

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Centenary Exhibition



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A Productive Collaboration

1919-1935

The University of Chicago

The Oriental Institute

December 1974



John Davison Rockefeller, Jr., 1874–1960



1991-92 Annual Report of the Board of Directors

Foreword

This exhibition in honor of the centenary of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., has been planned entirely around his relationship with the Oriental Institute of The University of Chicago, which means, truthfully although not exclusively, his relationship with James Henry Breasted. This began before the founding of the Institute in 1919, and extended until 1935.

Even within this boundary, limitations of space allow demonstration only in the most selective way. For a full view, one must look to the Institute's publication list of over two hundred volumes, to the entire museum collection, and far beyond. The first principle of concentration in the exhibition has been to focus on the beginnings of the Oriental Institute and then on some of those of its enterprises in which Mr. Rockefeller, according to the evidence, had the most direct interest.

One does not examine the evidence without finding more than the situation of the philanthropist supporting the scholar. There is warmth, there is admiration, there is fascination with the material, and there is the thrust of energy in advancing an enterprise, on both sides.



Figure 1. The Rockefellers and Breasted at Megiddo

A Productive Collaboration

In 1889 William Rainey Harper and John D. Rockefeller were creating the University of Chicago. Thirty years later, the former's protégé and the latter's son were creating the Oriental Institute.

Harper's protégé was James Henry Breasted. Breasted's original profession was pharmacy—his chemical training was to come in handy many years after his certification in 1886 when he was trying to preserve Egyptian antiquities—but just after he moved from his native Rockford to Chicago to open a drugstore, he fell ill and returned home to convalesce. In the fall of 1887, while staying at the home of his first patroness, Mrs. Theodocia Backus, a very devout woman, he became convinced that he had received the call to the ministry and enrolled in the Congregational Institute (now the Chicago Theological Seminary). There he began to study the language and literature of the Bible under Dr. Samuel Ives Curtiss. Gradually Breasted came to realize that contemporary understanding of ancient civilizations was lamentably inadequate. He plunged himself into Hebrew studies and, at the end of his second year at the seminary, won a public competition in the subject. The next day Curtiss came to Breasted and forced him to face something he had already begun to realize for himself: he was intended for a life not of religion but of scholarship. Curtiss suggested that Breasted study with America's foremost Semitist, William Rainey Harper, at Yale University. He also mentioned the new and neglected field of Egyptology.

During the next two years, Harper guided Breasted's development. Shortly before Breasted received his Master's degree in Hebrew, Harper asked him what he intended to do after leaving Yale. In the best American tradition of the day, Breasted intended to pursue his studies of the ancient world in Germany—and he asked Harper what he thought of Curtiss's suggestion of Egyptology. Breasted wrote later, he “seized me by both lapels of my student jacket, and said: ‘Breasted, if you will go to Germany and get the best possible scientific equipment, no matter if it takes you five years, I will give you the professorship of Egyptian in the new University of Chicago!’ ” In fact, Breasted appears in the University's very first *Quarterly Calendar*, published in June of 1892, as a Non-Resident Fellow. Three years after entering the University of Berlin, where he studied with the foremost Egyptologist of the time, Adolf Erman, James Henry Breasted earned his doctorate. It was August 19, 1894, eight days before his twenty-ninth birthday. A few months later he married Miss Frances Hart, an American girl he had met in Berlin.

For the next decade Breasted was very busy. During his teaching periods in Chicago, he supplemented his meager assistant professor's salary by earning FAME—Fifty And My Expenses—lecturing to various church and cultural groups. (He was in great demand as a speaker, and one of the first things mentioned by those who knew him, when they are

asked about Breasted even today, is his magnificent voice and teaching style.) But he was happiest while traveling around Europe's museums and Egypt's monuments copying every known hieroglyphic historical inscription, both for the great Egyptian Dictionary Project directed by Erman at Berlin and as source material for the *History of Egypt* he was to write.

One of Breasted's projects during this period was the drafting of a plan for a comprehensive program of Oriental explorations, which would require a sizable amount of money. He sent this to Harper, who transmitted it to the University's Founder and greatest benefactor, John D. Rockefeller. The latter had his philanthropic adviser, F. T. Gates, meet with Breasted. Gates had been involved in the founding of the University from the Chicago end and had so impressed the Founder that he had hired him away. As a result of that conference, Rockefeller gave \$50,000 for an Oriental Exploration Fund. The first project this was used for was the University of Chicago excavations at Adab, a Babylonian city in Mesopotamia. But beginning in 1905 Breasted was enabled to collect inscriptions along the Nile. The sudden death of William Rainey Harper in January 1906, at the age of forty-nine, may be the reason why the fund was not continued.

Breasted found himself at home in Chicago for nearly fifteen years. One of the fruits of those years of office work was a project Breasted detested: a school textbook designed to combat erroneous versions of history that paid no attention to the Near East and gave the impression that Western civilization began in Greece. It was called *Ancient Times*. It was phenomenally successful, and because a certain well-born lady read it aloud to her children, Breasted's reluctant effort benefited Oriental scholarship to a nearly unimaginable extent.

