevented him from

reaching us for several weeks, and then when he did arrive it was much too wet to dig in the East Area. Nonetheless, as it turned out, he made a major contribution to solving some of the questions about the Middle Susiana 3 Burnt Building which had remained unanswered at the end of last season. Rain-washed plaster faces on the eastern "niche" of the front room gave him a clue which he followed by scraping top surfaces of brickwork slightly. The wet conditions made it possible to observe color differentiations and thin plaster lines. On the basis of these indications it appears that the expanse of brickwork to the east had been built up against a buttressed east facade of the building, changing the doorway on that side into a niche. The traces of buttresses discerned by Jim Knudstad in the east and also in the south side of the building link up with those excavated last year on the west side of its central part. I had hoped that we would follow the surface indications deeper when the ground became hard enough for excavation, but the weather prevented this as it also prevented us from removing the Protoliterate remains above the western part of the Burnt Building. On the other hand, it has been possible for Richard Le Fevre to check many details in the sides of Protoliterate pits sunk into the western parts of the building and to draw a more complete plan. The Burnt Building now appears as an even more impressively regular and monumental structure than it did last season. The new information goes far to substantiate Professor Delougaz' hypotheses as to the building's significance.

While Jim Knudstad was still with us, I decided to move the excavations from the terrace to the high mound, where the steep slopes were shedding water rather than holding it in "basins" as in the East Area. In the third season as a stratigraphic test we had cut a narrow deep trench, Number XXIII, in the south-west spur of the high mound, which showed traces of Protoliterate remains at the top and thick deposits of Late Susiana material overlying Middle Susiana ones. We had had to stop in Trench XXIII at the close of the third season without reaching virgin soil. My aim in enlarging it was to carry on to that point. The obtaining of the complete sequence here would be an important addition to our knowledge since we have on the high mound, in sharp contrast to the terrace, reached virgin soil in only one small area. Thus, we still have no Early Susiana remains, not to speak of Archaic Susiana ones, from the high mound. For our historical conclusions as to the economic and social development of the Chogha Mish region, it is important to determine the size of the settlements preceding the large fifth millennium B.C. town of the Middle Susiana period.

In Trench XXIII soft ashy layers with sherds of the Late Susiana period sloped upwards towards the periphery of the mound, a circumstance which we had already noticed in the first major trench, Number II, dug on the east part of the mound during the first and second seasons. In Trench XXIII the ashy layers abut on the outer-slope side against densely packed hard brick-like materials, which were a difficult problem to disentangle. It is quite possible that we have here not just ordinary house walls, but in part at least, elements forming together a heavy retaining wall such as has been observed at Late Susiana levels at other sites. The recalcitrant nature of the hard materials made it impossible to go down through the Late Susiana levels of Trench XXIII quickly. We have, however, after digging about four meters, reached a heavy clay floor covering the entire extension of the trench and sealing

everything that lies underneath. This was an ideal place to stop; the deep deposits below must wait until next season.

A few days after reopening Trench XXIII, we returned also to another area somewhat higher on the south-west spur in what had been known in the third season as "Trench XXIV." At that time we had cleared Protoliterate brickwork on the lower slopes as well as two cess pits constructed of baked bricks; on the higher part of the slope we had articulated Elamite brickwork and it was in this area that last season Professor Delougaz clarified the massive Protoliterate retaining wall on the lower western slope and had discovered the monumental Protoliterate drain. "Trench XXIV" turned out to be our main effort of the season, though this is not what I had planned originally. However, by the time that the intervals of sunny days might have allowed us to return to the East Area, we had become too deeply involved in the complexities of the finds on the high mound to split our efforts. We started on the south slope about fifteen meters south of the great drain at a considerably lower level than its higher part. The stumps of some Protoliterate walls enclosing small hearth-like constructions with clusters of beveled-rim bowls and the mouths of two installations built of baked bricks appeared close to the modern surface. The latter we first thought to be kilns since in size and general shape they resembled two simple earth-cut kilns in the East Area. However, as excavation proceeded the complexity of these constructions became apparent. Both were well built of baked bricks and both expanded underground to a much wider size than their mouths. Richard LeFevre waxed enthusiastic over the corbelling used to produce the rectangular mouth of the western installation, which is very close to Professor Delougaz' great drain. It contained sherds in its upper part, but these gave out as we penetrated deeper into ashy earth which yielded many seeds to flotation. The other baked brick construction contained literally more sherds than earth, and also masses of bones. At a depth of some two and one half meters, I sent for one of our workmen who is the village well-digger and has had a lot of experience underground. He carried on until the bottom of the brickwork was reached at 3.20 meters and 3.00 meters respectively below the mouths.

