



The Oriental Institute Museum

GUSTAVUS F. SWIFT, *Curator Designate*

Important parts of the collection which has become the Museum of the Oriental Institute antedate the founding of the Institute itself, whose fiftieth anniversary we have celebrated within the past year. The additions of each decade describe and measure, to a considerable extent, the progress of ancient Near Eastern archeology as a whole, until, more and more, the collection is outstanding in the world.

Many responsibilities flow from this fact. The first is the proper care and treatment of objects in many materials, which run serious risks of survival in Chicago's climate. The Museum has profited from a recent inspection of all its collections, including the cuneiform tablets, by Miss Nan Shaw, Conservator, London, England. Her report will undoubtedly point to the need for a well-organized program of conservation. Also, the irreplaceable information in the records of the Institute's many excavations should be assembled, catalogued, and made conveniently available for continuing study.

During the past year, the Museum received from Joan Oates, because of the Oriental Institute's support of her excavations in east central Iraq, a collection of prehistoric materials from the early village site of Choga Mami. A share of the finds of the 1966/67 season at Nippur was also received.

This year an exhibit of scarabs was prepared and installed in the Egyptian Hall by Carl E. DeVries. The patient effort of preparator Robert Hanson has made it possible to exhibit substantial parts of the monumental and elaborately decorated bronze bands from the Institute's excavation at Khorsabad.



Bronze band from Khorsabad

We continue to be fortunate in having the devoted services of volunteer museum guides under the direction of Mrs. Charles Shields. They have given tours and talks to many groups and individuals during all the hours when the exhibition halls are open. The results show clearly in the Museum attendance figures since the year before this program became effective. The contributors of this service, as well as those who volunteer their time to the Suq, our Museum shop, which is under the supervision of Mrs. Norman Cooperman, extend very significantly the Museum's effort to reach into the Chicago area.

For the past three years, elementary school teachers in the Field Experiences Institute of the Chicago Board of Education have visited the Museum in order to plan and prepare for tours by their classes in the coming year.