That lady's husband was John D. Rockefeller, Jr. The direction of his life also was affected by William Rainey Harper. The Rockefeller family were dedicated Baptists (both father and son regularly received *Biblical World*, a University of Chicago Press journal), and this circumstance led to a rather restricted social life for John. In 1893 we find him writing to his father's friend:

[January 31, 1893]

Dear Dr. Harper,

As you perhaps know, I have been studying for the last two or three years with the idea of going to Yale.

In the spring of '91 I passed my "Preliminaries," and would have entered the fall of '92, had it not been thought best for me to give up studying for a year. On this account I shall not be in the class with a number of friends whom I had hoped to enter with, and in fact know none of the fellows intimately, who enter next fall. Three of my very good friends, two of them class-mates at present, enter Brown University in the fall, and a number of people have raised the question, as to whether it would be better for me on the whole, to go to Brown. The examinations can easily be arranged.

Being naturally somewhat retiring—I beg you to pardon the personal reference—I do not make friends readily, and some of those interested in my welfare, fear if I go to Yale in a class wholly strange to me, I will be "lost in the crowd," so to speak and remain much by myself, instead of getting the social contact I so greatly need. If I go to Brown with these friends, of necessity I will meet many men and associate with them. As far as the educational advantages are concerned, I feel that for a fellow naturally fond of studying and conscientious, it makes little difference which of these colleges is decided upon.

Therefore the question hangs largely upon the possibility and the probability of my getting the social contact.

I have visited both colleges and am about equally pleased as far as exterior is concerned. Of the inner life it is hard to judge. Since you have personal knowledge of Yale

and also of Brown, I take the liberty of troubling you for advice in this matter. I make no mention of my preference, in fact there are strong attractions in both directions, so that I am in a strait betwixt two; but ask your opinion on the question as presented in this letter, and from what you know of me and these colleges.

Trusting that I am not imposing too much upon your time and kindness,

I remain,

Very sincerely,

John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

(Harper refrained from a definite recommendation; he set forth the advantages of each university. Rockefeller, not surprisingly, went to Brown. While there, he met his future wife, Miss Abby Greene Aldrich.) This letter was his first contact with the University of Chicago. Indeed, it seems to be just about the earliest letter of his that has been preserved.

After Rockefeller graduated from Brown, he went to work at his father's office. One of his jobs there was to quietly assemble the tract of land fronting the south side of the Midway, opposite the original University of Chicago campus, which Mr. Rockefeller, Sr., then donated to the University.

Through a series of coincidences involving family enterprises which he was running, and under the influence of W. L. Mackenzie King (later Prime Minister of Canada), Rockefeller, Jr., became a humanitarian. Perhaps that is why he was particularly receptive to a proposition which he received shortly after the cessation of hostilities in World War I. James Henry Breasted recognized that the rise of nationalism in the Middle East, as well as a backlog of antiquities that had been accumulating in their countries of origin during the war, offered an unprecedented and irrecoverable opportunity for re-

search in this field. Accordingly he applied for funds to the Rockefeller-supported General Education Board and then sent this letter to the principal:

[February 16, 1919]

My Dear Mr. Rockefeller:—

Two years ago, after reading my *Ancient Times* with your children, I believe, Mrs. Rockefeller was kind enough to write me an appreciative letter, which I prize very highly.

The career of early man, of which that book offers only a slight sketch, can now be written out in a much fuller form. The materials out of which we can recover and put together its lost chapters, lie scattered among the buried cities of the Near East. This whole region has just been delivered from Turkish [rule], and for the first time in history the birthlands of religion and civilization lie open to unobstructed study and research. In the entire history of knowledge this is the greatest opportunity that has ever come for the study of man and his career.

In confronting such a situation as this, the individual historian, fettered by a program of university teaching, and without the funds or the time for work in the ancient world, is of course absolutely helpless. I am therefore taking the liberty of enclosing herewith a plan of work devised to meet this situation, and I should be very grateful for your judgement of it. If carried out, the plan would enable us to follow among early men just those processes in which you are so much interested at the present day. Let me explain.

You are today one of the great forces in making social, economic and industrial history. The very principles of justice and fair treatment which you are so admirably applying in your present day work, first grew up in the minds and hearts of men in that ancient world of the Near Orient around the eastern end of the Mediterranean. The noblest task in the study of man, is to recover the story of the human career, which culminated in the emergence of a religion of divine fatherhood and human brotherhood.

I earnestly hope that the enclosed plan may commend

itself to your judgement as one worthy of the support of the General Education Board. I should be very grateful if you would give me your opinion of it, or give me the benefit of your suggestions regarding it. I know that you are burdened with many affairs, but I would deeply appreciate your cooperation.

With kindest regards, I am
Very faithfully yours,
James H. Breasted.

