DISCOVERING NEW PASTS: THE OI AT 100
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THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
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Foreword

JOHN ROWE

I returned to Chicago and Jeanne came for the first time in 1998. One of our friends said, “With your interests, you must learn about the OI.” We did, becoming friendly with the last three executive directors and several of the faculty members. Of course, once you start visiting you get to know Jim Sopranos and Carlotta Maher, which adds to the experience. In 2002 we took an OI arranged trip to Egypt. The OI bailed us out after a commercial tour company mangled our bookings. It was a great trip, including a very fun dinner at Chicago House and some nice time with Ray Johnson. Over the years we have attended a number of OI programs, enjoying especially Emily Teeter’s lecture on the temple singer at Karnak. I joined the Visiting Committee, now the Advisory Council, in accordance with U of C usage. In addition to our own visits we took my former company’s board of directors to a dinner at the OI, with Gil Stein hosting and have taken one of my Rowe-Clark classes to the OI where Chris and Bob Ritner played host. Bob also came to my class and did a wonderful lecture for my juniors and seniors in high school. They live on virtual technology but still value experiencing the real thing. Gil Stein helped us plan a trip to Turkey as well.

The OI is simply a good place. Intellectually sharp and socially warm. It is small enough for individuals to make an impact and open enough to make it easy. Jeanne and I will maintain our connections after my term as Chairman of the Advisory Council comes to an end. Any place where bulls have five legs is worth knowing.
A comprehensive study of the ancient orient reveals to us the historic epochs of European man for the first time set in a background of several hundred thousand years. In this vast synthesis there is disclosed to us an imposing panorama such as no earlier generation has ever been able to survey.

This is the New Past.

He who really discerns it has begun to read the glorious Odyssey of human kind, of man pushing out upon the ocean of time to make conquest of worlds surpassing all his dreams—the supreme adventure of the ages.

— James Henry Breasted, 1920
A century ago, two pivotal events in May 1919 ushered the Oriental Institute into existence. The first was the May 2nd letter from John D. Rockefeller Jr. to James Henry Breasted approving an initial five-year grant for an Oriental Institute under Breasted’s leadership. The second was the May 13th vote of the University Board of Trustees, which made the OI a reality. But these two events were part of a much longer story that both preceded and followed May of 1919. By that time, Breasted had already been working tirelessly for nearly two decades to secure funding for various permanent research facilities, which he envisioned initially overseas and then subsequently here in Chicago. And still, the 1919 Rockefeller gift was just the beginning, limited as it was to a five-year funding period. The future of the OI remained very much in doubt until the realization of the Rockefeller endowment in 1929, which assured the OI’s permanence.

We are the stewards of what Breasted created, the beneficiaries of his vision, ambition, and persistence. From the outset, Breasted’s goal was to create a center for the study of the ancient Middle East, the cradle of civilization, capable of conducting research on a scale and scope that is only possible in a robust research institute dedicated to this specific purpose. And this, of course, is as true today as it was a century ago. In our fields, there are projects—because of their magnitude, because of the resources and time commitments they require—that can only be tackled here at the OI, the University of Chicago’s first research institute. With this comes a responsibility, an obligation even, to undertake such projects. And in large part, we have defined ourselves over the last century by doing so. This is one of the most important aspects of Breasted’s legacy for us. It is what makes the OI so unique—the ability to do what can only be done here.

But this is also a privilege that I think many of us tend to overlook or take for granted, even when the signs are all around us, from our incredible museum collection, to the scope of our research staff, to the definitive projects that have taken place within these walls—the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary, and now the Hittite and Demotic dictionaries, to name a few—projects that could only be envisioned, undertaken, and accomplished here at the OI. Nor can we overlook all of the transformative individual research efforts that could only thrive in the incubator of this research institute. This year, we celebrated the life and work of the great Sumerologist Miguel Civil. And the question naturally comes to mind: could he, or any of the other luminaries of the OI’s past, have accomplished all that he did in his individual scholarly pursuits and reached the same level of greatness elsewhere? I personally doubt it.

I often have a powerful realization of what is possible here, of the incredible potential of the place, and what a privilege it is to be part of the OI. Most recently, this was driven home when we resumed excavations at Nippur. In doing so, we were not starting from scratch. Rather, we were building upon forty years of fieldwork and the efforts of our predecessors, resurrecting the dig...
Discovering New Pasts: The OI at 100

house that the OI had built half a century ago, and drawing on the hopeful persistence we demonstrated in maintaining the site and concession through thirty years of war. It was the same exact realization I had when visiting our magnificent Chicago House in Luxor, Egypt—one of the jewels in the OI’s crown, where work has continued virtually unabated for ninety-five field seasons. How many institutions could manage one, let alone a range, of such projects of global reach, maintaining them over the course of decades? I have also often been struck by an overwhelming feeling of potential, of what can be accomplished by the OI—how we can dream bigger and plan on a scale that even our closest peers cannot contemplate. For me, this is the essence of what we should celebrate at our centennial, which is at least as much about looking to our future as to our past. And it is at the heart of Breasted’s vision and ambition for the OI, which we have been entrusted as stewards.

This volume, *Discovering New Pasts: The OI at 100*, commemorates the OI at its centennial. Intended for the general public, it does not purport to be a comprehensive or definitive history of the OI. Rather it is a snapshot of the OI today and a reflection on the past by those of us who have the privilege of being part of the OI at this special moment in its history. I would like to offer my sincerest thanks to the Centennial Book Committee, which was chaired by Prof. Theo van den Hout, and staffed additionally by Gretel Braidwood and Jim Sopranos, long-time members of the OI community and OI Advisory Council; Anne Flannery, museum archivist; Charissa Johnson, head of the OI Publications Office; and Prof. John Wee. The Committee worked under great pressure and time constraints to have this volume prepared and ready for press in time for the beginning of the OI’s centennial celebration during the 2019–20 academic year. In particular, I would like to express my profound gratitude to my friend and colleague Theo van den Hout, who brought his characteristic wisdom, diligence, and equanimity to the organization and editing of the book. I would also like to thank all of my OI colleagues who contributed to this volume and assisted in its preparation, as well as to Eric Cline, who wrote on the excavations at Megiddo, and to Jeffrey Abt, James Henry Breasted biographer, who contributed the chapter on Breasted and the early history of the OI, and made suggestions for the volume’s title, from which we drew inspiration. This volume would not have been possible without all of their collective efforts, and for this I am enormously grateful.

Finally, and in closing, I would underscore that our centennial is a celebration not only of the founding of the Oriental Institute, but also, importantly, of the supreme act of philanthropy that made the OI a reality. Philanthropy has made—and will continue to make—everything we do possible. Our Advisory Council, our members, our donors, and our volunteers are the lifeblood of the OI—we can only fulfill our ambitions and potential with their support. And so, on behalf of all of us at the OI, I would like to extend to them our most profound thanks.
Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.,
26 Broadway, New York City

Feb 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 misrule, and for the first time in history the birth-lands 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 judgment 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 adorningly 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 heartily hope that the enclosed plan may commend itself to your judgment 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,

(Signed) James H. Breasted.
Dear Doctor Judson:

I am enclosing herewith a copy of a letter to me from Professor Breasted, dated February 16th, and a copy of the memorandum which accompanied the letter; also a copy of a letter which I have just written Professor Breasted.

Mr. Murphy has written me of his correspondence with you on this subject, of your approval of the plan and of your suggestion that it would be better to finance the project for a trial period of five (5) years, at the end of which time the question of its continuance could be more wisely decided. I agree with you in this view, and in the belief that Professor Breasted’s budget is too low. In other words, that he cannot secure the service and cover the expenses of the project as one of great importance and one in which time may be a vital element.

While I am writing you another letter, formally stating my willingness to finance Professor Breasted’s plan as modified by you, I desire to say to you, in confidence, that 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 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, 1926, 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.
My dear Professor Breasted:

I owe you an apology for not having replied earlier to your letter of February 18th, enclosing a plan for the organization of an Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago. The pressure of many other things and absence from my office must be my excuse.

I am greatly interested in the project which you have in mind. Material of untold value is now available as it has never been before. Changing conditions may lead to the destruction of some, if not much, of this material, therefore, 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 (5) years, through the University, in whose name and under whose direction it would I assume be your wish to have the enterprise carried out.

I am enclosing herewith a copy of a letter which I have just written to President Judson on the subject.

Glad of the opportunity to become a partner with you and the University in this important undertaking and with every wish for its success, I am,

Very sincerely,

[Signature]

Professor James H. Breasted
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois
Note from the Editor

In November of 2017, Christopher Woods, director of the Oriental Institute (OI), charged a group of faculty, staff, and volunteers to put together a book celebrating the history of our institution. The committee consisted of Gretel Braidwood and Jim Sopranos, both long-term volunteers and members of the OI Advisory Council; Anne Flannery, OI archivist; Charissa Johnson, head of the OI Publications Office; John Wee, professor of Assyriology; and myself. The deadline was to be September 2019, less than two years away. The fact that we succeeded is due in large part to the quick and eager response of many groups and individuals in the OI, ready to tell the story of their unit. A special thanks we owe to Jeffrey Abt and Eric Cline for providing wonderful chapters on James Henry Breasted, the founder of the OI, and on Megiddo, respectively. In the winter of 2018, almost all contributions had been submitted in draft and first editing could start. As a committee, we are deeply grateful to all authors for their cooperation and flexibility. An enormous debt of gratitude is also owed to Charissa Johnson and Steve Townshend of the Publications Office: in spite of an already heavy schedule, they took on this new task with their usual enthusiasm and professionalism.

This book does not aim to be the official or definitive history of the OI. The official biography of our institute is a task for future historians, and the definitive history will never exist because the OI is ever evolving, and every generation writes its own history. With this book we hope to reach a wider audience and one that is perhaps not directly familiar with what we have done in the past century and what we still do, through texts and artifacts telling the story of the ancient Middle East and what it still means to our world today. We therefore decided on an accessible and not directly scholarly tone, without footnotes or a host of references. Interested readers can find notes on further reading at the ends of the various essays.

With its collaborative character this book truly represents the community that is the OI. A community of people, of faculty, staff, and volunteers, who together are passionate to get the story across: how in the ancient Middle East, humans for the first time settled down, domesticated their environment, and built the first cities. Artistic expressions started to flourish, people invented writing (first as a bookkeeping tool but soon giving way to literature and science), and the earliest political structures emerged. From Breasted to our youngest visitors at Mummies Night, this human journey has fascinated generations, and it is what the OI has dedicated its life to in the past one hundred years. This book tells the story of the OI, Our Institute, as we embark on the next century!

On behalf of the Centennial Book Committee,

Theo van den Hout
July 2019
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BEGINNINGS
[01] SEEKING PERMANENCE
LEFT: Breasted, May 1896.
SEEKING PERMANENCE: JAMES HENRY BREASTED AND HIS ORIENTAL INSTITUTE

JEFFREY ABT

That the Oriental Institute exists today is testimony to the brilliance, persistence, and charisma of its founder, James Henry Breasted. It began in 1919 with a five-year grant, the duration limited by donor John D. Rockefeller Jr., to test the program’s viability and promise. Breasted christened it the Oriental Institute, inaugurating it with a sense of permanence that was by no means assured. Nearly another decade would pass before he persuaded Rockefeller and his philanthropic officials to endow it and provide money for its own building. And that 1919 grant followed more than a decade of popularizing and failed grant applications through which Breasted honed his arguments on the relevance of ancient Middle Eastern scholarship for modern society. To understand how the Oriental Institute came into existence, how the particular contours of its mission were formed, and why it was endowed to assure its permanence requires an exploration of the circumstances, personal relationships, and ideas comprising its distinctive nature. Breasted’s biography and the institute’s origins are so deeply intertwined, however, it is impossible to tell the story of one without the other.

FROM AMERICA TO GERMANY TO EGYPT

Born in Rockford, Illinois at Civil War’s end in 1865 and living until 1935, just as the first tremors of World War II were felt, James Henry Breasted traversed one of America’s most transformative periods. During those seventy years, the nation underwent a dizzying number of economic, technological, and cultural changes that vaulted it from a weakened federation of formerly warring states to a rising international power. Breasted’s experiences—from his youth in the rural Midwest to travels among the Middle East’s ancient monuments—vividly exemplify the challenges and opportunities of that era.

By all accounts a precocious, disciplined, and earnest youngster who loved to read, Breasted sped through school and entered North-Western College (now North Central College), in Naperville, Illinois when he was just fifteen. He began vacillating over his future path, however, and briefly studied pharmacy in Chicago before returning to North-Western. He completed coursework in the Classical Department there, with a concentration in Latin, and worked summers in a small-town bank. Still at loose ends, Breasted finished his pharmacy studies and was briefly employed in a couple of drug stores. In the fall of 1887, now twenty-two years old, he had yet another change of heart and entered the ministry. Breasted took classes in Hebrew and Greek at the Chicago Theological Seminary on a non-matriculated basis, apparently to qualify for admission. The language requirements reflected a movement among some Christian seminaries of the era to assure future ministers could read the Old and New Testaments in their original tongues. That trend allied with the higher criticism in biblical scholarship that emphasized rigorous, comparative studies of sacred literatures in literary and historical rather than canonical or devotional terms. Breasted acquired a command of Hebrew so quickly—with his own learning aids including flip cards and glossaries (fig. 1)—that he earned a prize. He also caught the attention of a Semitic languages professor who discerned, despite the pulpit’s emotional appeal for Breasted, that he was already expressing religious doubts that would likely grow as his knowledge advanced. Recognizing his intellectual rigor and gift for languages as well, the professor encouraged Breasted to consider a career in ancient Middle Eastern languages, perhaps Egyptology.
“To understand how the Oriental Institute came into existence, how the particular contours of its mission were formed, and why it was endowed to assure its permanence, requires an exploration of the circumstances, personal relationships, and ideas comprising its distinctive nature. Breasted’s biography and the Institute’s origins are so deeply intertwined, however, it is impossible to tell the story of one without the other.”

LEFT: Figure 1. First page of Breasted’s “Hebrew Synonyms,” October 1889.
In those days, acquiring a foundation in Semitic languages was the place to begin, and the professor counseled Breasted to do so with William Rainey Harper, a Yale professor and one of the leading Hebrewists of the day. A captivating speaker and academic entrepreneur too, Harper founded journals to promote Hebrew and biblical studies while also creating a nationwide network of summer and correspondence schools to offer Hebrew language instruction for the general public. Tireless and dynamic, he attracted a large following, and by the time Breasted arrived at Yale in fall 1890, Harper was being recruited to lead the newly founded University of Chicago. No sooner had Breasted begun his classes in Hebrew, Assyrian, and Arabic, then Harper confided the Chicago invitation. Breasted, already uncertain about the long-term objectives of his Yale studies due to financial concerns, became even more doubtful and sought Harper’s advice. Persuaded by Breasted’s talents, Harper endorsed the Egyptology idea, but urged its pursuit in Germany, guaranteeing that when Breasted completed his doctorate there would be a faculty position awaiting him at the University of Chicago. Although Harper was not schooled in Germany, his mentor was, and by then, like many American scholars, he believed the level of training Breasted could obtain there—especially in critical studies of ancient languages—was far superior to that available in America or elsewhere in Europe. Harper steered Breasted to the University of Berlin which, by the late 1800s, offered a peerless curriculum in Egyptology enriched by the extraordinary resources of the Royal Library and New Museum.

Breasted entered in fall 1891 and dove into his Egyptology studies with Adolf Erman, arguably the foremost Egyptologist of the time. The program focused on hieroglyphics, Coptic, and history; and Breasted added minors in Arabic, Hebrew, and philosophy—Erman recommended Arabic to prepare Breasted for travel and fieldwork in Egypt. Having learned some German before he arrived, probably at the Chicago Theological Seminary, Breasted soon wrote and spoke it like a native. That not only amazed his professors, it accelerated his capacity to absorb their lectures, an essential skill in fields where the latest advances were presented orally, not in textbooks (fig. 2). Breasted progressed through his studies quickly, aiming to complete his doctorate in three years. He chose Egyptian sun hymns for his dissertation, a large subject that he narrowed to those composed during the reign of Amenhotep IV (1353–1336 BC, the “heretic pharaoh” who changed his name to Akhenaton and overturned Egyptian religious traditions in favor of a new, short-lived cult Breasted likened to monotheism. Although his preparations for dissertation research were largely philological, his
training with Erman inspired Breasted to read more broadly—encompassing historical and social sources—and to critically regard received materials, whether reproductions of primary materials or texts about them. That skepticism was generative in Egyptology because so much about ancient Egypt is derived from hieroglyphic inscriptions, many of which were hand-copied for publications before the language was fully understood, resulting in countless errors. Erman introduced Breasted to working with original inscriptions and objects in the New Museum where the professor also curated its Egyptian collections. Breasted’s experiences there drove home the value, and labor, of accurately copying hieroglyphs and associated pictorial reliefs, as well as the evidence to be gleaned from uninscribed Egyptian artifacts.

During spring 1894 Breasted completed his coursework, oral exams, and dissertation research. In addition to writing the text in German, he had to include hand-drawn hieroglyphic extracts and reliefs (fig. 3), and then distill the content into a condensed, Latin version for publication—tasks that took several additional months. After finishing his doctorate, Breasted obtained university support from Harper to travel through Egypt for research purposes and to acquire photographs and plaster reproductions for teaching. Also underway were plans for his wedding to Frances Hart, who hailed from San Francisco and was studying in a Berlin finishing school. Breasted, possessing
large brown-gray eyes, curly dark hair, chiseled features, and an athletic build, readily attracted the opposite sex and he had several girlfriends in prior years. The relationship with Ms. Hart stuck, however, and after a nearly three-year courtship they married in Berlin in October 1894 and embarked on a long honeymoon voyage through Egypt. It was the first visit there for both, but the nuptial ardor of the trip was muted by Breasted's determination to study as many ancient sites as possible.

When Breasted arrived at the University of Chicago the following spring, a central quadrangle of buildings in various neo-Gothic iterations was just taking shape, the institution having opened about two years prior thanks to a founding donation from John D. Rockefeller. One of the first buildings to be completed, Cobb Hall housed Breasted's academic home—the Department of Semitic Languages and Literatures—in two cramped rooms on the top floor (fig. 4). Like most of his colleagues, he had joint appointments in other units, including the Department of Archaeology, Old Testament Literature and Interpretation in the Divinity School, and the University Extension. Breasted's salary was insufficient to support a wife and hoped-for children, as well as his parents who he hoped to assist after their years of helping underwrite his education. The University Extension offered additional income to faculty willing to give lectures or short courses for the general public. Breasted's doctoral training left him unprepared to make his research popularly accessible, but he learned from Harper's example how to popularize his own work, and that doing so was a means of attracting a following outside the academy which, in turn, could open other doors for ambitious young scholars. Breasted became adept at engaging a broad audience, using colorful titles and numerous lantern-slide projections of photographs and illustrations he prepared. Popular interest in all things Egyptian certainly encouraged him, and within a year community lectures filled Breasted's schedule as his travels radiated outward from the Chicago area (fig. 5) to the Midwest and East Coast, each talk earning him "F.A.M.E.—fifty [dollars] and my expenses."

Meanwhile, Breasted was laying the groundwork for his research. He used some of his University Extension income, supplemented with university funds, to embark in 1899 on an ambitious effort: recording and translating all the historical inscriptions residing in European and American collections, and translating previously published transcriptions of those in Egypt. To speed up the recording process, Breasted employed a small view camera. As he traveled from city to city throughout Europe, he photographed inscriptions during the day and developed the negatives in hotel rooms each night. Many of the objects were housed in storage rooms or dark galleries, however, requiring Breasted to improvise a lighting technique no museum would countenance today: candles mounted on binder clips (fig. 6). But his method allowed him to create study prints later on, accelerating his research (fig. 7). Proof of his efficiency and tirelessness came in a rapid-fire sequence of publications: the scholarly, five-volume Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical Documents from the Earliest Times to the Persian Conquest (1906–07), the
general-interest, but fully annotated *A History of Egypt: From the Earliest Times to the Persian Conquest* (1905), and *Egypt Through the Stereoscope* (1905), written to accompany a set of one hundred stereographs of prominent sites selected by Breasted for the “armchair tourist.” While *Ancient Records* established Breasted’s credentials among fellow Egyptologists, the latter two books introduced the general public to ancient Egypt by supplanting occult fantasies with lively and accurate narratives that also underscored its place in ancient Middle Eastern history, its impact on ancient Greece and Rome, and thereby its contributions to European civilization.

**A LABORATORY ON THE NILE**

While working on *Ancient Records*, Breasted was fully aware there were many more sources remaining in Egypt to be documented, and he sought backing to do so comprehensively. In 1903 he authored a grant application to John D. Rockefeller—on behalf of his department—for explorations in three Middle Eastern regions: Syria-Palestine, “Assyro-Babylonia” (modern-day Iraq), and Egypt. Breasted proposed permanent headquarters be established in Beirut and Cairo initially to facilitate annual survey expeditions and then, based on their findings, excavations at promising sites. Rockefeller funded the surveys only, for five years, believing others ought to underwrite more permanent facilities. The grant, administered as the Oriental Exploration Fund, enabled Breasted to conduct two seasons of expeditions between 1905 and 1907, both along the upper Nile in Nubia (the northern region of modern-day Sudan) and Egypt: the first from Wadi Halfa to Aswan, the second from the vicinity of Khartoum to Wadi Halfa. His aim of capturing as much information as possible in the course of fast-moving explorations again involved photography, now assisted by a professional photographer using large-format cameras. The expeditions were mostly transported by *dahabiyyas*—shallow draft sailboats refined by Egyptians over the centuries for navigating the Nile’s varying depths and suddenly changing winds. Breasted outfitted one with an on-board darkroom and created a more portable version for overland explorations (fig. 8). Photography within darkened chambers or atop tall monuments also demanded the use of artificial lighting and improvised scaffolding (fig. 9). The two expeditions were astonishingly productive, yielding more than twelve hundred photographs, numerous transcriptions, and copious field notes.
“Photography within darkened chambers or atop tall monuments also demanded the use of artificial lighting and improvised scaffolding. The two expeditions were astonishingly productive, yielding more than twelve hundred photographs, numerous transcriptions, and copious field notes.”
Breasted realized, however, that despite photography’s accuracy, imperfect lighting conditions compounded by deteriorated inscriptions limited the utility of some images. Breasted compensated for illegible passages by having prints made in the field and filling in by hand sections where the human eye discerned more than the camera could capture (fig. 10).

While he was still at work in Nubia, one of Rockefeller’s advisors, after reading Breasted’s *History of Egypt*, invited a proposal to further his research. Breasted replied with a plan to document and publish inscriptions on all the remaining monuments of Egypt from Aswan to the Nile delta. It employed photography as before, now supplemented with a process to collate—or compare the photographs with the original inscriptions and secondary sources—and transform the compiled information into drawings he estimated would require one hundred folio-sized volumes to publish. To facilitate the project, Breasted envisioned a portable “laboratory” that included housing for Egyptologists/epigraphers, photographic and drafting facilities, and a small research library for comparing newly documented sources with those already published. Because so many Egyptian monuments are near the Nile, he proposed the laboratory be housed on a barge that could be towed from site to site (fig. 11). Breasted’s proposal was declined, however, because of its high cost and duration—about fifteen years. He concluded the Nubian expedition and returned to Chicago, Breasted’s disappointment tempered by his election to the Berlin Royal Academy.

During the following few years, Breasted returned to his research on Egyptian religion with a series of talks fleshing out parallels he discerned between Egyptian theological innovations and those of the Old
Testament, including the rise of monotheism. That research culminated in another significant book, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt* (1912). Alongside that work, Breasted widened his scope to embrace the entirety of ancient Middle Eastern studies and the methodologies of other disciplines. Those included history and anthropology, the latter approached through the practices of Americanist archaeology, chiefly its investigations of pre-Columbian civilizations. Both disciplinary approaches informed two textbooks he published in 1914 and 1916. For the first, a survey of European history co-authored with a Columbia University historian, Breasted spanned the time from the Stone Age through the height of the Roman empire in about three hundred pages; his co-author addressed the period from then to the beginning of the eighteenth century. For the second textbook, written entirely by Breasted, he expanded the material on antiquity to over seven hundred pages in order to treat ancient Middle Eastern history more fully than ever before and to assert its seminal place in the origins of ancient Greece and Rome, and thereby in the birth of European civilization. The result, *Ancient Times: A History of the Early World* (1916), was intended for high school students but found a wide readership thanks to Breasted’s now very accessible writing style and integration of numerous illustrations with the text. It was here he coined “Fertile Crescent” to characterize the causes and shape of ancient Middle Eastern settlement patterns; and it was here as well that Breasted gave fullest expression to his use of images. With a combination of vivid photographs, schematic drawings, and diagrams (figs. 12 and 13)—most supplemented with informative captions—he orchestrated the material evidence of ancient civilizations into a saga that inspired readers, including former President Teddy Roosevelt, who enthusiastically reviewed it for a large circulation weekly.

**FROM AN EGYPTOLOGICAL INSTITUTE TO AN ORIENTAL INSTITUTE**

As Breasted was completing the first textbook and beginning work on the second, he again pursued funds to resume research in Egypt, now encouraged by his lifelong friend, George Ellery Hale. An astronomer and academic entrepreneur, Hale successfully raised funds to build ever larger telescopes and became a leader of the American scientific community, partly through his own popularizing efforts and organizational skills. Hale assisted Breasted by advising on his grant applications and forwarding them to prospective donors. In one, Breasted resurrected his plan for a floating archaeological laboratory on the Nile. Hale—who was then helping reform and energize the moribund National Academy of the Sciences—suggested Breasted’s project be incorporated as the “Egyptian Institute of the National Academy of Sciences.” When nothing came of that plan, Hale invited Breasted to contribute ideas for a proposal to another donor. It encompassed a constellation of agencies grouped as an institute of arts, letters, and sciences—a vision that evolved into an independent academy with separate entities including an “Oriental Institute.” Unlike Breasted’s 1903 Oriental Exploration Fund plan with its recommendation of specific regions to explore, this new scheme identified large problems calling for further research. Informed by the broader aims and insights that came from Breasted’s textbook writing, these included: the rise of civilization, in particular the underlying processes of human evolution from the Stone Age to the advent of classical antiquity; the systematic examination of Hittite texts to illuminate ancient Middle Eastern history more widely, made possible by a 1915 breakthrough in their translation; the compilation of a dictionary to speed studies of Assyrian/Babylonian cuneiform; and, of course, the documentation and publication of Egyptian inscriptions, ultimately to
Above: Figure 12. “The Evolution from the Sand Heap to the Pyramid in Two Thousand Years, and the Rise of Stone Architecture in One Hundred and Fifty Years,” figure 38 from Breasted’s *Ancient Times* (1916). Public domain, reproduction by author. Right: Figure 13. “Colossal Portrait Figure of Ramses II at Abu Simbel in Egyptian Nubia,” figure 70 from Breasted’s *Ancient Times* (1916). “Four such statues, 75 feet high, adorn the front of this temple, which, like the statues, is hewn from the sandstone cliffs. . . . We can here see that such vast figures were portraits. The face of Ramses II here closely resembles that of his mummy. . . . (From a photograph taken from the top of the crown of one of the statues by The University of Chicago [1905–6] Expedition).” Public domain, reproduction by author.
illuminate ancient Egypt’s influences in the ancient eastern Mediterranean. That proposal was also declined. But by 1917, Breasted’s work on it, along with the public acclaim he enjoyed from *Ancient Times*, emboldened him to once again appeal for Rockefeller backing.

By then, however, Rockefeller had begun handing responsibility for both his business operations and philanthropy to his son, John D. Rockefeller Jr. Upon assuming leadership of the charitable work, the younger Rockefeller entirely revamped it. He shifted it from somewhat random gifts that often arose from personal connections, to “scientific” philanthropy based on probing studies conducted by staff members with expertise in diverse fields. The change, which led to the creation of several specialized foundations such as the General Education Board, the International Education Board, and the Rockefeller Foundation, also entailed turning from retail to wholesale giving. The goal was a redirection from ameliorating the consequences of social problems to addressing root causes—for example, from allocations for hospitals treating the ill to grants for medical research that eradicated the causes of illness. These changes compelled Breasted to present his proposals to several Rockefeller officials in order to gauge their receptiveness and to ascertain which of the Rockefeller philanthropies he ought to approach. The General Education Board was the most promising because it focused on universities. But, Breasted learned, it did not allocate funds to individual professors, only institutions; and even then, it was for projects that benefited the entire university, not individuals’ research projects or departments. Nonetheless, he was warmly welcomed by Rockefeller officials, several of whom had either read *Ancient Times* or knew of Breasted’s accomplishments. With America’s entry into World War I in April 1917, however, Breasted postponed his appeal until a more propitious time.

When he revived the proposal in January 1919, a few months after war’s end, Breasted highlighted elements mentioned earlier, emphasizing in particular the themes of opportunity and obligation. The opportunity was access to lands in the Middle East formerly controlled by the Ottoman Empire. The obligation was America’s responsibility to pick up the reins of ancient Middle Eastern research from European scholarship devastated by World War I, mirroring American military contributions to the allied war effort.”
prior from Rockefeller’s wife, Abby, complimenting him on *Ancient Times* and saying Rockefeller would be reading it to their children. Breasted hoped he might break the logjam, and Rockefeller duly inquired into the matter. An advisor explained the problem and recommended, if Rockefeller considered the proposal worthwhile, that he personally fund it. Rockefeller did in May 1919, but as a five-year grant only to launch the program and test its viability. Breasted christened his initiative the “Oriental Institute,” knowing that he had five years to prove its worth and that its durability remained an open question.

He inaugurated the institute in late 1919 with a survey of research opportunities that began in Egypt. Breasted investigated a number of prospective sites there, some via a pioneering use of aerial photography during a turbulent two-hour flight (fig. 14). He was particularly interested in the mortuary temples and tombs located along the Nile between Saqqara and Luxor. Breasted considered the complexes, with their hundreds of inscriptions and reliefs, as possessing especially rich veins of information about ancient Egyptian political history and social customs, as well as the civilization’s religious practices and beliefs. Breasted also perused antiquities dealers’ holdings to acquire objects for research and teaching as he awaited the arrival of his expedition crew—two doctoral students, a former student, and a junior colleague—selected to assist him on the rest of the survey.

Once the team assembled, Breasted planned to head northeast from Cairo to examine major sites along the Fertile Crescent from locations between Jerusalem and Beirut, to those eastward along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, and then in the vicinity of Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra. He needed the permission of British military officials, however, because they administered much of the region in the wake of the Ottoman Empire’s collapse after World War I. The British subjected Egypt to colonial rule earlier, an arrangement that was formalized in 1904 with France, which had ruled there even earlier and retained control over Egypt’s antiquities service. The British warned Breasted they could not assure his team’s safety due to continued fighting in Transjordan (modern Jordan and southern Syria) through which it had to pass to reach the eastern half of the Fertile Crescent. Accordingly, Breasted and his
The crew had to take a nearly five-thousand-mile detour by ship from Suez down through the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, across the Arabian Sea to Bombay (Mumbai); and then double part way back to the Gulf of Oman, up through the Persian Gulf, landing in Basra. A British military base was there, and thanks to contacts Breasted had cultivated with British officialdom since his 1905–07 expedition, officers provided transportation and other assistance for the expedition’s survey of Babylonian and Assyrian ruins from Eridu (fig. 15) to Nimrud (fig. 16), as well as Nippur, Babylon, Khorsabad, and Nineveh.

On the expedition’s return, while stopping over in Baghdad, the British told Breasted of ancient wall paintings discovered at Dura-Europos (Salahiyeh) along the Euphrates about midway between Baghdad and the Mediterranean coast. Recognizing the paintings’ significance and concerned about their survival, the British asked Breasted to document them before the British completed a planned withdrawal from the area. He agreed on condition the British arranged motorized transportation and a military escort for the expedition after it left Dura so it could continue west along the Euphrates toward Aleppo. Breasted mapped a route whereby the expedition could proceed on its own from there to the Mediterranean coast, down to Jerusalem, and then Cairo—saving his team another five-thousand-mile detour. The British approved and the team headed west along the Euphrates (fig. 17). It had only a day to clear the paintings enough to photograph them and do some field surveying before the British withdrew. Despite the time constraints, the expedition documented what proved to be its most significant discovery, later published as Oriental Institute’s first research monograph, Oriental Forerunners of Byzantine Painting: First Century Wall Paintings from the Fortress of Dura on the Middle Euphrates (1924). The paintings, dating from about 115 AD, proved to be exceptionally rare evidence of a brief period of Roman presence along what was once the easternmost frontier of the Roman Empire. During that period, Dura-Europos was a vital crossroads where the artistic and religious traditions of Middle Eastern and European cultures intermingled, strikingly evident in the paintings (fig. 18).
ABOVE: Figure 17. Oriental Institute expedition along the Euphrates near Fallujah, April 28, 1920 (P. 7299).


OPPOSITE: Figure 19. Oriental Institute expedition outside the caravansary at Sabkha, ca. May 8, 1920 (P. 6891).
After completing its work there, the expedition transferred to five locally hired horse-drawn wagons and drivers because when the British withdrew, they took their automobiles with them. The expedition’s safety appeared uncertain, however, because its route fell between the British security umbrella to the east and the French one to the west. A British officer hired some Arab riflemen to accompany Breasted and his team about twenty miles to Meyadin where they were replaced by others from Deir ez-Zor, even further west, who were less hostile to the French. Because of conflicts between Arabs and the British, fights between Arabs and the French, and disputes among local sheikhs competing for supremacy in a struggle for independence, Breasted was advised to fly an American flag as a sign of neutrality (fig. 19). The comparatively slow pace of the wagons forced the expedition to stop overnight at khan (caravansaries) along the way that were ever less sanitary and hospitable as the group traveled west. After a restorative and cleansing stop in Aleppo, Breasted hoped to visit ancient sites near Aleppo such as Carchemish and Antioch, but fighting there forced him to proceed to Baalbek, Beirut, and Byblos (Jubayl) instead. From there, the expedition traveled by train to Damascus to examine sites near it and then on to Haifa. Breasted’s plans to study sites in Palestine were also curtailed by fighting in the region so the team continued on to Jerusalem and then Cairo whence it returned to America.
A BEGINNING AND A PROGRAM

Once back in Chicago, Breasted began setting the Oriental Institute’s next goals. By then he chaired the Department of Oriental Languages and Literatures—it substituted “Oriental” for “Semitic” in 1915. Breasted integrated the faculty into the institute as non-paid associates and reserved his Rockefeller grant to hire additional institute staff. The department had moved to the university’s Haskell Oriental Museum when it opened in 1896 (fig. 20) and a few faculty members, including Breasted, served as the museum’s curators from its beginning. During the intervening years he enlarged the Egyptian holdings with purchases, subscriptions to excavations, and gifts; and one of his first steps, after returning from the 1919–20 expedition, was to mount a temporary display of objects acquired during it (fig. 21). Because Haskell included offices and classrooms adjacent to the department’s teaching collections and library, Breasted could administer the institute from the chair’s office and wedge its programs into Haskell’s available spaces.