The problem of interpretation remains. Obviously the

structures are too deep to have been kilns. Their inner faces are not smooth-plastered, which would seem to preclude them from having been either granaries or cisterns. Since their bottoms were not paved with baked brick it may be that they were disposal pits or for water. However, their careful construction and expensive building material seem too elaborate for such a function, so we are not yet ready to accept such a mundane use for them until we have uncovered more of the Protoliterate levels here. If they were disposal pits, then they must have been associated with a very important area. No such installations have been found in the terrace so far.

The appearance of these substantive Protoliterate remains *in situ* at such a high level has probably been the biggest surprise of the season. They do, however, as we approach the top of the south-west spur, disappear underneath Elamite remains. Inevitably, although somewhat to my dismay, part of the Trench XXIV area turned into a complicated Elamite excavation site. The thick walls of the Elamite fort dug in the third and fourth seasons and hypothetically restored by Professor Delougaz in our forthcoming interim report now appear to be the final stage of the Elamite occupation. We had sections of this late phase at the very top of this season's excavation. Probably to be associated with this final Elamite phase is a deep vertical drain formed by at least five pipe sections about 50 cms in diameter. The uppermost one was just at the modern surface and we were only able to clear down to the fifth segment. The drain was in a clearly visible circular shaft cut into the Protoliterate levels. Also dug into the Protoliterate levels nearby were two flexed burials of children placed under broken segments of large pithoi. These two can be tentatively assigned to the final phase of the Elamite occupation.

At lower levels than the top brickwork were found the walls of at least two earlier Elamite building phases. Several were of impressive dimensions and were based on projecting footings of hard mud brick. One long wall had traces of painted dadoes, white above and red below. Beside this wall was a cluster of chunks of brick formed into stepped moldings brightly painted in white and red; they were face downwards as if fallen from the top of the wall or the ceiling. Another wall near the painted one may belong to an earlier phase since it has a somewhat different

The east portion of the Seti wall. The two men on ladders are Jim Allen and Frank Howard (probably—he's a bit blurry).



6 alignment and is lower. Associated with it is a baked-brick pavement; this runs underneath a high mass of later Elamite debris and so could not be completely cleared as we were in the last days of digging when we found it. In its present state it looks like part of a monumental entrance and it lies in the central hollow of the high mound, the erosion of which led Professor Delougaz to postulate the existence there of the main gate of the Elamite fort.

What we have found of the Elamite constructions this season proves the existence of several phases of large buildings. Their scale is such that we can only expect to recover their plans by the ambitious clearance of considerable parts of the high mound. This season we have reached parts of those buildings at the eroded slopes of the southwest spur of the high mound where there was little remaining of the heavy brickwork of the final Elamite phase. Our results already give much more substance and importance to the Elamite occupation of Chogha Mish. The monumental character of the buildings and the painted decoration present in at least one phase provide a fitting setting now for the magnificent goat-handled cup discovered by Professor Delougaz a year ago. To that work of art we have added this season our first Elamite seal impression. An incompletely preserved conical sealing has several rollings of a squat cylinder seal. Though the clay of the sealing and its preservation are not very good, the design can be reconstructed. Within frond-like borders are two human figures with wings springing from their waists; they raise their arms in atlantid fashion, as if supporting each other.

Many problems still remain. For example, what was the character of the Elamite settlement: who lived in what must have been splendid buildings? We do know that there was certainly not an ordinary town — there are no traces of Elamite structures on the larger part of the site, so we have been assuming only the existence of a strong but simple fort. Now, however, we can speculate that the complex included quite sumptuous dwelling and administrative quarters for a commanding officer or local administrator. The still undeciphered small Elamite tablet found in the third season in the East Area of the terrace, where it must have been accidentally dropped anciently, now becomes more understandable. It even suggests the possibility that Chogha Mish may even present us some day with a tablet archive.

Though the precise range of the occupation must await further study, the style of the goat cup places it quite early in the second millennium B.C., which fits in well with the absence of pottery analogous to the mid-second millennium B.C. materials from Haft Tepe or the thirteenth century B.C. and later finds from Chogha Zanbil.