Breasted's prospectus included a request for an endowment of an institution of research. But Mr. Rockefeller did not accept Breasted's suggestion. He had Mr. Starr J. Murphy of the General Education Board consult the University's President, Harry Pratt Judson. Judson recommended not an endowment but about five years of annual support in accordance with Breasted's budget, or some \$10,000 per year. Murphy, in turn, indicated that Breasted's project certainly deserved support, but the General Education Board did not give annual grants. He thought that private funds would be the best financing. And this was the result:

[May 2, 1919]

Dear Dr. Judson:

. . . I stand ready to contribute to the University for the general purpose outlined in Professor Breasted's plan, whatever sum may be needed during the period of five years, up to a total of One hundred [thousand] dollars (\$100,000), with the understanding that up to Twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) of this amount will be available each year as called for, and such balance, if any, as is not called for in any year will be available if required at any subsequent time prior to January 1st, 1925, at which date this pledge expires.

With this confidential understanding it would be possible for you to say to Professor Breasted in discussing the work and budget with him from time to time—if in any

year the work which you felt ought to be undertaken seemed fully to warrant such a request—that the interest in the enterprise which I had expressed to you would make you feel free to ask me to add to the budget for which he has asked.

Hoping that the University may see fit to organize this work at as early a date as possible, and that the results which it may accomplish may be of genuine importance and value, I am,

Very sincerely,
John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

To Breasted he wrote in part: "I fully agree with you that the present opportunity should be availed of as fully as possible. In view of these facts and because I believe that no one is better fitted to lead in this enterprise than yourself, I shall be happy to finance your project on the basis of the annual expense outlined for a period of five years." This points up two characteristics of John D. Rockefeller, Jr.: first, he completely avoids embarrassing Breasted with his charity, and, second and foremost, he displays his trust in the *man* he is aiding, whom in fact he had not yet met.

Plans for the maiden expedition of the Oriental Institute were laid over the summer, and at one point Rockefeller offered to supplement Breasted's acquisition fund, if necessary. The trip is chronicled in considerable detail in Breasted's *The Oriental Institute*; among the highlights, certainly, was the opportunity to acquire vast quantities of the antiquities which had been piling up in dealers' shops during the war. It was Rockefeller who in large part made those acquisitions possible. In the beginning of December 1919 he pledged anonymously an additional \$25,000 solely for "the purchase of important historical pieces which he may come upon during his expedi-

tion to the Holy Land.” Being essentially a public man, Breasted was not one to express his feelings on paper. But a note from his wife, at home in Chicago, upon receipt of this news, may convey Breasted’s emotions more eloquently than he might have cared to:

[December 11, 1919]

Dear President Judson,

With so many matters on your mind, it was very kind of you to telephone me that message today—a message which has put new courage into me, because I know what it will mean to my husband. That the donor should withhold his name, only raises him in my estimation, for it proves him to be sincerely interested in the history of civilization, and the cause for which my husband has sacrificed so much.

Few know what this scientific journey has involved and it is not necessary to dwell upon it but I should like you to express my deep gratitude to the donor, of a gift which means far more than he realizes; and if it is, as you assure me, but the beginning, then I think he should know, that such assurance will bring to my husband the support which he needs, in an undertaking which is demanding all the fortitude which he possesses, to carry out. . . .

Believe me

Gratefully yours

Frances H. Breasted.

Nevertheless, \$25,000 was not enough. Breasted spent that much in Egypt, and more; but his itinerary was to take him to Mesopotamia, and the dealers in Baghdad were as well stocked as those in Cairo. So on April 13, 1920, this message was cabled—which did not arrive until the twenty-seventh.

Baghdad April 13
Judson University
Chicago

Great opportunity. Something very extraordinary. May we draw twenty-five thousand dollars on demand Baghdad

and twenty-five thousand dollars more on sixty days date Cairo. Will leave Baghdad May first. Reply by telegram.

Breasted.

On April 28 this letter was sent:

Dear Doctor Judson:

Referring to the telegram from Doctor Breasted—I will contribute as much as you are able to secure from others up to a total of Twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) from me, toward the additional Fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) for which Doctor Breasted asks.

Very sincerely,

John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

This matching grant was later made up by Mr. Julius Rosenwald. Among the purchases that these gifts made possible were a complete group of mortuary statuettes, much stoneware, and a fine group of bronzes, all from Egypt; Mesopotamian antiquities acquired through Mr. Rockefeller’s efforts include the Sennacherib prism, many hundreds of ordinary tablets, and a solid gold cuneiform tablet that turned up in Paris. Also on this Egyptian tour Breasted was able to buy, through the generosity of Mr. Martin A. Ryerson and Mrs. Elizabeth Milbank Anderson, two of the most magnificent papyrus Books of the Dead known.

The grand tour of the Near East constituted the first year’s work of the Oriental Institute. The second season saw the founding of two endeavors still in operation, the Coffin Texts Project and the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary. Toward the middle of 1921, Mr. Rockefeller wrote to President Judson that he understood the Institute’s work could be wrapped up within the five years of his original pledge, and he did not intend to support its work further. Breasted did not know of this decision. Shortly thereafter, Harry Pratt Judson retired, and Ernest DeWitt Bur-

ton, a New Testament scholar and friend of Breasted's, was made president.