As Breasted planned the institute’s future, he drifted away from launching new excavations and concentrated instead on already discovered evidence worthy of study and publication. That decision may have been compelled by his failure in finding prospective donors for new excavations to match Rockefeller’s grant. But his years of dismay over the countless previously excavated objects stored in museum collections still awaiting research also played a role. Unsurprisingly, he turned to three projects that drew on known materials: an “Assyrian-Babylonian Dictionary,” the “Coffin Texts,” and “the Archives.” Breasted modeled the dictionary after the Egyptian dictionary project on which he worked at the invitation of its editor, and his old mentor, Adolf Erman. Following the Egyptian dictionary’s method, Breasted’s project—eventually called the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary—aimed to compile all known cuneiform texts and extract from them the many appearances of every word, with the phrase in which it is used, on separate cards. Together the cards, when alphabetized, assisted the Assyriologists in compiling the dictionary from all known variants of each word’s uses in context, thereby ascertaining its meaning on the basis of historical etymology. The project’s scope demanded efficiencies achieved with specialized typewriters, filing systems, and other aids. Within six months the team completed seventy-five thousand cards, and Breasted hoped to boost the output to over two hundred thousand cards per year by increasing the staff, aiming to complete the dictionary in eight to ten years. The intellectual rigor he modeled in his own work and taught his students, however, bogged down the dictionary’s progress. As knowledge of the language grew and standards of scholarly accuracy became ever more exacting, the project evolved into an ongoing Assyrian seminar, and the dictionary’s compilation slowed to a crawl. Over four decades passed before the first volume was issued and the project grew to almost two million cards and twenty-six physical volumes, the dictionary reaching completion about ninety years after its launch.
ABOVE LEFT: Figure 22. John Hartman photographing the interior side of a coffin panel in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, ca. 1923.

ABOVE RIGHT: Figure 23. Coffin Texts transcription form, designed by Breasted, spring 1922. Author and date of transcription unknown.

OPPOSITE: Figure 24. The Coffin Texts project staff at work in a side gallery of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, 1922–23. In the middle distance, from left to right: Alan H. Gardiner, Breasted, and Ludlow S. Bull. On the far left and far right are Anna MacPherson Davies and Norman de Garis Davies, a couple expert at rendering facsimiles of ancient Egyptian paintings. Mr. Davies was a member of Breasted’s 1906–7 Nubian expedition team.
The Coffin Texts project originated with an observation Breasted made in *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*. It came in his discussion of Egyptian mortuary practices during the Middle Kingdom (ca. 1975–1640 BCE), when texts began to be inscribed on the interiors of coffins used by prosperous Egyptians to guide the deceased into the afterworld. Mortuary texts were inscribed much earlier in pyramids for pharaohs and royal officials; Egyptologists studying those inscriptions referred to them as “Pyramid Texts.” Breasted noticed that during the Middle Kingdom, the Pyramid Texts were combined in coffins with similar writings, identical in purpose but tailored to the needs of less-exalted persons. With the passage of time, this later mortuary literature was gathered into the Book of the Dead. As a result, extensive extracts from both the Pyramid Texts and these forerunners of the Book of the Dead were utilized in Middle Kingdom coffins. For that reason, Breasted considered the coffin inscriptions especially important because they constitute some of the earliest evidence of Egyptian religion as practiced by those other than royalty. However, he observed that discussions of the Book of the Dead’s place in the evolution of Egyptian religion were complicated by confusion over the extent of its origins in the Pyramid Texts versus those of the Middle Kingdom. Following the convention of calling inscriptions in pyramids “Pyramid Texts,” Breasted named those appearing in coffins for their physical locations. Because they contain the origins of the Book of the Dead, they had yet to be systematically studied, and because little was known of the religious beliefs and practices of people outside the pharaonic courts, Breasted aimed to compile and publish all surviving Coffin Texts. At the time, there were known to be 138 Middle Kingdom coffins in museum collections, of which 95 were in the Egyptian Museum, the balance scattered among museums in Europe and America.

The project commenced during 1922–23 with disassembling, photographing (fig. 22), carefully studying, and then reassembling each coffin. Breasted’s research team—which included him, a few colleagues, and former students—used the photographs alongside temporarily disassembled coffins for notations and copying. The process began with handwritten transcriptions made from the photographs. Then those transcriptions were collated against the photographs or original inscriptions by at least one other project scholar (fig. 23). The outcome had to be as accurate as humanly possible because the fragility of the coffins prohibited their disassembly ever again. To speed the transcription and collation process, Breasted designed pre-punched forms that could be collected in loose-leaf ring binders and subsequently rearranged to facilitate comparisons of similar texts from different coffins (fig. 24). For the purposes of publication, Breasted and his collaborators agreed on dividing the texts into distinctive “spells” and publishing them in parallel columns. That step was necessary, he observed, because they were written in a challenging type of hieroglyphs often similar to hieratic, a form that falls part way between the more regular block script of hieroglyphs, and demotic, writing that can be likened to cursive. Because the hieratic of the Coffin Texts was often idiosyncratic, like an individual’s cursive handwriting, the team had to translate it into hieroglyphs, a task closer to paleography than simple transcription—a process that demanded comparisons of similarly worded spells. The resulting publication, laid out to facilitate comparisons of similar spells, required seven volumes and took nearly a quarter century—from 1935 to 1961—to complete.
The transcription process took so long because of the complexity of translating the highly personal and abbreviated nature of hieratic script into more easily read hieroglyphs. To carry the analogy of transcribing a person’s hard-to-read handwriting into block letters one step further, one has to imagine a page of script in which a certain squiggle that is repeated many times could be either an n or an r. Solving the problem requires a careful examination of the squiggle in context. If a certain word, such as are, occurs many times, recognizing the precise rendering of the r in it may help one interpret other words containing r or n, such as over and oven. The challenge of transcribing hieratic increased as Egyptologists’ appreciation of its nuances grew, requiring the Coffin Texts team to make the transcription process as transparent as possible. Eventually, as Breasted learned, even the transcription of what may seem to be easily read hieroglyphs necessitated a degree of palaeographic accuracy that could only be achieved by comparing many similar signs to ascertain the shades of meaning represented by subtle differences among them. Breasted’s goal of copying the surviving records of Egypt as a means of preserving and disseminating them was becoming ever more complex as Egyptology itself matured.

Breasted’s Archives project was to be an exhaustive repository of materials supporting ancient Middle Eastern research. Combining a research library and elaborate, card-based data catalog, the Archives aimed to assemble and classify all available information from monuments, both published and unpublished, whether from original sites in the Middle East, in museums, or scattered through an international literature of scholarly books and articles. By mid-1922 it contained over twenty thousand cards. Breasted later expanded the project to include an “Archaeological Corpus” of photographic documentation. He hoped it would become sufficiently comprehensive to furnish answers for virtually all scholarly inquiries. Breasted acknowledged, however, that the vastness of the ancient civilizations comprising the ancient Middle East rendered doubtful the financial capacity of any organization to attain his ideal. Within a decade he all but abandoned the effort.

RENEWAL AND NEW VENTURES

During the Oriental Institute’s first few years, Breasted’s widening fame in America and abroad brought new honors. He was elected to the National Academy of Sciences, Oxford University awarded him an honorary doctorate, and he was invited to speak at a rising number of national and international conferences. But the institute’s future remained uncertain, and in 1923, as its founding five-year grant was about to end, Breasted readied a proposal to Rockefeller for its continuation and expansion. The request contained two elements: endowment—to support the institute’s current programs, new initiatives including excavations, and implementation of his long-sought epigraphic survey of Egyptian monuments; and a new building—to accommodate the institute’s multiple functions as research center, library, publications office, teaching facility, and museum, all augmented with centralized support for photography, drafting, and collections and records storage. Rockefeller was surprised by the request because he intended his initial gift only to launch the institute and, if it proved viable, the University would find other sources to sustain it. Even so, he was willing to consider the matter as though an entirely new proposition. To advance his cause, Breasted argued the institute was uniquely positioned to fill a gap in knowledge about the origins of civilization caused by the interrelations of disciplinary and regional-area specializations. Whereas archaeology and anthropology outside the Americas focused on prehistoric humans, and history and sociology concentrated on developed societies, the course of human evolution from ‘primitive’ to ‘civilized’ was insufficiently understood.”
itive" to “civilized”—particularly in the West—was insufficiently understood. Breasted argued the institute, with its breadth of expertise and its specialization in ancient Middle Eastern cultures, was—with proper backing—poised to fill that void. Chicago's president, endorsing Breasted's proposal, added that while the university enjoyed extensive support for its research in the physical sciences, such was not the case for the humanities. Rockefeller was inclined to support the new request, believing it would not appeal to most other donors, but he nonetheless turned to an advisor for additional review. The advisor backed Breasted's proposal in principle, but was unenthusiastic about the building idea, feeling it should be left to Chicago-area donors; and he opposed money for endowment because the program's success relied so heavily on Breasted's remarkable abilities. To endow the institute would, he believed, saddle the University with a program that would likely fall apart were Breasted no longer available to lead it. Rockefeller accepted the advice and committed to five more years of funding, at five times the original grant's amount, explaining it was to support Breasted's research, not to establish an institution.

Breasted used the additional money to enlarge the staff working on existing projects, to firm up his publications office—reaffirming his principle of disseminating results as quickly and widely as possible, and to launch his long-dreamed-of project: recording the inscriptions and reliefs of ancient Egypt, what came to be called the Epigraphic Survey. He narrowed its scope to the remnants of ancient Thebes: monuments located on both sides of the Nile in the vicinity of modern Luxor—primarily the complexes of Luxor and Karnak on the east side of the river, and those of Medinet Habu and the Ramasseum on the west. After further consideration, he began with Medinet Habu (fig. 25) because, as he first observed in 1903, it was essentially undocumented. Before starting the survey, however, Breasted refined his methodology. From his experiences with the Nubian expeditions and Coffin Texts project, he learned that photographs alone were insufficient records and they had to be augmented with information visible only to the human eye, ideally of an Egyptol-
ogist trained to discern what the camera missed. Further, because Breasted wanted the survey’s results to be readily publishable, the hieroglyphic inscriptions and reliefs had to be translated into line drawings that were easier to reproduce in print. The challenge lay, therefore, in combining the speed and efficiency of photography with the greater visual capacity of an Egyptologist and the rendering skills of an artist.

While guiding the illustration programs of his textbooks through production, Breasted learned of a printing industry technique whereby continuous-tone photographs were translated into crisp line drawings for more accurate reproduction in large-edition publications. This was necessary to assure the images could be printed on the same presses with the same papers as were used for accompanying pages set in type. Artists were employed to trace the contours of images in photographic prints using pens filled with waterproof India ink. Once the tracings were complete, the prints were immersed in chemical baths to bleach out the photographic images leaving only the inked drawings which were then used to create printing plates. Breasted, anticipating the difficult fieldwork conditions of Egyptian temples, experimented with various photographic papers to select one that was heavy enough to endure repeated handling on location, firm enough to render crisp ink lines, and amenable to bleaching (fig. 26). He hired his former student, Harold H. Nelson to head the Epigraphic Survey and together they assembled a staff and equipment. Nelson also supervised the construction of a field facility to house the staff, accommodate darkroom and drawing functions, and securely store equipment and supplies during off seasons. Christened “Chicago House” in its first season, it was expanded several times to absorb more staff, workrooms, and to establish a working library for Egyptologists’ consultations when analyzing inscriptions and reliefs in the field (fig. 27).

The project began in fall 1924 with photography along the exterior walls of Medinet Habu’s main temple. Nelson soon realized, however, after the photographs were altered into provisional drawings, that their collation against the original inscriptions was nearly impossible because of their large size (20 × 24 inches) and the difficulty of annotating them for many corrections without making the drawings illegible. To solve the problem, the staff photographer suggested an intermediate step: making full-sized blueprints from the provisional drawings, cutting up the blueprints into smaller pieces, pasting them on standard-sized typing paper to create collation sheets, and having the Egyptologists mark corrections on them. Thus, the preliminary drawings need not be handled again until the artist consulted the
completed collation sheets for final corrections prior to the drawings’ publication. This sequence of steps—photograph (fig. 28); preliminary drawing, bleaching, creation of collation sheets; collation against the originals by the artist and at least two Egyptologists (fig. 29); and corrected final drawing for publication (fig. 30)—came to be known as the Chicago House Method. It is still practiced to this day, albeit with the aid of digital technologies. The survey team took a few additional years to settle on standards for depicting damaged or incomplete hieroglyphs and reliefs, masonry lines, scale, and a myriad of other details. Like the scholars working on the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary, the Egyptologists’ linguistic knowledge deepened as the Epigraph Survey proceeded, slowing their work as they became ever more exacting. Although the survey was fully underway by the 1925–26 season (fig. 31), in 1929 Nelson estimated it would take nearly twenty-one additional years to complete Medinet Habu. The Epigraphic Survey continues as of this writing, however, its work augmented with other initiatives such as further excavations, conservation efforts, cataloging of previously undocumented blocks and fragments, and comparable efforts at other sites in the Luxor area.
FROM OPPOSITE LEFT:

Figure 28. Preparatory photograph, ca. October 1927, for plate 43, “Ramses III Presenting Captives of the Libyans and the Sea Peoples to the Theban Triad,” from *Medinet Habu*, vol. 1, * Earlier Historical Records of Ramses III* (1930). The superimposed outline shows the area represented in the plate (see fig. 30).


Figure 31. Epigraphic Survey staff at work on the first pylon at Medinet Habu, 1925. From left: John Hartman, Harold H. Nelson, and Alfred Bollacher with unidentified Egyptian assistants.
AN UNBUILT MUSEUM AND INSTITUTE

While these projects proceeded, Breasted also courted Rockefeller foundation officials for more funds and ideally endowments. The officials reciprocated his attention by consulting Breasted on other scholars’ archaeological grant applications because of his expertise as a seasoned awardee and growing renown. Breasted’s prominence was elevated further by his role in one of Egypt’s most electrifying discoveries. When Howard Carter found a tomb in the Valley of the Kings near Luxor, he was uncertain about the tomb’s date and occupant. Lacking sufficient knowledge to interpret the hieroglyphic evidence, Carter invited Breasted to assist him. Based on seal impressions made about three millennia ago in the plaster covering the tomb’s entrance, Breasted proved it was created for Tutankhamun. Not long after, when Carter began fighting with the Egyptian antiquities service over access to the tomb and division of finds, Breasted was also asked to help mediate the dispute because of his impartiality, expertise, and diplomatic contacts among Egyptian, French, and British officials. In the end, he was unable to resolve the matter before he had to return to America. Meanwhile, worldwide infatuation with the discovery, stoked by weeks of frenzied press reports over each gold object carried into the light of day, transformed an obscure pharaoh known to Egyptologists as Nebkheperure Tutankhamun into “King Tut.” The deluge of publicity also lent individuals associated with the story, including Breasted, a moment of international fame. Hale urged him to seize the opportunity, transforming it into more Oriental Institute support. Breasted followed the advice by sharing his insider’s knowledge of the King Tut saga with key patrons, especially Rockefeller.

By coincidence, the Rockefeller Foundation’s head visited Cairo just as Breasted was mediating Carter’s dispute with the antiquities service. While touring the Egyptian Museum the advisor noticed its poor conditions—galleries overcrowded with antiquities, a leaking roof, falling plaster ceilings and walls, and storage rooms flooded by the Nile’s annual inundation. He thought Rockefeller might be interested in personally underwriting the museum’s restoration. The idea arose because a year prior, after visiting France where he observed damage at Versailles, Fontainebleau, and the Rheims cathedral, Rockefeller donated $1 million to restore them. Breasted enthusiastically endorsed the Egyptian Museum idea, Rockefeller authorized planning for a gift, and he asked Breasted to lead the initiative. Once underway, however, Breasted magnified the gift’s purposes from repairing and enlarging the existing museum to creating a vast new museum and adjacent “Institute of Archeological Research” at a cost of $10 million (fig. 32). A little over half the money was provided to erect the two buildings, and the balance was for an endowment to be administered by a new “Egyptian Archeology Foundation,” its board of trustees—composed of European and American scholars—to be headed by Breasted. For about thirty years, part of the endowment income was to underwrite the operating budget of the museum
Figure 32. Proposed Egyptian museum building complex viewed from across the Nile; the museum is on the right, the research institute on the left. Rendering: William Walcot after designs by Welles Bosworth, from *The New Egyptian Museum and Research Institute at Cairo* (1925).
under the guidance of an Egyptian Museum Commission of Egyptians, Europeans, and Americans. At the conclusion of that period the Egyptian government was to absorb the expenses and by then, ideally, a generation of Egyptian scholars would have been trained to assume the museum’s leadership too. The remainder of the endowment income was to be for archaeological research throughout the world, but by implication primarily in the ancient Middle East. The richly endowed Egyptian Archaeology Foundation was to continue in perpetuity.

The Egyptians’ approval was required, however, and shortly after Breasted formally presented Rockefeller’s offer, in early 1926, it was declined because Egypt’s leaders could not tolerate three decades of Western control over their most prominent museum. Breasted underestimated a rising nationalist movement within Egypt that threatened the existing order, as restlessness with the British protectorate intensified. Further, as word of the offer got out, it divided the Egyptological community, many members of which were sympathetic to the Egyptians’ cause. Despite the very public rejection of Rockefeller’s gift, Breasted’s friendship with him and his associates only deepened. During the same period, Breasted reported the dilapidated conditions of the archaeological museum in Jerusalem and—following a pattern similar to the Egyptian Museum initiative—he proposed that Rockefeller fund a new building there, albeit on a smaller scale. In spring 1927 Rockefeller pledged $2 million for its construction on a prominent site just outside the Old City—the Palestinian Department of Antiquities housed in one wing, museum support staff in another, and the galleries arrayed around a large interior court. The far different political circumstances in Palestine, still under British mandate, made creation of the Palestinian Archaeological Museum (now called the Rockefeller Museum by Israeli authorities) much easier.

PERMANENCE

As a result of Breasted’s persistent lobbying and ever closer associations with Rockefeller officials, he obtained an endowment for the first time. It was allocated by the General Education Board for the Epigraphic Survey, and it accompanied five years of funding for explorations in Asia Minor focusing on Hittite sites, Oriental Institute publications, additional staff, and unforeseen contingencies. Conversations about these projects furthered the officials’ interest in the ancient Middle East as a whole, and they encouraged Breasted to develop a more comprehensive, long-term plan. Despite his misgivings about seeking very large grants due to past failures, Breasted complied in 1927 with an “Archeology Foundation” proposal for an entity that resembled existing Rockefeller foundations. Its purposes included endowing professorships at elite universities to train future archaeologists, sponsoring expeditions and excavations at ancient sites throughout the world, distributing subsequent finds to American museums and educational institutions, and publishing research. The price tag was over $32 million. Breasted envisioned the Oriental Institute as the foundation’s clearing house for information gathered, serving in a kind of hub-and-spokes relationship with a network of institutions spanning the Middle East. Those could include newly created or enhanced research institutions and museums at key sites including Beirut, Baghdad, and Jerusalem—museum plans for the latter were just being finalized at the time. Breasted believed the scheme would only be feasible, however, if the institute obtained a new, much larger building and an increased endowment to ensure its institutional permanence. Undaunted by the Archeology Foundation’s estimated cost, Rockefeller officials began evaluating the proposal, assigning staff to interview scholars in Europe and America, including those at the Oriental Institute while Breasted was away.
While the Archeology Foundation proposal was being considered, Breasted rethought his strategy for a new building and more endowment. Realizing Rockefeller would only back his short-term initiatives, and then only out of personal regard, Breasted concentrated on persuading General Education Board officials that archaeology was, as a discipline, on par with the natural sciences whether measured by methodological rigor or the societal benefits of its discoveries. Thus, he argued, the institute warranted a level of funding commensurate with that allocated to the sciences. The Board took its time assessing Breasted’s proposition, however, and he grew impatient, worrying that Rockefeller’s grant of four years earlier would run out before the officials acted. As a result, Breasted asked for a five-year subvention to assure the institute’s programs could function uninterrupted while his larger proposals were under review. Knowing Breasted would continue hectoring them with numerous smaller requests, Rockefeller’s associates dropped the Archeology Foundation idea and narrowed their discussions to the objectives closest to Breasted’s heart: the new institute building and endowments. By late 1928 a consensus emerged: the General Education Board would allocate $2 million, mostly for an institute teaching-staff endowment; and the International Education Board would appropriate $1.5 million for the new building and endowment to maintain it, another $1.5 million for teaching staff endowment, another $1 million pledge if the University could raise a matching amount, also for teaching endowment, and $2.2 million distributed over ten years for research, expeditions, and publications. By coincidence, in early 1929, just a month after the grants were announced, Breasted led the Rockefeller family on a long-planned tour through the Middle East that included sites of the Oriental Institute’s work (fig. 33). By tour’s end, Breasted and Rockefeller had formed an even closer friendship, and the latter acquired a far more detailed appreciation of Breasted’s scholarship and ambitions for the institute. As a result, Rockefeller recommended the International Education Board allocate nearly $2 million more for the institute. All told, Breasted raised nearly $12 million dollars from the Rockefellers and their foundations—about $172 million in today’s terms, the endowments assuring the permanence he long sought.

Breasted set the building project underway with a design that conformed with the University’s neo-Gothic style while integrating teaching and public service functions with its research and publication
programs (fig. 34). The overall configuration also combined objectives Breasted worked out for the unbuilt Egyptian museum and research institute. The building was constructed with three floors above ground and one below, the museum galleries all located in a single plane on the first floor adjacent to a lecture hall placed there expressly for public programs. The displays, designed before the advent of regular changing exhibitions and spaces to accommodate them, were to be semi-permanent with only minor adjustments as new acquisitions were added. Galleries were arranged to offer students and others a tour of ancient Middle Eastern material culture, augmented with a brief overview of the institute’s many explorations. Offices for university faculty, Oriental Institute staff, and museum curators; seminar and small classrooms; and a research library were placed on the second and third floors. Collections storage, photography labs, and exhibit preparation and conservation workshops were located on the basement level. The building also contained an industrial-strength loading dock and freight elevator to accept large, heavy crates of antiquities, lower them to the basement for processing, and lift them back to the gallery floor for display.

“Thanks to a tide of publicity, including a Time magazine cover story featuring Breasted’s portrait, the staff was overwhelmed by crowds of visitors when the museum opened in late 1931. More than fifty thousand arrived in the first six months and the museum hosted ninety-five tour groups in the first three months.”
Figure 35. Map highlighting Oriental Institute expeditions, ca. 1931.
Middle Eastern worksites, the film was screened for visitors several times daily in the institute’s lecture hall. It was also circulated for showings across the nation and, far from easing the museum’s absorption of visiting crowds, the film’s popularity attracted even more.

Each gallery featured a map of the Middle East showing all the institute’s field projects, with a red arrow indicating which one was relevant to the objects on display (fig. 35). By then institute expeditions spanned two thousand miles from Egypt to Persia (Iran). The staff, which grew from a mere handful in the early 1920s to thirty-eight by 1926, and by 1931 to seventy-three—not including Department of Oriental Languages and Literatures faculty—enabled it to pursue extensive field operations across the region. Several necessitated field quarters that varied widely in extent and durability. In Egypt, an architectural as well as an epigraphic survey at Medinet Habu was now supported with a small campus of research facilities and housing on the east side of the Nile between Luxor and Karnak (fig. 36); an epigraphic survey at Saqqara was similarly based in a cluster of freshly constructed buildings; and a prehistoric survey along the upper Nile often relied on tents erected at each stop. In Palestine a major excavation at Megiddo was housed in a large, specially designed complex; while Hittite-related expeditions in southern Turkey and northern Syria were furnished with far less permanent quarters (fig. 37).
Farther east, Babylonian-related explorations operated out of a pair of suitably designed, interconnected courtyard buildings at Tell Asmar. At home, the Coffin Texts and Chicago Assyrian Dictionary projects continued, and the pace of institute publications quickened, from four between its founding and 1926, to twelve in the next three years, to twenty-three in the following three years, Breasted serving as editor-in-chief.

UNFINISHED WORK

Despite his editorial duties and leadership of the institute’s far-flung activities abroad and those at home, Breasted still found time to complete two new works. *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus* (1930) is an extensive two-volume facsimile, transcription, and translation of an ancient manuscript accompanied by a critical commentary. Breasted dated the text to the seventeenth century BC, but he believed it was compiled from much earlier Old Kingdom sources originating between 2600 and 2100 BC. Containing a medical treatise on one side and incantations and potions associated with magical rituals on the other, the papyrus posed an array of knotty interpretive challenges. Breasted’s commentary was written for colleagues in Egyptology, but with a nod to others, including physicians interested in the ancient forerunners of their profession. The several parts of his book, taken as a whole, comprise a summa of Breasted’s scholarship in the rigor of its linguistic analysis; its reach across the fields of Egyptology, the history of science, and history of mysticism; and the elegance of presentation both in its scholarly apparatus and printing production. His other work, *The Dawn of Conscience* (1933), was prepared for a much broader audience. In it, Breasted attempted to apply Egyptian moral teachings to urgent questions of his time, including human character and purpose during the social turmoil following the Great Depression. *Dawn* relied on material from his much earlier *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, but it also included observations from two other lecture series and recent findings from several sources, including the Coffin Texts project. Whether because of the topic or Breasted’s fame, *Dawn* attracted a larger readership and more reviews than any of his previous works. Although intended as
a popular work, *Dawn* was closely studied by fellow scholars and others, including Sigmund Freud, who cited Breasted’s discussion of the “heretic pharaoh” Akhenaten and his short-lived monotheistic revolution in *Moses and Monotheism* (1939).

Breasted was at the peak of his intellectual powers when he died in New York, in late 1935, on his way home from a trip to Egypt and Palestine. He was felled by a strep infection complicated by latent malaria that he may have acquired years earlier on the 1919–20 expedition. Although he retired from his department’s chairmanship and teaching a couple of years earlier, he was reluctant to relinquish the institute’s directorship, and his personal scholarship continued apace. Revising *History of Egypt* was high on Breasted’s priority list because he was eager to incorporate the many discoveries made since he published it nearly a quarter century prior, most arising from his own research and projects he directed through the institute. A world-renowned scholar and public intellectual, Breasted embodied in the popular imagination the epitome of the daring, charismatic, and accomplished Egyptologist. In creating the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago, he associated the university with leadership in archaeology for generations of observers, including George Lucas who had his fictional Indiana Jones mention studying there at the beginning of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Much of Breasted’s scholarship was superseded by subsequent research, and only traces of his popularizing work remain, such as the expression Fertile Crescent or the elevation of ancient Middle Eastern history in American high school and college surveys. Arguably his greatest and most lasting achievement was the creation and endowment of the Oriental Institute. Whether Breasted obtained his extraordinary support from Rockefeller and associates because of the significance and potential of ancient Middle Eastern research, or because of Breasted’s unusual gifts, remains unclear. At the end of the day, his biography and the origins of the institute are so deeply interwoven, it makes little difference (fig. 38).

[02] ARCHITECTURE OF THE OI
ARCHITECTURE OF THE OI
SUSAN J. VAN DER MEULEN

Built from 1929 to 1931 at 1155 East 58th Street, on the same block as the President’s House (1895, Henry Ives Cobb) and Rockefeller Memorial Chapel (1928), the Oriental Institute was designed by New York architects Mayers, Murray and Phillip (MMP), also known as Goodhue Associates. Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue had died suddenly in 1924, at age fifty-four, and MMP carried on in his spirit. Goodhue—a nationally known architect and American Institute of Architects gold medalist specializing in Neo-Gothic and historical style buildings—had been at work on Rockefeller Memorial Chapel since 1918, and the work continued under MMP, principals in his office, until 1929. So it was perhaps no surprise that these architects were the choice for the new Oriental Institute building project. The tasks among the three were divided as follows: Francis L. S. Mayers was the business manager; the design architect was Oscar Harold Murray; and the architect/engineer was F. Hardie Phillip. Gifted New York sculptor Ulric Ellerhusen was responsible for the decorative stonework inside and outside the building. On behalf of the University of Chicago, consulting architect E. B. Jackson drew a preliminary plan for the OI.

Among other contemporaneous MMP works are the Temple Emanu-El Synagogue designed in collaboration with Kohn Butler Stein from 1927 to 1929, and the Church of the Heavenly Rest, 1929, in New York City; they also completed Goodhue’s 1919 Saint Bartholomew’s Church at 325 Park Avenue, adding a dome and a Community House, and they worked on still more buildings in California, Nebraska, and Hawaii.

CONSTRUCTING THE INSTITUTE

The principal benefactor for the new Oriental Institute building was John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who Director James Henry Breasted had persuaded to help with the project. Funds for the Oriental Institute were approved in May 1919 by the Rockefeller Foundation, which granted $50,000 per year for five years, from 1919 to 1924, totaling $250,000; Chicago lumber magnate Martin A. Ryerson immediately matched this amount, and by 1924 the total from both sources amounted to $500,000. Finally, in 1928, the Rockefeller foundation gave the OI an endowment of over $8,000,000, which included the $2.5 million necessary for the construction of the new museum. Until 1931, the earlier Haskell Oriental Museum of 1894–96 housed the OI’s collection of Near Eastern artifacts; that museum was designed by Henry Ives Cobb and was located in the Quadrangle. However, the OI’s collection expanded so quickly that the Haskell Oriental Museum soon became too small for Breasted’s aspirations.
The Oriental Institute building was constructed in a courtyard scheme, with great surrounding exhibit halls in modified Neo-Gothic style, and Art Deco details that evoke a feeling of antiquity.

The Oriental Institute building was constructed in a courtyard scheme, with great surrounding exhibit halls in modified Neo-Gothic style, with decorative details that evoke antiquity. For the Museum Galleries on the first floor, a structural bay of about 18 feet on center and a clear interior beam span of 36 feet, with special framing at the corner galleries, gives consistently 36-foot-wide and 18-foot-high gallery halls around the 4-bay-wide courtyard—with the Special Exhibits hall being narrower—resulting in 16,000 square feet of exhibit space. The steel and concrete structure supports the heavy live and dead loads of the collection and the upstairs rooms, and they provided pier footings for the 17-foot-tall King Tut colossus, the 10-ton bull head from Persepolis, and the 40-ton lamassu of the Neo-Assyrian monarch Sargon II. The terrazzo floor throughout the museum (a material favored in the 1930s) has a special rose-colored border and “key accents” in the lobby and inside the Special Exhibits foyer.

On the second floor, above the galleries, are classrooms; offices for the academic faculty and staff; the Research Archives; the Director’s Office; and smaller, programmatic spaces. On the third floor there are additional offices, as well as a large space for special dictionary projects. A basement story holds: the LaSalle Banks Room, used for meetings, Museum Education programs, and
similar small events; archaeology laboratories and a classroom; artifact storage; and toilets and climate control facilities.

New York landscape architect Beatrix Farrand, who had worked on projects at Yale, Princeton, and the Rockefeller’s Seal Harbor estate, designed the museum’s outdoor courtyard. She also designed planting schemes for International House, Burton-Judson Courts, Eckhart Hall, and Sunny Gymnasium. Much later, in 1997, Hammond Beeby Babka Architects designed an addition to the south of the museum, and this addition was built to match the stone and fenestration of the original museum. The wing added a new conservation laboratory and exhibition preparation shop, additional artifact and archival storage, library stacks, and new climate control facilities.

A NEW STYLE
The University of Chicago had mandated use of the Neo-Gothic style to harmonize with existing buildings on the campus, however a new stylistic mood was in the air in 1929. French artists and architects of the influential Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes (held in Paris in 1925) had featured much Egyptian Revival decorative work in the show, partially due to enthusiasm over the discovery of King Tut’s tomb in 1922. In the 1960s this style was coined “Art Deco,” and it was the last style to integrate art and architecture before the International Style of modern European architecture—which rejected all ornamentation—was introduced to New York in a 1932 show at the Museum of Modern Art. For the OI’s design, a Symbolism Committee presided by James Henry Breasted and Professor John S. Shapley, head of the University’s Art department, guided the architects and Ellerhusen on both the overall building program and on specific design details, showing them illustrations in Emile Prisse d’Avennes’s Atlas de l’Histoire de l’Art Égyptien (1868–78), Archibald Paterson’s Assyrian Sculptures: Palace of Sennacherib (1915), and Georg Steindorff’s Die Kunst der Ägypter (1928). Old Middle Eastern motifs lent themselves to an Art Deco rendering by the architects and sculptors in the new building.
“Two pairs of tall bronze gates leading into the galleries feature bands of Egyptian-Assyrian lotus flowers, darts, and cones; the capitals of the center door posts were inspired by the Apadana at Persepolis.”
THE BUILDING EXTERIOR

The signature tympanum panel Breasted titled “East Teaching the West” is located directly above the 58th Street entry doors at the museum's Bedford limestone exterior, and was the result of collaboration between Breasted and his artists. It shows the rays of the sun and the Egyptian ankh symbol over a large Egyptian scribe standing on the “East” side (left), accompanied by the pharaohs Djoser and Thutmose, as well as Hammurabi of Babylon, Assurnasirpal of Assyria, Xerxes of Persia, a lion modeled after the Temple of Soleb in Nubia, and an Arab ruler. The Persepolis Palace, the Step Pyramid at Saqqara, the Sphinx at Giza, and a broken capital from the temple of Sahure fill out images of ancient architecture on the “East” side. On the “West” side, at right stands a large Western hero (wearing a cape), showing an Egyptian hieroglyphic plaque which reads, “We behold your goodness,” alluding to our debt to ancient civilizations. A large bison at the lower right is an emblem of the American West. We further see small portraits of men of the West: Herodotus, Alexander the Great, the Roman Emperor Augustus, a crusader, and two archaeologists, shown along with architecture such as the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, the Parthenon, and the Nebraska State Capitol (which MMP Architects and Ellerhusen had worked on together in the Art Deco style from 1922 to 1932). Shields and bosses at the entry and upper gables of the building illustrate different images from antiquity: a winged sun disk, a menorah, a Phoenician ship, a so-called Assyrian Tree of Life, and the King’s Gate at Hattusa, among other motifs. Ellerhusen sculpted these reliefs; he had worked with sculptors Lee Lawrie and Edward Ardolino on Rockefeller Chapel’s stone details and had created the “March of Religion” figures on its south entrance gable.
The exterior façade’s limestone pier buttresses surround stone-mullioned windows up to the third floor eaves of a pitched, red clay tile roof. Exterior gables are flat continuations of the stone facade, with smaller shed dormers—with flat roofs sloping in the same direction as the roof from which they project, but at a different slope—and with larger, more elaborate gables in the location of the Research Archives.

THE BUILDING INTERIOR
Inside the building, the lobby is a focal point. Twin lions sculpted in Ellerhusen’s Art Deco style allude to the lions at Assurnasirpal’s Ishtar Temple at Nimrud. They finish off the balusters of the lovely stone staircase with its beautiful landing and stone-mullioned bay windows; it is an “imperial” stair with divided symmetrical flights that continue up to succeeding floors. The brass handrail

“Twin lions sculpted in Ellerhusen’s Art Deco style allude to the lions at Assurnasirpal’s Ishtar Temple at Nimrud.”

