

## RESEARCH ENTERPRISES

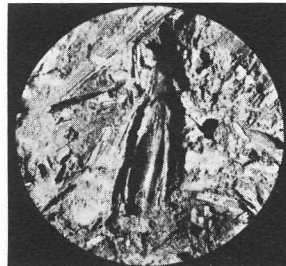
The formal program of Oriental Institute research embraces studies spanning the ancient Near East both geographically and chronologically. No description of the work of a growing organism can really be complete or remain up to date for long, but at least the greater part of the Institute's research activities can be subsumed under the following major headings.

### *CURRENT OPERATIONS*

#### BACKGROUND FOR CIVILIZATION

That the Near East was the "cradle of civilization" as we know it has long been an axiom of scholarly and popular thought. But the process by which civilization came into being is still a matter of dispute. To provide evidence that will clarify the picture is one of the purposes of the Institute's research program.

The research undertaken by the Institute to date indicates that the background for civilization is to be found in the transition from food-gathering to food production in man's early history. While primitive man still lived in caves, he spent most of his time hunting animals and scratching for roots to supply his daily needs. Eventually, however, he learned that certain grains could be sown and reaped and that certain animals could be domesticated and maintained in the rolling hill country below his mountain re-



*Imprint in clay of Jarmo barley*

treats. Hence he ventured in small bands to settle in these open spaces to till the soil and to pasture flocks. Here, through the mastery of the techniques of planned agriculture and animal husbandry, he obtained the leisure necessary to fashion tools, utensils, and shelters and to develop the social, religious, political, and artistic aspects of life. Thus he laid the foundations for civilization. The transition that marked his entrance into a new type of existence took place for the first time in history in the hill country adjacent to the upper Tigris-Euphrates Valley in the period between 8000 and 6000 B.C.