It came time to decide what to do about the Institute after its first five years. An elaborate tour of the Nile was planned for Mr. and Mrs. Rockefeller, Mr. and Mrs. Ryerson, and Mr. and Mrs. Breasted, but the Rockefellers were forced to cancel, citing family reasons—the children then ranged in age from seven to nineteen. Burton and Breasted went to see Mr. Rockefeller in New York to ask for operating expenses, a new building, and an endowment, around Thanksgiving of 1923. One reads Rockefeller's response to the Chicagoans' supplication with a sinking feeling through the first page, where he details the limited nature of his commitment to Judson, culminating at this point:

[November 26, 1923]

I quite appreciate the fact that since my correspondence was entirely with Dr. Judson, neither of you gentlemen had any first hand knowledge of just what my relationship to the enterprise was, but had permitted your wish to become father to the thought, and had assumed that it was understood my relationship would be a continuing one.

With the clear understanding, then, that not only am I in no way committed to the further support of the Oriental Institute, but have gone on record as indicating the improbability of my making added contributions thereto, understanding the embarrassment of the position in which you gentlemen find yourselves, through no fault of yours nor of mine, and having in mind the importance of the work which the Institute has done and is doing, I will be glad to take the matter up on its merits as an entirely new proposition, and consider carefully the material which Dr. Breasted left with me the other night. Within a few days I will write you again.

A week later he pledged \$50,000 for the next season.

Rockefeller also consulted the old family adviser, Frederick T. Gates, who wrote:

[December 26, 1923]

Dr. Breasted is so superlatively fitted for his chosen work by a rare and unequalled combination of native gifts, learning, experience and acquired influence, his staff is so well chosen, his enthusiasm is so contagious, his organizing and executive capacity is so great that it would seem to be wasteful and a false economy to cut him off entirely from research and confine him to routine departmental instruction. But such would seem to be the inevitable result unless you finance his budget. . . .

I recommend that you decline endowment because Dr. Breasted is himself the very life and soul of the Oriental Institute and in no small degree of all present or useful research. He is the Atlas that carries it on his back. His like has not arisen and he will leave no successor.

He also thought Chicagoans should pay for a new building.

The result of this exchange was a letter with the following words:

[December 29, 1923]

As I view it, Dr. Breasted is the chief asset of the Oriental Institute. The work which he is personally able to plan and carry out during his lifetime is bound to be of very real and far reaching importance. Whether when he has finished his work the Institute should be continued, whether others will be found to take his place whose ability and leadership would justify its continuance, would seem to be questions to be dealt with when they arise. Because I believe so profoundly in Dr. Breasted, in his prominent and outstanding ability in his chosen line, in the service which he has rendered, is rendering and will continue to render in this field if the means are provided, I shall be happy to extend my recent pledge . . . for four additional years.

Both Breasted and Burton realized that they were in a delicate situation and characteristically sought to remedy it in different ways. Burton recommended finding a successor to Breasted; this, of course, was very unlikely. Breasted, on the other hand, reacted in



Figure 2. Bronze band from Khorsabad

the following way. He stopped in New York on the way to Egypt and met Rockefeller again.

[December 29, 1923]

For obvious reasons I would prefer to pass over in silence the substance of his prefatory remarks; but it is my duty to give you the exact situation. I may summarize his statement by saying that he regarded his contributions to the Oriental Institute as support of a *man*, not of a *cause*. . . . I had just established very cordial and sympathetic relations with Mr. Fosdick [Rockefeller's adviser and subsequent biographer] on the *other* basis, namely that of supporting a great cause rather than the incidental and temporary man who happens at the moment to be on the job.

Fosdick, in fact, urged support of numerous other activities throughout the Near East, always in consultation with the Oriental Institute.

Ernest DeWitt Burton had been president of the University of Chicago for less than two years when he died in April 1925. Mr. Rockefeller's next gift was pledged soon after that. He had previously been asked to support excavations at Megiddo (biblical Armageddon) and had pledged \$60,000 for one year on the condition that matching amounts be found for four more years of work. The additional sum was not forthcoming. Instead, Rockefeller decided to give \$215,000 for five years. (At the same time, he paid for the installation of electricity at Chicago House, Luxor.) And the very next month he added \$25,000 for the purchase of a magnificent collection of Phoenician antiquities, now housed in Beirut.

It can be seen from the figures that the Oriental Institute was growing too large to rely on the generosity of even the most munificent individual; Breasted turned back to the General Education Board. Even so, he could not lighten the burden on Mr. Rockefeller. In the autumn of 1925 he found him-

self, apparently by chance, crossing the Atlantic on the same ship with the Rockefellers. His confidant in Chicago was now Mr. Harold H. Swift, chairman of the Board of Trustees. Breasted wrote that it was Mr. Rockefeller who brought up the subject of finances, and that he studied the proposal with great care.

[October 14, 1925]

On my arrival in London my son Charles handed me a letter which he had been instructed by the donor to keep in his pocket until we reached London, the donor and his wife having disembarked at Cherbourg for Paris. On opening the letter I found it to be one of the most kindly and cordial communications I have ever received, in the course of which the donor pledged \$50,000 a year for the work of the Oriental Institute *in addition* to his present support.