RIGHT: Stairway balustrade lion modeled after a pair at the entrance to a small temple of Ishtar near the palace of Assurnasirpal II at Nimrud, northern Iraq, ninth century BC. Photo: Vick Cruz. OPPOSITE: Stone fountain at the entrance to Special Exhibits. Photo: Vick Cruz.
has quatrefoil mounts; original brass doorknobs and escutcheons bear Islamic stars (though only a few sets still remain). The lobby walls are lined with ashlar limestone courses, with quoining and voussoirs at flat arch architraves, and the wall openings were designed in the Ottoman “Bursa arch” style, with rounded corners. Two pairs of tall bronze gates leading into the galleries feature bands of Egyptian-Assyrian lotus flowers, darts, and cones; the capitals of the center door posts were inspired by the Apadana at Persepolis (see p. 49). A 1930 bronze bust of James Henry Breasted, by sculptor Numa Patlagen, is located near Special Exhibits on the right; just inside this gallery there is an arched stone fountain niche carved with old Assyrian water motifs. Deeply recessed and cusped segmental Neo-Gothic stone arches are found on the inside of the main entry vestibule’s doors. The heavy wood entry doors—originally planned to be of more costly bronze—have four types of floral bosses. Lobby cornices, friezes, and beam soffits display Assyrian rosette swags and bell-shaped flowers; flower cornices in metal decorate the interior of the elevator. Above the elevator doors is an Art Deco brass clock. Hanging lantern lamps and sconces add more flower motifs. These were made by the Chicago Architectural Lighting Company (no longer extant), who also made for the galleries the forty-six hanging glass globes in the style of double-handled Cypriot pottery vases. The “Suq” shop, originally called the “Inquiries” area, adds much Near Eastern flavor.

In the galleries, stenciled patterns adorn the fronts and undersides of the ceiling beams, with more patterns between smaller joists, as suggested by the Symbolism Committee. The undersides of the beams in the Mesopotamian and Egyptian galleries have running spirals from a Theban tomb in Prisse d’Avennes, vol. I, p. 13. The fronts of these beams have colorful bands and stylized lotus flowers from Theban tombs from Prisse d’Avennes, vol. 2, p. 35. The Nubia and Special Exhibits gallery has a different flower-dart beam motif and soffit from Prisse d’Avennes, vol. 2, p. 54. A third beam and soffit pattern in Anatolia looks like an Oriental carpet design, the source of which has not yet been identified. On the ceiling above the space between the Persia and Nubia galleries, a pattern of gold stars spans a blue field inspired by the “star chamber” found in Hatchepsut’s and Thutmose III’s Chapel of Hathor and in Egyptian tombs. The lovely hanging glass globes accent the ceilings. Handsome dark wood radiator enclosures with metalwork grilles ring the gallery perimeter at the windows.
Facing the main entrance to the building, the charming Breasted Lecture Hall has a Tudor arch at the stage, Georgian-style raised wood paneling, tall casement windows, hanging lamps in the antique style (with striped borders in the style of Nefertiti’s helmet), and a 1936 portrait of Breasted by John Johansen. At the second floor Research Archives (now the Elizabeth Morse Genius Reading Room), ornate gambrel trusses crown the deeply pitched ceiling. Two tall gables at each side enclose cinquefoil lancet windows. A north wall Minstrel’s Gallery is the balcony for second level publications storage. The south wall’s two-story glass “lotus” window beautifully illuminates this scriptorium space. This room was evidently Breasted’s favorite space. Replicas of the original pendant lantern lights from the St. Louis Antique Lighting Company have been upgraded with contemporary lighting technology and hang from a cork-lined ceiling elaborately stenciled with Tudor rose trees.

Finally, the handsome, wood-paneled Director’s Office on the second floor above the Megiddo Gallery has its own exit stair; an ornate pendant lamp and decorative cornices; seventeen tall, double glass door bookcases for display of the Institute’s many publications; and a wonderful stone mantelpiece by Ellerhusen, showing Persepolis floral motifs. The elegantly detailed Oriental Institute building thus vividly evokes the ancient Middle East. The architects have created an appropriate showcase for the world-renowned museum collections and its academic personnel.

Note: MMP’s archive of drawings and photographs is in Columbia University’s Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library. For the Gothic style of the University of Chicago campus, see Jean Block: The Uses of Gothic: Planning and Building the Campus of the University of Chicago 1892–1932, 1983. The University of Chicago Press. pp. 203–7. For all details of the decoration of the OI, see Emily Teeter, with Leslie Schramer: “Some Decorative Motifs of the Oriental Institute Building,” News & Notes, Fall 2008. See also James Perry Wilson, “The Architectural Offices of Bertram Goodhue,” (Peabody Museum, Yale).

With special thanks to Emily Teeter and Professor Theo van den Hout for their help in writing this essay.
LEFT: Breasted Lecture Hall featuring Tudor arch at the stage, Georgian-style raised wood paneling, tall casement windows, and hanging lamps with striped borders in the style of Nefertiti’s helmet (P. 14022). ABOVE: OI Director’s Office, with Ulric Ellerhusen stone mantelpiece, left (P. 18544).
INTRODUCTION
JEAN M. EVANS

The Gallery Enhancements Project (GEP) was a reinstallation of the museum undertaken in the years leading up to the OI centennial. At its inception in 2014, the GEP was rather straightforward. New, freestanding cases would be designed and purchased. The new cases would replace the original display cases of the museum, which dated back to the 1931 opening and earlier. The old cases lack internal lighting and laminated safety glass, and their wooden trim obstructed views of the objects. Modern features of museum display cases that would help stabilize the microclimate of the display spaces were lacking in the 1931 cases. It was safer for both the objects and the visitors to have modern cases, and the overall aesthetics of the visitor experience could be improved through updated displays and improved lighting. The majority of the $2.7 million budget for the GEP—made possible through the generosity of an anonymous donor with additional funding—was devoted to the purchase of some fifty-five new freestanding cases from Helmut Guenschel, Inc.

It soon became clear, however, that significant portions of the museum displays needed to be rethought and that mere case replacement was untenable. Before the GEP, the last reinstallation of the museum had commenced in 1996. Climate control was installed throughout the galleries, and a new wing was added to the 1931 building to house a conservation laboratory and additional storage space. These much-needed modernizations were realized under the direction of Karen Wilson. However, over two decades have now passed since the gallery displays themselves were addressed—a lengthy amount of time for museum exhibition and display. In these intervening decades, an additive approach with no systematic, synthesizing drive had been applied to the galleries. These had brought much-needed improvements to individual cases, but the overall planning of the galleries became increasingly obscured. Most display cases still lacked basic labels that could tell a curious visitor where the artifacts were from and what they dated to. It was therefore time to update the museum displays.

It was soon decided that even the existing cases that were not going to be replaced would have to be replanned, rewritten, and reinstalled. An exhibition design team consisting of Elizabeth Kidera (Museum Exhibit Design and Architecture), Lori Walsh (Walsh Graphic Design), and Franck Mercurio (Mercurio-Exhibits) helped us devise a consistent way to display our artifacts to their best advantage. The team worked to maximize the information we could provide to visitors by eliminating many of the busy motifs and design elements that had decorated the old graphics. Important graphic features to emphasize the achievements of OI excavations, and other research and to draw attention to contemporary issues—such as the looting of archaeological sites—were developed.

The entire museum staff worked together to implement these changes, and each of the museum departments played important roles in the GEP. To cite just one example, Conservation assisted with the deinstallation of objects from their display cases and examined them in the conservation laboratory to assess their condition and determine if stabilizing treatments were needed. At the same time, the mounts that held the objects in the displays were assessed to check their functionality. Where necessary, new mounts were specified or modifications to existing mounts were recommended. Their material identification of objects allowed the labels to be accurate, correct-
ing many of the historical designations that were based on visual identifications and had often proven to be incorrect. Testing of display materials ensured that any product used inside a display case would not emit harmful volatiles that could contribute to the deterioration of the collection. Conservation treatments were carried out on the objects that required intervention to ensure their long-term survival. In a similar manner, Museum Registration kept track of the movement of objects during the GEP, and Museum Archives provided the documentation of excavations and artifacts reproduced throughout the galleries to emphasize the connection between the OI as a research institute and its collections.

In the individual contributions that follow, the history of Conservation, Registration, and Museum Archives is presented, in addition to the overall formation and history of the collections. The main impression in these contributions is that of professionalization of practice. In terms of collecting practices, this is the shift from the early buying practices for acquisition to the realization and execution of modern archaeological fieldwork and the resulting division of finds. In terms of the collections themselves, the modern methods by which objects are analyzed, conserved, documented, and displayed largely reflects the late twentieth century modernization of museum practice itself.

The Gallery Enhancements Project represents the third re-installation of the museum, which houses some 350,000 artifacts excavated mainly by OI archaeologists along with comprehensive documentation of our fieldwork and other research. Together, the collections comprise one of the best resources in the world for the ancient Middle East. The galleries, arranged geographically, chronicle the cultures of the ancient Middle East and reveal the excitement of archaeological, linguistic, and historical discovery by past and present OI scholars. We hope you will visit the museum and explore firsthand the stories we tell in our galleries.
The origins of what was to become the Oriental Institute Museum stretch back to 1892 when the Department of Semitic Languages and Literatures, headed by university president and Hebrew scholar William Rainey Harper, assisted by his brother, Assyriologist Robert Francis Harper, was founded. By 1895, the department included Egyptologist James Henry Breasted. The faculty of the department, then housed in two small offices on the fourth floor of Cobb Hall, recognized the need to have manuscripts, casts, and ideally authentic antiquities to supplement their teaching. The first objects purchased for the collection were plaster casts received in Chicago in 1896, including replicas of the Rosetta Stone, the Moabite Stone, and the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser (all of which are currently displayed in the museum).

The Egyptian collection grew rapidly through Breasted’s purchase of over 700 small objects on his honeymoon in Egypt in 1894–95. Allocating $500 from the university in 1894, President William R. Harper instructed Breasted, “I hope you will do your best to secure material, having in mind especially the practicality of the material for us, and not mere curiosities.” As Breasted’s wife recalled in a letter to her family (January 4, 1895), “He had no idea of buying antiques for the University when he came but getting behind the dealers he finds things so cheap that he has gotten a number of things.” Among the “things” were animal mummies, fragments of statues, shabtis, jewelry, stone and pottery vessels, and five human mummies (famous for being stored in the bedroom on their Nile ship. Mrs. Breasted commented that she had to “lean over a mummy case in order to wash in the morning”). Until 1896, this material was stored in the basement of Walker Hall. Harper continued to express support for the growth of the university’s museum, inquiring “In general what steps can we take for securing additional material without expenditure of money, or at all events with the expenditure of a small amount of money... What can we do in the way of securing loan collections from down town?” (a reference to the Art Institute which had a fine collection of Egyptian material purchased by Charles L. Hutchinson and Martin Ryerson in 1892 and 1894. Both these men were trustees of the University of Chicago).

Early in his career and with the possibility of funds to make purchases, Breasted sought advice about how a collection should be constituted. In June 1895, he corresponded with Cyrus Alder, a Semitic scholar and librarian of the Smithsonian Museum, who advised “In view of the fact moreover, that you are not certain of a large fund, and further that the museum is a university museum, and must therefore take into consideration the needs of students, I should lay stress first on securing a collection of casts of important monuments, and second on manuscripts, in which the country is poor, and which will always afford an opportunity for original research...” In later years, Breasted recalled that his strategy, in keeping with his own training as a philologist, was to give priority to written records, although the “evidence in the realm of form, technique, craftsmanship, costume... of non-inscribed material was also valued.”

In the 1890s and into the mid-twentieth century, most of the countries in Egypt and the Middle East shared a portion of excavated material with the excavators. These “divisions” were ultimately to provide the majority of the objects in the university collection. 1896 saw the first accessions resulting from the university’s financial support of the work of British archaeological groups (the Egypt Exploration Fund and later, the British School of Archaeology in Egypt), led
mainly by William M. F. Petrie, who in return for an annual “subscription” of $750 gave a portion of their own divisions to Chicago (fig. 1). That was not a small sum, being about $22,860 adjusted for inflation to 2019. This arrangement brought the university into close collaboration with the Art Institute of Chicago, whose first president Charles L. Hutchinson, and Breasted formed the Chicago Society of Egyptian Research, a branch of the Egypt Exploration Fund. The CSER raised the annual subscription between the university, the Art Institute, the Field Museum, and private individuals, with other local institutions including the Hibbard Egyptian Library (now at the Garrett Seminary at Northwestern University), the Newberry Library, and at times, the Western Theological Seminary, the Evanston Public Library, the Chicago Historical Society, and the Chicago Theological Seminary, also contributing to the fund. From 1895 through the early 1920s, the university’s support of the British excavations brought thousands of provenanced Egyptian objects to Hyde Park.

In 1896, the rapidly growing collection was moved from the basement of Walker Museum to the new Haskell Oriental Museum funded by Mrs. Caroline Haskell in memory of her husband. The neo-Gothic building is located on the west side of the university’s original quadrangle (fig. 2). Initially, the museum was the home of the Department of Semitic Languages and Literature, the Department of Comparative Religion, and the Divinity School. William Rainey Harper served as the museum’s first director and Breasted as assistant director.
When open in 1896, the galleries at Haskell Oriental Museum displayed plaster casts and Egyptian objects from Breasted’s purchases (fig. 3). They were soon joined by Egyptian antiquities received from the British excavations that the university supported (fig. 1). For many years, the collection was composed primarily of objects from Egypt. The first antiquity from Western Asia was probably a clay brick from Nippur received from Robert Harper in 1888–89. In 1906, the museum received more than 1,000 important objects including cuneiform tablets, statues, stone and clay vessels, beads, and other material from the university’s sponsorship of the excavations of Edgar J. Banks at Bismaya (Adab, in today’s Iraq). Many of these objects are still highlights of the museum and research collection. The cuneiform tablet collection was further enriched by seventy-seven examples from the collection of Robert Harper that were gifted to the museum by his heirs in 1916–18. During this same period, the Haskell Museum continued to receive large numbers of objects from the British excavations in Egypt, as well as Egyptian artifacts that were deaccessioned or on loan from the Art Institute of Chicago and the Field Museum, a pattern that continued for several decades. These early transfers included material much better suited to the university’s mission, such as 198 Egyptian ostraca received in 1903 from the Field Museum, and a fragment from an Amarna tablet from the Art Institute of Chicago received in 1916.

With the funding from Rockefeller in 1919 to establish the Oriental Institute (see Abt in this volume), the museum collections expanded rapidly. In Breasted’s nearly year-long reconnaissance trip through Egypt and the Middle East, he made many highly important purchases, such as the Sennacherib Prism (A2793), and the cartonnage mummy case of Meresamun (E10797), but perhaps more important, the trip established the future excavation program of the new institute.

Up until 1925, the Haskell Museum’s galleries exhibited objects from both the Near and Middle East. That year, the Divinity School, along with its artifacts from the Far East, moved to new quarters in Swift Hall, allowing the Oriental Institute to renovate and occupy all the galleries. The new exhibition halls that opened on December 9, 1926 featured “fully labeled” objects from Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, and Anatolia, which were displayed in beautifully designed cases “of types evolved from the best
In the workshops of the Art Institute of Chicago” (figs. 7–8). Many of these handsome wood cases continued to be used until very recently, and a few can still be seen in the galleries.

With the funding from Rockefeller-related foundations from the mid-1920s into the early 1930s, the University of Chicago sponsored expeditions in Egypt, Anatolia, Palestine, Iraq, and Iran. In some cases, there were multiple expeditions in a single country, and under the terms of partage (division of finds), thousands of objects, including the Khorsabad reliefs and lamassu (winged bull), monumental sculpture from Persepolis, the Amuq Valley, and Luxor, and carved ivories and pottery from Megiddo, were shipped to Chicago. The sheer number of artifacts eventually overwhelmed the Haskell Museum, and Breasted warned the university administration:

The rapid growth and expansion of the various institute projects and the resulting additions to the collections of Haskell Oriental Museum have rendered the building so completely inadequate as to make it imperative for the present writer to devote a large part of his time and effort to evolving and presenting a plan for the future of both the museum and the Oriental Institute. Much of the museum’s valuable collections, all the new acquisitions from the institute’s Megiddo Expedition, and a large part of the Hittite excavations in Asia Minor are at present stored in their original packing-cases owing to a lack of space in Haskell Museum. (Breasted, The Oriental Institute [1933], 106)
As Breasted summarized, “there was never sufficient space for adequate exhibition space for antiquities.” His warnings were heeded, and in 1928, the International Education Board, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, funded a new building designed by Mayers, Murray & Phillip (see van der Meulen in this volume). A site at 58th Street and University Avenue, then occupied by the faculty club, was selected for the new home of the Oriental Institute. That building, that opened on December 5, 1931 (figs. 9–10), and which still houses the institute and its museum, had five permanent galleries on the ground floor (see Oriental Institute, first floor plan, 1931, p. 47) and storage and workrooms in the basement. The second and third floors were devoted to faculty, staff, project offices, the library, and two small classrooms. The building was true state of the art, with four “photographic laboratories” and “a press equipped with all requisite fonts of type” that “permits the institute to print all its own labels.”

The opening of the museum, only nine months after construction was finished in April 1931, is a testament to hard work and good organization. Foremost of the challenges was the installation of the 40-ton Assyrian lamassu that arrived in Chicago in 1929. The pieces of the sculpture were introduced into the building through a large gap left in the east side of the (then) Egyptian gallery, and in only about three months, the fragments were reconstructed and restored on a concrete base. As the number and the scale of excavations were reduced because of the depression and lack of funding, so too the number of new acquisitions was reduced due to the changing laws in the Middle East that began to limit or even prohibit divisions of the finds. However a few, but highly important, objects entered the collection through purchase, including the “Chicago Stone,” an amulet of the god Pazuzu, an inscribed ossuary from Jifna (Palestine), and a fragment of a Dead Sea Scroll.

During the many years when Breasted acted both as director and the curator of the museum (until his death in 1935), much of the museum work was actually overseen by “secretaries.” The first was T. G. Allen in 1917, followed by Edith Williams Ware in 1926, and Watson Boyes who served from 1932 until 1963. Allen, an accomplished Egyptologist, was very active in museum research. He published the only comprehensive catalog of the Egyptian collection of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1923, and a catalog of stelae in the Field Museum that appeared in 1936, although it was written years earlier.
According to Miriam Lichtheim, by the mid-1940s “The museum had functioned without a curator and was quite neglected,” until Pinhas Delougaz (later to direct and codirect Oriental Institute excavations in Iran, see Alizedeh in this volume) was appointed curator, and “he undertook a large program of renovation and innovation. In the basement of the building he established a workshop run by a competent technician. Until the new technician [Robert Hanson] installed electric lights, the basement was a black hole, its floor covered by layers of Chicago’s black coal dust. . . . Thus the basement became a clean, whitewashed storage and work place with objects neatly shelved and labelled.” That was the greatly improved status of the basement for the next half century. The basement work and storage areas provided research opportunities for many graduate students and postdoctoral scholars who later went on to distinguished careers, including Helene Kantor, Miriam Lichtheim, Elizabeth Stefanski, Ann Perkins, Lee Marfoe (who was to author the first overall museum guidebook in 1982), Paul Zimanski, Ray Tindel (who went on to serve in every capacity in the museum, including curator), and many others. The basement was also the domain of devoted volunteers, including Carolyn Livingood (who was responsible for establishing the Volunteer Program in 1966; see Geshwender in this volume), and Betty Tieken, whose specialty was repairing pottery vessels (Mrs. Tieken being famous for smoking while working with highly flammable adhesives but also for managing the first museum shop in 1966). Although Delougaz is most closely associated with the institute’s work in Iran, his contributions to the museum were enormous, and 1967 Oriental Institute director Robert McCormick Adams acknowledged his “almost single-handed academic responsibility for the exhibition and growth of the institute’s museum collections . . .”

In 1969, the museum became more professional with the appointment of archaeologist Gustavus F. Swift as the first full time, non-faculty curator, a tradition that has continued to this day, reflecting the importance of the museum and its collections to research.

By the mid-twentieth century, most of the countries in the Middle East stopped granting regular divisions of excavated artifacts and the growth of the collection slowed. Yet some artifacts from Oriental Institute expeditions continued to arrive, such as those from UNESCO-supported rescue excavations in Egyptian Nubia that Chicago received in 1966; material from Nippur, Iraq in 1968; and objects from Chogha Mish, Iran received in 1970. The museum’s collections were further refined through exchanges of Egyptian and ancient Middle Eastern material with the Metropolitan Museum of Art in the 1950s and 1960s. By this time, the Oriental Institute Museum, both for ethical and financial reasons, generally did not purchase antiquities.

Through the years, the museum has undergone several modifications. In 1974, under the supervision of conservator Barbara Hall, a section of the basement was remodeled to create a laboratory, and in 1976, another area was renovated to create a small climate-controlled area for storage of the most vulnerable organic material, such a leather, textiles, and papyrus (see D’Alessandro in this volume). Work space was also created for Robert and Linda Braidwood, and photo studios—long the domains of Ursula Schneider and later, Jean Grant—were updated. In 1977, the Mesopotamian gallery was com-
**ABOVE LEFT:** Figure 11. Redesign of the Mesopotamian gallery, ca. 1993, showing the use of bright colors and graphics fashionable at that time. Photo: Jean Grant.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** Figure 12. The Egyptian gallery, ca. 1996, showing the confusing juxtaposition of the Assyrian lamassu and the Egyptian collection. Large stone reliefs from Egypt are mounted on the south wall (right), the only place where heavy objects could be displayed, regardless of their date or subject matter. Photo: Jean Grant.
pletely redesigned to reflect a more modern look with brighter colors and bold graphics (fig. 11). Through the '70s, '80s, and '90s, small-scale temporary exhibits were mounted on diverse topics such as: Alexander the Great; John D. Rockefeller Jr. and the Oriental Institute; Artists in Egypt, 1920–1935; The Magic of Egyptian Art; and Sports and Games in the Ancient Near East.

In 1996, Karen L. Wilson, director of the museum, oversaw the first major renovation and expansion of the museum. All the galleries closed for several years in order to introduce climate-control systems and to add a nearly 1,500-square-meter wing to the south of the original building. This was an enormous task. It took the museum staff and many volunteers more than two years to pack all the artifacts in the galleries and in the basement, gradually stacking the boxes and crates in tall racks that filled the north gallery (fig. 13). A major challenge was devising a system to track each object as it moved from its permanent location to a temporary storage box, and then that box’s transfer from location to location until the individual objects were put back on storage shelves (see McDonald in this volume). The new wing housed additional object storage, an archive for paper records and photographs that document the work of the Oriental Institute, a conservation laboratory, storage areas specially climate controlled for organic and metal objects, respectively, additional workspace and offices for museum registrars and the archivist, new photo studios and a darkroom, and book stacks for the Oriental Institute’s library. The wing, designed by Chicago firm Hammond, Beebe and Babka, seamlessly merged with the original building (see van der Meulen in this volume). The galleries, most of them designed by the Chicago firm Vinci-Hamp, reopened between 1999 (Egypt) and 2006 (Nubia), presenting a more accessible view of the history and cultures of the ancient Middle East, with new interpretative panels and labels and better lighting. Major changes in the new configuration included relocating the Egyptian collection to the south gallery and the Mesopotamian to the north. This eliminated the confusing juxtaposition of the Egyptian mummies in front of the Assyrian lamassu (fig. 12), an arrangement that dated to the opening of the building in 1931. The monumental Tutankhamun statue, which previously was displayed with its back to a wall, was moved to the entrance of the Joseph and Mary Grimshaw Egyptian Gallery where it could be viewed in the round (fig. 14). Another project was the creation of the Yelda Khorsabad Court (fig. 15) that reunited the Assyrian reliefs from the palace of Sargon II that had previously been displayed separately in the east galleries.
The west side of the museum was redesigned as a new permanent exhibition space for the Nubian collection named for the Robert F. Picken family, the material from Megiddo was housed in a reconfigured space named for the Haas and Schwartz families, the Syro-Anatolian collection—most of which was previously not on view—received a dedicated space named for Dr. Henrietta Herbolsheimer, and the Persian Gallery was named for Robert and Debbie Aliber. Another entirely new area, the Marshall and Doris Holleb Family Gallery for Special Exhibits was established, allowing the institute to mount more ambitious temporary exhibits (figs. 16–17). Many of the objects in these shows were normally stored in the basement, and their inclusion in an exhibit allowed for their conservation, photography, and for further study. Between 2006 and 2017, seventeen exhibits were presented in the Holleb Gallery, each with its own extensive catalog. These temporary exhibits provide opportunities for graduate students, staff, and faculty to curate exhibits, and the shows garner needed publicity for the museum and its mission.

Further improvements took place in following years. In 2009, under the supervision of longtime archivist John A. Larson, the archives space in the new wing was fitted with compact storage to help organize and make accessible the tens of thousands of documents and photos that record the history and activities of the institute (see Flannery in this volume). Between 2010 and 2012, the museum upgraded its computerized records, gradually developing an integrated database that
The Institute | Museum

links museum objects and their excavation records, photography, and bibliographies, creating a powerful research tool (see McDonald, Flannery, and Scalf in this volume).

Today the museum is professionally run with a staff that is the envy of other similar-size university museums, with two curators, three full-time conservators, two registrars, an archivist, a photographer, a group of exhibit designers and preparators, and a museum shop manager and assistant. The staff of the museum (as well as the faculty) are aided in many ways by the more than 100 dedicated volunteers (see Geshwender in this volume).

The museum continues to serve as the public face of the Oriental Institute. The galleries provide the framework for a wide variety of family and adult programs that often are the first contact that the public has with the work and mission of the institute.

From its inception, the mission of the Oriental Institute Museum has been to preserve, exhibit, and make available artifacts to scholars who study the ancient Middle East. Today, the museum holds over 350,000 objects. Schoolchildren, older students, scholars, and others from all over the world visit its galleries. The collection is one of the few in the world that gives a comprehensive view of all major cultures of the ancient Middle East, and that is scientifically excavated and documented, making the objects of particular value for promoting the study and understanding of the past. With the most recent renovations, the museum is preparing itself for the next century (see Evans, in this volume).

“The collection is one of the few in the world that gives a comprehensive view of all major cultures of the ancient Middle East, and that is scientifically excavated and documented . . .”
The Tablet Collection
SUSANNE PAULUS

The Tablet Collection is a collection of the Oriental Institute comparable to a library of rare manuscripts. It houses mostly inscribed clay tablets. The cuneiform script was used in the ancient Middle East from 3350 BC to AD 100 to write local languages, including Sumerian, Akkadian, Elamite, Old Persian, and Hittite, all of which are represented in this collection. The oldest objects in the collection are tablets with numerical notations predating the invention of writing around 3350 BC. The most recent is a legal tablet from the Hellenistic period (AD 3689) that documents the dedication of two young children to a temple in Uruk.

Today, the Tablet Collection contains more than 7,000 tablets and other inscribed objects, including 700 cones, prisms and prism fragments with royal inscriptions, and inscribed bullae and seal impressions. It now includes a wide range of cuneiform writings, including economic, legal, scholarly, and literary texts, although the beginnings of the collections were modest. When the Haskell Oriental Museum of the University of Chicago was established in 1896, the collection mostly contained plaster casts of cuneiform objects purchased in 1893 in London, including the Black Obelisk of the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III and an eleventh century BC kudurru stele, both of which are still part of the collection today.

The first excavated tablets at the Haskell Museum were only small fragments. In 1901, Hermann V. Hilprecht, one of the leaders of the University of Pennsylvania’s excavations in Nippur, presented these tablet fragments to a Chicago clergyman named Rev. Joseph Wardle, who subsequently donated them to the Haskell Oriental Museum. Hilprecht and his assistant Albert T. Clay had not considered these tiny fragments worthy of publication, as they were more focused on the thousands of better-preserved tablets excavated at Nippur. Sadly, the then-staff at the Haskell Museum shared their opinion. The fragments were thrown out, as recorded on acquisition note no. 54, which reads, “Worthless. Discarded.”

Two years later William Rainey Harper organized an excavation in Iraq, funded by the University of Chicago’s Oriental Exploration Fund, Babylonian Division. As a result of this dig in Bismaya (ancient Adab), under the direction of Edgar J. Banks, over 560 beautifully preserved tablets became part of the tablet collection.

A second major acquisition came to Chicago with Reginald Campbell Thompson. When he was hired in 1907 as an assistant professor of Semitic languages—a position he held until returning to England in 1909—Campbell Thompson donated a sizable collection of antiquities to the University of Chicago, including many cuneiform objects he had acquired while traveling around the Middle East. A letter from December 1907 addressed to the University’s president, Harry Pratt Judson shows that this donation was not entirely altruistic, as he had hoped to gain a tax break on the yacht he brought with him from England.
“I hope that the University may consider them worthy of a place in the secondary collections. I am arranging with the Custom House to bring them in with me—I presume duty-free. This brings me to a second point. I do not want to trouble you with a long explanation, but the Customs may possibly ask you something about me. I am shipping a yacht across to Chicago for my own use, and have suggested to them that I will present to the University (if you are willing to accept) a second collection of antiquities (“B”) if they can see their way to modifying the duty on my yacht, which I am afraid may be heavy.”

Both collections “A” and “B” became part of the museum’s collections. The donation included over 200 cuneiform tablets from different periods, as well as cones and cone fragments covered with royal inscriptions from the Second Dynasty of Lagash. Many of the tablets were published as line drawings by Ivan L. Holt in an article titled “Tablets from the R. Campbell Thompson Collection in Haskell Oriental Museum, the University of Chicago” (1911).

Another sizable early donation came from Theophile J. Meek who gave seventy-six tablets, most of them dating to the Old Babylonian Period, to the Haskell Oriental Museum. Credit for the donation was given to the Robert Francis Harper estate, which is named after R. F. Harper, an Assyriologist and brother of the first president of the University of Chicago. In addition to these larger donations, individual tablets were obtained for the Haskell Oriental Museum. Starting around 1917–19, James Henry Breasted acquired tablets more systematically, going to great lengths to procure objects deemed to be of scholarly value.

One example is the purchase of A 2480, a well-known Sumerian and Akkadian sign list. The tablet was offered to the museum in October 1916 for $150 by Arthur K. Bennett together with other objects he had acquired in Iraq. To secure funding for the purchase, Breasted solicited funds from a donor, T. W. Robinson, the Vice President of the Illinois Steel Co. of Chicago, IL. To sweeten the deal, Breasted sent Robinson not only his recently published book Ancient Times: A History of the Early World, but also “two amethyst seals” and other objects from Bennett’s materials. The acquisition was successfully concluded, and Daniel D. Luckenbill (1881–1927) published this important object in 1917, which was henceforth known as the “Chicago Syllabary.” This text would later be a fundamental resource for Miguel Civil’s Materials for the Sumerian Lexicon, vol. 14 (1979).
Luckenbill also played a vital role in bringing new tablets to Chicago. In the winter of 1919–20, the Oriental Institute purchased over 800 clay tablets in Iraq, and Luckenbill brought those tablets to Chicago as part of his “baggage” in “a photographic trunk.” The batch included tablets from different periods and sites in Iraq, including administrative texts from the Third Dynasty of Ur found in Drehem (ancient Puzriš-Dagan) and Umma, Old Babylonian letters likely discovered in Kish, and Neo- and Late Babylonian tablets from Uruk. Some of the tablets were identified as containing interesting medical and astronomical information, and one tablet was a first millennium BC library copy of the second tablet of the Epic of Gilgamesh, probably excavated at Uruk. While many of these tablets have been published, scholars still make exciting discoveries among the tablets from “Luckenbill’s baggage.” The most important piece, separately acquired in 1919–20, did not travel in the trunk but was hand-carried by Luckenbill throughout his ocean and land journey back to Chicago. This piece was a beautifully preserved prism of the Assyrian king Sennacherib, translated and published by Luckenbill in 1924 and known as the “Chicago Prism.”

Donations and purchases were significant for the establishment of the Tablet Collection. However, the Tablet Collection’s core is comprised of tablets found during the Oriental Institute’s many scholarly excavations. The collection contains tablets and inscribed objects from excavations of the ancient cities of Adab (Bismaya) in southern Iraq; Nippur (Nuffar) in central Iraq; Eshnunna (Tell Asmar), Nerebtum (Tell Ishchali), and Tutub (Khafajah) in the Diyala region; and Dur-Sharrukin (Khorsabad). Additionally, the OI received tablets from excavations conducted by the American Schools of Oriental Research at Nuzi (Yorghun Tepe) in northern Iraq. Tablets from the OI excavations in Iran, especially at Persepolis as well as at Choga Mish, Istakhar, and Tall-i Geser also found their way into the collection. Excavated tablets were often divided among excavating institutions and local institutions of the home country. For example, the tablets excavated in Nippur were divided among the Iraq Museum in Baghdad, the University of Pennsylvania’s Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Philadelphia, and the Oriental Institute in Chicago. Tablets from the fourth season on were divided between the Oriental Institute, the American Schools of Oriental Research, and the Iraq Museum. However, the excavators created molds of many tablets found in the field so that the tablet collection also houses more than 8,000 plaster casts, mainly from Nippur. These casts are a valuable resource for researchers interested in studying those finds.

While to a certain extent the texts can speak for themselves, additional valuable information can be gleaned from the contexts in which the tablets were excavated. For example, context can help determine whether an economic receipt was still considered useful information for the owner and therefore kept in an active archive, or if it was considered worthless and consequently discarded in a dump. A good example involves the tablets found in House F in Nippur; the house...
was identified as a school, based on the student exercises found. Moreover, the presence of multiple school tablets representing varying levels of scholarly expertise, all found together in House F, allows modern scholars to reconstruct the ancient scribal curriculum in detail. This kind of productive interplay between text and context is only possible when materials are found under controlled scientific excavations and are fully documented and recorded.

Tablets, whether purchased, donated, or excavated, were always considered to be “one of the most valuable parts of the museum collection as a whole.” They were also under the direct supervision of the cuneiformists in the building, as Gustavus F. Swift, the curator of the museum, wrote in the 1969–1970 Annual Report. Designated tablet curators included Ignace J. Gelb (until 1976), John A. Brinkman (1976–2002), Walter Farber (2002–2015), and Susanne Paulus (2015–). Much of the daily business was (and still is) done by the faithful student assistants who care for the tablets, keep records, and update the catalog.

When the collection moved from the Haskell Oriental Museum to the newly constructed Oriental Institute, the tablets were stored in a dedicated Tablet Room on the third floor (room 322), which is now repurposed as a faculty office. This room was originally designed to house floor-to-ceiling metal cabinets to store the tablets, which were accessed via an unsteady, movable ladder. The room was connected to the offices of the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary project.