One of last year's questions has now been answered positively by this season's work: Protoliterate walls do exist *in situ* at relatively high levels of the high mound. The lowest Elamite walls rest directly on top of the Protoliterate levels without any intervening deposits. Once we have done justice to the complex Elamite buildings we may hope to find underneath them remains of the structures which once crowned the acropolis of Protoliterate Chogha Mish and were presumably the most important buildings of the city.

Our life here this season has been relatively cut off from outside contacts. The rains and the state of the "roads" have prevented almost all visitors from reaching us, in great contrast to the many we had last season. It is for the most part our colleagues who have come, Jean Perrot and Genevieve Dollfus of the French Mission at Susa and members of their staff, Professor Negahban of the University of Tehran and some of his staff from Haft Tepe, and, just today, Professor Henry Wright of the University of Michigan, who is in Iran for a year to work with the Iranian Centre for Archaeological Research. Some of us have made a number of excursions to such points of interest as Shustar, Dezful itself, and the Ab-e Dez dam, as well as to the major archeological sites, but only once have we all been able to leave camp together, to attend the now traditional party given by Professor Negahban in the courtyard of the Haft Tepe Museum on the eve of the Persian New Year (March 20th). It was as always a most enjoyable and gay occasion with Iranian music and dancing and the traditional Nowruz decorations and foods. For me, of course, there could not but be many thoughts of last year when Professor Delougaz was at the celebration and was a few days later writing for you our Nowruz report on the ninth season of excavations at Chogha Mish. Now it is another Nowruz and the end of the first season of excavation without him. As he would have wished, the work he initiated and carried on through so many years has gone on. Chogha Mish has again proved how much it has to yield.

Now in these last days in camp we are rushing to wind up this season's tasks. Johanne Vindenas is up to date with sherd and object registration and Daniel Shimabuku is far along with the writing of the locus and stratigraphic sheets on the basis of the field notes and sketches which he has so meticulously made this season. We will be leaving the expedition house and records in good order for an efficient start next season.

This letter brings to all of you the good wishes proper to the Nowruz season and the renewal of the year.

Cordially, Helene J. Kantor
Director, Joint Iranian Expedition

BULLETIN — TOURS OF EGYPT, 1977

The Oriental Institute and the Field Museum of Natural History are planning to sponsor several trips to Egypt during the months of January, February, and March of 1977. Each group will consist of approximately 25 people and will be led by an Egyptologist from the Oriental Institute. The itinerary has not yet been finalized but will be similar to that of the Oriental Institute tour of February, 1976, and will include an excursion by boat between Asswan and Luxor. The length of the tour will be approximately 18 days. Further information, including the cost of the trip, will be announced later. The trip will be open to members of both institutions, and interested parties should write to Bernard Lalor, Membership Secretary, The Oriental Institute, 1155 East 58th Street, Chicago, IL 60637.

PICTURE THIS, OR, WHAT A RELIEF!

by Myrette Patur Katz

Take 44 Oriental Institute members and one notable Egyptologist, Dr. David Silverman, place them on a transatlantic flight, destination: Egypt, and what you have is an experience that everyone ought to have at least once in a lifetime.

Ancient Egypt still exists, not only in the tombs and temples but also in the peasants (*fellahin*) whose crops, religion, and rulers may have changed over the millennia but not their tools or their machines for drawing irrigation water—ox-driven wheels, Archimedes' screws, and *shadufs* (cranes holding buckets to dip into the river).

Our first stop introduced us to the Luxor Temple and then to Chicago House, where Dr. Kent Weeks and his staff gave a lovely reception for us. The land of Luxor included the Temple of Karnak, built by pharaohs over a thousand-year period, and magnificent painted tombs on the West bank. Immaculate motor coaches, black hansom cabs with brass lamps, and graceful feluccas were our modes of transportation.

From Luxor we lived on a lovely steamer, the *Isis*, for the five-day voyage up the Nile to Asswan. Our first day aboard we were to have a costume party. This necessitated quick purchases at the shop on board of colorful gallabiyas, the native garb. Prizes for the best costumes were awarded to Jill and David Maher; we feasted that night at a lovely buffet with a stuffed baby lamb standing on its last legs. Nubian dancers entertained us with a skillfully executed stick dance, and we entertained and amazed them with the Hustle and Bus Stop.