Rockefeller proposed to make up any difference between what the General Education Board allowed and that sum from his own pocket. He also undertook to supply administrative help to Dr. Breasted.

Other benefactions of that period include the excavation of Khorsabad and transportation to Chicago of the great bull from Sargon's palace there, and the purchase of a collection of Arabic manuscripts.

Several projects associated with Breasted but not with the Oriental Institute also were or were to be aided by Rockefeller. The first of these was the great Egyptian Dictionary, on which Breasted had worked as a student in Berlin. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., made it possible for that project to be completed. The largest single endeavor attempted in the Near East was to be a \$10,000,000 museum in Cairo, a gift to the government of Egypt, which was worked up in considerable detail. Unfortunately, the project could not be carried out. But the various Rockefeller educational boards were determined to spend that amount of money on the Near East. One result was the Palestine Archaeological Museum (now called the Rocke-

feller Museum) in Jerusalem; another was to have been a museum in Baghdad, in return for which Chicago was to receive all the results of excavation at Nimrud. Like the proposed Cairo museum, this one was not built either.

What did happen was that just short of ten years after the conception of the Oriental Institute, Breasted's plans for teaching and research endowment and a new building were accepted. He wired Swift on November 23, 1928: "BOARDS VOTED ENTIRE APPROPRIATION AS ARRANGED WITH US FOSDICK INFORMS ME IT IS LARGEST SINGLE APPROPRIATION EVER VOTED AT ONE TIME FOR A SINGLE CAUSE IN ENTIRE HISTORY OF THE BOARDS OFFICIAL LETTER OF COURSE COMES LATER WARM APPRECIATION OF YOUR SPLENDID COOPERATION AND CORDIAL GREETINGS." The Oriental Institute building was dedicated on December 5, 1931.

During the winter of 1929 the Rockefellers finally got to go on their Nile trip. Only David (who earned his doctorate in economics at the University of Chicago in 1940) was young enough to go along; the family was accompanied by David's tutor, Nelson's future wife, a doctor, and James and Charles Breasted. It was no longer a matter of business. The Institute was comfortably off. Mr. Rockefeller now had a chance to see what he had been accomplishing over the past decade.

The chief record of the tour of Egypt and Palestine is a series of letters Mr. Rockefeller wrote to his children back home. They chronicle the journey vividly—from Gibraltar to Algiers to Naples, where the party visited Herculaneum and Pompeii, and on to Cairo, reached January 21, 1929.

We are at last in Egypt, but strange to say it is hard to make ourselves realize that fact, although as I sit in our hotel parlor on the fourth floor of the Semiramis, I am looking out onto the Nile, almost at our feet, and across it

to the two great pyramids of Gizeh which stand out boldly against the Western sky and speak to us of the dim past, thousands of years ago and remind us that the great desert stretches on unendingly beyond them.

The next letter is filled with doings in and around Cairo. The family visited and marveled at the Cairo Museum at least half a dozen times. They admired the pyramids, paintings, and reliefs at Saqqara. They took side trips to Gizeh. David climbed a pyramid. David, the future banker, turned out to be the best bargainer in the bazaars. They called on all the notables of Egypt and socialized with all the distinguished visitors in town.

The group reluctantly left Cairo after two weeks to travel up the Nile by steamer, but once again they were pleased with what they saw. One stop was at Abydos, where Mr. Rockefeller met Miss Amice Calverley, an English artist who was copying the temple's beautifully colored reliefs. After about a week the party reached Luxor, where they accepted the hospitality of Chicago House.

We found Luxor a fascinating place. On the east side of the river and standing out boldly on the water front is the Luxor temple, very much in ruins, but still preserving lines of stately columns and partially roofed portions. The ruins of a Greek Forum in the temple yard seem so depressingly modern as to be unworthy of serious notice. . . .

The last afternoon we were in Luxor we had tea on top of one of the pylons, or gates, of the temple enclosure and watched the sun set and the moon and stars come out. We sat, as it were, on an oasis, green and fertile, with the native mud huts nestling among the palm trees in the foreground—the river threading its quiet way through the fields, and on both sides, as far as the eye could see, stretched the rocky cliffs, separated perhaps a dozen or twenty miles, rising out of the barren desert. It was a scene of thrilling and awesome beauty—never to be forgotten.

Stops further upriver included Edfu, Aswan, and the southernmost site of the trip, Abu Simbel. Mr. Rockefeller's description of that now-famous temple is well worth citing in full:

The temple is hewn right out of the granite cliff. It has four colossal statues carved in the rock on the face of the temple and is developed inside with its great pillars and various chambers, all, including the walls, elaborately carved and painted just as though the whole thing had been built of quarried stone brought there for the purpose. The afternoon we returned we climbed the steep hillside back of the temple cliff and walked several miles over the desert to a commanding height from which we could see the river winding through the narrow, fertile valley and the desert with its rocky cliffs and driven sand surface extending in every direction as far as the eye could see. We lay for an hour in the sand, finer and softer than any sea sand I have ever seen, looking at the great ridges and drifts of sand in the valley below, with the fascinating green river bottom and the cliffs beyond seen through a little gorge that faced us. It was an enchanting spot and the scene one long to be remembered. That night we visited the temple by moonlight and got up to see the sun rise on it in the morning and send its first rays through the front door, through the four chambers and onto the statues in the inner chamber of the temple, as had been planned by the builder!