The proximity of the tablet collection to the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary project guaranteed that the tablets were always available to the cuneiformists for reading and collations, and passages from many unpublished tablets in the collection are quoted in the volumes of the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary*.

Although it was advantageous for the tablets to be so accessible on the third floor, concerns about preservation and conservation of the objects were raised at least from the late 1960s onwards. The Annual Reports mention that basic tablet conservation in the mid- to late twentieth century involved
soaking tablets in continually flowing baths to remove damaging salts followed by firing at high temperatures in a kiln, practices no longer endorsed by conservation standards. Around 1976, modest climate control (in the form of a window air-conditioning unit and a dehumidifier) was installed in the tablet room. With the creation of a fully climate-controlled storage area in the basement resulting from the renovations and addition of the new wing, it was decided that the benefit of having the tablets in a protected environment outweighed the convenience of having the material readily accessible on the third floor. Therefore, in 1999, ninety-six cabinets with nearly 500 drawers were moved into the storage area in the basement. The former tablet room was converted into an office (room 322), and a small room previously used as the women’s lounge on the third floor became the “tablet study room,” used by visitors, students, and staff for examining cuneiform objects. Dozens of well-known scholars from Europe, Asia, and the Americas have spent many hours in this tiny room.

From the earliest acquisitions, all tablets were registered on file cards kept in cabinets in the old tablet room. The transfer of the cuneiform objects into the basement storage areas provided the opportunity to initiate the registration and integration of the tablets into the museum database. Beginning in 2012, the curator Walter Farber, together with his assistants, worked on inputting information about the cuneiform objects into the Integrated Database. Today, basic information about all the tablets is accessible to the public, including information transferred from the original file cards, although many catalog entries are still in need of revision.

Access to our collections by scholars and the public has long been a priority of the OI. Researchers in the international Assyriology community have always been able to request photographs of OI tablets for their research, and with the rise in accurate and flexible digital tools, we are partnered with colleagues in North America and Europe to further this access. Since 2002, the Tablet Collection cooperates with the Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (CDLI) to scan and digitize our cuneiform tablets. All published tablets were scanned on a flatbed scanner and added to this worldwide database. Since 2017, a project to digitize the over four thousand objects that remain has been staffed by dedicated volunteers; we anticipate this effort will occupy our relentless volunteers for a few years. Another important project awaiting attention is the updating of all the catalog information. But the paramount goal for all tablet curators was and is the promotion of the collection as a rich and unique resource for the study of the ancient Middle East, a resource that still includes many unstudied and unpublished tablets. There are indeed treasures waiting to be rediscovered in the cabinets!
KEEPING THE PAST PRESENT: A SHORT HISTORY OF THE OI MUSEUM ARCHIVES

ANNE FLANNERY

In the 1919 proposal that he sent to John D. Rockefeller Jr., James Henry Breasted laid out an intricate and yet practical plan for the Oriental Institute. The metaphor that ran through his plan was a celestial one and the idea that would be at the foundation of his institute was that of a vast archive. Evoking images of the stars and constellations, Breasted claimed that you cannot have the OI without its archive because the true dream of the scholar who studies the ancient Middle East is of a central repository where documents, photographs, ephemera, and texts could be gathered together under one roof, much like an astronomer’s observatory. He writes, “It is evident that the methods and the equipment of the natural sciences should be applied to the study of man, and that the vast body of documents he has left behind must be as systematically gathered, filed and employed as are the observations of the astronomer.” (Breasted, February 18, 1919)

In Breasted’s imagination, only with an archive of this magnitude could the scholar of ancient history explore his work while at home: “By means of the camera he could rescue forever large numbers of written documents and monumental ruins still unsurveyed. His photographs, journals, note-books, drawings and surveys, especially if he had an assistant to aid him in the field, would rapidly grow into a comprehensive group of documents. They would form a methodically collected body of historical archives, which he would spend all his available time in America studying. . . . The final result would be a systematically built up documentary basis, such as exists nowhere else, for recovering the lost chapter of the career of man.” (Breasted, February 18, 1919)

Breasted’s plan envisions many projects that the OI has undertaken over the years—some finished and others still ongoing—such as the Epigraphic Survey, the Assyrian, Hittite, and Demotic dictionary projects, and the tablet collection, to name only a small segment of what came to be through the formation of the Oriental Institute. Even before the 1919 plan, the work that would shape the Oriental Institute was already underway in the Haskell Museum. Breasted had been working since 1894 to build his photographic archive when he purchased nineteenth-century photographic views of Egypt (Picturing the Past, p. 51), which still exist in the archives today. This dedication to photography and the twenty-five years (1894–1919) during which the idea of the OI was taking shape are also documented in the Museum Archives of the Oriental Institute.

At the core of the institute is an archive of objects, documents, and ideas. The Research Archives encompasses the library aspect of this archive—tomes of information that provide context for the primary documents being generated and stored within the OI’s walls. Museum Registration is teeming with objects and study collections that were the fruits of excavations and reconnais-
sance trips. The Museum Archives is a repository that contains the fragments that make up its own history as well as the “career of man.”

The Museum Archives took an indirect path to become what it is today. In the early years (1894–1919), the Museum Archives did not exist. The pieces of paper and film that now constitute its collections were first housed in Haskell Hall, and later divided up throughout Breasted Hall (the OI’s current building). Many of these items were seen not as special collection items that tell the history of an institution, but rather as tools that were used as part of the daily operations of the institute—correspondence, photographs, dictionary cards, and excavation records. The institute was at first too young to have an archive, and at that time only photography and visual material were seen as pertinent items to catalog, while correspondence would have been managed by the administrative offices. In fact, the photographic archives were the first building block for the Museum Archives. Collections of film, glass plate negatives, and lantern slides were carefully housed in offices, or in the basement of the museum. It was not until the late 1970s that the Oriental Institute hired its first archivist, Ronnie Burbank, and she was tasked with the organization and conservation of the photographic archives. A treasury of over 100,000 images—negatives and prints—were photographed or collected by Breasted and his successors starting in 1894. Ronnie Burbank left the OI for her native Canada and the Royal Ontario Museum in 1981, which is when John Larson took over as the Oriental Institute’s archivist. Larson was the first person in the history of the institute to be tasked with assembling its own ephemeral history. From 1981 to 2016, when Larson retired, the Museum Archives of the
“As the Museum Archives moves into the second century of its existence it is larger than ever and continues to grow faster than any other collection at the Oriental Institute. Breasted’s idea of an archive grows ever more expansive and is still, more than ever, approaching the vastness of an astronomer’s observatory.”

Oriental Institute grew exponentially—not only by pulling together all of its pieces from around the building, but through the internal acquisition of excavation materials, faculty papers, and publication documents.

The physical space of the archives posed a problem at first because there was no space specifically dedicated to the Oriental Institute Archives until 1995 when the construction of the new wing was initiated. Up until this point, the negatives collection and archives office were located in room 221 on the second floor in what is now Museum Education. The lantern slides and negatives were stored in what is now the Docent Library. One can only imagine what the heat was like in the summers, although the windowless nature of the room would have at least protected items from sunlight. Other parts of the negatives collection were stored in the basement alongside museum objects while, since 1972, archival documents had been kept on the mezzanine of the Research Archives and Breasted’s correspondence was stored beneath the stairs leading up to it. The director’s correspondence was kept in a closet at the top of the stairs on the third floor in what is now JNES (the Journal of Near Eastern Studies) storage. With such limited storage, it is no wonder that the archives remained small and mainly focused on the vast collection of photographs and negatives. All of this changed in 1992–93 when crisis struck the Research Archives and there was an unexpected shake-up throughout the building. It was determined in 1992 that the Research Archives was structurally unsound. The bookshelves were too heavy and the floors needed to be reinforced. The upshot for the Museum Archives was that the mezzanine was needed to rehouse library materials. As a result, temporary storage for Museum Archives materials was found in the basement next to an already cramped Museum Registration department. This continued until the new wing was completed in 1997 and the Museum Archives, for the first time ever, received its own centralized space. John Larson oversaw the organization of faculty papers, director’s correspondence, excavation records, and photographs into this space. The process of moving and cataloging the Museum Archive was so massive that it is still ongoing more than twenty years later.

Another major change for the space of the Museum Archives came in 2009–10, when compact storage was built into the current space of the Archives. This allowed for another expansion of the space in which the Museum Archives were stored, albeit an internal one. The Integrated Database Project is an innovation that works in conjunction with the physical space to house and make accessible close to 80,000 Museum Archives records. These records are searchable anywhere in the world that has an internet connection. As the Museum Archives moves into the second century of its existence it is larger than ever and continues to grow faster than any other collection at the Oriental Institute. Breasted’s idea of an archive grows ever more expansive and is still, more than ever, approaching the vastness of an astronomer’s observatory.
Object conservation, led by a professionally trained conservator, has been practiced at the OI for nearly fifty years. Before there was a professional conservator on staff, however, there was a team of dedicated restorers and preparators responsible for the care of the collection. We have no pictorial evidence for any work that might have been carried out on the collections prior to 1930. By the early 1930s, however, archival documents and photographic evidence reveal that the collection was under the care of Donato Bastiani and a staff of four to six preparators. Bastiani was a noted Italian sculptor and artist who was hired by the OI to carry out major restoration work on the oversized sculptures from Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Persia (fig. 1). Bastiani worked for a time in the studio of Lorado Taft, the artist responsible for the Fountain of Time in Hyde Park. Taft’s expertise with large-scale cement sculptures with steel armatures would have served as invaluable experience for Bastiani. The work that he undertook was technically demanding and required a wide range of talents. Not only did he piece together hundreds of stone fragments and recreate large missing sections, but the massive size of these sculptures required coordinating a team of structural engineers and riggers. The steel structural supports that keep Tut and the Persian bull standing proudly in the galleries have withstood the test of time. In the case of Tut and the Assyrian reliefs, they have even withstood the rigors of being moved from their original installation location, something that Bastiani probably never envisioned.

Bastiani and his team of preparators were also responsible for the treatment of the smaller objects in the collection. Many of the ceramics, stone, glass, and metal objects needed work before they could be exhibited in the new galleries. Correspondence exists between the OI and major museums in New York, London, and Berlin seeking advice and discussing possible treatments. These efforts show a dedication and attention to detail that is truly admirable. Much of the collection exists today because of their intervention. It would be several decades, not until the early 1970s in fact, before a professionally trained conservator would be hired to take over the physical care of the collection. It was during the years between Bastiani, restorer extraordinaire, and the hiring of the first institute conservator, that the profession of art conservation was born. By the late 1960s, art conservation was practiced in many of the world’s major museums. As the profession matured, the material science behind the behavior of artifacts and their aging characteristics became better understood. In particular, the interaction of chemicals used in conservation treatments with the materials of which the objects were composed became understood in a way that the earlier restorers could not have imagined. All of this hard-won knowledge has led to a much more conservative approach to the treatment of objects.

Barbara Hall, a professionally trained conservator who received her degree in archaeological object conservation from the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, was hired in 1972 to establish the first conservation laboratory at the OI (fig. 2). She instituted the protocol that any treatment of an object needed to be documented, one of the basic tenets of conservation. After decades of treatments to the collection with little or no documentation, all treatments of the collection post-1972 were recorded with both photographic images and written reports. Another conservation
concept that was adopted pertained to the use of chemicals and other products used in the treatment of objects. Only those products that had been tested and shown to be safe to use on artifacts and whose long-term aging properties had been documented could be used in conservation treatments.

In addition to changes in how individual objects were treated, the larger issue of preventive conservation was finding a voice in the conservation world. The understanding that the provision of a stable and inert environment for a collection would do more to ensure its long-term survival than any single treatment was quickly finding support in the museum world. Another benefit to this practice was the realization that stabilizing the environment could mitigate the need for intervention in all but the most severe cases.

Some of the environmental stresses on artifacts occur when material such as wood changes shape when the amount of moisture in the air changes. The condition of the OI’s collection of archaeological objects from the Middle East is complicated by the fact that much of the collection has absorbed soluble salts from the burial environment. These salts are very reactive to the amount of moisture in the air and change physical shape with changes in relative humidity (RH). Historically, the wide swings in RH in the uncontrolled environment of the OI over the course of a year caused the soluble chlorides to alternate between a solution and a solid on a regular basis. Once inside the body of an object, the soluble salts physically changed to a solid (crystal) state when the environment became dry. The crystal form takes up much more space than a solution. The resulting pressures within the body of the material can actually force apart the structure of the artifact. If this cycle is allowed to continue, more and more of the body of the artifact is damaged over time.

Among the metals, iron and copper alloys are particularly susceptible to chemical corrosion by soluble chlorides, one of the salts found in the burial environments of the Middle East. This corrosion can ultimately destroy objects, if left untreated. In the late 1970s, with funding from NEA, the first climate-controlled space in the basement was created for the storage of the metal collection. By providing a dry environment for the metals (25–30% RH), the first Metals Room helped to slow down the ongoing corrosion of the chloride-bearing artifacts. In 1986, Laura D’Alessandro was hired as the next head of the Conservation Lab. Another graduate of the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, her appointment allowed for a relatively easy transition of the Conservation department’s activities. One of her first priorities was to address the unstable condition of the organic objects in the collection. With still no date in sight for a building-wide solution to the problem, funding was obtained from IMLS to retrofit an area of the basement with equipment to provide a stable environment for the organics (45% RH). Both of these areas remained in use, protecting these most susceptible portions of the collection until the completion of the construction project and the removal of the artifacts to the newly constructed, climate-controlled spaces in the new wing.

Over the next thirty years, the OI saw many changes. By the end of the 1980s, plans were in the works to install climate control in the building. The understanding that preventive conservation was a

“Barbara Hall . . . instituted the protocol that any treatment of an object needed to be documented, one of the basic tenets of conservation.”
Discovering New Pasts: The OI at 100

Figure 3. The lamassu under a coat of pink-colored silicone rubber as the mold is prepared for the cast of the bull, which will be displayed in the Louvre’s new Khorsabad Court (1991). Bottom left: Figure 4. The French restoration team reinforces the plaster mother-mold on the lamassu with steel rebar to lend the plaster strength for the casting process in Paris. The plaster covers the silicone rubber layer on the lamassu.

“As the 16-foot tall bull became covered in pink silicone rubber, the (temporary) appearance of a pink bull was initially a cause for outrage, both within the building and among the French team.”
more cost effective and conservative approach to the care of collections had finally found fertile ground. During this time, plans were begun to house the collections in temporary storage within the former Egyptian gallery in order to clear the galleries on the first floor and the basement storage areas for the construction activities. In the midst of these plans, curators at the Louvre in Paris requested permission to make a copy of the lamassu to install in their newly designed Khorsabad Court. In 1991, a team of French conservators and curators descended on the OI to work on the lamassu. Within the space of a month, the French conservators had created a silicone rubber mold of the bull (fig. 3). A mold requires a hard material to hold it in place when the copy is made so that the silicone rubber holds the exact shape of the original object. Plaster of Paris was chosen as the material for this mold, also known as a “mother mold” in casting terms. While not an ideal choice for this particular application—the sections would be very large and heavy and would need to be reinforced with metal bars and then undergo the rigors of container shipment to Paris—Lafarge Coppée, a Paris-based plaster manufacturer, was underwriting the project (fig. 4). Only one small crisis arose during the process. The French restorer had requested a blue-colored catalyst in recognition of the fact that the bull was male—but a pink catalyst was sent by mistake. Given the time constraints—the specially created catalyst was shipped from a lab in Rome, Italy—there wasn’t time to wait for another shipment. As the 16-foot tall bull became covered in pink silicone rubber, the (temporary) appearance of a pink bull was initially a cause for outrage, both within the building and among the French team. Despite this drama, the very successful cast of the Oriental Institute’s lamassu was subsequently placed on display at the Louvre.

By the early 1990s, as part of the construction/climate control project, the deinstallation and relocation of the Assyrian reliefs and the statue of Tut were begun. With the movement of the Egyptian gallery, the statue of Tut needed to be relocated to the south wing (fig. 5). And from a curatorial perspective, the Assyrian reliefs needed to be reinstalled in a manner closer to their arrangement in antiquity. This work took place over a period of ten years. In January 1998, in the midst of the work on the Assyrian reliefs, the construction of the new wing was completed. The first major renovation of the 1930s building provided some badly needed space as well as a state-of-the-art climate control system for all museum areas and a new conservation laboratory (fig. 6). Between 1988 and 2007, the majority of the collections were rehoused in custom-designed storage cabinets and archival packing materials with a series of Institute of Museum &
ABOVE: Figure 6. An image of the busy “new” conservation laboratory in the 1998 extension, present day.
Library Services (IMLS) grants. During this time, the lab received five years of funding from the Getty Foundation, which allowed for the hiring of post-graduate conservation fellows. In 2007 and 2008, the OI received funding to conduct two six-month training programs for conservation colleagues from Afghanistan and Iraq. In 2010, the metal collection was specially re-housed as part of a two-year project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). In recent years, conservation has taken an active role in the State Department-funded cultural heritage project at the National Museum of Afghanistan. And the American Research Center for Egypt (ARCE) awarded the museum a grant which allowed the first intermediate coffin of Ipi-ha-ishutef to be conserved and placed back on display in the Egyptian gallery after an absence of over twenty years. Another milestone in Conservation’s history was the acquisition of a portable x-ray fluorescence spectrometer that allowed the lab to conduct basic analysis on the collection in a totally nondestructive manner.

This section would not be complete without mentioning the Conservation Laboratory’s very first supporter. The University of Chicago Women’s Board has supported the Conservation Lab at the OI since its inception. In 1974, the Women’s Board provided funding for equipment for the brand-new lab in the basement of the OI. In 1998, with the lab’s relocation and expansion into the second floor of the new wing, the Women’s Board once again came to the support of Conservation and provided funding to purchase critical laboratory equipment. The most recent conservation grant awarded by the Women’s Board (in 2007), was a joint grant with the Persepolis Fortification Archive project and funded the purchase of a laser cleaning device. This high tech device uses the energy of lasers as a cleaning tool and was initially used in the cleaning of the Persepolis tablets and is now used on objects in the museum’s collection. The Conservation Laboratory is very appreciative for all of the funding that it has received over the years, which has enabled the realization of so many important improvements and projects.

“... from a curatorial perspective, the Assyrian reliefs needed to be reinstalled in a manner closer to their arrangement in antiquity.”
MOVING TUT

The Oriental Institute’s statue of Tut was discovered in 1930 during excavations at Medinet Habu in Egypt. When found by Uvo Holscher, the field director, it was badly damaged with significant parts of the statue missing (fig. 1). Upon reaching Chicago, restorer Donato Bastiani aligned the fragments on the floor of the basement and made very careful measurements so that the statue, when completely restored, would fit inside the beams of the gallery ceiling. In order to support the weight of the fragments without jeopardizing the structural integrity of the gallery floor, an internal steel armature was constructed (fig. 2), which extended through the floor of the gallery to a cement pad in the basement. The missing areas of the statue were initially carved in clay and then molded so that they could be cast in cement, a
more structurally sound and durable material than plaster. These cement casts were then attached to the original pieces of stone and the restoration was completed in situ in the original Egyptian gallery. In 1996, when planning first began for the relocation of Tut to the new Egyptian gallery, archival photos of the process were studied, which revealed the issues that the team would face.

By 1998, a plan was in place and the work began. In order to move the statue from its position on the south wall of the former Egyptian gallery (fig. 3), the statue needed to be cut into two main sections. A third cut was made through the steel armature in the basement so that the support could be lifted free of the gallery floor. The location of the cut through the statue itself was carefully planned to slice only through restored sections—no original part of the stone statue was affected. As the critical cut would be made through the restored legs of the statue, silicone rubber molds of the legs were made in case they did not survive the removal process and needed to be recreated (fig. 4). A steel cage was then built around the upper portion of Tut to hold the statue in place when the cut was made through the leg area (fig. 5). Sections of the 1930s restoration were carefully removed, and once the armature was visible the steel was cut to separate the statue into two sections (fig. 6). The head and torso section of Tut was then moved through the galleries to its new location (fig. 7). The base was lifted out of the gallery floor and installed in the new Egyptian gallery where it was attached to its new basement support. The head and torso section was aligned over the base and carefully measured, matching the exact orientation of the original 1930s reconstruction (fig. 8). The armature was welded in place and the restored sections of the leg area were reattached. One additional feature that the statue received was a specially-engineered earthquake-proof mount to ensure that it could withstand moderate vibrations in its new location. After infilling the missing areas and painting the fills (fig. 9), the statue of Tut was once again ready to greet visitors in the newly named Joseph and Mary Grimshaw Egyptian Gallery (fig. 10).

Laura D’Alessandro

LEFT: Figure 10. Photo: Charissa Johnson.
MUSEUM REGISTRATION PRIOR TO 1986

In 1894, James Henry Breasted went to Egypt to buy artifacts to be used for teaching and research, and Caroline Haskell provided funding for the Haskell Oriental Museum to house this material. Thus was inaugurated what ultimately became the Oriental Institute Museum and its collections. These first acquisitions were recorded in large registers with the objects listed and described in ink, complete with ink sketches. These “Haskell Registers” were used until 1929 when the museum switched over to a more flexible record-keeping system based on 5” x 8” cards. (The first object listed in the Haskell registers is an ushebti made from cornmeal (E1 purchased in the area of Abydos in 1894/95, accession no. 2). The last object listed in full in the Haskell registers is A7013, a fragment of an Arabic manuscript purchased from Bernard Moritz, accession no. 830, acquired 1929).

We do not know who undertook this recording process that we now refer to as registration. It may have been James Henry Breasted himself, or more likely an assistant. While Breasted was the titular director of the Haskell Oriental Museum, the actual administrators of the museum appear to have been the museum secretaries. T. George Allen was appointed museum secretary in 1917 and secretary of the Oriental Institute when it was created in 1919. In 1926, Edith Williams Ware succeeded Allen as secretary of the Oriental Institute Museum, and in 1929 Ware was succeeded by Watson Boyes, who continued in that role until his death in 1964.

In April 1931, the Oriental Institute moved from the Haskell Museum to its new headquarters (and present building) at the corner of 58th Street and University Avenue, along with its substantial and ever-increasing collections. Museum Administration and records were installed in a suite of offices on the second floor. Museum displays were installed in the galleries on the first floor, and additional objects were stored in the basement. In the following years many objects came in from divisions from the many OI excavations at Megiddo, the Diyala sites, the Amuq sites, Khorsabad, Alişar Höyük, and Persepolis, to name but a few.

The death of Breasted in 1935, the economic difficulties caused by the Depression, and the loss of Rockefeller funds brought a time of retrenchment for the Oriental Institute. This was followed closely on by World War II, when many faculty and staff were taken away by war-time duties. In 1944 Pinhas Delougaz was added to the museum staff as curator, a role in which he continued until his retirement in 1967. He appears, effectively, to have been in charge of the museum, with academic responsibility for the exhibits and collections. According to the 1962–63 Annual Report, Watson Boyes as museum
secretary had “a staff of clerical and secretarial assistants, two preparators, and a photographer.” It is interesting to note that nowhere is a registrar listed; registration’s functions were presumably shared amongst the various assistants. Sometime around 1967 Joan Gartland appears to have been hired as the museum’s first registrar, to assist Profs. Delougaz and Kantor in managing the collections. She left that post upon the completion of her MA in Egyptology. Mr. Boyes was succeeded by Mrs. John Livingood, who established the museum’s Volunteer Docent program.

In July 1969, Gustavus F. Swift was appointed curator (effectively the head) of the Oriental Institute Museum, the first time the museum had a full-time curator in its more than fifty years of existence. He appointed Judith Franke as registrar, who replaced Joan Gartland in that function. It was Judith Franke who moved the registrar’s office and records down from the second floor museum offices to their current area in the west basement, and she continued as registrar and was promoted to assistant curator in 1973. Mr. Swift’s health progressively deteriorated in 1975–76, until his passing on October 1. Miss Franke took charge of the museum and supervised the reinstallation of the old Mesopotamian Hall (where the Egyptian gallery is now). In 1977 John Carswell was appointed curator and hired Mrs. Anita Ghaemi as registrar and assistant curator, effective October 1978, a position she continued to hold until January 1986. Raymond D. Tindel was hired to replace her, effective April 1986.

Ray Tindel served as registrar until his retirement in 2007 when he was replaced by Helen McDonald, who had been assistant registrar from May 2005. Susan Allison joined as assistant (now associate) registrar in 2008.
MUSEUM REGISTRATION FROM 1986
The major projects at the beginning of Ray’s term were first to complete a physical inventory of the collections, second to establish a computerized database for collections management, and third to register the large backlog of unregistered artifacts. Thanks to many dedicated volunteers, the first two of these projects were largely completed by the early 1990s, when it became necessary to pack up the collections in preparation for the construction of the new wing and the installation of a climate control system in all of the exhibition galleries and storage spaces.

There were many object moves during Ray’s tenure. The early efforts to install climate control in some parts of storage involved a lot of object movement. One room was provided with a local form of climate control with reduced humidity to provide an environment suitable for metals. Another was similarly refitted to provide an environment suitable for delicate organic objects that need a stable environment (materials such as shell, bone, leather, textiles, rope and basketry). As part of this move the papyrus collection moved from the vault on the second floor in the 1988–89 academic year to this temporary Organics room. Then, with the plan to install climate control throughout storage and the galleries and build the new wing extension, almost the entire collection had to be packed and moved to be stored in the old Egyptian gallery (where the Edgar and Deborah Jannota Mesopotamian Gallery is today) while the building work was carried out. Once the new wing was built and climate control had been installed throughout storage, both the metals and organics collections moved to their present rooms in the new wing.

A total of 3,555 temporary storage boxes (henceforth TS boxes) were packed with museum objects weighing a total of 95,915 lbs. The boxes were weighed so that weight could be evenly distributed, given the weight bearing limits of the gallery floors. (By the time the archival collection was also packed in 1997, the number of TS boxes being stored in the gallery had risen to 4,500). Those parts of the collection moved to the temporary Metals and Organics rooms in basement storage were not packed but left as is, since those areas had climate control, unlike the galleries at that point.

Groundbreaking on the new wing took place in August 1996 and was completed in 1998. With climate control now installed throughout the galleries and storage areas, it was possible to start moving the TS boxes down to
storage, initially onto shelving and then into new custom state of the art storage cabinets, as those were purchased thanks to successful IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services) grants obtained by the head of Conservation. Unpacking and rehousing started with the Egyptian collection in 1998, as that was most urgently needed for the reinstalla-
tion of the new Egyptian gallery in its present location (opened in May 1999). At the same time the tablet collection was moved down from the third floor into climate-con-
trolled storage (the third floor does not have climate control). An inventory of the tablet collection was carried out once the move had taken place; the inventory was complet-

The Mesopotamian and Megiddo collections were unpacked into new cabinets in the same room as the tablet collection (the old Organics room) in 1998–99. The same year work began on the reinstalla-
tion of the Persia gallery and the unpacking of the relevant collection. The museum report for 1999–2000 records that 1,200 objects had been unpacked into new cabinets; by the following year this had risen to include an additional 6,000 Iranian ceramics. The Persia gallery opened in September, and a traveling exhibit on Ur was installed in what is now the Mesopotamian gallery. When that exhib-
itet departed, work began on the reinstalla-
tion of the Mesopotamian gallery. By this point, a very large number of objects were on the move relating to the reinstalla-
tion of the galleries. Ray’s report for 2002–03 mentions 6,000 objects moved for exhibit consider-
ation (and most will have been moved more than once).

The installation of the Joseph and Mary Grimshaw Egyptian Gallery, the Robert and Deborah Aliber Persia Gallery, the Edgar and Deborah Janotta Mesopotamian Gallery, and the Dr. Norman Solikhah Family Assyrian
The Henrietta Herbolsheimer M.D. Syro-Anatolian Gallery, the Haas and Shwartz Megiddo Gallery, and the Robert F. Picken Family Nubian Gallery were installed under Geoff Emberling, and the Marshall and Doris Holleb gallery for Special Exhibits was also established at that time.

In the next thirteen years there were some sixteen special exhibits mounted in that gallery (and numerous smaller temporary exhibits elsewhere in the galleries). These special exhibits have involved some twenty-two incoming loans (smaller loans for mini exhibits in other galleries are in addition to this figure). Between 2007 and March 2019 we have also made forty-seven outgoing loans. Nineteen were for special exhibits at other museums, eight were renewable loans (i.e., for more than one year) and seven loans related to analysis. When Ray Tindel retired, he left his successor a list of ten long-term loans made to other institutions that should be returned to us if possible. The last of these was returned in 2019. One of the loans (a variety of Egyptian objects lent to Wheaton College, Illinois) had been out since 1941.

By the time of Ray’s retirement in 2007, some 2,420 TS boxes had been unpacked. A further 823 have been unpacked under Helen McDonald. That would suggest that we should have only about 314 TS boxes still to unpack. However, there are in fact around 1,450 TS boxes still in use. So how did that happen? In fact the TS box system proved to be such a useful way to keep track of boxes of unregistered material that it has continued. Around 1,000 TS box numbers have been assigned since 2000. Some of these were boxes that had remained in the old Metals and Organics rooms and so were not moved up to the galleries for storage and therefore did
not get TS box numbers during the renovation. Other boxes were returning study loans or donations of study sherds, animal bone or chipped stone that arrived in the last ten years. The TS box numbering system was also used to keep track of material not yet formally accessioned and still under the purview of the excavators (this affects some 600 TS boxes).

CONTINUING REGISTRATION OF MATERIAL

By the time Ray retired in 2007, the museum collection as a whole was 188,000 records, indicating that at least 118,000 objects had been registered under his tenure. Today it is 261,466 (a figure that includes nearly 12,000 casts). Indicating that, a further 70,000 objects have been registered in the last eleven years. So, major progress has been made, and obviously the amount of registration was only possible with the help of many hardworking volunteers and student helpers.

Towards the end of Ray’s time as registrar, it became clear that registration of the sherds from the Amuq sites (Çatal Höyük, Tell Judeidah, and Tell Tayinat) would need to happen to facilitate the publications of the Middle Bronze Age and later levels—publications in the capable hands of Marina Pucci (Çatal), Lynn Swartz Dodd (Tell Judeidah), and for Tell Tayinat (Tim Harrison, Heather Snow, and James Osborne). The Amuq sherds fill over 250 drawers; their registration was begun under Ray and was completed under Helen McDonald. At the moment, as well as unregistered material in TS boxes, there are also some 350 drawers of unregistered sherds and flint, and several cabinets of unpacked boxes. Another way of keeping track of presently unregistered objects is the
T (temporary) numbering system, where objects that are still under the control of their excavators get a temporary number prefaced with a T in the database (but not marked on the object) so that its location and other information can be tracked. There are presently 7,300 T records in the database.

Many of the collections registered since 2007 were done either as part of being unpacked and rehoused for various cabinet grants or because of publication reasons. To give a few examples, the Serra material was unpacked and registered as part of a cabinet grant starting in 2008 and now subject of a publication by Bruce Williams (some 12,000 registration numbers). The Qasr el Wizz (Nubia, Egypt) material was also unpacked and registered for a cabinet grant and is now in process of publication by Arthur Obluski et al. (some 3,050 registration numbers). The Semna South (Nubia, Sudan) material returned from a long-term study loan in 2010 and was registered by 2018 to assist with the publication in process by Joan Zabkar (around 2,880 registration numbers). The registration of the sherds from Rayy (Iran) was begun when some were used for a special exhibit in 2007 (Daily Life Ornamented) and completed some years later (some 3,850 registration numbers).

The Khorsabad (Iraq) relief project is one example of how long it can take to do certain projects. Work on the registration and rehousing of the reliefs began under Ray, who personally registered around 350 of the smaller, more interesting relief fragments to facilitate their study by Eleanor Guralnick. Then, in the summers 2008–12, there was an effort to uncrate, register (if necessary), clean, photograph, and rehouse the larger pieces of relief. This was a project involving the Preparation, Conservation, Photography, and Registration departments of the museum (and resulted in 420 relief fragments being registered). The project was brought to an end by the sad passing of Eleanor in 2012, with just seven crates left to unpack. Museum Registration then continued with the registration of the rest of the small relief fragments in the years up to 2014 (a further 540 fragments). Again, while there is still a small amount of this material yet to register, the vast majority is now registered (a total of 1,480 pieces of relief).

While we prioritize the registration of material that is being studied for publication, this does not mean that everything from a site is registered, even when there is a publication.

“While we prioritize the registration of material that is being studied for publication, this does not mean that everything from a site is registered, even when there is a publication.”
COMPUTERIZATION

The museum’s first computer database for objects was built by Ray using dBase III (a DOS-based program), and the process of inputting records from the registration index cards (begun in 1987) was completed around 1990. At that time, the museum held a total of 70,000 registered objects. For a while, the registrar operated a hybrid system of cards and computer records. Objects were registered into the database, and from there cards were printed out as a backup. This system was carried from 1994 to 2001 (Asiatic collection registration numbers A37000 to A43147). One alternation to the OIM registration numbering system brought about by computerization was the addition of a letter E prefix to Egyptian/Nubian registration numbers to make them consistent with the Asiatic and Cast collections whose numbers already had a letter prefix (A and C respectively).

In the early years of the new millennium, attention moved more seriously towards a more integrated database that would bring together the records of all parts of the museum and other parts of the OI. Both registrars sat on the Integrated Database (IDB) committee that assessed a shortlist of vendors. We also began an assessment of the data in our old dBase III database in 2009 in preparation for this move to the new IDB using KE (now Axiell) EMu (Electronic Museum) software. There followed a couple of years of data cleanup and standardization of terms and the checking of several thousand objects where certain information was ambiguous. The move to the new system took place between 2010 and 2012 and has been followed by further data cleanup, a process that is ongoing.

There are now a number of new things that can be done in the new EMu IDB. One of the most significant is to attach digital images and PDFs made from scans of our old paper documents. This has made it possible to add the entire large backlog of digital images taken by staff and researchers for the last ten or more years and connect them to the relevant object records. Going forward, all newly registered items are now also digitally photographed as part of the registration process. Objects are also photographed as often as possible as they make their way through Registration for various projects such as inventory and gallery enhancements. The intention is to add at least basic record shots of as much of the collection as possible to the IDB.

Scans of the original registration cards, accession cards, and accession folders have also been added to the IDB and attached to accession group records and object records. This scanning has been carried out by an army of volunteers based in the Research Archives.

It has also been possible to improve our documentation in other ways. The paper permits to publish applications are being scanned, added to the IDB, and connected to individual object records. The new system has made it easier to keep track of permits that include a large number of objects. In addition, we can now produce a list of publications resulting from older permits and verify the objects were actually published. We now have access to all of the records of the publications held in the Research Archives, which has improved and standardized the references. Going forward, we can connect a reference listed on a registration card to the associated object record in EMu. Adding images and publication information to the IDB, along with data cleanup, will be an ongoing process.

One of the other developments EMu has made possible is a public online database. Instead of contacting the registrars, researchers and the general public can now search our collections themselves.
IN CONCLUSION

While a great deal has been accomplished, there is still more to do. As technology makes more things possible, our lists of things that can, and therefore should, be done get longer. Will we have storage space for all of the unregistered sherds, flint, and bone once we unpack and register it all? Probably not is the short answer. How soon will that be? Not sure, ask again in five years.