Asswan was stunning and the Nubians gracious in their welcome. We saw Middle Kingdom tombs, both the High Dam and older Low Dam, and the Temple of Philae, drained and being moved to a new location as was Abu Simbel. We flew there, and found an Italian film company at work. The unscheduled surprises in an itinerary always add something.

Back in Cairo our days included a visit to the Bazaar to purchase handsome brass trays as well as handcrafted jewelry and objets d'art for the Suq. Our party traveled to Giza by camels, donkeys, a horse, and a bus. We lunched at a fashionable suburb called Maadi and visited Coptic churches and a synagogue. Tombs of the Old and Middle kingdoms outside Cairo were magnificent, with a second-century Roman cemetery on the topmost level where bones and potsherds could be found.

The Cairo Museum is truly the most splendid of warehouses. Its contents are rich in history and beauty and it will be Chicago's good fortune next summer to see some of the treasures from the tomb of King Tutankhamen. Our final night in Cairo included wine, flowers, and profound memories of a unique experience—that is, until another trip is offered by the Oriental Institute.

THE TREASURES OF TUTANKHAMEN

The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago and the Field Museum of Natural History will sponsor an exhibit, the Treasures of Tutankhamen, consisting of more than fifty objects from the tomb of the Eighteenth Dynasty pharaoh Tutankhamen. The final resting place of this king was found in 1922 by the British archeologist Howard Carter. After careful recording, the objects were transported to the museum in Cairo, and only infrequently have a few of the pieces been allowed to be exhibited outside Egypt; in 1962 the University and the Field Museum were fortunate to have a small group of the objects on display in Chicago.

This new exhibit is much more extensive and will include the golden mask of Tutankhamen, statues of the king, his jewelry, and one of his beds, to mention just a few of the pieces. To make the exhibit even more spectacular, the Cairo Museum will be sending some objects which have never been displayed outside of Cairo.

The Metropolitan Museum of New York, under its director Mr. Thomas Hoving, has undertaken the task of organizing the show, which will tour the United States for two years. After opening at the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., on November 15, 1976, the exhibit will be at the Field Museum in Chicago from April 15 to August 15, 1977. From here, it will travel to New Orleans, Los Angeles, Seattle, and New York.

In conjunction with this exhibit the two sponsoring institutions in Chicago are planning several programs such as a lecture series with guest lecturers from both Europe and the United States, evening courses for the membership of the two museums, and supplementary exhibits. These programs will deal with the topic of Tutankhamen specifically and the Eighteenth Dynasty in general. Details will be announced from time to time during the year.

David P. Silverman, Project Egyptologist

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abundant in the third and fourth millenniums B.C. than they are today, impressive as many of them still remain. Their outflow now is lost beneath the shifting sands of the Jafura desert, but then may have reached the sea through a series of interconnected lakes and rivers. We may never know the full extent of settlement that those favorable conditions rendered, for it is partly lost beneath recently encroaching sands and surely in part is also covered by the mushrooming urban development around the major water sources. But in several weeks of intensive and rewarding reconnaissance, our joint Saudi-American team made a solid and provocative beginning. Now it remains, before this first campaign draws to a close in April, to adapt our approach to a different and no less challenging oasis. After that, in the years to come, there will be many, many more.

With all best wishes, Robert McC. Adams

8 **REMINDER**

*The Oriental Institute cordially invites you
to attend an illustrated lecture*

**"THE ROYAL MUMMIES:
A BIOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION
OF EGYPTIAN ARCHEOLOGY"**

by

James E. Harris
University of Michigan

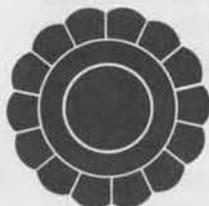
Wednesday, May 12, 1976

8:30 P.M.

The James Henry Breasted Lecture Hall
1155 East 58th Street

Admission is free. Museum Halls and the Suq will be open one hour
before the lecture.

*(The Quadrangle Club, 1155 East 57th Street, will be open to Oriental
Institute members who wish to make dinner reservations. Please call
Mrs. Schlender, 493-8601. Please remember that the privilege of the use
of the dining room at the Quadrangle Club is a courtesy extended to
members of the Oriental Institute only on nights when there is an
Oriental Institute lecture.)*



The Oriental Institute
The University of Chicago
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