Doubtless, had Rockefeller lived a few years longer than he did, he would have been greatly interested in the international effort to save this temple from the artificial lake that floods its site.

After a month along the Nile, the Rockefeller family was back in Cairo. From there they set out on a week-long tour of Palestine. In quick succession they visited Jerusalem, Nazareth, Megiddo, Tiberias, Damascus, Baalbek, and Beirut. No letters were sent from this part of the trip, since the travelers would

have gotten home before the mail did. All that can be said is that it must have been gratifying for Mr. Rockefeller to stand in the mountain pass and survey the excavations that he had made possible at Megiddo.

Several invaluable contributions were received from Mr. Rockefeller after this trip. He paid for the copying, and ultimate publication, of the Abydos temple reliefs, by Miss Calverley; he paid for the sumptuous expedition house at, and publications from, the tombs at Saqqara; and he paid for the publication of the life's work of Mrs. Nina M. Davies, a series of a hundred and four faithful copies of Egyptian paintings of several periods and sites. All three of these sets of books, but in particular the Calverley and Davies volumes, are masterpieces of the printer's craft.

A much more personal aftermath of the trip was Mr. Rockefeller's gift to Breasted personally of the capital to provide him and his family with a comfortable income—actually for the first time in his career. This was followed in 1930 by a contribution to the endowment of the Ernest DeWitt Burton Distinguished Service Professorship, the chair Breasted occupied until he retired in 1933.

Upon his retirement Breasted returned twice more to the Near East. After the first trip, he lost his devoted wife of nearly forty years. Returning from the second, he contracted a streptococcal infection which not even all the facilities of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research could cure. He died in New York on December 2, 1935.

Rockefeller's immense contributions to Oriental research should be understood as a response to the extraordinary personality of James Henry Breasted.

But they can also be seen as part of a larger commitment to humanistic science in general. Consider the restoration of the Palace of Versailles and of the entire town of Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, and the establishment and installation of the greatest collection of medieval art in the world, The Cloisters, New York. In this section of human endeavor, as in so many others, an inconceivable amount has been accomplished that would not have been possible without the concern and generosity of John Davison Rockefeller, Jr.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Rockefeller's life is chronicled in Raymond B. Fossdick, *John D. Rockefeller, Jr.: A Portrait* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1956). The principal, invaluable source for the life of James Henry Breasted is the biography by his son: Charles Breasted, *Pioneer to the Past: The Story of James Henry Breasted* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943). The origins and the development of the Oriental Institute are set forth by James Henry Breasted in *The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago—a Beginning and a Program* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1922 [Oriental Institute Communications, No. 1]) and in *The Oriental Institute* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933 [University of Chicago Survey, Vol. XII]).



Figure 3.
Gold-covered statuette from Megiddo

The Exhibits

Sources:

The Rockefeller Family Archives
The Rockefeller Foundation Archives
The University of Chicago Libraries,
Special Collections
The Oriental Institute

Documents

Section 1

The Principals

John Davison Rockefeller, Jr.,
 1874–1960

Chronology: The Rockefellers, the
University, and the Oriental
Institute

James Henry Breasted, 1865–1935

Section 2

The Founding of the Oriental
Institute, 1919

Section 3

The Reconnaissance of 1919–20

Section 4

Map: The Field Operations of the
Oriental Institute in the Near East,
1935

Section 5

The Megiddo Expedition

Section 6

The Iraq Expedition: Khorsabad

Section 7

The Palestine Archaeological Museum

Section 8

James Henry Breasted Hall, the
Oriental Institute headquarters in
Chicago

Section 9

The trip of Mr. and Mrs. Rockefeller
and party, conducted by Dr. Breasted,
to Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, 1929

Section 10

The Temple of Sethos I at Abydos,
Egypt

Antiquities and Publications

Case 1

Dura (Salahiye), Syria: Selected
publications of the site, deriving from
its discovery by Breasted in 1919:

The Oriental Institute: A Beginning and
a Program, by James Henry Breasted,
University of Chicago Press, 1922
(Oriental Institute Communications
No. 1)

Oriental Forerunners of Byzantine
Painting: First-Century Wall Paintings
from the Fortress of Dura on the Middle
Euphrates, by James Henry Breasted,
University of Chicago Press, 1924
(Oriental Institute Publications, Vol. 1)

Excavations at Dura-Europos: Final
Report: The Synagogue, by Carl
Hermann Kraeling, with
contributions by C. C. Torrey, C. B.
Welles, and B. Geiger, Yale University
Press, 1956

Case 2

Megiddo, Palestine: Selected ivories,
14th to 11th centuries B.C.