One final thank-you to all of the student helpers, interns, and volunteers over the years who have registered, inventoried, and photographed so many objects for us.

We would like to thank all of our volunteers, work study students, student museum assistants, and interns since 1986, as follows (in surname alphabetical order): Lisa Albers, Debbie Aliber, Kate Anderson, David Anderson, Natasha Ayers, Leah Baer, Rozenn Bailleul-LeSuer, Joan Barghusen, Pearl Bell, Michele Biehl, Rebecca Binkley, James Bodefeld, Karen Bradley, Gretel Braidwood, Meghan Burke, Sam Butler, Cassandra Calleweart, Dennis Campbell, Ruth Caraher, Glenn Carnagey, Becky Caroli, Kathleen Cescon, Judy Cherchi, Joey Corbett, Hazel Cramer, Petra Creamer, Lilian Cropsey, Elizabeth Davidson, Elif Denel, Irv Diamond, Joe Diamond, Georgia Dixon, Cliff Dossel, Aimee Drolet, Leon Drolet, Anita Eller, Thorin Evans, Margaret Fitzgerald, Lilla Fano, Kierra Foley, Margaret Foorman, Leila Foster, Kiersten Forsberg, Terry Friedman, Jordan Galcynzksi, John Gay, Betty Geiger, Maggie Geoga, Peggy Grant, Diana Grodzins, Mary Grimshaw, Aleksandra Hallman, Alison Hade, Betty Harre, Melana Heinss, Janet Helman, Pat Hume, Courtney Jacobson, Robin Kasson, Shehla Khawaja, Steve Knapp, Barbara Levin, Dan Levine, Erin Livingood, Michael Lombard, Lorrie Luther, Andrew Maclver, Joan Margolis, Masako Matsumoto, Georgie Maynard, Meghan McArdle, Carmen McGarry, Lance Reed, Roy Miller, Charles Myers, Lauren Nareau, Ila Patlogan, Rebekah Planto, Eric Poryles, Barbara Ramlo, Tine Rasalle, Yalda Razmahan, Patrick Regnery, Andrew Rich, Mila Rowton, Naomi Rubinstein, Andrew Rutledge, Kate Sarther, Matthew Sawina, Lillian Schwartz, Daila Shefner, Sabrina Sholts, Nicole Simpson, Tamara Siuda, Junli Song, Jim O.J. Sopranos, Toni Smith, Angela Spidalette, Luciana Stefani, Kit Sumner, George Sundell, Maja Sunleaf, Raymond Tindel, Tasha Vorderstrasse, Rose Wagner, Leslie Warmus, Richard Watson, Lara Weiss, Peggy Wick, Catie Witt, Elizabeth Wolfson, Anne Yanaway, Frank Yurco, Danielle Morgan Zwang, and Lauren Zych. Thank you all.

LEFT: Cornmeal ushebti E1 front view, the first object entered into the Haskell registers (D. 28980).
The Volunteer Program at the Oriental Institute is one of the oldest such programs among cultural institutions in the city of Chicago. The OI has the distinction of having the longest serving volunteers in the city of Chicago, including two currently active volunteers, Carlotta Maher and Jim Sopranos, who have been here from the official beginning of the Volunteer Program.

The Volunteer Program started in 1966 as a docent program established by the late Carolyn Livingood; Carolyn was a visionary who, while volunteering as the museum secretary, singlehandedly created the Volunteer Program and recruited the first group of volunteers. These early volunteers were almost all women, although there were some men. The women for the most part did not have regular jobs, and some had children at home while others did not. They were interested in an intellectual challenge while they performed good works. On their appointed days, they came to the institute in high heels and make-up, with good leather bags over their arms, excited to share their enthusiasm for the museum with whomever came to see it.

Carolyn wrote the training materials for the Volunteer Program, and got ink on her fingers from mimeographing the programs for her volunteers. Carolyn Livingood was a demanding leader and a formidable person; she insisted that docents be accurate in their presentations, and she spontaneously followed docents and critiqued their presentations. It is a great compliment to those early volunteers that they wanted to do the job well enough to please her. So began a tradition of guided tours for the thousands of schoolchildren, tour groups, and individuals that visited the museum annually.

Carolyn enlisted the faculty to provide further training for the volunteers through lectures. The faculty members who participated were enthusiastic and returned to help train new docents every year. Faculty members donated their time to the volunteers, answered volunteers’ questions, encouraged their further studies, and respected volunteers’ intelligence and value as part of the OI. The mutual respect and the relationships that emerged from this close interaction between faculty and volunteers came as a unique and unanticipated benefit that continues to this day.

Carolyn developed continuing education courses for members and volunteers, and she arranged for graduate students to teach the courses. Carolyn and her friend, volunteer Betty Tieken, “Carolyn [Livingood] and her friend, volunteer Betty Tieken, started the Suq gift shop.”
started the Suq gift shop. Carolyn, always a volunteer herself, enhanced the Oriental Institute beyond measure by the service that she and all the volunteers contributed since that first year in 1966.

Carolyn drafted Carlotta Maher to succeed her as the head of the volunteer guides, or docents. Without the Museum Office to work out of, the volunteers were given a tiny room on the second floor and the volunteers paid for a telephone so that they could book tours and arrange for the proper guides.

The 1970s saw the impact of the Field Museum’s blockbuster King Tut exhibit from April to August, 1977. Carlotta vividly remembers a meeting at the Field Museum a year before the Tut exhibit when their director of Education said, “I don’t think this is going to be very big,” to which Carlotta responded, “I think you’re wrong.”

Carlotta Maher was right! Chicagoans of 1977 remember the Treasures of Tutankhamun exhibit and the excitement of those four months the show was here. Carlotta arranged for OI volunteers to serve at the Field Museum for the Tut exhibit and at the Oriental Institute where we had our satellite exhibit that included thirty-seven objects used to embalm Tut.

A bus ran between the Field Museum and the Oriental Institute, bringing 300 visitors per hour to the OI. Carlotta stood on the stairway of the institute shouting directions to arriving groups, while OI professors and graduate students lectured daily at both locations in addition to the OI volunteers giving tours at both places. Carlotta says it was glorious to be a part of America’s first museum blockbuster!

Having caught the archaeology bug, Carlotta went to Iraq with McGuire Gibson and recruited Peggy Grant to succeed her.

Peggy Grant, who was a masterful organizer, regularized the tours, tour hours, days, and guides, and she expanded docent training. In those days, very few school teachers had any training in ancient Near Eastern history or culture. Peggy received a grant from the University of Chicago’s Women’s Board to develop a teacher’s manual. She hired Joan Barghusen, a docent with an education back-
ground, for this project. Peggy and Joan also created slide show presentations to accompany a guided tour, doubling the maximum group size the OI was able to accommodate.

OI Director Tony Brinkman recognized how valuable Joan Barghusen was. He took over paying her salary when the grant ran out, and that was how the Museum Education Department (later shortened to “Education Department”) began. Peggy and Joan had a tiny office with a coffee pot, two desks, and a small library; the constant comings and goings of volunteers, faculty, and staff created an atmosphere of great warmth in the small space.

Janet Helman took over from Peggy Grant as the volunteer manager in 1984. Janet worked with the newly formed Education Department to develop a teacher’s institute for public school teachers called “Before the Greeks.” This program gave about twenty teachers a chance to delve into the treasures of the OI, learn about the ancient Near East, and become lifelong fans of the institute.

The Education Department made its first move to a larger space and entered the computer era. The department acquired an Apple 128 computer, which allowed them to publish a volunteer newsletter, the *Docent Digest*, and print mailing labels.
During these years, the Docent Training Program became an eight-week course taught by OI faculty members. This scholarly training inspired abiding interest in, and passion for, the history of the ancient Near East. As docents developed expertise at giving tours and working directly with teachers and children, tour time slots filled to capacity during the academic months.

Volunteers hosted potluck luncheons to celebrate the holidays and the completion of docent training. At these events, volunteers, faculty, staff, and graduate students enjoyed good food while they socialized, further strengthening relationships and the sense of community associated with the OI Volunteer Program. The docent group also made several trips to visit exhibits at other museums; they went to Boston, New York, Brooklyn, Cleveland, Memphis, and Detroit.

In January of 1993, Terry Friedman and Cathy Duenas mutually assumed the roles of docent coordinators. It was a bold move to create a job-sharing position to manage the Oriental Institute’s docents and volunteers. Terry and Cathy’s stewardship of the program would last for more than twenty years; it would see many changes and build important bridges into the next millennium.

Shortly after taking over the volunteer management, Terry and Cathy learned in 1995 that the museum would close in order to install climate control and to build an addition. It was to be a multi-year project that would challenge their resiliency, patience, and creativity regarding how to keep the Volunteer Program alive and in the public eye. Director Bill Sumner’s announcement about the museum closure sent a shockwave through the docent community. There was tremendous worry and uncertainty about the future of the program and what would happen to the docents. Terry Friedman, Cathy Duenas, Education Department Head Carole Krucoff, along with a cadre of docents and staff members came up with a plan to keep both the docents and the community engaged.

Outreach was the solution, and “let’s take the show on the road” was the battle
The docents accepted the challenge and became traveling ambassadors. From the north side to the south side, the surrounding suburbs, and adjacent states, docents would pile museum replicas, a slide projector, and dress-up costumes into Cathy’s Jeep, and off they went. The program quickly gained popularity and was in demand by audiences of all ages—from school groups to community centers and public libraries—who saw the advantage in this enriching educational opportunity.

When the museum reopened, Terry and Cathy realized that the newly installed galleries would need updates to the curriculum materials for students and teachers. A major grant from the Polk Brothers Foundation enabled the Museum Education Department to collaborate with OI faculty and a group of Chicago Public Schools teachers to develop new curriculum guides for the Egyptian, Mesopotamian, and Nubian collections. These materials would also serve as a springboard for future outreach to another important audience: the city’s growing Hispanic community.

With a growing interest in bilingual education, Cathy Duenas spearheaded the effort to offer outreach to the Hispanic community. Cathy and the Spanish-speaking docents and volunteers were instrumental from the program’s inception and throughout its development over the years. The outcome of this project included colorful family activity cards with beautiful pictures of artifacts in the museum collection, bilingual interactive computer kiosks, and a Spanish language audio guide to the museum.

Terry and Cathy embraced new technologies to help run the Volunteer Program with greater efficiency. They began
OPPOSITE TOP: Debbie Aliber. 
OPPOSITE BOTTOM: The Pickens family. 
ABOVE: Carole Yoshida and Joan Barghusen. 
RIGHT: Mary Grimshaw.
to use email as a communication tool and sent the monthly newsletter electronically. In celebration of the new millennium, the Docent Program became the Volunteer Program, and its newsletter was renamed the Volunteer Voice. When the museum galleries finally reopened in 2006, the comprehensive Docent Training Program was reinstated. This time, however, each lecture was videotaped, allowing for a rolling admissions policy that let new recruits train at their own pace.

For five years, Terry and Cathy produced fall miniseries programs as adult education opportunities for volunteers, Oriental Institute members, and the wider community. Faculty from the Oriental Institute joined with other University of Chicago faculty members to create a series of lectures that highlighted a unified theme. The program was so well attended and successful, it was decided to integrate it into the OI Members’ Lecture series.

Volunteer managers maintain a continuous thread of involvement in the Volunteer Program, ensuring that it continuously grows without losing any of the accomplishments that have been achieved in the past. Former managers Carlotta Maher, Janet Helman, Terry Friedman, and Cathy Duenas are active advisors and consultants to current volunteer manager Sue Geshwender. Sue Geshwender joined the staff of the Education Department in 2011 and took over the role of volunteer manager in 2014 upon Terry Friedman’s retirement.
Docents make up the majority of the current volunteers and are also actively involved in the management of the program; they do a variety of jobs, from training new docents to staffing tours and more. Docent training has remained a priority since the reinstatement of the eight-week volunteer training program in 2015; during this intensive training period, faculty members select readings and give lectures while docents coach and mentor trainees.

Research Archives volunteers—many of them University of Chicago students—have grown steadily in number and have made significant contributions to the OI under the direction of Foy Scalf. With the help of all these volunteer hours, the integrated database has become a powerful tool for making our collection accessible to many outside the OI.

Volunteers learn from faculty members throughout the year via a series of monthly Monday morning lectures and enjoy such benefits as behind-the-scenes visits to the object storage area, conservation lab, Hittite Dictionary office, Research Archives, and the Director’s Office. Faculty-led film discussions and book discussion groups provide interesting and different ways for volunteers to engage in, and learn about, the ancient Near East. A great sense of community and camaraderie exists among the volunteers, who congregate with faculty and staff at potluck luncheons to celebrate the holidays.
Since the beginning of the Volunteer Program in 1966, volunteers have become some of the Oriental Institute’s most ardent supporters. Many former docents serve on the Visiting Committee, and volunteer alumni have endowed several galleries: Mary Grimshaw, Egypt; Debbie Aliber, Persia; Bud and Cissy Haas, Megiddo; Rita and Kitty Picken, Nubia.

The OI’s highest honor, the Breasted Medallion, was first awarded to a volunteer, Carlotta Maher. Since then, several other volunteers have also received the distinguished honor: Janet Helman, Betty Tieken, Rita Picken, Bud Haas, Peggy Grant, and Jim Sopranos.

Every year, volunteers provide approximately five thousand hours of service to the Oriental Institute. For over half a century, these passionate, dedicated volunteers have accomplished many things: They created the Docent Training Program, the Education Department, and a public outreach program. They play a crucial role in educating the public through adult and family programs, assisting faculty and staff with their research, and most of all, in bringing the ancient Near East to life for tens of thousands of visitors and school groups year after year.
YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAMS

CALGARY HAINES-TRAUTMAN

Founded in 1980, the Education Department of the Oriental Institute creates learning opportunities for our volunteers and the public and promotes engagement with the institute and its collections. Over the last thirty-nine years, the Education Department has designed a variety of initiatives to bring the OI collections to life for youth and family audiences. Here, we highlight some of the Education Department’s most enduring initiatives—Mummies Night; the Kipper Family Archaeological Discovery Center; as well as a newer program, the Nowruz Celebration—which embody the mission, spirit, and successes of OI Youth and Family Programs.

MUMMIES NIGHT

Mummies Night is a longstanding Hyde Park tradition that stretches back twenty-seven years—an annual family Halloween party that celebrates the OI’s mummies with spooky, fun, and educational activities for guests of all ages. Originating as “Mummy’s Night” in 1992, this event began as a celebration on the Wednesday before Halloween and ran for four years in a row before being suspended due to the gallery closures in 1996. In 2004, the event was revived as “Mummies Night,” which it has remained ever since.

For children and families, programming is essential for creating an inclusive and engaging environment in the museum, and Mummies Night continues to be one of our most successful efforts to bring in the general public to explore the collections. Each year since 2004, Mummies Night has attracted repeat visitors and new guests to the museum by the hundreds. Guests come from across the university, surrounding South Side neighborhoods, the suburbs, and even other states, giving the OI a chance to create deeper connections with a variety of communities and reach new audiences. Over the years, thousands of families have visited the OI, often in costume, to enjoy everything from origami bat making, mummy simulations (fig. 1), storytellers and musicians (fig. 2), theatrical perfor-
mances, films, tours (figs. 3 and 4), traditional ancient games like Senet (fig. 5), and not-so-traditional games like toilet paper mummy wrap races (figs. 6 and 7). Although the focus is on fun, many aspects of the event highlight the OI’s collection and ancient Egyptian culture (fig. 8). The event brings together high-quality content and an open and welcoming environment that attracts large numbers of visitors each year.

Over the years, Mummies Night has benefitted from a variety of partnerships, which help us to offer high-quality programming to families at little to no cost. In the early 2000s, Mummies Night partnered with Chicago Book Month, an initiative sponsored by the Chicago Mayor’s Office of Special Events, which offered city-wide publicity and helped attract numerous first-time visitors. In
2008, Mummies Night was supported by Science Chicago, and many visitors reported hearing about the event through this collaboration. In 2009 and 2010, Mummies Night was part of the “Chicagoween” celebrations.

The goal of Mummies Night has always been to attract new audiences to the museum for a night of free, fun, and accessible activities that make all families, no matter what their experience with museums, feel welcome and engaged (fig. 9). In 2017, with the goal of maintaining this spirit, even in the face of budget cuts, the OI applied for and was awarded a $1,500 grant through the Office of the Provost’s Campus-Wide Inclusive Climate RFP, which partially funded Mummies Night in 2018. This funding helped us put on the biggest Mummies Night ever, at-

**TOP:** Figure 7. A family competes in a Mummy Wrap Race. Photo: David Turner.

**LEFT:** Figure 8. A group of kids pose in front of the colossal statue of King Tutankhamun in the OI Egyptian gallery. Photo: David Turner.

**BOTTOM:** Figure 9. A parent points out the decorations on the mummy of Meresamun to her child. Photo: David Turner.
tracting 638 visitors! With the success of 2018, the Office of the Provost renewed their funding for Mummies Night in 2019, this time at a level of $2,000.

Survey data from post-event surveys played an important role in the recent successful grant funding of Mummies Night. With post-event surveys, we have been able to show that nearly half of visitors to Mummies Night each year have never before visited the OI, and surveys have helped us
to understand the ages of visitors and the types of activities that are most in-demand. Each year, visitors provide feedback such as how “[the] decorations [and] music brought the museum to life,” and that the event was “very friendly and accessible” and a “great way for kids to participate/engage.” We are thrilled to be able to continue to delight visitors, both returning and new, young and old, with this annual Halloween tradition, and we look forward to many more successful years (figs. 10 and 11)!

THE KIPPER FAMILY ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERY CENTER

Developed from 2006 to 2008, the Kipper Family Archaeological Discovery Center (KADC) opened for its first “season” in November 2008 and has been a central facet of the OI’s education programs for both youth and family audiences and K–12 outreach ever since. In the KADC, visitors of all ages get hands-on experience working like archaeologists in a simulated dig site. Visitors excavate artifact replicas, record data about the objects, and use observation and inference to come to conclusions about their finds.

The KADC dig site and program was modeled after the Spertus Museum’s Rosenbaum ARTiFACT Center, which operated for over fifteen years before closing in 2006. In the ARTiFACT Center, visitors excavated replica artifacts on a simulated archaeological dig site using real tools and the same processes used by archaeologists. The OI was able to purchase materials from the closed Center and collaborate with Education emerita from Spertus and former ARTiFACT Center curator Susan Bass Marcus to develop a unique dig experience for the OI.

The product of extensive teamwork and collaboration across faculty, administrative staff, the Education Department, students, the Development Department, the Director’s Office, and Preparation, the KADC was first opened for testing in spring of 2008, and quickly became one of the most popular educational resources at the OI. The simulated dig site was modeled after Tell Megiddo, a man-made mound in present-day Israel that was formed over thousands of years by ancient people living at the same site and building on the ruins of the people who came before them. An education
program and additional artifact replicas were created to be used with the dig site. Erik Lindahl, then-head preparator, planned and executed a stadium bleacher design for the Tell that maintained LaSalle as a multi-purpose space. The stair-stepped design of the tell also created a clear visual for the stratigraphy of the site, showing how layers of artifacts, ruins, and soil accumulated over time to form the mound.

Programming efforts for the tell originally focused on field trips for sixth-grade students and their teachers. Students learned the process of how an archaeologist excavates a site, used real tools to dig in sand-filled “trenches,” and took notes on the artifact replicas they uncovered. Jessica Caracci, Kipper Center coordinator, recruited and trained graduate student interns to lead the program on the tell, and the Volunteer Department developed a special docent-led tour focused on how artifacts go “from ground to gallery.” An official opening was held on November 17, 2008, honoring David and Barbara Kipper and their family for their generous and transformative contribution to the museum. Over the course of the 2008–09 academic year, over four hundred students and teachers took part in programming featuring the KADC (fig. 12).

From the first year, the Education Department was interested in developing public programming for use with the tell. Early on, support from Science Chicago helped develop a KADC program for families, the “Dig It!” Science Saturdays program, which ran with sold-out morning and afternoon sessions. The family program consisted of a dig, then an interactive tour and scavenger hunt about observing real artifacts in the galleries that are similar to those found in the tell. Over the years, Dig It! was developed and modified to become “Junior Archaeologist,” a program that is run for family and K–12 audiences today. In Junior Archaeologist, visitors uncover their prior knowledge about archaeology, then learn about the science of archaeology by following the steps of the scientific method. Visitors ask questions about ancient life, religion, or royalty, make hypotheses, and then collect data through the simulated dig and an interactive tour led by University of Chicago student facilitators. They draw conclusions about their questions and then finish the program by reflecting on the new knowledge they have gained—both about the ancient Middle East and archaeology.

Since its creation, the KADC regularly attracts seven hundred to nine hundred students each year, who participate in field trips where they learn about archaeology through this hands-on experience. With a focus on the science of archaeology, students learn an accurate, though simplified, understanding of how archaeologists use the scientific method and then put the theory to use in a dig (fig. 13) and interactive tour of the galleries focusing on observation and inference (fig. 14). The Junior Archaeologist program is the most popular interactive field trip program offered at the OI. As this volume was assembled, a teacher called to book a Junior Archaeologist trip for her class in the fall, four months ahead, and said, “It’s the best thing I’ve ever done!”

Junior Archaeologist continues to be popular for public programming as well. Special Junior Archaeologist badge programs were developed for Boy Scouts, and a Girl Scout archaeology “fun patch” was developed by the OI (figs. 15 and 16). Over the last ten years, hundreds of scouts have earned patches from their participation in the dig; an OI adult education class took part in a simulated dig as part of their “Digging Deeper: An Intro to Archaeology” course; University of Chicago student members have participated in informal evening digs; and each year, Morris Fred’s Anthropology of Museums class at the University of Chicago experiences the dig as a sixth-grader on a field trip would. The KADC has even been the site of several birthday parties! These are just a few of the audiences the KADC serves. Junior Archaeologist remains a perennial favorite for families.
visiting the museum, with quarterly Junior Archaeologist programs attracting thirty to fifty people each session (figs. 17–19).

Entering its twelfth “season” during our centennial year, the KADC gives families, middle schoolers, and university students an unforgettable and engaging experience with archaeology. Connecting directly with one of the OI’s most famous digs at Tell Megiddo, the Junior Archaeologist program gives visitors hands-on experience with basic archaeological concepts like stratigraphy, observation, and inference. Whether students remember what King Sargon II did, or where Megiddo is at the end of a program, they leave the OI with their curiosity sparked, along with an enduring understanding of the process of archaeology and its value as a science in studying the lives of ancient people.

THE NOWRUZ CELEBRATION

The OI Education Department strives to invest visitors in our collections and the stories they tell, a goal that is particularly vital when involving communities who have cultural connections to our artifacts. A recent example of such efforts is the annual Nowruz Celebration. In 2016, the special exhibition, Persepolis: Images of an Empire, provided an opportunity for the OI to deepen its partnership with the Zoroastrian community in Chicagoland. For many years, the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago (ZAC) had a relationship with scholars at the OI, and with this special exhibition featuring a site of the Persian Achaemenid Empire, a Zoroastrian empire, they were excited to extend their involvement to public programming as well. With the timing of one of the OI’s “Ancient Game Day” programs around the Persian New Year, Nowruz, the OI expanded the game program to become “Ancient Game Day and Nowruz Celebration.”

Nowruz, a secular holiday celebrated all over the world, marks the beginning of the New Year as the spring equinox. The first OI Nowruz Celebration in March 2016 built upon Game Day activities (figs. 20–21) with special tours of the Persepolis exhibition, a traditional haft-seen table in the lobby that displays items of symbolic importance for the new year (fig. 22), Nowruz-related crafts like egg coloring (fig. 23) and New Year cards (fig. 24), and a screening of the film Persepolis Recreated. The program was a success, and it was decided that Nowruz could become a stand-alone program to be run each March in celebration of the Persian New Year.

This past year in March 2019, the OI hosted our fourth annual Nowruz Celebration. Since its inception, the program has expanded each year,
CLOCKWISE (FROM TOP LEFT): Figures 20 and 21. Families play the Royal Game of Ur during the Ancient Game Day and Nowruz Celebration program in 2016.
Figure 22. A haft-seen table in the lobby of the OI, displaying symbolic items for Nowruz.
Figure 23. A family decorates paper eggs in the LaSalle Banks room.
Figure 24. Attendees show off their completed New Year cards in the LaSalle Banks room.
Photos: David Turner.
both in attendees and activities, and moves in new directions. A partnership between the OI Education Department, ZAC, and the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA) has driven this program each year, with ZAC and FEZANA providing invaluable programming support, marketing, and funding.

In 2019, over 275 visitors came to the OI to enjoy the Nowruz Celebration, which included tours of the Persian gallery (fig. 25), activities, games, a traditional haft-seen table, a Persian “Tea House” serving tea and treats (fig. 26), and performances by the Donya Dance Ensemble (fig. 27) and students from the Chicago Persian School (figs. 28–29). Each year, the programming changes to meet the interests of our collaborators in the Zoroastrian community, who ensure that the program stays fresh and
OBSOLETE: Figure 28. Dancers from the Chicago Persian School perform. ABOVE: Figure 29. Members of the Chicago Persian School children’s choir perform traditional Persian children’s songs. Photos: Steven Townshend.
relevant for their community, and in turn, for our other audiences.

The Nowruz Celebration provides a space for Zoroastrians and the many other people who celebrate Nowruz to come together as a community for an afternoon of exploration and fun (fig. 30). The event also raises awareness about the Zoroastrians’ history through tours of our Persian galleries, which focus primarily on the OI’s excavations at Persepolis. Visitors who have never celebrated, and often never heard of, Nowruz also have an opportunity to learn more about this important global holiday, which was inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2016.

We are excited to continue this new tradition at the OI, and we are hopeful that the museum will be the site of many Nowruz Celebrations to come. The event provides a way for us to connect with communities who themselves have cultural connections to our collections while welcoming our returning OI visitors. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to create a celebratory space that is authentic to holiday traditions, as well as to the educational mission of the OI.

*LEFT:* Figure 30. A spontaneous dance party breaks out in the aisle of Breasted Hall during a break between performances. Photo: Steven Townshend.
A KIND OF PARADISE: 
THE RESEARCH ARCHIVES OF THE OI
FOY SCALF

“A monastery without books is like a state without its troops, like a castle without walls, a kitchen without utensils, a table with no dishes upon it, a garden without herbs, a meadow without flowers, a tree without leaves.”

— Jakob Louber (1440–1513) 
Librarian of the Carthusian Monastery of St. Margaretental in Basel

For the academically inclined, a visit to the Research Archives is a trip to a kind of intellectual paradise; I invoke here the words of Jorge Luis Borges: “I, who had always thought of Paradise in form and images as a library.” Borges, an Argentinian writer famous for his essays and poetry, became blind at the age of fifty-five. In his “Poem of the Gifts,” Borges laments the irony of his blindness in the context of his profession and book collection, recounting his earlier, idyllic notions about libraries. Like the library in Borges’s imagination, students and scholars make the pilgrimage to the Oriental Institute’s (OI) library—now named the Research Archives—to forge new ideas and discipline old ones through deep, archaeological dives in the intellectual stratigraphy bound in the pages of volumes on the shelves of the Elizabeth Morse Genius Reading Room, as the main room is now called. The experience has left indelible impressions in their minds and on their work. Miriam Lichtheim (PhD, University of Chicago, 1944)—an Egyptologist who is justly famous for her three-volume set of English translations, Ancient Egyptian Literature, but who spent many years as a librarian at the University of California, Berkeley—remembered her time in the OI’s Research Archives fondly, spending day after day there next to Helene Kantor (PhD, University of Chicago, 1945), who went on to become a world-renowned figure in the archaeology of the Middle East. Lichtheim recalled:

“Thereafter we found ourselves occupying seats at adjacent tables in the Oriental Institute’s Library, each partly hidden by a long row of books lined up in front of us. We sat there most of the day, every day of the week, for the next three years. A friendship developed, and there were social occasions for meeting. But what is engraved in my mind is that scene of daily study.” (Fig. 1)

There is real magic in the social fabric of the library. As a wide-eyed graduate student, I had spent many hours in the library, both studying for my classes as well as working as a part-time student employee. During one study session, my advisor Robert Ritner (PhD, University of Chicago, 1987), who himself had worked as a student employee in the Research Archives, had come to the library to discuss with me some matter related to a class he was teaching. As he was about to leave, he looked down at me and said, “No wonder you are doing so well in the Egyptology program . . .
you are sitting in my old seat.” Despite the humor in this quip, which suggests a kind of residual “magic” in the library chairs, each academic generation has always felt the inspiration and pressure to achieve from the spirits of the great minds that have long haunted the halls and desks of the Oriental Institute and the paradise that is its library.

A HISTORY OF THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE LIBRARY AND THE RESEARCH ARCHIVES

From the very beginning—in fact, even before its birth—the Oriental Institute had a library. William Rainey Harper (PhD, Yale University, 1876), the first president of the University of Chicago, studied deeply in the humanities, particularly philology, and received a PhD from Yale University with a dissertation comparing Latin, Greek, Sanskrit, and Gothic. Committed to the close study of texts, Harper laid the groundwork for the University’s library system, building the collection into the second largest library in the United States by 1896. Now Harper Memorial Library, dedicated in his honor, faces the Midway Plaisance along 59th Street. Harper recruited and worked alongside James Henry Breasted in the Department of Semitic Languages when it was moved into Haskell Oriental Museum, located in Haskell Hall on the main quad of the University, which had been designed by Henry Ives Cobb and built in 1896 through the partial funding of Mrs. Frederick Haskell. In the north room of the third floor, Harper and Breasted helped build a library of primary reference resources for the study of the ancient Middle East; at one time this room was referred to as the Divinity Library of Haskell Hall (fig. 2). Large portions of the working library of the department were comprised of the personal books of these two men (fig. 3), and many of Breasted’s own library books are today in the Research Archives of the Oriental Institute, identified by his bookplate and stamps (figs. 16–17); these books were incorporated into the collection in the 1970s.

Harper and Breasted enlisted the help of professional library staff to manage and curate the collections. Prior to becoming the director of the state library school and library dean of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign from 1907 to 1909, Albert S. Wilson worked in the Haskell...
Hall library (fig. 4) from 1900 to 1906, producing cards on typewriters for the library card catalog at a time when it was still common to find patrons conducting their research in suit and tie (fig. 6). In the days before the Oriental Institute, the Haskell Hall library remained limited to a single room. However, with the foundation of the institute in 1919 and infused with the financial backing of the Rockefeller family, the library expanded along with the rest of the institute, its faculty, its staff, and its collections (fig. 7). With such growth, managing the library and linking patrons with their sources required additional dedicated staff equipped with specialized knowledge in the ancient Middle East and an independent spirit to support Breasted’s vision for an interdisciplinary institute devoted to cutting edge research. Although they largely remained behind the scenes, librarians played an incredibly important role in shaping how knowledge was produced at the OI and often led the way in systems for the retrieval of information within large data sets.

Breasted recognized the particular information science needs of the burgeoning Oriental Institute and in 1924 hired a young Norwegian librarian named Johanne Vindenas. Without question, it is Johanne Vindenas (fig. 8) who was most responsible for turning the OI library into the premier library for ancient Middle East studies in the United States. Breasted brought in Vindenas to run and manage the library, and he hired her fellow countrywoman, Asgerd V. Skjønsberg, as a cataloger. Vindenas thrived, spending forty years at the Oriental Institute (1924–64).
“Although they largely remained behind the scenes, librarians played an incredibly important role in shaping how knowledge was produced at the OI and often led the way in systems for the retrieval of information within large data sets.”

**RIGHT:** Figure 8. Johanne Vindentas, Oriental Institute librarian 1924–64, holding two Arabic manuscripts in the reading room (P. 53033).
During that time, Vindenas (fig. 9), Skjönsberg, and library staffers produced over 284,400 index cards (fig. 10) for the library’s extensive card catalog (fig. 11), covering the approximately 50,000 volumes in the collection (fig. 12). So “meticulous” were her cataloging methodologies that in 1988 Robert Wadsworth, former bibliographer for the University of Chicago libraries, mentioned them in a remembrance he wrote a month after her death. Wadsworth noted the technical expertise and independence of Vindenas, who “was in such thorough control of all technical details that little could be done for her by the general [university library] staff.” The cards from the library’s card catalog were reproduced in sixteen large volumes in 1970, supervised by Shirley A. Lyon. The Catalog of the Oriental Institute Library, University of Chicago bears witness to the detailed and time-consuming task of producing an analytical index of ancient Middle East studies in the form of a paper database of cards. So incredible were these feats that the Catalog remains a useful reference source even to this day and, as discussed below, served as an important methodological model for the dictionary projects in the early, halcyon days of the OI.
The Institute | Research Archives

It was Vindenas who oversaw the move from Haskell Hall to the new Oriental Institute building constructed at the corner of East 58th Street and University Avenue in 1930 (fig. 13). The books were moved to the new building in 1931 where they occupied the large reading room on the second floor, described by Breasted as “the most beautiful room in the building. . . where for the first time the entire specialized group of books representing the field of research with which the institute is concerned is conveniently accessible.” Although formally part of the larger university library system, Vindenas had wide latitude to manage the collection to fulfill the mission of both the institute and the university at large. With the construction of the new Oriental Institute building, ancient Middle East studies had its new “country club.” The Oriental Institute served as a grand research institution analogous to what mathematicians had in the Institute for Advanced Studies (IAS) at Princeton. In Sylvia Nasar’s best-selling memoir of John Forbes Nash Jr., A Beautiful Mind, the IAS was described as a mathematical paradise: “Its well-stocked third-floor library, the richest collection of mathematical journals and books in the world, was open twenty-four hours a day. Mathematicians with a fondness for tennis (the courts were nearby) didn’t have to go home before returning to their offices—there was a locker room with showers. When its doors opened in 1921, an undergraduate poet called it ‘a country club for math, where you could take a bath.’” The Oriental Institute library was likewise an extremely rich collection of books, journals, pamphlets, newspapers, magazines, manuscripts, and ephemera (figs. 12, 14, and 15) covering the archaeology, languages, cultures, and peoples of the ancient Middle East (which was included in the early
twentieth century under the rubric “Oriental Studies”). And like the IAS, faculty at the OI could obtain library keys for unrestricted twenty-four-hour access to accommodate the needs of researchers on whatever idiosyncratic schedules they preferred (fig. 11).