Case 3

Megiddo, Palestine: Bronze statuette
of a seated male deity, covered with
gold; 12th or 11th century B.C.

Case 4

Khorsabad, Iraq: Fragments of bronze bands in two registers, depicting a king holding the horns of two bulls, an attendant, a bird in flight, a fig tree; a fragment of a plow is also seen. Originally nailed to a wooden post beside the door of the Shamash temple next to the palace of Sargon II of Assyria; 8th century B.C.

Case 5

Baked clay prism inscribed in cuneiform with an account of the campaigns of the Assyrian king Sennacherib, probably from a foundation deposit at Nineveh, Iraq; 7th century B.C.; acquired during the reconnaissance of 1919–20

Case 6

The Egyptian Book of the Dead: a part of the hieratic *Papyrus Ryerson*, 525–30 B.C., illustrating “The Weighing of the Heart against Maat”; a part of the hieroglyphic *Papyrus Milbank*, from Saqqara, ca. 200 B.C., illustrating vignettes and mortuary spells; both acquired during the reconnaissance of 1919–20 and named for contributors

Other objects textually related to the Book of the Dead:

Painted fragment of a wooden coffin, Abydos, 1300–1100 B.C.

Situla, a bronze vessel decorated in raised relief, 712–525 B.C.

Five shawabti statuettes, New Kingdom to the Ptolemaic period

Three limestone fragments containing Pyramid Texts, from the pyramid of Pepi I, 2340–2315 B.C.

Case 7

The Temple of King Sethos I at Abydos, copied by Amice M. Calverley with the assistance of Myrtle F. Broome and edited by Alan H. Gardiner (a joint publication of the Egypt Exploration Society and the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, London, 1933), Volume II, Plate 11
Sethos offers incense to the sacred barks of Amon Re, Khons, and Mut

Case 8

Ancient Egyptian Paintings, selected, copied, and described by Nina M. Davies, with the editorial assistance of Alan H. Gardiner (Special Publication of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, Chicago, 1936), Volume II

Plate LXI. *Guests at a Feast*, from the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Nebamun and Ipuky

Plate LXV. *Fowling in the Marshes*, from an Eighteenth Dynasty Theban tomb

Plate LXXII. *The Procession to the Tomb and Mourners*, from the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Ramose

Case 9

Egyptian limestone reliefs acquired during the reconnaissance of 1919–20

Fragment from a tomb wall with clappers and a dancer, Fifth Dynasty (2460–2350 B.C.)

Round-top stela, the deceased seated before funerary offerings, late Twelfth Dynasty (1897–1785 B.C.)

Round-top stela of the Syrian god Resheph, Eighteenth to Twentieth Dynasty (1450–1100 B.C.)

Case 10

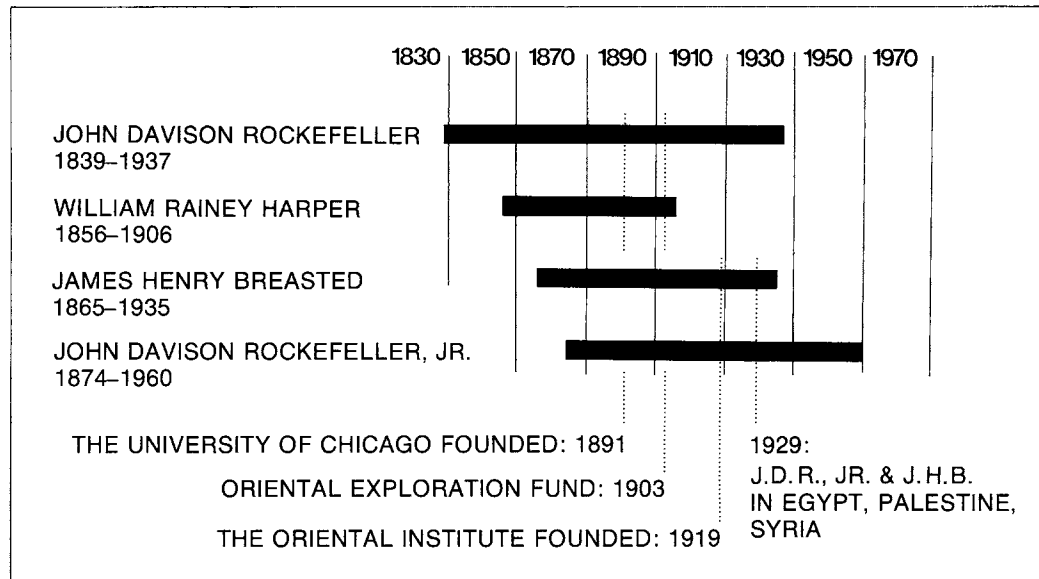
Egyptian objects acquired during the reconnaissance of 1919–20