The early days of the Oriental Institute library did not pass without contention and, in fact, libraries at the Oriental Institute have had a tumultuous history. Almost immediately following the death of James Henry Breasted in 1935, his son James Henry Breasted Jr. began correspondence with John Wilson about the fate of his father’s library. Wilson, who assumed the directorship after Breasted, took over during one of the most challenging periods in the history of the institute, receiving in his first days a devastating letter from Rockefeller about funding that would necessitate massive cuts to the institute’s projects and staff. The complicated matter of Breasted’s personal library further strained an already exasperated Wilson, who had to confront major financial contraction upon assuming his directorate; these tensions manifested in Wilson’s relationship with a young Breasted Jr. trying to find his way after the loss of his father. Breasted Sr.’s library was known around the Oriental Institute as the “Director’s Library,” a preference reflected in the bookplates used to designate these volumes (fig. 16), although Breasted Sr. also had a bookplate marking his own ex libris material (fig. 17). As one can imagine, Breasted Sr.’s life and work were intertwined with the very fabric of the early institute, and there was little distinction made between what belonged to Breasted’s personal library and what belonged solely to the institute. This complicated the task of assigning legal possession at Breasted’s death, as he had willed his library to his son, James Henry Breasted Jr.

Breasted Jr. had every legal right to consider the library of his father his own personal property. Furthermore, the collection had immense sentimental value to the younger Breasted, who had often corresponded with his father about books. In a letter dated August 1931, Breasted Sr. thanked his son for the gift of a volume by Leo Frobenius: “. . . his generalizations on Africa, and his wide observation, make his writing important for us Orientalists. You could not have selected for me a more useful book. In all likelihood, I would have overlooked it, if you had not presented me with a copy.” Yet, there was some confusion about which books actually belonged to the Breasted library. Throughout Breasted’s career, the director’s library was used by those in the institute as part of the institute’s own collections, which contributed toward the care and binding of such books, and which also often passed up purchasing specific volumes for the institute library because those volumes were already in the director’s library. In 1936, when it came time to hash out the details, the lack of clarity caused friction between Breasted Jr. and new director John Wilson, as both men were reorienting themselves to a world without Breasted Sr. The correspondence about the fate of these books be-
gan rather benignly, with Breasted Jr. informing Wilson that he (Breasted) may want some of the books, as he was considering an academic career studying and teaching about the ancient world, following in the footsteps of his father. Breasted Jr. often asked Wilson for career advice in these letters, but largely offered to leave the Breasted library in the care of the institute, at one point even offering to sell it to the institute for a market value sum. In a letter to Wilson on August 10, 1936, Breasted Jr. broke the news to Wilson that he would like “to retain ownership of my father’s scientific library.” Serious disagreements would plague the remainder of their correspondence about the library through 1939.

Breasted Jr., who graduated from Princeton in 1932—where he was voted the “biggest grind” by his class for his hardworking efforts—was adamant that any book containing the director’s library bookplate belonged to him; Wilson disagreed, pointing out that the same bookplate was used in many other volumes belonging to the institute’s library. Furthermore, Breasted Jr. was especially offended when members of the institute raised the subject of their invested “equity” into this collection in terms of binding, preservation, storage, and care, suggesting in a letter of 1937 that this investment was worth “almost double the value set on the library by the appraisers.” In a letter on July 13, 1938, Breasted Jr. wrote to Wilson that: “Like the Eloquent Peasant I do not have the wealth or the publicity ballyhoo facilities of your University or institute. But I am more than willing to lay this whole business before the bar of public opinion unless you decide to make this unnecessary.” The last straw came when Wilson kept for the institute a number of volumes from the library, bound at institute expense, and sent replacement copies to Breasted Jr. The latter saw this as an unforgivable affront—an attempt to keep books in which one might find Breasted’s own marginalia notes and whatever value such notes may have contained. Despite Wilson’s attempt to assuage Breasted Jr. of this offense in a letter of April 19, 1939, by noting that “a page-by-page check of the volumes . . . does not reveal a single note or marginal comment in Dr. Breasted’s handwriting,” the young Breasted was not to be appeased.

Their correspondence ended bitterly, with Breasted Jr. taking possession of his father’s library. He temporarily severed all ties with the University of Chicago and the Oriental Institute, partially over perceived wrongs committed in the library negotiations, but equally from the affairs surrounding his University of Chicago degree. Like his father, Breasted Jr. committed himself to the study of the ancient world. He came to the University of Chicago’s Department of Art for graduate school and submitted a thesis on Old Kingdom servant statues. He had a letter from the prominent Egyptologist Hermann Ranke stating that his work was worthy of a PhD, but the committee in the Art Department disagreed and conferred on Breasted Jr. only an MA. After obtaining his father’s library, he openly expressed his frustration to the University, the institute, and to Wilson personally in a series of letters in November 1941 in which he cut off all relationships with them. At this time, Breasted Jr. was writing from the Department of Art at the
University of California, Los Angeles, where he would go on to a directorship position at the Los Angeles County Museum from 1946 to 1951. The impasse between Breasted Jr. and the OI, however, was only temporary. Once emotions cooled, Breasted Jr. wrote to Egyptologist William F. Edgerton, assuring him that the matter was water under the bridge, partially chalked up to the impetuous actions of youth. With a new, amicable agreement, the majority of the director’s library was restored to the Research Archives in the 1970s, with the final volumes turned over during the renovation of the director’s office in the term of William Sumner (director, 1989–1997). As it happened, the temporary removal of Breasted Sr.’s books from the OI actually proved to be felicitous, allowing these books to avoid the dislocations of the OI library in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

It’s possible that Johanne Vindenas had seen the writing on the wall when she retired from the Oriental Institute library in 1964. By that time, the University of Chicago had conceived of the idea of a centralized library for the entire campus. In a press release of 1969, the University acknowledged a gift of $10,000,000 by the Joseph and Helen Regenstein Foundation for the establishment of Joseph Regenstein Library on 58th Street between Ellis and University avenues. In the face of the library consolidation project, Herman H. Fussler and Stanley Gwynn of the University library began negotiations with the Oriental Institute in May of 1965 about what to do with the books housed in the OI, even suggesting the possibility of leaving it in its current place in the reading room. However, as part of the consolidation and the prospective opening of the new library by 1970, the University’s library administration suggested rather strongly that scattered departmental libraries be brought together under the new roof of Joseph Regenstein Library. Herman Fussler made a presentation to the OI voting members, ultimately encouraging consolidation.

Faculty and voting members of the Oriental Institute partook in serious discussions about how such a consolidation would affect the institute. What is described in the Director’s Correspondence as a “vocal minority” fought to keep the books in the institute; but in the end, they lost. In a letter from Robert M. Adams, director of the Oriental Institute, to Mr. Herman H. Fussler, director of the university libraries, dated November 17, 1965, Adams writes: “I am pleased to report that by the time it [the voting member’s discussion] was over a clear consensus had emerged in support of the basic decision to transfer the major holdings now in the Oriental Institute into the new library building. To all but a small minority of us, this seemed the best course of action available.” Fussler wrote back to Adams on November 22: “Thank you for your memorandum of November 17, with respect to the decision by the voting members of the Oriental Institute to locate the major holdings of the Oriental Institute in the new library building.” While the administration can be forgiven for imagining the efficiencies this centralization and shared services plan could have—mostly in terms of the costs associated with the space needed to store the books, but also some potential reduction in library-related staff and expanded library hours—the efficiencies directly related to scholars using the materials, those which are much more difficult to directly calculate, were seriously reduced. Subject expertise, individual service, specialized classification, and the expediency of finding and
using library materials—all offered by librarians such as Vindenas—were trumped in efforts to centralize and economize.

Under the directorship of Robert McCormick Adams (1962–1968), the Oriental Institute library was emptied of its tomes, infuriating segments of the staff, and disrupting large-scale projects like the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary. Flyers announcing the closing of the library went out on August 7, 1970, which explicitly stated that materials would be completely inaccessible (fig. 18): “TO ALL USERS OF THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE LIBRARY. Beginning AUG 13 1970 the Oriental Institute Library stacks will be closed to all users (including faculty members with keys to the library), so that books can be labeled for the movement of the collection which begins 17 August. Once labeling begins, the shelving arrangement must not be disturbed in any way.” The materials were scheduled to be available in Regenstein Library one month later, by September 21, 1970.

For three years, the stunning reading room of the Oriental Institute library (fig. 19) sat empty. Plans were made during those three years to rebuild the library’s reference collection. By August 1972, serious discussions were underway for a new reference library in the Oriental Institute. In a letter to faculty and staff dated August 21, 1972, Director John A. Brinkman announced: “Because of continued faculty interest in establishing a library of basic reference works in the core institute fields of archaeology, cuneiform studies, and Egyptology, a long series of conversations with two directors of the Regenstein library has culminated in an agreement with Mr. Stanley McElderry, current library director, to consider a concrete proposal to establish such a reference library.” By October that same year, initial ideas had been slightly diverted as the minutes of a voting members’ meeting note that: “if the library administration should be unwilling to release the necessary books from Regenstein, then the possibility of setting up an independent library should be considered.”

Work on long-term projects like the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary (CAD), Chicago Hittite Dictionary (CHD), Chicago Demotic Dictionary (CDD), among others, required intensive bibliographic effort; staff routinely needed to check references to lines, words, spellings, meanings, or translations of individual texts in their original publications. Prior to the library consolidation, these staff members—who were drolly known as “slaves” in the CAD office—could quickly come down to the second floor of the Oriental Institute, pull the needed volumes from the library shelves.
(fig. 20), and compile their scholarly work. If they couldn’t find what they were looking for, they had a dedicated subject specialist like Johanne Vindenas to guide them and a collection of 45,000 volumes that fit essentially in a single large reading room. After the consolidation, researchers were required to walk two blocks, check the library catalog for a call number (the classification scheme of which was often not obvious to the user), determine the location where those classifications are kept, negotiate five upper floors and two basement levels to find the necessary work among millions of others, and at last, hope that it was not checked out or in use somewhere in the library. The Chicago Assyrian Dictionary was a particularly demanding library superuser whose staff needed quick and easy access to a wide range of library books. Shirley A. Lyon, librarian for the Oriental Institute during the consolidation process, wrote to Erica Reiner, professor of Assyriology and editor-in-chief of the CAD, on July 29, 1970, to say that “the library is sympathetic to the needs of the Dictionary staff and wants to respond to them as fully as possible. . . . The Library has no objections to leaving in the Oriental Institute on indefinite loan for the use of the CAD the books described on the list submitted. . . .” One can only imagine how much longer an already long-lived project like the CAD, which took over ninety years to complete, would have taken without the Oriental Institute library and its successor, the Research Archives. Fantasies of centralization had blinded many to these departmental concerns and deprived the institute of Breasted’s accomplishment of having a comprehensive research collection for the institute’s needs in one space. They could not see,
as Gilbert Highet, the humanist known for his series of weekly radio broadcasts about topics in literature, had so eloquently observed when writing about Oxford University, that: “No doubt it would be possible for a central university library to provide enough reference books for all the undergraduates studying every subject; but it would be clumsy and uneconomic. In a small college library one can easily allow the necessary books to circulate year after year, or at worst to be reserved on a table, where the readers will all know one another” (fig. 21). This social aspect of the departmental library can be particularly rewarding (as it was for Miriam Lichtheim and Helene Kantor), and it lies at the heart of today’s Research Archives.

The rebuilding of the Research Archives can in some ways be considered a real grassroots effort. Private collections were turned over for common use among scholars in the building. These included the materials from the libraries of James Henry Breasted (1865–1935), Keith Cedric Seele (1898–1971), William Franklin Edgerton (1893–1970), John Albert Wilson (1899–1976), Raymond D. Bowman (1903–1979), John W. B. Hadley (1930–1994), Klaus Baer (1930–1987), T. George Allen (1885–1969), and the Megiddo Expedition. These have since been supplemented with major donations from Deborah Aliber, Catherine Novotny Brehm, Edward W. Castle, Andrew Dolan, Fred Donner, and Bruce Williams, in addition to the many smaller donations received every year. Likewise, the ex libris bookplates found throughout the collection reflect estates and gifts from a wide range of scholars, including S. R. Driver, Ernst Herzfeld, Georg Möller, Charles Nims, Keith Seele, Wilhelm Spiegelberg, and Walter Wreszinski, among others. The library was re-founded during the directorship of John Anthony Brinkman and opened its doors again in 1973. However, in order to distinguish itself from the larger university system, it was designated as the “Research Archives,” consciously avoiding the word “library” in its title, a decision that has ever since been a source of
confusion for visiting researchers looking for the archival records of the institute, which are held in the “Museum Archives.”

After the library consolidation and the subsequent opening of the Research Archives, the legacy of Johanne Vindenas had to be entirely rebuilt. A number of important figures who went on to prominent careers oversaw the rebuilding effort in the Research Archives throughout the 1970s, including Charles Van Siclen III and Richard Zettler. During this time, a distinctive classification method was established in the Research Archives. Where Vindenas had employed the classification system of the Library of Congress, the Research Archives was organized around the acronyms of publications used by scholars in the field—a library organizational scheme I have referred to as “by scholars, for scholars.” For example, volume two in the Oriental Institute Publications series, which is known by its acronym OIP 2, can be found arranged alphanumerically in the series section on the shelves in the reading room. In this way, patrons who already know what they were looking for could quickly and easily bypass looking up the classification number in the library catalog and proceed directly to the volume on the shelves. Although idiosyncratic, this arrangement can create real efficiencies in conducting research.

What Vindenas was to the Oriental Institute library, Charles Ellwood Jones (fig. 22) was to the Research Archives. Jones spent twenty-two years (1983–2005) as the head of the Research Archives, taking it from its early incarnation and growing it into a twenty-first century library. Jones has gone on to an impressive library career, employing the skills built during his time in Chicago to further the missions of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World in New York, and today the Pennsylvania State University libraries where he is Tombros Librarian for Classics and Humanities (fig. 23). Under Jones’s tenure, the infrastructure of the library was transformed in many important ways. At a time when email was still a rarity, Jones, largely with the aid of Information Technology support from John Sanders, created an important listserve devoted to circulating information about the study of the ancient Middle East, which remains in use to this day as the ANE-2 list. He oversaw the transition from the library card catalog to a dedicated online public access catalog (OPAC) available over the internet. He oversaw two major architectural projects: the renovation of the reading room, which included the restoration of lighting fixtures based on the original design that replaced flo-
rescent track lighting (fig. 24), and the expansion of the library into the new wing built in the late 1990s.

Since that time, the Research Archives has continued to expand its collection and methodologies. Compact storage was installed in the new wing in 2012, thereby doubling space for growth in our monograph stacks (fig. 25). We have continued to transform the library catalog, analyzing all publications with an independently listed author, a practice already envisioned by Breasted as invaluable to researchers. Our library catalog, therefore, doubles as an index of ancient Middle East studies with its 600,000 records covering the 65,000 physical volumes in the collection. Over the last ten years, a major project has been the “integration” of the library catalog with all the other data from around the institute. This project, known as the Integrated Database Project, has revolutionized access to our collections and has allowed us to produce networks of integrated knowledge across the Oriental Institute museum, archives, library, and research labs. The Research Archives thus remains a central node of the institute blending the past and the future, where the enduring traditions of our respected elders are combined with the cutting edge technology of the twenty-first century (fig. 26).
“Our library catalog, therefore, doubles as an index of ancient Middle East studies with its 600,000 records covering the 65,000 physical volumes in the collection.”
THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL CORPUS PROJECT AND INFORMATION SCIENCE AT THE OI

The Research Archives was established from a collective need for a “library of basic reference works” among the faculty, staff, students, members, and visiting researchers of the Oriental Institute (fig. 27). As a reference library, volumes from the collection do not circulate to ensure their availability as needed. Although its history has been circuitous, the University of Chicago community is now in a nearly unique position in the world of ancient Middle East studies with two independent, world class library collections on its campus. Non-circulating reference materials are available through the Research Archives, and circulating library materials are available through Regenstein library. This preserves the fundamental intent of the collection as a reference source for in-house scholarly work, a primary fulfillment of our mission to support the research endeavors of the institute as a whole. As stated in the Oriental Institute Annual Report 1959–1960: “The existence of an Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago implies further that the ancient cultures of the Near East are worthy of special attention as the record of man’s earliest attempts to organize human life on a comprehensive scale, to unfold its higher potential, and to give it a cosmic frame of reference.” Few are aware of the role of the library in that “cosmic” story.

Although taken for granted today, spaces for the collection, storage, production, and study of texts—and the knowledge they contain—are as old as writing itself. A modern research institute is unthinkable without a library, much like its monastic predecessors. In AD 1170, the subprior of Saint Barbara in Normandy, whose name was Geoffrey, wrote a letter to a monk named Peter Mangot, providing Peter with permission to build a monastery. Geoffrey cautioned Peter that the monastery needed a library because:

Claustrum sine armario est quasi castrum sine armamentario, ‘A monastery without a library is like a castle without an armory.’

Although for granted today, spaces for the collection, storage, production, and study of texts—and the knowledge they contain—are as old as writing itself. A modern research institute is unthinkable without a library, much like its monastic predecessors. In AD 1170, the subprior of Saint Barbara in Normandy, whose name was Geoffrey, wrote a letter to a monk named Peter Mangot, providing Peter with permission to build a monastery. Geoffrey cautioned Peter that the monastery needed a library because: Claustrum sine armario est quasi castrum sine armamentario. “A monastery without a library is like a castle without an armory.” Similar notions existed in the ancient Middle East and Africa. The Ptolemaic (ca. 237–57 BC) temple of Horus at Edfu included a library room called the “house of books” (pr mḏꜢ.t)—a phrase analogous to the Mesopotamian edubba “house of tablets”—that included inscriptions on the walls, ostensibly detailing some of the papyrus scrolls kept inside. So “charged” were these books that the ancient Egyptian scribes referred to them as “divine books” (mḏꜢ.t-nṯr) and more specifically as the “emanations” or “souls” of Re (bꜢ.w Rʿ)—physical manifestations of the sun god, the most powerful force of nature. Such “charged” texts were sought by the Neo-Assyrian king Ashurbanipal in his efforts to create one of the best stocked libraries of the ancient Middle East, complete with lists of catalogs detailing the contents of the library. Perhaps in scope it was unmatched until the founding of the Library of Alexandria, whose seemingly innumerable contents Callimachus legendarily cataloged in his Pinakes—popularly regarded in information science as one of the first library catalogs.

Already in antiquity, but especially since the Middle Ages, accessing information—bibliographic or otherwise—has been aided by various kinds of catalogs. The now largely obsolete library card catalog owes its existence to the principles of classification developed at the end of the nineteenth century AD by people such as Charles Ammi Cutter, whose Rules for a Printed Dictionary Catalog (1876) served as a foundation for long-running standards in library and information science such as the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR), Resource Description and Access (RDA), or the modern Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR). Cutter’s volume appeared in the same year (1876) that saw the creation of the American Library Association (ALA), founded at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition by a group of attendees including Melvin Dewey. Dewey’s now famous classification system was based
partially on earlier schemes, such as that of Sir Francis Bacon, and informed by contemporaries such as Cutter. It was also influenced by the ALA’s adoption of standardized 3 × 5 inch cards stored and displayed in sets of drawers comprising the “classic” card catalog, whose furniture design is often attributed to Ezra Abbot. Dewey’s system heavily influenced how knowledge was handled far beyond the world of library science.

The late nineteenth century was a time of dynamic study and advancements in the humanities; these advancements produced anxiety about how the deluge of information would be managed. Paul Otlet expanded the Dewey Decimal system to theoretically cover any potential topic through a universal decimal classification, a wonderful story told in a recent popular volume, Cataloging the World, by Alex Wright. By 1895, Otlet had founded the Universal Bibliographic Repertory in Brussels, a card catalog designed to index all human knowledge—essentially a project to take the library card catalog to its logical extreme. For a fee, researchers could submit queries and receive answers from the project’s headquarters in Belgium. Likewise, since 1860 the Oxford English Dictionary had been collecting slips organized into “pigeon-holes,” a system mimicked by nearly all dictionary projects at the Oriental Institute, including the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary (CAD), Chicago Demotic Dictionary (CDD), and Chicago Hittite Dictionary (CHD). Projects established within the last twenty-five years tend to employ digital database frameworks, but the CHD continues to collect and produce a large paper card collection, and the over one million paper cards from the CAD remain together among the archives of the institute. Likewise, the manner in which Johanne Vindenas indexed the library volumes—most helpful to scholars for journal articles, conference proceedings, Festschriften, and book reviews—sought to solve the same problems with which Otlet and others were grappling, namely the organization and distribution of knowledge. Aligned with the aims of the OI Integrated Database today, “Otlet had developed a series of progressively more ambitious schemes to organize the collection and to promote universal access to human knowledge through a global information network.”

Otlet’s legacy had largely been forgotten until it was resurrected by Warden Boyd Rayward in his PhD dissertation for the Graduate Library School at the University of Chicago in 1973, and then subsequently in many publications throughout his career. Rayward demonstrated the importance of graduate programs for library and information science; established in 1926, the University of Chicago Graduate Library School stopped accepting new students in 1988 and closed in 1989 despite its important contributions to the research mission of the university. The research of Rayward on Otlet represented one thread in the global trend in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to use cataloging systems first developed in libraries for organizing information in other disciplines—a trend most evident in the dictionary projects, but present also in surprising ways elsewhere. In fact, the Integrated Database Project currently developed through a sophisticated digital database platform had a little recognized forefather in a paper “database” system at the Oriental Institute that, like Paul Otlet, sought to gather and catalog all the material from the ancient Middle East.

Like the Universal Bibliographic Repertory of Otlet, the Oriental Institute designed in the 1930s the Archaeological Corpus Project, headed by a scholarly committee representing some of the primary divisions of ancient Middle East studies at the time, including: A. T. Olmstead, T. George Allen, Watson Boy-
“As a space providing the ingredients necessary for the soup of science, the library serves as one of the few communal spaces where all of us—faculty, staff, students, members, visitors, and the public—come together to ‘excavate’ ideas.”

initiated as part of the New Deal during the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Boxes containing the nearly 400,000 cards produced by the project sat in storage for perhaps as many as fifty years, but still retain the handwritten label, “WPA Project.”

The project was yet another brainchild of James Henry Breasted, whose extraordinary vision was seemingly limitless. According to Breasted:

“The writer considered that a practical method for producing some degree of correlation of materials both old and new would be the compilation of an encyclopedic index. On a limited scale this work began with the organization of the Institute in 1919. In so far as such an index was bibliographical, it could be compiled by a librarian in accordance with library practice. . . . The catalogue thus produced by our librarians is becoming more and more an indispensable tool for all research workers in the field of the Near East. In physical form this catalogue is of course a card index, so organized that its subject entries include the leading rubrics in the cultural development of man, especially before the rise of historic Europe, but also later. Ideally conceived, the contribution of each item recorded would be summarized on its cards, so that, when exhaustively compiled, the cards under each rubric would be the basis for a complete organization of the discernible relevant facts and materials, drawn not only from publications but also from unpublished original monuments and sources.”

Several major scholars worked for the project. Homer L. Thomas was supervisor of the project in 1939–1941. By 1943, it was Ann Louise Perkins at the helm. Miriam Lichtheim took over from Perkins in 1949. She ran the Archaeological Corpus Project from 1949 until 1951, when then Director Karl Kraeling cut funding for the project and redirected it toward excavations at the site of Ptolemais in Libya, which formed part of the pentapolis of Cyrenaica. The results of these excavations were subsequently published as Oriental Institute Publications 90, Ptolemais: City of the Libyan Pentapolis. It is clear from her
memoir, *Telling it Briefly: A Memoir of My Life*, that Lichtheim harbored resentment over how the project, as well as her position as research associate, ended at the Oriental Institute—a situation she described as being “rudely interrupted” by Kraeling, who believed the project “superfluous” and let her go despite the support of the Egyptologist William F. Edgerton. Her layoff from the Oriental Institute subsequently led her to leave the professional field to become a librarian, first at Yale and then at the University of California, Los Angeles, a fitting development from her work on the corpus, but she continued to produce scholarly work in her personal time. While in California, she helped Klaus Baer, another Kraeling “victim” in her opinion, transition from Chicago to a professorship at the University of California, Berkeley.

The work of the Archaeological Corpus Project began to produce results, particularly “after long experimentation, at last attempting quantity production under the direction of Dr. Neilson Debevoise.” In the preface to her 1947 book, *Seal Impressions of Nuzi*, Edith Porada notes that the “photographs of the seal impressions were taken by the writer with the material and equipment put at her disposition by the Archaeological Corpus of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago,” where A. T. E. Olmstead is listed as “Chairman of the Archaeological Corpus.”

Like the Mundaneum of Paul Otlet, which he saw as a foundation to international collaboration and a contribution to world peace, the Archaeological Corpus Project served as an example of large-scale cooperation among scholars. Few scholars of today’s younger generations who open the pages of the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* probably realize the scale of its achievement—among the greatest in the humanistic tradition on par with the compiling of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible in the sixteenth century or the Oxford English Dictionary in the twentieth century. Even fewer are likely to realize the debt such projects owe to the library card catalog, by which a model had been set for putting basic information on paper cards and arranging them by various criteria.

This intertwined history of the Oriental Institute library, the Research Archives, the major scholarly projects of the institute, and its publications helps to demonstrate how the Oriental Institute has been home
ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN IN THE RESEARCH ARCHIVES

At the center of the Research Archives is a spectacular reading room ringed with shelves and furnished with large tables (figs. 13, 19, and 26) for poring over books or laying out elephant folios (figs. 29 and 30) for easy access. After a renovation grant in the 1990s, the room has since been known as the Elizabeth Morse Genius Reading Room, named after the trust that funded the renovation of the reading room, including the recreation of light fixtures in their original style (figs. 31 and 32). Breasted described it as “the most beautiful room in the building,” with its towering rosette window (figs. 13 and 26), vaulted ceiling (fig. 33), and beautifully executed decoration. It remains a popular setting for photography, including the official portrait of the thirteenth president of the University of Chicago, Robert Zimmer (fig. 34). Like other areas of the Oriental Institute, stylistic features from the ancient Middle East were incorporated into the design, such as in the leaded glass window rosette (fig. 35) and the finely carved bounty of plants repeated in the woodworking (figs. 36 and 37). However, much of the architecture at the University of Chicago was based on the Gothic style of English institutions like Oxford and Cambridge Universities, a style of the Victorian Gothic revival so common on American collegiate campuses that it has been termed “Collegiate Gothic.” Therefore, the ceiling of the Research Archives was decorated with several designs borrowed from English heraldry. A repeating pattern stenciled on cork board inlays in the ceiling depicts a greyhound peering back over its shoulders as it reclines at the base of a tree (fig. 38), an attitude or pose in heraldry referred to by the French terms couchant “lying down” and regardant “looking backward” (fig. 39). In one tableau over the central windows on both east and west walls, two mirrored greyhounds sit beneath a tree from the trunk of which grows the coat of arms of the University of Chicago, with its motto crescat scientia vita excolatur: “Let knowledge grow from more to more; and so be human life enriched” (fig. 40).
both to major paradigm shifts in the methods of our sciences as well as “simple” and incremental scholarly advancements. Throughout the last century, the library has often played the role of catalyst in its narrative of progress. As a space providing the ingredients necessary for the soup of science, the library serves as one of the few communal spaces where all of us—faculty, staff, students, members, visitors, and the public—come together to “excavate” ideas (fig. 28). In fact, all of the most important scientific work for which the Oriental Institute is known, the basis for its legacy and for the writing of this centennial celebration, the reason why it continues to capture the public imagination, exists today in libraries around the world as the written results of the endeavors carried out by the great men and women who spent their careers here and whose brilliance and dedication are reflected in the pages of their books and articles. In the library, we are the stewards and keepers who both make such work possible and fuel the work of the future.

Librarians, often among the unsung heroes of academic institutions, have held steadfast in their mission to save, preserve, and catalog—all the while facilitating access to—knowledge about the world. Legends of their heroic efforts abound, such as the story of Prior Bernhard II, who on November 21st of AD 1237, died while saving books from a fire in Styria (Austria) by casting them out the windows of the library, a narrative apt to characterize the desperate attempts to salvage volumes from the Institut d’Égypte in Cairo as it burned in December 2011 after clashes between the military and protestors near Tahrir Square. While the Oriental Institute is fortunate to lack such a tragic story, there is an oral history account of a fire that started in the motor of an oscillating fan when curtains covering the library windows were caught between the blades, thereby overheating the motor. At the time, climate control had not yet been installed in the building and it was common in the hot, humid summers of Chicago to open the windows of the library and circulate the air by means of electric fans. To extinguish the flames and avoid catastrophe, the fan was kicked through a second story window onto the gravel roof of the museum galleries below where it was summarily extinguished, thereby saving the priceless knowledge in the Research Archives for us and future generations.

FOY SCALF

Egyptologist Foy Scalf (PhD, University of Chicago, 2014) specializes in the textual culture of ancient Egypt, with particular interest in ancient religious literature. He has published on Egyptian language and linguistics, religion and philosophy, as well as textual transmission and knowledge production. In 2017, he curated a special exhibit at the Oriental Institute Museum, The Book of the Dead: Becoming God in Ancient Egypt, and edited the accompanying catalog—a fully illustrated guide to the ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead. At the Oriental Institute, he is a research associate, head of Research Archives, and head of the Integrated Database Project.

FURTHER READING


The Research Archives catalog, as part of the OI’s Integrated Database and Collections Search, can be found online: https://oi-idb.uchicago.edu/.
The Center for Ancient Middle Eastern Landscapes (CAMEL) studies the history of this constantly evolving region through an analysis of its diverse and changing landscapes. Middle Eastern landscapes record thousands of years of human activity and continue to shape people’s lives today. Combining the latest in remote sensing, aerial photography, historical and contemporary maps, and archaeological surveys, CAMEL offers a unique view of the distant past in the Middle East.

CAMEL was founded by Tony Wilkinson in 1998 to pursue systematic, scalar, and technologically sophisticated landscape archaeology. Landscape archaeology itself is based on the idea that we can study past societies through both the large-scale distribution of human activity in space, and through the ways that people interacted with, altered, and perceived their physical environment. In his landmark text *Archaeological Landscapes of the Near East* (2003), Wilkinson defined the modern study of this field for the Middle East.

“Landscape archaeology itself is based on the idea that we can study past societies through both the large-scale distribution of human activity in space, and through the ways that people interacted with, altered, and perceived their physical environment.”

*LEFT: CAMEL founder Tony Wilkinson.*
Wilkinson saw CAMEL’s original basement facility, then called the Center for the Archaeology of the Middle Eastern Landscape, as his own little Bletchley Park. There, a great deal of information and a team of trained analysts were brought together in one place to decipher the long-vanished landscapes of the ancient Middle East. Today CAMEL operates a computer lab dedicated to Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and archaeological remote sensing, and serves as one of the most prominent research units devoted to the study of landscape archaeology in the region.

The CAMEL Lab carries on the vision of its founder through three core functions that guide the lab’s endeavors and development:

**Collection:** The systematic collection and organization of contemporary and historical spatial data pertaining to the Middle East

**Application:** The application of pioneering methods for investigating this data

**Collaboration:** The facilitation of the work of numerous researchers and members of the public seeking to better understand ancient or modern Middle Eastern landscapes

**COLLECTION**

The collection and organization of relevant spatial data forms the backbone of CAMEL research. To this end, the lab catalogs and maintains a collection of approximately twenty thousand unique geospatial datasets. The data we are assembling includes maps and aerial photographs from the Oriental Institute archives; maps and photographs made available by other organizations, individuals, and governments; spatial data collected by researchers during the course of their fieldwork; and data acquired by spy satellites and manned space vehicles from the 1960s to the present. We have detailed data for extensive contiguous areas of the Middle East, North Africa, and parts of Central Asia, including complete CORONA satellite coverage of Afghanistan. The CAMEL database is now part of the OI’s Integrated Database, making these resources broadly accessible. A significant portion of CAMEL data is searchable and downloadable, enabling the Oriental Institute to present original, profound perspectives on this important region and its vibrant cultures.
“CAMEL continues to be at the forefront of efforts to access and utilize sources of historical imagery that were declassified in 2013, particularly U2 aerial imagery . . . and HEXAGON satellite imagery.”

APPLICATION
CAMEL continues to develop techniques for remote sensing and data visualization in landscape archaeology. Below are just a handful of recent CAMEL projects.

Historical Aerial and Satellite Imagery
Among CAMEL’s numerous achievements has been the development of the “Chicago Protocol” for integrating Cold War Era satellite photography into studies of the archaeology of the ancient Middle East. The CORONA imagery was taken by American spy satellites between 1959 and 1980 and declassified in 1997. CAMEL continues to be at the forefront of efforts to access and utilize sources of historical imagery that were declassified in 2013, particularly U2 aerial imagery (mostly captured between 1959 and 1960) and HEXAGON satellite imagery (captured between 1971 and 1984). CAMEL has already used these new sources of historical imagery for a project focused on desert kites (mass-kill hunting traps) and other stone structures preserved on the surface of the basalt desert (harra) of eastern Jordan.

ABOVE: “Jellyfish-shaped” desert kite in eastern Jordan surrounded by other stone features, U2 photograph from January 1960.
GIS and Historical Geography: Anatolian Atlas

The Anatolian Atlas, codirected by Joshua Cannon and Professor James Osborne, has built an extensive online database of Anatolian archaeological sites that serves as a useful research tool as well as a venue for displaying new research. The website displays geographic and bibliographic data on Anatolian archaeological sites in order to highlight and reassess debates in historical geography for the Hittite period (c. 1650–1180 BC).

3D Visualization

Using 1936 aerial photographs taken by Erich Schmidt, CAMEL created a 3-D model of the World Heritage site of Persepolis, Iran, at the time of its first excavations. This project was led by then-graduate student Jennifer Altman-Lupu. A video of the model was on display in the Persepolis: Images of an Empire exhibit at the Oriental Institute Museum (2015–17).

Education and Training

As an active member of the University of Chicago community, CAMEL is an important training resource for archaeologists. The lab actively trains students and volunteers from across campus in research skills ranging from operating total stations and geophysical survey equipment to using GIS software, drone photography, and photogrammetry. The director of CAMEL also teaches a two-course sequence known as Ancient Landscapes. In the course, students are introduced to the theory and method of landscape studies and the use of GIS to analyze archaeological, anthropological, historical, and environmental data.

COLLABORATION

CAMEL also plays an important and expanding role in facilitating the research of numerous projects at the Oriental Institute and beyond. With connections to research projects around the world, CAMEL has become globally recognized as an important resource, and one that has a growing role as an integrative component within the overall mission of the Oriental Institute.
ABOVE: A 3-D model of Persepolis developed from archival photographs.

OPPOSITE COUNTERCLOCKWISE:


MIDDLE: Acting CAMEL director Anthony Lauricella demonstrating how to calibrate the OI’s magnetometer.

BOTTOM: Ancient Landscapes students present their final projects to peers and faculty at a public poster session.

RIGHT: Archaeology Institute of Afghanistan staff receive GIS training in CAMEL as part of the OI’s Afghan Heritage Mapping Partnership.
AHMP: Afghan Heritage Mapping Partnership

The analysis of satellite imagery is an important tool in archaeological research and cultural heritage preservation in conflict zones across the Middle East and Central Asia. Since 2015, CAMEL has devoted much of its research effort to cultural heritage projects concerning the sites and monuments of Afghanistan. This work is generously funded by an institutional grant from the US Department of State and led by professor and former OI director, Gil Stein. The partnership draws on CAMEL’s unique resources and skill set to develop a comprehensive geospatial database of all detectable archaeological sites in Afghanistan. This database currently documents more than four thousand confirmed and probable archaeological and cultural sites. Alongside this remote research, the AHMP focuses on capacity-building by training the staff of the Archaeology Institute of Afghanistan (AIA) in the application of GIS to archaeology and cultural heritage resource management. The project has also resulted in an abundance of new research. Recently the AHMP has published extensively on methods for detecting looting, remote survey using historical maps and aerial images, and caravanserai trade networks. Most notably, the AHMP database has been used to produce the first nationwide, diachronic assessment of damage caused to archaeological sites by looting, militarization, urban growth, and agriculture.

From right: Here, the site of Kaurmach is shown over a span of nearly forty years—between CORONA spy satellite photography, Soviet topographic maps, and commercial satellite imagery. Together, they tell a recent history of the impact of progressive development and militarization.
LOOKING BACK FROM A BIRD’S EYE VIEW: AERIAL AND LANDSCAPE ARCHAEOLOGY AT THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE

Even before Wilkinson and the CAMEL lab, the Oriental Institute has been pioneering ways to see, study, and understand Middle Eastern landscapes.

Some of the earliest aerial photographs in our collections were produced by the OI’s founder, James Henry Breasted, in 1920. As one of the early, unrecognized pioneers of utilizing aerial survey for archaeological research, Breasted photographed Egyptian pyramids and temples from a Royal Air Force plane. His glass plate and film negatives document now-vanished features such as the ancient lake at Abusir, Egypt.

In 1935, the field director of the OI’s mission to Persepolis, Erich Schmidt, was gifted a plane (christened “Friend of Iran”) from his wife, Mary-Helen Schmidt, enabling him to direct an impressive series of flights over much of Iran. This mission included photographing excavations already in progress, mapping sites being considered for excavation, and new explorations over archaeologically unknown areas of Iran. During the aerial survey, Schmidt and the other surveyors developed techniques for correcting their photos for the effects of light, seasonality, and weather on the visibility of different archaeological features. Over one thousand digital images reside in our...
archives and can be geolocated thanks to Schmidt’s meticulous cataloging. The paradigm of aerial photography guided the developing use by archaeologists of satellite images and other remotely sensed data.

Research at the Oriental Institute also established the early foundations for landscape-scale archaeological study. OI professor Robert Braidwood’s archaeological surveys in the Amuq Valley expanded the scale of archaeological investigation. Braidwood’s work elsewhere formulated significant theories on the role of environment in the development of agriculture and the rise of urban societies.

Robert McCormick Adams extended the study of ancient cities of Mesopotamia into their hinterlands, incorporating landscape-scale survey into the focused research of urban central places. During the 1950s, ’60s, and ’70s, Professor Robert McCormick Adams and a number of colleagues at the OI undertook an extensive sweep of archaeological survey throughout the Mesopotamian plain and adjacent regions of Iran.

PAST CAMEL DIRECTORS

The Center for Ancient Middle Eastern Landscapes has been a home for many prominent scholars of landscape archaeology. The second director of CAMEL was Scott Branting (currently associate professor, University of Central Florida). During his tenure (2004–14) he oversaw a project of massive imagery acquisition and systematization. Branting also supervised the expansion of CAMEL’s facilities into a second floor multi-station computer lab. The second floor lab proudly bears the name of William M. Sumner, former OI professor and director, whose vision for embracing digital and computational applications to archaeology made possible the space for the first laboratory.
The most recent CAMEL director (2014—17) was Emily Hammer (currently assistant professor, University of Pennsylvania). Hammer recommitted the lab to collaborative research, as well as the innovative use of new imagery and remotely-sensed datasets from the Middle East. Many of these datasets have supported our work on heritage landscapes in the Republic of Afghanistan, including the production of the AHMP site and feature catalogs. OI alumnus Jason Ur (currently professor, Harvard University), Jesse Casana (currently professor, Dartmouth University), Mark Altaweel (currently lecturer, University College London), and Carrie Hritz (currently associate director of research, National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center) conducted and published research under the umbrella of the CAMEL lab.

Currently, CAMEL is being supervised by Interim Director Anthony Lauricella and a faculty oversight committee consisting of James Osborne, Hervé Reculeau, and Yorke Rowan. In 2019 CAMEL organized a centennial-themed conference titled “Landscape Studies in the Near East: The Next 100 Years” to celebrate the strides we have made in understanding ancient Middle Eastern landscapes over the past century, and to look forward to the directions the field is going in the future—or where it ought to go—geographically, methodologically, and theoretically. Topics included the environment and social change; integrating and analyzing large-scale datasets; new remote sensing and other technologies; cultural heritage and political ecology; landscape archaeology theory; modeling ancient settlement systems; and synthesizing historical and archaeological data. Cumulatively, this conference emphasized just how incredibly diverse this discipline that was started at the OI has become.

FURTHER READING


MAKIN’ BOOKS: OI PUBLICATIONS

CHARISSA JOHNSON

James Henry Breasted was obsessed with publishing books. His passion was to photograph and translate reliefs and inscriptions, and with funding from John D. Rockefeller Jr., he had the means to publish them. The first Oriental Institute Publication (OIP), *Oriental Forerunners of Byzantine Painting: First Century Wall Paintings from the Fortress of Dura on the Middle Euphrates*, was published in 1924, the same year that the Epigraphic Survey was created. “These paintings were at that time the only unconcealed oriental forerunners of Byzantine painting; and they were recorded by the Oriental Institute expedition in a single day” (Jean E. Luther, *OI Annual Report 1978–79*). Thus, the Oriental Institute Publications—an office that now boasts sixteen series and over eight hundred publications—was born.

Many people are surprised to discover that the Oriental Institute has its own Publications Office, even though our publications are utilized across the world. In its beginnings, the OI had its publications printed and sold through the University of Chicago Press. The OI contributed to the printing, but for many years received few royalties. In 1976 John A. Brinkman (OI director, 1972–81) decided it was time the OI published and sold books independently.

“This year the staff of the publications department of the Oriental Institute numbers six, a significant expansion reflecting the fact that the Institute now publishes and markets its own books and monographs. . . . With efficient and up-to-date office equipment and an in-house staff perhaps appreciable economies can be realized. In future years the department may find it possible to produce as many as six volumes annually.” (Olga A. Titelbaum, *OI Annual Report 1976–77*)

From its inception, OI Publications has published a variety of ancient Middle Eastern findings and discoveries, monographs (including many oversized books with detailed plates/images), and seminars, instituted three internationally renowned dictionaries, made incredible technological advancements, created and converted multiple fonts, and scanned and uploaded all of its titles as free PDFs available everywhere the internet reaches.

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS

The earliest OI publications were printed in the days of hand-set letterpress printing. Typewritten manuscripts were sent to typesetters, and proofs—preliminary versions of publications to be reviewed by editors and authors—were then sent to Publications. These were called galley proofs, so named because
the printer would place a page into a metal tray (called a galley) where the type would be laid out before being tightened into place. After galley proofs, page proofs were sent to Publications for review. This process involved an exorbitant amount of checking and rechecking, which costs much time and money. Additionally, any images would need to be photographed and the negatives would then be taken to the printer and fitted to the page.

“The negatives for thirty-two page signatures are placed upon specially treated metal plates, light is shown through the negatives to react with the metal, and the negatives are removed; the metal plates are then placed in a special chemical bath, the chemicals react differently with the metal not exposed to light, and the metal plates emerge from the chemical bath as the printing plates that are used to print a book.” (Thomas Holland, *OI Annual Report 1992–93*)

The electronic age and the digital advancements that came with it completely renovated this process. Publications received its first computer, a Macintosh SE/20, in 1989. This was the very first computer ever obtained by the OI. (The “20” meant that it could store twenty megabytes of data. Today this wouldn’t even be enough to store one high-resolution color image from any of the OI’s current publications. In addition to online server storage use, each of the Publications computers currently store 3,000 gigabytes—around 157,000 times the storage capacity of the original Macintosh SE/20.)

“As the use of computers became more widespread in the second half of the 1980s and desktop laser printers became available, we acquired a Macintosh SE/20, a LaserWriter IINTX (300 dpi), and the latest version of Microsoft Word and began the in-house production of manuscripts. The first volume to be produced in-house with this hardware and software was *The Holmes Expeditions to Luristan* (OIP 108) in 1989.” (Thomas Holland, *OI Annual Report 1992–93*)

“The highlight of the year in the Editorial Office was the successful testing of a new method of preparing manuscripts for printing. Rather than preparing camera-ready copy in-house, an electronic version of a manuscript was transmitted to a printing company, which output the electronic file as a negative from which metal printing plates were made. Last year’s Annual Report was prepared electronically and served as a test for this new method of book production; the results could not have been more spectacular. Thomas Urban, who prepared the manuscript, reports that every special character and mix of fonts and typefaces printed without any problems. The valuable information learned during production was put to use immediately in the production of the Hittite Dictionary.” (Thomas Holland, *OI Annual Report 1993–94*)

With the development of computing technology and the many software upgrades that happened in following years, Publications gained the ability to utilize more fonts. This allowed us to produce a wider range of manuscripts, especially those that pertained to Egyptian, Sumerian, Semitic, Indo-European, and Anatolian topics. Ancient Middle Eastern languages contain various characters and diacritics, and “the ability to produce good quality diacritics and special characters goes hand in hand with our ability to produce good quality manuscripts in-house and at lower cost.” (Thomas Holland, *OI Annual Report 1989–90*) Fonts for Greek, Northwest Semitic, cuneiform, ancient Egyptian, Egyptian hieroglyphs, Coptic, and Demotic were either purchased or made in-house. Especially important were two Times Roman-based fonts designed by Ecological Linguistics in Washington, DC, for the Assyrian and Hittite dictionaries.
“Tom Urban continues to work with Lloyd Anderson of Ecological Linguistics on new fonts, this year with an eye to cross-platform compatibility; Tom’s computer has a PC-card with Windows 95 that allows him to test fonts instantaneously.” (Thomas Holland, OI Annual Report 1997–98)

“The typesetting, composition, and layout of our publications are still done in-house, but we no longer have to produce camera-ready text in-house at a lower resolution. We can now have our texts printed from floppy disks at the same resolution (2400+ dpi) as a document typeset by an outside vendor. The working out of this new method of publishing was crucial to our being able to take on the publishing of the Hittite Dictionary.” (Thomas Holland, OI Annual Report 1992–93)

Similarly, Publications’ work on the Chicago Demotic Dictionary required many hours—and three years—spent adding about 2,000 special characters to the Gentium Plus font.

“The characters were added to Gentium Plus using the software FontForge. The Publications Office has been using an initial version of the modified Gentium Plus for several months and the font appears to be stable. As soon as we move past the font problem, we need to remove the CDD files from Microsoft Word, which is very unstable, and place them into InDesign, which is very stable. With this transfer in mind, Ariel Singer was hired to work for Publications but in the CDD offices. The CDD files contain many thousands of scans of words from papyri written in Demotic. While the scans were easily inserted into the Word files, in InDesign the scans should be placed as individual image files—but, no individual image files were retained. So, Ariel Googled and discovered how to extract the image files from the Word documents. . . . When we assemble the CDD in InDesign we’ll be able to place the image files in their proper places.” (Thomas Urban, OI Annual Report 2015–16)

Today, Publications uses Adobe Creative Suite (InDesign and Photoshop apps, primarily) to format and lay out manuscripts and edit images, receiving digital and physical proofs from printers. Generally two full-time staff and four part-time staff publish around twelve to twenty publications a year, in addition to a quarterly members’ magazine, annual reports, brochures, and materials for the annual postdoctoral seminar. While a relatively small operation, Publications is no less valuable, and continued improvements to technology and methods are allowing Publications to produce even more books and make quality manuscripts available to more people.
SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Assyriological Studies (AS): Philological research dealing chiefly with Assyriological grammatical and lexicographical material.

The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (CAD): (1920–2010) The CAD project was initiated in the early 1920s, not long after James Henry Breasted founded the Oriental Institute in 1919, and barely one hundred years after the decipherment of the cuneiform script. The CAD was conceived to provide a comprehensive treatment of Akkadian with each word in a meaningful context. The source material ranges from the third millennium BC to the first century AD and spans the area from the Mediterranean Sea in the west to the Zagros Mountains in the east.

The Hittite Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (CHD): (1975–present) CHD is a comprehensive, bilingual Hittite-English dictionary of the Indo-European Hittite language from central Asia Minor, ca. 1750–1200 BC. The CHD is not just a list of words and their meanings, but rather a dictionary that reflects and illustrates the ideas and material world of Hittite society through its lexicon. Published letter by letter, the CHD is a long-term project and the result of a painstaking process of cultural, historical, and lexical investigation for all those interested in Hittite culture and history.

Chicago Hittite Dictionary Supplements (CHDS): The CHD Supplement series is intended for the publication of materials directly related to the CHD. These can be publications of primary texts that were as yet unpublished (CHDS 1–3) but might also include lexical studies to support the CHD itself.

Late Antique and Medieval Islamic Near East (LAMINE): LAMINE aims to publish a variety of scholarly works, including monographs, edited volumes, critical text editions, translations, studies of corpora of documents—in short, any work that offers a significant contribution to understanding the Middle East between roughly AD 200 and AD 1000.


Materials and Studies in Kassite History (MSKH): Materials and studies in Kassite history.

Oriental Institute Communications (OIC): Preliminary reports for the general reader that are popular in style, written in simple non-technical language, and plentifully illustrated. Their purpose is to bring out the main facts developed through fieldwork.


Oriental Institute Nubian Expedition (OINE): Definitive final reports of the Oriental Institute Egyptian Aswan High Dam Program.

Oriental Institute Publications (OIP): Scientific presentations of source materials, including full and final accounts of field operations, results, and landscape studies.

Oriental Institute Seminars (OIS): Proceedings from small, focused, post-doctoral seminars that explore important theoretical, methodological, and cross-culturally significant topics relating to broader issues in the Middle East.

Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization (SAOC): Studies dealing with various topics of the ancient Middle East.

Lost Egypt (LE): A series of limited edition photographs by the Epigraphic Survey. These exquisite photographic prints recapture images of the Nile Valley at the turn of the century, revealing glimpses of an Egypt that no longer exists.

Miscellaneous Publications (MISC): General Middle Eastern studies.

OTHER PUBLICATION DESCRIPTIONS

Annual Reports: Reports on the activities of projects, individuals, museum, membership, and development.

Chicago House Bulletin: The annual Chicago House Bulletin is an illustrated diary of the Epigraphic Survey six-month field season in Luxor with more information and illustrations than can be presented in the OI Annual Report. The bulletin is sent to all OI members as well as friends and supporters of Chicago House and is our way of saying, “thank you.”

News & Notes: Quarterly members’ magazine connecting our members to the ancient Middle East by providing access to OI scholarship, research, and history. Each issue includes articles by OI faculty, associates, and affiliated scholars, as well as up-to-date information on OI programming and travel.
ELECTRONIC INITIATIVE

Perhaps one of the most exciting things about Publications is that, in addition to print-on-demand, the OI offers all of its more than eight hundred publications online for free PDF download. The OI was one of the first major academic institutions to do this and has paved the way for other academic institutions to do similarly. Understandably, many shied away from this idea due to concerns of financial loss. However, this project has actually increased sales, and more important, it has allowed many who would otherwise not have access to these publications to access valuable information.

The first book offered in free PDF download form was the *Chicago Demotic Dictionary*. This proved a huge success, and so Thomas Urban presented the idea of doing the same with all of our publications in the early 2000s.

“The experimental electronic distribution… has gone quite well, judging by the consistent number of ‘hits’ to their web pages.”

(Thomas Holland, *OI Annual Report 2002–03*)

In October 2004, faculty voted unanimously to move ahead with the idea: the Electronic Initiative.

“Under a mandate from the Director of the Oriental Institute, following the advice of the Electronic Publications Committee and with the support of the faculty, the Publications Office is committed to making all its 356 titles that are not at present online, published since the early 1900s, available both online in PDF format and in print as books-on-demand. Work began in 2004, when the Student Editorial Assistants began inventorying all the Oriental Institute titles not online, gathering trim sizes, page counts, and types of pages (i.e., text, line art, halftone, color, foldout). The information gathered was then sorted, totaled, and sent to scanning companies in order to obtain competitive quotes for the scanning, creation of PDF and TIFF files, and book-on-demand printing. One company proved capable of scanning the many oversize and complicated volumes and another expressed an interest in being the distributor of book-on-demand titles, and a pilot project is underway. Once the pilot project has been successfully completed, the...
The next step will be to expand our Electronic Publications web page in order to list full publication information of each title and the formats in which the volumes are available: PDF and in print or book-on-demand.” (Thomas Holland, OI Annual Report 2005–06)

Everything published before 2004 was scanned and converted to PDF, as time and money permitted. Thomas Urban, Leslie Schramer, Lindsay DeCarlo, and Katie Johnson tracked down every OI book and sent them to Northern Micrographics to scan. The Assyrian and Hittite Dictionary projects donated to help fund the scanning of their own books, while Misty and Lewis Gruber donated towards the scanning of Egyptological titles. The OI funded everything else.

“All new titles are simultaneously issued in print and as PDF files delivered through the Oriental Institute’s website. The Oriental Institute chose Northern MicroGraphics (NMT Corporation), located in La Crosse, Wisconsin, to scan its published and either out-of-print titles or titles whose electronic files are too old and to convert them to PDF files. The Publications Office oversaw the scanning of the following forty-six titles of the latter type, archiving high resolution TIFF and PDF files and posting them on the web in reduced file size, searchable, and secure PDF files. . . . The office hopes to announce that more than 100 titles are available as downloadable PDF files and that all 300+ titles published by the Oriental Institute since its founding are listed online.” (Thomas Holland, OI Annual Report 2006–07)

In October 2013, nine years after the Electronic Initiative was first approved, the scanning of older titles was completed and 768 titles (130,990 files totaling 646.08 gigabytes of data) were uploaded to the OI website as PDFs. In addition to allowing millions around the globe access to hitherto inaccessible information, the Electronic Initiative had several other unexpected benefits: OI publications became searchable, and images from each of the publications could be extracted any time researchers needed them.

Ultimately, spreading valuable knowledge, discoveries, and ideas at a greater pace and distance is the greatest reward and the reason Publications came about in the first place. To this day, Publications still receives letters and emails from around the world expressing how much access to OI publications has changed people’s lives for the better.

“We are privileged to play such a significant role in the distribution of knowledge, and the posting of so many titles online can only raise the profile of the Oriental Institute in the field of Near Eastern studies to the world. We encourage everyone to visit the Publications Office web page and browse the list of titles available online, noting especially that the dates of these volumes range from the 1920s to the present.” (Thomas Urban, OI Annual Report 2007–08)
AREAS OF RESEARCH
[07] EGYPT
EGYPT: WHERE THE OI BEGAN

BRIAN P. MUHS

Egyptology and Egyptian archaeology are represented at the Oriental Institute by both individual and institutional research projects, which have a complex and interrelated history. James Henry Breasted’s personal research in Egypt and Nubia inspired many of the first institutional research projects undertaken by the Oriental Institute. Those institutional projects in turn provided valuable experiences to several generations of Egyptologists and Egyptian archaeologists, which they applied to their own individual research, some of which subsequently inspired later institutional projects at the Oriental Institute. This chapter attempts to trace some of the relationships between individual scholars and institutional projects by surveying the careers of some of the Egyptologists and Egyptian archaeologists who have worked at the Oriental Institute and then describing some of the Oriental Institute projects on which many of them have worked over the years.

JAMES HENRY BREASTED (Egyptology) was born in Rockford, Illinois, on August 27, 1865, and received his BA from North Central College in 1888. He attended the Chicago Theological Seminary and Yale University, where he studied with William Rainey Harper and received his MA in 1891. At the suggestion of Harper, he went to Berlin and studied Egyptology with Adolf Erman, receiving his PhD in 1894. In the meantime, John D. Rockefeller Sr. had selected Harper to be the president of the University of Chicago, and Harper hired Breasted as instructor of Egyptology and assistant director of Haskell Oriental Museum in 1894. He became assistant professor in 1898, director of the Haskell Oriental Museum in 1901, and full professor in 1905. Breasted already thought about Egyptology in terms of projects that would provide solid data for writing history, such as his translations of Egyptian historical texts known as Ancient Records, published in 1905, or his photographic and epigraphic expeditions to Egypt and the Sudan in the winters of 1905–06 and 1906–07.

Breasted persuaded John D. Rockefeller Jr. to fund the research institute that became the Oriental Institute in May 1919, and Breasted became the first OI director from July 1, 1919 until his death on December 2, 1935. As director, Breasted continued to think about Egyptology in terms of projects. For example, Breasted envisioned that a diachronic study of the development of Egyptian funerary texts from the Pyramid Texts through the Coffin Texts to the Book of the Dead would provide an important chapter in human intellectual history. Kurt Sethe, who had studied alongside Breasted in Berlin, had already compiled a synoptic edition of the known Pyramid Texts in 1908, so Breasted and Alan H. Gardiner in Oxford jointly organized the synoptic Coffin Texts Project beginning in 1921. Breasted hoped to hire Thomas Allen (see below) to lead the project, but Gardiner had other plans.

Breasted also continued to believe that the ancient inscribed and decorated monuments of Egypt had to be accurately recorded, so that they could be properly translated and used to write history. Consequently, Breasted organized the OI Epigraphic and Architectural Survey in 1924 to record monuments at Thebes, starting with the Temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu. He hired Harold Nelson (see below) to lead the Epigraphic Survey from 1924 to 1939 and Uvo Hölscher (see below) to lead the Architectural Survey from 1926 to 1937.
He arranged for two future Egyptology faculty members, William Edgerton and John Wilson (see below), to study Demotic in order to deal with the graffiti at Medinet Habu. Breasted also organized the OI Sakkarah Expedition in 1930 to record monuments at Saqqara, starting with the Mastaba of Mereruka, for which he hired Prentice Duell (see below) from 1930 to 1936. Breasted collaborated with Gardiner to establish the Abydos Expedition in 1929, for which they hired Amice Mary Calverley (April 9, 1896–April 10, 1959) and Myrtle Florence Broome (February 22, 1888–January 27, 1978) to record the Temple of Seti I in color paintings. Breasted and Gardiner also established the Theban Tomb Paintings Project in 1930, for which they hired Nina Macpherson de Garis Davies (January 6, 1881–April 21, 1965) to record selected Theban tombs in color paintings.
UVO HöLSCHER (Architectural Survey) was born at Norden, Germany, on October 30, 1878. He excavated with Ludwig Borchardt at Abusir from 1906 to 1908, he excavated at the pyramid of Khaefre at Giza from 1909 to 1910, and he participated in excavations at Amarna from 1910 to 1911. He then became lecturer at Hanover University in 1911, and assistant professor in 1921. Hölscher served as field director of the Oriental Institute Architectural Survey at Medinet Habu from 1926 to 1937. He became professor at Hanover University in 1937, and emeritus in 1947. He died on February 21, 1963.

HAROLD HAYDEN NELSON (Epigraphic Survey) was born in New Orleans on November 25, 1878, and received his BA from the University of Chicago in 1901. He then studied with Breasted at Chicago and received his PhD in 1913. Meanwhile, in 1904 Nelson joined the Syrian Protestant College, later known as the American University in Beirut. He started as instructor of English and later became professor of History and chair of the Department of History. Nelson hosted Breasted and the first OI expedition to Egypt and the Middle East when they came to Beirut in 1920. Nelson then left AUB to become the first director of the Epigraphic Survey in Luxor in 1924. He returned to Chicago in 1939, served as acting OI director from 1942 to 1943, and retired in 1947. He died on January 24, 1954.

THOMAS GEORGE ALLEN was born in Rockford, Illinois, on August 11, 1885, and received his BA from Beloit College in 1909. He studied the Pyramid Texts with Breasted at Chicago and received his PhD in 1915. Allen was appointed secretary of the Haskell Oriental Museum in 1917 and secretary of the Oriental Institute in 1919. Breasted wanted him to work on the Coffin Texts Project, but Gardiner gave the position to Adriaan de Buck instead. Allen became editorial secretary of the Oriental Institute from 1927 until his retirement in 1950, and he also served as assistant curator at the Field Museum. After his retirement, he worked on the OI Book of the Dead Project until 1960. He died on March 21, 1969.
WILLIAM FRANKLIN EDGERTON (Egyptology) was born in Binghamton, New York, on September 30, 1893 and received his BA from Cornell in 1915. He began graduate studies at Chicago in 1915 but then served as a sergeant in the U.S. Army Medical Corps from 1918 to 1919. He briefly studied Assyriology at the University of Pennsylvania in 1919 and accompanied Breasted on his first expedition to Egypt and the Middle East from 1919 to 1920. He then resumed his graduate studies at Chicago in 1920, receiving his PhD in 1922. Edgerton then joined the OI staff for one year from 1922 to 1923. He studied Greek Papyrology at Columbia in 1923 and then served as assistant professor at Louisville in 1924 and as associate professor at Vassar in 1925. He rejoined the OI staff in 1926 and served on the Epigraphic Survey under Nelson until 1929. He also studied Demotic in Munich with Wilhelm Spiegelberg in 1927 and 1928. Edgerton became associate professor at the University of Chicago in 1929, and in 1931 he received a bequest of Spiegelberg's materials for the creation of a Demotic dictionary. Edgerton became full professor in 1937 but took a leave of absence from 1942 to 1945 to serve as a captain and a major in the U.S. Army Signal Corps. He became professor emeritus in 1959 and a visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley, from 1965 to 1967, after Klaus Baer came to Chicago. He died on March 20, 1970.

PRENTICE DUELL (Sakkarah Expedition) was born in New Albany, Indiana, on August 17, 1894. He received his BA from the University of California in 1916 and an MA from the University of Arizona in 1917. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps from 1917 to 1919 and became instructor of architectural history at the University of Illinois from 1921 to 1922. Duell obtained an M.Arch. from Harvard University in 1924. He became assistant professor of ancient architecture at the University of Cincinnati in 1925 and professor in 1926. He then became lecturer in classical archaeology at Bryn Mawr in 1927 and associate professor in 1929. Duell served as field director of the Oriental Institute Sakkarah (Egypt) Expedition from 1930 to 1936. He became a research fellow at Harvard University in 1939 until his death on April 16, 1960.

JOHN ALBERT WILSON (Egyptology) was born in Pawling, New York, on September 12, 1899, and received his BA from Princeton in 1920. He taught
English at the American University in Beirut, where he studied with Nelson, and from which he received his MA in 1923. He began his graduate studies at Chicago in 1923, receiving his PhD in 1926. Wilson joined the OI staff in 1926 and served on the Epigraphic Survey under Nelson. He also studied in Berlin with Kurt Sethe and in Munich with Wilhelm Spiegelberg and became associate professor at the University of Chicago in 1931.

After Breasted died, Wilson was made full professor and became acting OI director from January 14, 1936 to June 30, 1936; he was formally appointed OI director from July 1, 1936 to November 30, 1946. The Depression had diminished the Oriental Institute's financial resources, so Wilson reduced the number of ongoing projects, including those in Egypt. He concluded the Sakkarah Expedition, the Abydos Expedition, the Theban Tomb Paintings Project, and the excavations at Medinet Habu, but continued the Oriental Institute's work on the Epigraphic Survey at Thebes. World War II then broke out, so Wilson temporarily closed the Oriental Institute's remaining projects, including the Epigraphic Survey. He took a leave of absence while he served with the Office of Strategic Services from 1942 to 1943 and with the State Department from 1943 to 1944. Wilson again became acting OI director from July 1, 1960 to June 30, 1961 and became professor emeritus in 1968. He died on August 30, 1976.

KEITH CEDRIC SEELE (Egyptology) was born in Warsaw, Indiana, on February 13, 1898. He received his BA from Wooster College in Ohio in 1922 and taught at the Presbyterian Assiut College in Egypt from 1922 to 1923. He received his BD from the McCormick Theological Seminary in 1926 and studied for two years in Berlin with Kurt Sethe from 1926 to 1928. Seele joined the OI staff in 1928, where he helped Breasted organize the future OI Museum for a year. He then served on the Epigraphic Survey under Nelson from 1929 until 1936 and on the Sakkarah Expedition under Duell. Seele was appointed instructor at the University of Chicago in 1936 after Breasted died, and
he completed his PhD in 1938. He took a leave of absence from the University from 1942 to 1944 to serve in the U.S. Army Signal Corps in Washington, DC. Seele was director of the OI’s Nubian Salvage Project from 1960 to 1961 and from 1962 to 1964, missing 1961 to 1962 because of illness. He became professor emeritus in 1964. He died on July 23, 1971.

**RICHARD ANTHONY PARKER** *(Epigraphic Survey)* was born in Chicago on December 10, 1905 and received his BA from Dartmouth College in 1930 and his PhD from the University of Chicago in 1938. Parker joined the OI staff in 1930, and after receiving his PhD served on the Epigraphic Survey under Nelson from 1938 to 1939. He returned to Chicago in 1939 to teach during World War II. After the war, Parker succeeded Nelson as director of the Epigraphic Survey from 1946 to 1949. He then left the OI in 1949 to become professor of Egyptology at Brown University. He died on June 3, 1993.

**GEORGE ROBERT HUGHES** *(Epigraphic Survey/Egyptology)* was born near Wymore, Nebraska, on January 12, 1907, and received his BA from the University of Nebraska in 1929. He received his BD from the McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago in 1932 and was ordained as minister. He began graduate work at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago in 1932 but then began studying with Edgerton and received his PhD in 1939. Hughes joined the OI staff in 1934, working with Edgerton on Spiegelberg’s materials for a Demotic dictionary. He took a leave of absence from 1942 to 1946 while he worked on cryptography for Intelligence in Washington, DC. Hughes rejoined the OI staff in 1946 and worked on the Epigraphic Survey under Parker until 1949. Hughes then succeeded Parker as director of the Epigraphic Survey from 1949 until 1964. At the same time, he filled in for Seele as acting director on the OI’s Nubian Salvage Project from 1961 to 1962 while Seele was ill. Hughes returned to Chicago to teach in 1964 and served as OI director from July 1, 1968 to June 30, 1972. He became professor emeritus in 1975 and died on December 21, 1992.
CHARLES FRANCIS NIMS (Epigraphic Survey) was born in Norwalk, Ohio, on October 19, 1906. He received his BA from Alma College in Michigan in 1928 and his BD from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago in 1931 and was ordained as Presbyterian minister. He began studying with Edgerton at the University of Chicago in 1931 and received his PhD in 1937. Nims joined the OI staff in 1934 and served on the Sakkara Expedition until 1936 and then on the Epigraphic Survey until 1939. He was pastor of the First Church of Eldorado, Illinois, from 1940 to 1943, and served as a U.S. Army chaplain from 1943 to 1946. Nims rejoined the OI staff and served on the Epigraphic Survey from 1946 until 1964. He then succeeded Hughes as director of the Epigraphic Survey from 1964 until his retirement on June 30, 1972. He died on November 19, 1988.

EDWARD F. WENTE (Egyptology) received his PhD from the University of Chicago in 1959. He became assistant professor in 1963, associate professor in 1965, and full professor in 1970. He succeeded Nims as director of the Epigraphic Survey from 1972 to 1973 and became professor emeritus in 1996.

KLAUS BAER (Egyptology) was born in Halle, Germany, on June 22, 1930 and immigrated to the United States with his family in 1933. He received his BA from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1948 and his PhD from the University of Chicago in 1958. Baer became assistant professor at the University of California, Berkeley in 1959. He returned to Chicago to become associate professor in 1965 and full professor in 1970. He died on May 14, 1987.

JANET H. JOHNSON (Egyptology) received her PhD from the University of Chicago in 1972. She became assistant professor in 1972 and began the Chicago Demotic Dictionary Project with the help of George Hughes and the materials for a Demotic dictionary that William Spiegelberg gave to William Edgerton. Johnson became associate professor in 1979, and full professor in 1981. She served as OI director from July 1, 1981 until September 30, 1989.

KENT R. WEEKS (Epigraphic Survey) received his PhD from Yale University in 1970. He became assistant professor at the American University in Cairo from 1971 to 1972 and then succeeded Wente as director of the Epigraphic Survey in 1973. Weeks then left the Oriental Institute in 1977 to go to the University of California, Berkeley.
LANNY BELL (Epigraphic Survey/Egyptology) received his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania in 1976. He succeeded Weeks as director of the Epigraphic Survey in 1977 and then returned to Chicago to become associate professor from 1989 to 1996.

PETER DORMAN (Epigraphic Survey/Egyptology) received his PhD from the University of Chicago in 1985. He succeeded Bell as director of the Epigraphic Survey in 1989 and then returned to Chicago in 1997 to become associate professor. He left the Oriental Institute in 2008 to become president of the American University in Beirut.

MARK LEHNER (Egyptian Archaeology) received his PhD from Yale University in 1990. He became assistant professor at the University of Chicago from 1990 to 1995. He has been director of the Giza Plateau Mapping Project since 1984 and the Ancient Egypt Research Associates since 1985, which absorbed the Giza Plateau Mapping Project in 1995.

ROBERT K. RITNER (Egyptology) received his PhD from the University of Chicago in 1987. He became assistant professor at Yale University in 1991. He returned to the University of Chicago to become associate professor in 1996, and full professor in 2004.

W. RAYMOND JOHNSON (Epigraphic Survey) received his PhD from the University of Chicago in 1992. He succeeded Dorman as director of the Epigraphic Survey in 1997.

STEPHEN P. HARVEY (Egyptian Archaeology) received his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania in 1998. He became assistant professor at the University of Memphis from 1998 to 2002 and then became assistant professor at the University of Chicago from 2003 to 2006.

NADINE MOELLER (Egyptian Archaeology) received her PhD from the University of Cambridge in 2004. She became assistant professor at the University of Chicago in 2007 and associate professor in 2015. She has been director of the Tell Edfu Project since 2001.

BRIAN P. MUHS (Egyptology) received his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania in 1996. He became lecturer at the University of Leiden in 1997 and then became associate professor at the University of Chicago in 2011.
THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY, 1924–2019

W. RAYMOND JOHNSON & J. BRETT McCLAIN

In 1924, James Henry Breasted established the Epigraphic Survey as a permanent expedition of the Oriental Institute in Luxor, Egypt. Its core mission is the systematic documentation of the reliefs and inscriptions in Egyptian monuments, primarily within, though not limited to, the region of ancient Thebes. The expedition’s objective is to record the inscribed content of these monuments, along with their architectural context, at an optimum level of accuracy, creating a definitive and permanent record that will serve as a primary resource for academic research and will stand in place of the original monuments themselves, as their physical deterioration takes its inevitable course.