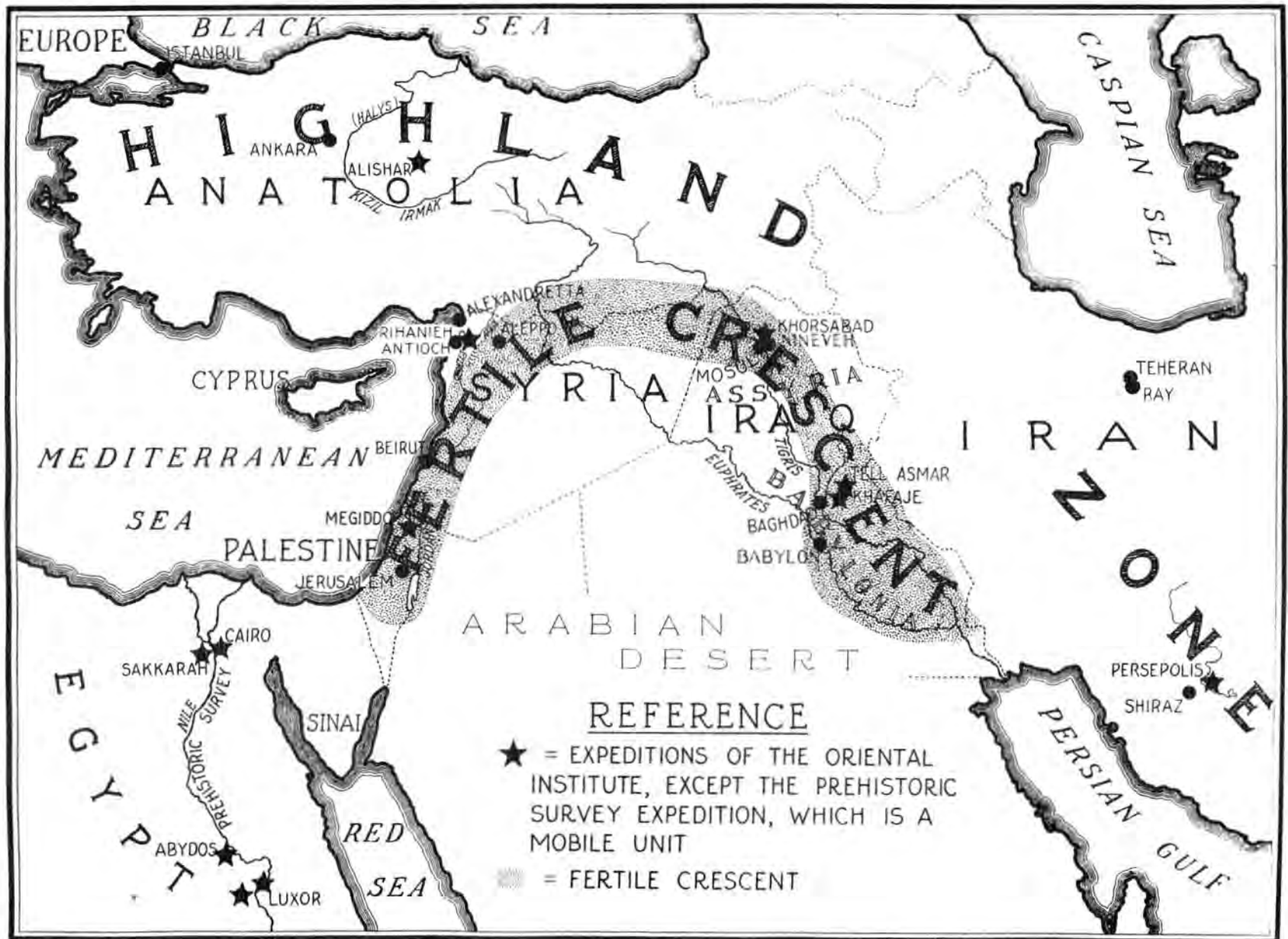
Wooden statuette of a standing man, with inlaid eyes, Assiut (?), Middle Kingdom (2000–1750 B.C.)

Painting on mud plaster from a tomb wall, a scene of daily life with oxen, Thebes, Eighteenth Dynasty (1554–1318 B.C.)

Bronze mirror with handle in the shape of a papyrus stalk, New Kingdom (1550–1100 B.C.)

Bronze mirror with handle in the shape of a woman, New Kingdom (1550–1100 B.C.)





The Field Operations of the Oriental Institute in the Near East, 1935

List of Illustrations

Cover

Part of *Papyrus Ryerson*, an Egyptian Book of the Dead, illustrating "The Weighing of the Heart against Maat." *The Oriental Institute* 9787

Frontispiece

John Davison Rockefeller, Jr. *The University of Chicago Libraries, Special Collections*

Figure 1

The Rockefeller party and Dr. Breasted at Megiddo, Palestine, in 1929. *The Oriental Institute*

Figure 2

Fragment of bronze band, originally nailed to a wooden post beside the door of the Shamash temple. Khorsabad, Iraq, 8th century B.C. Height, 11 inches. *The Oriental Institute* A12468

Figure 3

Statuette, seated male deity, bronze covered with gold. Megiddo, Palestine, 12th or 11th century B.C. Height, 10 inches. *The Oriental Institute* A18316

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1991-92 Annual Report of the Board of Directors