The Survey was first based in a temporary field facility located on the west bank of the Nile, at the desert edge behind the Colossi of Memnon. With a generous gift from John D. Rockefeller Jr., the original complex was replaced in 1930–31 with a newly built expedition headquarters located on the east bank of the river and provided with a library, offices, artists’ studios, photographic darkroom, and support areas. Known as “Chicago House,” this has served as the Epigraphic Survey’s base of operations since 1931. The Survey is proud to be the longest-running American expedition in Egypt . . .”

As a service to the scientific community in Upper Egypt, the Chicago House Library is open to all archaeologists and scholars working in the region, as well as to Egyptian and foreign graduate students pursuing advanced degrees.

Forty-five years ago, in response to changing climatic and demographic conditions in Egypt and the resultant accelerating decay of its monumental heritage, the Survey added conservation and restoration to its Luxor programs while focusing part of its documentation work on the most threatened sites. At the great Colonnade Hall at Luxor Temple, fragile reliefs from the time of Tutankhamun and his successors were threatened by serious groundwater-induced salt decay. In response, in 1974 the Epigraphic Survey added this unique monument to its documentation program. Our two publications on Colonnade Hall, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Luxor Temple*, vols. 1–2, have recorded and preserved the largest extant version of the riverine Opet Festival, with dozens of joined fragment groups from the quarried upper walls integrated into the standing wall scenes. Since 1994, hundreds of decaying wall fragments in the temple’s blockyards, weakened by groundwater salt, have been conserved with the support of grants from United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Egypt and the World Monuments Fund (WMF). During this time, over fifty thousand inscribed blocks and fragments were raised off the ground onto specially built damp-coursed platforms, organized by type and time period. An open-air museum of reassembled fragment groups, arranged chronologically along the temple’s eastern exterior, was inaugurated in 2010, adding an educational component to the visitor’s experience while alleviating congestion at peak visiting hours. Additionally, in the Colonnade Hall and Amenhotep III’s solar court, hundreds of inscribed fragments have been physically restored on the walls in two major groups that reestablish their context. During the last forty years, over 2,200 fragments have been documented with film photography, and in 2016 the Epigraphic Survey launched a multi-year project to record every block and fragment in the blockyards using digital photographic and 3-D photogrammetric technology, as described elsewhere in this volume.

Meanwhile, at Medinet Habu, grants from the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) and USAID Egypt over the last three decades have facilitated documentation, conservation, and restoration of the temple complex. The first USAID Egypt grant in 1995 through the Egyptian Antiquities Project (EAP) program of ARCE allowed us to address conservation issues in the small Amun temple of Hatshepsut and Thutmosis III, including desalination, roof and wall repairs, reactivation of ancient rooftop drain channels, and cleaning, documentation, and publication of the painted reliefs of the six inner sanctuaries (*Medinet Habu, Volume IX*). More recent grants from USAID Egypt and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF) have allowed us to initiate the restoration of an inscribed sandstone well of Ramesses III, as well as to restore a large sandstone Egyptian-style gate from the reign of the Roman Emperor Domitian. These grants
LEFT: Medinet Habu conservation students receiving instruction from Lotfi Hassan at the Ramesses III southern well, 2015. Photo: Nahed Samir.

have also allowed the expedition to train a cadre of local Egyptian conservation students, many of whom now work with the project on our expanded restoration programs. Our most recent grant from USAID Egypt has funded the restoration of sandstone walkways and mud-brick walls around the outside of the mortuary temple, which will allow visitor access to the back areas of the temple while protecting the areas that still require archaeological work. Included in this documentation and restoration program are the famous House of Butehamun, with its four slender white columns, and the monumental Western High Gate of Ramesses III, a fortified palace complex that was destroyed during a civil war at the end of the New Kingdom. This restoration project, including an archaeological survey supervised by University of Chicago/Oriental Institute archaeologists Nadine Moeller and Gregory Marouard, revives the Institute’s restoration and site management work on the site, started in the 1920s under the direction of archaeologist/architect Uvo Hölscher but dormant since 1932.

As we celebrate the one hundredth birthday of the Oriental Institute, the Epigraphic Survey is proud to be a flagship project of the Institute and to represent the University of Chicago and the United States working in proud partnership with the Ministry of Antiquities in Egypt. Here’s to our next hundred years of cultural heritage preservation and documentation work!
Discovering New Pasts: The OI at 100

CHICAGO HOUSE: TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS IN EPIGRAPHIC RECORDING
W. RAYMOND JOHNSON & J. BRETT McCRAIN

When James Henry Breasted established the Epigraphic Survey in 1924, his vision was to record the vast corpus of inscribed wall surfaces in Egypt’s monuments at a level of accuracy that had never before been achieved. In order to accomplish this in a scientifically precise and efficient fashion, he adopted a copying method based on large format film photography, the use of which for epigraphic documentation was still in its earliest stages of development. Breasted’s innovative approach, now known as the “Chicago House Method,” combined the impartial precision of the camera with the technical skill of the trained graphic artist and the professional expertise of the Egyptologist, resulting in the most accurate facsimiles of scenes and inscriptions that it was possible to produce. This tripartite methodology has, for over nine decades, set the optimum standard for the epigraphic recording of ancient Egyptian wall relief.

The Chicago House Method is based on a large format film photographic negative of the wall surface, carefully measured before shooting to minimize distortion. From the negative, an enlargement is printed at scale on matte photographic paper. The artist takes this to the wall and, using the photographic image as a guide, pencils the lines of the relief or inscription directly onto the printed surface, taking care to observe and record all visible details of the carved original. The pencil lines are then inked using drafting pens, after which the photograph is immersed in a bleaching solution. This causes the photographic emulsion to disappear, leaving a spatially and visually accurate black-and-white line drawing. The initial drawing is then blueprinted, and the blueprinted copies are taken back to the wall by the Egyptologists, who perform a multi-phase collation in order to make sure that all relevant details of the scene or text are recorded accurately. Any corrections recommended to the artist are verified once more on site before changes are made to the original inked drawing, and, once corrected, the drawing is checked against the blueprinted sheets and field notes to ensure that all collected data have been included. The project’s field director then performs a final check, after which the drawing is approved for publication.

No part of the monument is considered to have been recorded in full until the facsimile copy thereof has completed all stages of this process. For each scene or wall section, the Survey’s folio publications include the drawing, a black-and-white photograph, and a color photograph or facsimile where relevant.

After almost a hundred years of fieldwork, newly available digital tools are now allowing the Epigraphic Survey to expand the scope of its documentation program in ways that were not previously possible using traditional methods. Beginning in 2012, Survey artist Krisztián Vértes worked to develop a technique for replicating the method described above in electronic format. With the support of the University of Chicago Women’s Board, Marjorie M. Fisher,
and Matthew Whealton a suite of Wacom desktop and portable drawing tablets, along with Apple laptop computers and tablets and the accompanying peripheral devices, was purchased in order to put the digital theory into practice. Based on Adobe Photoshop software, the step-by-step details of the computerized Chicago House Method were presented in extenso first in the freely-downloadable electronic publication Digital Epigraphy, which serves as a guide to this innovative adaptation of the core methodology, particularly for other projects wishing to follow the Epigraphic Survey’s lead in adopting the latest digital recording techniques. In this centennial year of the Oriental Institute, we are pleased to announce the inauguration of the web-based version of this manual (http://www.digital-epigraphy.com). This open-ended and interactive web site includes case studies of the latest field developments in our digital epigraphic recording, including the first start-to-finish digital recording of a scene at Luxor Temple, from the initial photogrammetrically rectified digital photograph through digital drawing, collation, on-site consultation, correction transfer, transfer check and field director’s check, all carried out on the iPad Pro tablet. In addition to featuring our own case studies, conventions, and digital drawing methodologies, the web site also features articles by colleagues in Egypt who are utilizing new digital drawing tools in their own projects, many inspired by the Survey’s programs. Once again, the Epigraphic Survey is leading the way in innovative epigraphic recording utilizing new technology and also freely sharing that technology with the world. The digital drawing technique is already being widely applied in the Epigraphic Survey’s field projects. At Medinet Habu, it is being used to record hundreds of large-scale relief fragments from the destroyed Western High Gate of Ramesses III. Once each of these inscribed blocks has been photographed, drawn, measured, collated, and finalized, the digital drawings can then be used to create virtual reconstructions of whole wall surfaces, and ultimately of the entire monumental gate complex. Meanwhile, in the fragment blockyards at Luxor Temple, the new tools are being employed to document a corpus of several hundred sandstone fragments dating to the reign of Ptolemy I, including a partial copy of the famous Bentresh Inscription, a pseudo-historical tale set in the reign of Ramesses II. Again, once fully recorded, these fragments can be virtually reconstructed in digital form using the computerized tools now available as part of the Survey’s extensive suite of documentation techniques. Another project, documentation of the Theban tomb of Neferekhru, steward of Amenhotep III’s jubilee palace at Malqata, was added to the Epigraphic Survey’s dossier in 2010 out of increasing concern for the exquisitely carved but fragile reliefs from late in the king’s reign. While most of the reliefs of the tomb portico have been drawn in pen and ink (among the best and most
beautiful drawings in the history of the Epigraphic Survey) and are being collated now, the fragments recovered in our cleaning of the floor debris and entryway are being drawn digitally in order to complete the virtual reconstructions of the inscribed wall and doorway, which will be followed by their physical reconstruction. At the same time, Chicago House has assisted the Ministry of Antiquities with protecting the palace itself (it is now surrounded by an eleven kilometer protective wall) and has helped to facilitate getting archaeological work resumed on the site.

Digital technology is also utilized to record types of material unsuitable for representation in traditional black-and-white line drawings. In the central chamber of Luxor Temple, Roman frescos from the reign of the emperor Diocletian present a rare example of late imperial wall painting, laid over the pre-existing Eighteenth Dynasty raised relief scenes. To record this singular combination of decorative elements, a combination of scanned film negatives and digital photographs was used to create a background layer over which the preserved details of the frescos were first penciled and then inked using a representational pattern for color tones. With a click of the mouse to hide the photographic layer, a detailed and highly accurate texture drawing of the Roman paintings is revealed; it has even been possible to enhance the content of the facsimile copies by incorporating scanned copies of old photographs and paintings made by early European travelers to Upper Egypt when the frescoes were better preserved, in order to provide the most complete possible documentation. This has been juxtaposed with digital drawings of the underlying pharaonic relief, using the method described above. When presented alongside high quality color photographs, the aggregate process yields comprehensive documentation of all phases of decoration within this chamber at a previously unimaginable level of detail.

In addition to new digital drawing tools, computerized photogrammetric technology is also making it possible to record both inscribed wall surfaces and archaeological landscapes at an unprecedented level of three-dimensional detail. The key to this development is a software program (Agisoft Photoscan/Metadata) that allows multiple high-resolution digital photographic images to be processed and merged together to create a “point cloud”—a millimeter-precise digital model of any surface, large or small. The visual data in the photographs may then be applied over this model, creating a highly accurate 3-D image that can be manipulated in various ways. At Luxor Temple, a project has been initiated using this innovative technique to document the entire corpus of over 50,000 pharaonic inscribed fragments stored in blockyards around the temple precinct, with almost 10,000 fragments recorded at the time of this publication. In 2019, the Survey inaugurated a groundbreaking digital drawing initiative utilizing this new technology for the inscribed standing
walls of the Luxor Temple sanctuaries as well, starting with the Hall of Offerings in front of the bark sanctuary. Meanwhile, at Medinet Habu, the same technology is being used to record architectural features and archaeological strata revealed during the course of surveys now being carried out in the western part of the temple enclosure. Never before has it been possible to create fully functional, accurate 3-D maps of whole sectors of an archaeological site. It is anticipated that the photogrammetry program will ultimately result in a chronologically phased three-dimensional record of the entirety of this vast monumental complex.

The generous support of Misty and Lewis Gruber has made it possible to scan all of the Epigraphic Survey’s publications dating back to the 1920s, along with all other previous and current
publications of the Oriental Institute, and to make them available in PDF format for free download to anyone with access to the Internet, fulfilling the Institute’s Electronic Publications Initiative. All 351 titles published by the Institute prior to 2004 are now available to the public via the Oriental Institute Publications web page at no cost, and all new OI publications are released simultaneously in hard-copy print and in free digital format. The Epigraphic Survey is proud to be a part of this initiative and to have the results of over nine decades of fieldwork and research made accessible to scholars, researchers, students, and interested individuals around the world.

All of these new digital technological advances have given the Epigraphic Survey a greatly expanded set of tools to augment the traditional documentation methodology that we have developed and used in our recording for almost one hundred years. It must be kept in mind, however, that there is no “magic bullet.” Initially, digital photography was seen as the perfect way to back up and duplicate hard-copy film photography, and indeed digital photographic documentation is now an essential component of every aspect of the Survey’s fieldwork. Yet with the passage of time, questions have arisen about long-term storage and retrievability of digital images, and for this reason we view hard-copy film photography as a means to back up our digital images as well.

The two formats complement each other and satisfy the long-term requirements of our archives and publication programs. It is the goal of the Epigraphic Survey to continue to utilize every available technology, both old and new, in our ongoing documentation work. The priceless cultural heritage preserved in the monuments of pharaonic Egypt deserves no less. James Henry Breasted would certainly agree.
THE CHICAGO DEMOTIC DICTIONARY
JANET H. JOHNSON & BRIAN P. MUHS

When Janet Johnson joined the faculty of the Oriental Institute (in the early 1970s), she decided to prepare a dictionary of the late stage of the Egyptian language known as Demotic. Jan made no claim that she could do a Demotic dictionary by herself (nor did she have any understanding of how complex and how long a project this would turn into), but she realized that the OI had wonderful resources that could be tapped for the benefit of our study of the ancient world.

What is Demotic and why study it? Demotic is the name given to a stage of the Egyptian language used from around 650 BC to around AD 350, and the cursive script in which it was written. The name is a Greek word meaning “popular” and was used by early Greek visitors to Egypt to distinguish the contemporary language and script from the older “priestly” hieroglyphs and hieratic, which were used primarily for religious texts. Early attempts to crack ancient Egyptian writing (including those studying the Rosetta Stone; see image right) had examined Demotic because most European scholars thought the hieroglyphs were a sacred script rather than a phonetic one, but they realized that (at least some) Demotic was phonetic. But once Jean-François Champollion and his contemporaries had figured out how to decipher hieroglyphs in the early 1800s, Demotic—being younger/more recent and being cursive, so harder to read—was again left aside by most scholars. However, there is an amazing wealth of material in Demotic, from personal letters to administrative documents to economic and legal transactions to fine literature, and the final developments of Egyptian religion, both mortuary and civil. Bringing the study of such materials “into the game” could open up whole new vistas of understanding about ancient Egypt and the ancient Middle East.

Why at the OI? A German scholar named Wilhelm Spiegelberg had made phenomenal inroads in reading, analyzing, and publishing Demotic texts. One of the OI’s fine Egyptologists, William F. Edgerton (see p. 186), had gone to Germany to study Demotic with Spiegelberg in 1927 and 1928, and consequently Spiegelberg willed most of his library and scientific papers to Edgerton and the OI after he died in 1930. This included all the notes and cards he had compiled for a Demotic dictionary, inspired by the work on the great Berlin Wörterbuch for hieroglyphic and hieratic (a more cursive form of hieroglyphs) texts. Those materials, as well as a large number of Spiegelberg’s personal notes about and translations of Demotic texts in European and Egyptian museums, were available for reference in the OI and were used regularly by the generation of students who studied with Edgerton and his successors. So the OI had available records that could be used toward building up Demotic studies and specifically a Demotic dictionary.

But it also had human resources. Both George Hughes and Charles Nims, who had spent years working at Chicago House in Luxor, had studied Demotic with Edgerton and continued to publish about Demotic. When Hughes retired as director of the Epigraphic Survey in 1964 and returned to Chicago to teach, leaving Nims as the new director in Luxor, he (Hughes) turned his attention to his first love—Demotic. At this time, Jan Johnson was lucky enough to show up in Chicago to

ABOVE: Decree issued by the Synod of Egyptian Priests in honor of Pharaoh Ptolemy V in 196 BC. In inscribed in Egyptian hieroglyphs, Egyptian Demotic, and Greek. The Rosetta Stone. © Trustees of the British Museum.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Swm</strong></th>
<th>GN “Aswan”</th>
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<td></td>
<td>= EG 414</td>
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<td></td>
<td>= Swm. Wb 4, 59:4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>= Gauthier, Dict. géog., 5 (1928) 17-18</td>
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<td>= Verreh, TOP 5 (2011) pp. 402-4, #2207</td>
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<tr>
<td>in</td>
<td>reread ἑρμ as var. of ἑρμ “ship’s cargo, load, journey” (EG 24 &amp; above)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>see Zauzich, Enchonra 9 (1979) 145, §1 vs. Sp., P. Loeb (1931)</td>
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<td>var.</td>
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| **Swny** | in compounds/phrases  |
|          | Yb Swm “Elephantine & Aswan” |
|          | in phrases |
|          | Yb Swm πτ τς τ||ς Πρ ιω-ραq “Elephantine, Aswan, the Southerm District, Philae” (P P Berlin 15609, 1-2) |
|          | PN m| sh Yb Swm m n| w|b w “PN [who] writes (is) Elephantine (S) Aswan (in) the name of the priests” (P P Berlin 15999, 20) |
|          | sh n Yb Swm “scribe of Elephantine (S) Aswan” (P P Berlin 13593, 9) |
|          | rmt Swm (EG 414) |
|          | for discussion, see La'da, Akt. 23, Int. Papyrologen Kongr. (2007) pp. 374-77, who id’d as designation of military status |
|          | in phrase |
|          | γλα γε rmt Swm “soldier, man of Aswan” (P P BM 10525 vo. 3) |
|          | στ γε Swm (EG 414) |
|          | qwn n Swm “quay: measure of Aswan” (EG 414 & 533 [= R7 O Berlin 9030, 6-7]) |
| in titles | sττ τ|ς n m| t||ς w|| (p)| n| pτ qty Swm “strategos of the places which are in the vicinity of Aswan” (P P BM 10591 vo. 110-11) |
|          | sh n Yb Swm “scribe of Elephantine (S) Aswan” (P P Berlin 13593, 9) |
|          | γλα γε fnt lω-τ l| p r Swm “kallasins of fnt, who is assigned to Aswan” (P P Berlin 13596, 6-7, P P Berlin 13597, 4) |
| var.     | γλα γε fnt lω-τ sh r Swm “kallasins of fnt, who is registered at Aswan” (P P Berlin 13601, 9) |

w. DN

| Is t wr. t t τ τ t t τ τ t t t τ τ τ τ τ τ τ t Swm “Iisis, the great, the great goddess, the mistress of strength, the leader of the troops, the lady of Aswan” (P7 G Aswan 13, 3-5) |

in GN

Tt-rsy.t-n Swm “The Fortress of Aswan,” below
study with Hughes and his colleagues, Ed Wente and Klaus Baer. She realized that if she could learn to read the difficult Demotic script, there was a world of opportunity waiting. When she joined the faculty in 1972, she realized that between the Spiegelberg materials and the impressive Demotic knowledge of George Hughes, the OI was the place to resume a commitment to a Demotic dictionary. With the assistance of a series of excellent Egyptology students who dedicated a significant amount of their careers (as students and later as faculty colleagues) to Demotic studies, and depending on the always available and always invaluable knowledge and advice of George Hughes, the Demotic Dictionary Project began.

At first, the Chicago Demotic Dictionary Project was conceived as a supplement to Wolja Erichsen’s Demotic glossary, which he had recently published (1954), consisting of all the notes about Demotic vocabulary and orthography he had collected over his years of teaching and publishing. Publication of Erichsen’s Glossar had stimulated Demotic studies and precipitated a huge number of publications providing many hundreds of new Demotic words or new spellings/orthographies of words already known. We hoped to pull all of these together and make them available to scholars, in parallel to Erichsen’s original Glossar.

How did the digital age intervene? Just as Jan and a couple of students finished sorting the Spiegelberg material and began discussing the directions the work would go, the Macintosh computer appeared on the market. This was a godsend because the Macintosh’s ability to handle “funny” or “exotic” fonts (all those diacritics so dear to philologists) made it possible to set up a format to compose on the computer and see dictionary pages on the screen displaying all the fonts and diacritics needed. These included not only those needed for the Egyptian language and script but for all the scripts for all the other ancient Middle Eastern and eastern Mediterranean languages with which Demotic came in contact. We modeled our format on that of Erichsen’s Glossar for the ease of scholars who would be working back and forth between the two dictionaries.

In addition, in a most fortuitous chain of events, Jan’s husband Don persuaded her to sign up for the door prize at a Macintosh fair being held on campus. And she won a scanner! It didn’t take long to realize that the scanner now made it possible to take every bit of Demotic—whether written on papyrus, ostraca, used in monumental inscriptions, etc.—and study them on the computer where over-the-counter software provided the equivalent of a photo studio right in the computer, magnifying texts to the point where one could see the ductus (direction of brush lines) of the writing and improve one’s reading of the frequently damaged and always difficult texts. The very cursive nature of the Demotic script meant that any dictionary of Demotic must give high priority to producing legible examples of all the words included. We could now do this more accurately and quickly, and our fears of having to make thousands of hand copies to be pasted in the dictionary gave way to the far superior digital copies made on the computer and easily pasted into the digital dictionary pages.

So why did it take so long? We had chosen the twenty-five-year period directly following Erichsen’s publication of his Glossar (1954) to serve as the base for inclusion of new publications in the dictionary. There were a lot of publications during that time, each and every one of which...
Discovering New Pasts: The OI at 100


RIGHT: CDD staff in 1979 (from left to right): George R. Hughes, Mark Smith, Janet H. Johnson, Michael Fitzpatrick, Robert K. Ritner, Richard Jasnow, and Charles Nims.
we read, retranslated (as necessary), scanned, and then made note cards and facsimiles for every word. By the time we started putting everything together and writing the actual entries, we had hundreds of thousands of 3 × 5 index cards with words cited in context and with (Xerox) samples of the handwriting. Following the fine example of the Epigraphic Survey, every entry for every word in the dictionary had to be read and approved by at least two people—one junior staff member (an advanced Egyptology student) and one senior staff member. But in many cases where there was a question about meaning or derivation or any other aspect of the word or its usage, more staff were consulted and colleagues around the world were asked to give their opinions, until we could come to a tentative solution that satisfied most of us. A formal International Advisory Board was appointed in 2014 that currently consists of Friedhelm Hoffmann, Mark Depauw, Dimitri Meeks, and Richard Jasnow. This Board is consulted both informally and individually for problems relating to individual entries and more formally and as a Board for decisions about dictionary policy.

We continued to draw topflight students who were happy to spend part of their student years reading, analyzing, and sorting vocabulary from brand new texts. And “graduates” from our staff now hold many important positions in Egyptology throughout the US and even in Europe.

Are we done? Yes and no: We have (artificially) decreed that the current files are “done” and we are preparing them for final publication. Starting in 2001, we began posting drafts of letter files as PDFs on the OI website so that students and colleagues throughout the world could make use of them and could send us additions and corrections to make the dictionary as complete and accurate as possible. We are now doing final digital conversions of fonts (to Unicode, which hadn’t been dreamed of when we began) and photo images to improve the presentation and accessibility of the dictionary. Thomas Urban, the former head of the Oriental Institute Publications Office, has designed a Unicode font that includes not only all the signs and diacritics we need for the Chicago Demotic Dictionary (Egyptian, including Coptic and Demotic; Greek; Northwest Semitics—especially Hebrew and Aramaic; and occasional letters from African languages) but everything needed for the whole range of publications produced by the OI, including cuneiform, Akkadian, and Sumerian. This font will be made available on the OI website so that anyone around the world who wants to prepare a manuscript for our publications office will be able to use it. Ochre Data Service has made major contributions to the conversion of our old documents to these new Unicode fonts; the OI Publications Office has been fundamental in helping us convert our documents and produce our final PDFs. These final PDFs will replace the now out-of-date draft PDFs that have appeared on the OI website over the years. We have calculated that the final PDFs will total more than a thousand pages and the dictionary will probably appear in print as a three-volume set (two volumes of dictionary entries and a volume of bibliography and other supporting data).

But over the years the digital world has been moving ever forward. Our old computers are out of date and our old ways of thinking about computers and the potential of digital contributions to scholarly research and publication are out of date too. So Brian Muhs—who thankfully agreed to become associate editor of the dictionary when he joined the OI faculty—and Jan and relevant OI staff have been working to move in the direction of an online searchable database, plugged into related databases and resources being developed around the world. We can’t even imagine where a Demotic dictionary could be at the next Centennial, but I think it’s fair to assume that the OI will continue its historic contributions to the field of ancient Middle Eastern studies not merely following, but frequently leading, as the science and research move on in fascinating new directions.
Among the initial Egyptological projects of the Oriental Institute, perhaps the most personal for Director James H. Breasted was the mission to gather, copy, and publish the multiple versions of religious inscriptions compiled between the Old and New Kingdoms. Dating between the more exclusive, carved royal Pyramid Texts and the widely available papyrus Books of the Dead, these intervening funerary documents are found primarily inscribed in ink on wooden coffins of the social elite and so named the “Coffin Texts.” The lack of published examples of this First Intermediate Period and Middle Kingdom (ca. 2190–1665 BC) corpus had hampered Breasted’s theological lectures in 1912, so that he resolved to “undertake the formidable task” of copying and publishing the vast body of material on his own. Breasted’s driving motivation was that the documents would confirm his belief in the continued, evolutionary progress in the morality of mankind from antiquity to the present, a “positivist” thesis that seems rather quaint considering that Breasted’s Chicago was riven by continual gangster violence, murders, and corruption. Regardless of one’s theoretical preference, however, the Coffin Texts are a critical assemblage of Egyptian religious speculation, mythology, images, and practices during one of the pivotal epochs of Egyptian culture.

Breasted was joined in the endeavor by Alan H. Gardiner in 1922, and the team engaged multiple copyists to produce a “complete” edition of “all of the existent materials scattered through the museums of Europe and America and especially upon the great nucleus of nearly one hundred available coffins in the Egyptian national museum at Cairo.” Hand-copied (“autographed”) and collated manuscripts were produced for all of these sources, and the assembled corpus was edited by Adriaan de Buck of Leiden from 1935 until his death in 1959. The Coffin Texts, like all Egyptian funerary literature, are composed of older as well as contemporary recitations, or “spells.” Adapted or simply copied Pyramid Texts appear within them, just as Pyramid or Coffin Text spells appear adapted within the later Book of the Dead, where they are treated as simply other members of the Book of the Dead collection. In the case of the Coffin Texts Project, the treatment was different and—counterintuitively—not all texts on coffins of the period were classed as “Coffin Texts” if the individual spell was also part of the Pyramid Text corpus. When published in 1961, de Buck’s final volume (VII) was announced as “the last volume of the autographed Coffin Texts in the contemplated Project” (p. vii), although the institute had...
never produced the autographed edition of “Pyramid Texts” within the Coffin Text corpus that had been explicitly promised in the Introduction to volume I. Assumed to comprise a “distinct” and “foreign body” within the Coffin Texts, these long-lived spells were “reserved for later” (p. xi).

After a lapse of forty years, a formally renewed Coffin Texts Project under the direction of Robert Ritner was authorized by the director in 2001 with the goal of completing the institute’s outstanding commitments. With the appearance of volume VIII in 2006, edited by James P. Allen, the Oriental Institute marked the true completion of the Egyptian Coffin Texts Project. The translation volume once envisioned and entrusted to Tjalling Bruinsma had been rendered unnecessary by the publications of R. O. Faulkner in 1969 (Pyramid Texts) and 1973–78 (Coffin Texts), which serve to engage scholars and laymen alike. Glossaries, bibliographies, symposia, and detailed textual studies appeared, but the critical edition of Middle Kingdom Pyramid Texts remained unaccomplished. By careful examination of the institute’s original collation sheets and unpublished sources from the site of Lisht, James Allen, after years of concentrated study, fulfilled the task admirably. The final volume has stimulated discussion not only of the longevity of the Pyramid Texts, but of the nature of the Coffin Texts themselves. While Breasted insisted that the Pyramid Texts were “sharply distinguished” from the Coffin Texts, the frequent appearance of “Pyramid Texts” on coffins (among the narrowly defined “Coffin Texts”) leaves this opinion open to question. Ironically, the one coffin acquired in Chicago by Breasted for study by the Coffin Texts Project (E12072) contained only “Pyramid Texts” and was therefore excluded from the initial seven volumes. Now these Middle Kingdom texts on a coffin can be examined as constituent elements among the redefined “Coffin Texts.”

FURTHER READING

Below: E12072A (D. 13375).
THE “ANCIENT EGYPTIAN PAINTINGS” PROJECT

ROBERT K. RITNER

In his 1933 volume *The Oriental Institute*, Director James H. Breasted surveyed in detail the expanded Institute’s aspirations, background and development, its museum collections, multiple field projects, and research. Of all the sites or objects that could typify these goals, Breasted chose for the frontispiece a color image of a New Kingdom Egyptian wall painting that had been in the collection of the British Museum since the early nineteenth century. This short note began as an attempt to determine why.

The 1929 tour of Egypt conducted by James Breasted for John D. Rockefeller Jr. produced multiple benefits for Egyptian art history. In Egypt, Breasted introduced Rockefeller to the ongoing work of the Egypt Exploration Society, which was struggling to maintain financial support for its copying expedition at the great temple of Seti I at Abydos. Acting as middleman through letters and cables, Breasted negotiated an agreement between Rockefeller and the Society’s representative, Alan H. Gardiner, that resulted in the publication of four oversized “elephant folios” of photographs and color plates copied by Amice Calverly with the assistance of Myrtle Broom and edited by Gardiner. Appearing between 1933 and 1958, the elaborate volumes were a “joint publication of the Egypt Exploration Society (Archaeological Survey) and of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.”

While the initial negotiations for the Abydos project were ongoing, Breasted suggested in a letter to Gardiner on April 4, 1929 that Rockefeller might also be interested in financing the color publication of “your Theban tomb paintings.” As Gardiner replied to this “very welcome suggestion” on April 22, 1929: “our science, as well as the history of art generally, will be very greatly benefitted.” Gardiner had by then commissioned 140 color paintings by Nina M. DeGaris Davies reproducing the best of Theban tomb artwork. Gardiner noted: “My collection of paintings was made as a record, merely, with the purpose of publishing a few plates from time to time . . . in my Theban Tomb Series, or in case anyone wished to borrow them for the purpose.” Some of the paintings were on loan to the British Museum and others to the museum in Manchester.

The publication envisioned by Breasted and Gardiner as “Masterpieces of Egyptian Painting” would go beyond the latter’s collection and include newly-commissioned paintings by Nina Davies from additional tombs, the sites of Beni Hasan, Meir and Abydos, the painted chest of Tutankhamun, and from scenes removed to the Cairo and British Museums. Before the agreement was finalized, Gardiner asked Breasted for Rockefeller’s permanent address (May 26, 1929) as he had directed Nina Davies to begin copying the *Meydum Geese* in the Cairo Museum as a present to Mrs. Rockefeller. The *Meydum Geese* became the initial painting in the publication. The proposal as submitted by Gardiner on June 27, 1929 indicated a scope of “150 to 200 plates in colored collotype representing a selection of all that is best and most worthy of publication among the preserved Egyptian paintings.” This atlas would be published by the Oriental Institute and consist of plate volumes as folios of 24 × 19 inches, while the separate text volume would be of normal quarto size and “be as brief as possible.” Additions to the Gardiner corpus by Davies would expand the geographical and temporal range of the publication to give it “a character of completeness.”

The final agreement sent from Charles Breasted to Nina Davies on February 24, 1930 stipulated that the project would include the Gardiner paintings and add fifteen new works by Davies that...
would become the property of the Oriental Institute. Gardiner’s preference for these as a gift to Manchester was rejected due to the American conception and financing of the project. Breasted did concede that the final title of the project “will be selected at a later time.” In her reply the following month (March 20), Davies indicated that she would begin copying the British Museum wall scenes in the summer, and by October 28 two of these scenes were completed: the fowling scene from the lost tomb of Nebamun and, from the same tomb, a scene of Lady Musicians and Dancers. These were chosen by Davies as the best representatives to be sent to Chicago, and of the two the fowling scene was the most significant artistically:

“I thought that you might like the copies in Chicago early next year when the plates of them will be finished. We felt obliged to make two plates of the Fowling Scene owing to the very great detail in parts of the picture—this is far the most detailed picture in the B.M. & took me quite a long time to paint, but it is finer than anything in Egypt. I think you will like it.”

Breasted replied enthusiastically on November 30 that the news of the paintings’ completion and readiness for display in Chicago was “a source of special satisfaction” since they would serve as a special exhibition at the opening of the new Oriental Institute building, expected in June 1931. On December 17, Davies promised the paintings by May 1 for the formal opening, well in time for the delayed opening in December 1931.

The project was completed in 1936 under the revised title Ancient Egyptian Paintings, which comprised 104 paintings in two plate volumes and a smaller text volume, following Gardiner’s original proposal. The pivotal British Museum Fowling Scene (BM EA37977) was given double representation in volume II as Fowling in the Marshes on plate 65 (the full scene) and 66 (a detail of a cat in the marshes). The retitled Singers and Dancers (BM EA37984) is in the same volume on plate 70. In the accompanying volume III of Descriptive
Texts, *Fowling in the Marshes* received more comment than most, extending to three pages (125–27) explaining why this traditional scene is “much less stiffly designed” than other examples in the atlas, with avian prey more numerous and varied, “most delicately drawn butterflies,” and a cat that has captured three birds “so indisputably a masterpiece that a special Plate has been accorded to it.”

Like all eleven of the British Museum Nebamun paintings, the fowling scene from a now unlocated Theban tomb was discovered in 1820 by Giovanni d’Athanasi and purchased from the Henry Salt collection in 1821. The paintings date to the late Eighteenth Dynasty (Thutmose IV or Amenhotep III), about 1350 BC. As noted above, the theme is conventional, but the execution is not. The tomb owner Nebamun stands in a papyrus skiff clutching three herons as decoys in one hand and prepares to cast a serpent-headed throw-stick with the other. His daughter kneels between his legs and his wife Hatshepsut stands behind him. Nymphaeum water lilies—images of festival and drunkenness—are draped over his shoulders, plucked by his daughter from the river, and held in a bouquet by his wife, who wears them also atop her wig. At the prow, his cat perches on bending papyrus reeds, having seized three of the many birds shown nesting or fleeing in the papyrus thicket. The trope of “wandering in the marshes” indicated not only leisure but sexual pleasure in Egyptian phraseology, the act of subduing wild animals signified victory over chaos for both living and dead in Egyptian magic, and the religious implications are emphasized by the appearance of a goose, sacred bird of the god Amun, at the prow before the cat. The latter is itself a form taken by the sun god Ra in official mythology to destroy chaotic forces. Nebamun’s guide and protector in the marsh is thus Amon-Re, the...
god whom he served in his professional life. More is implied in the painting than a simple scene of daily life amid nature. In keeping with artistic tradition, a complementary scene once appeared at the left, but this is now lost except for old photographs of two fragments showing Nebamun spear-fishing while his son kneels between his father’s legs and holds water lilies.

Accompanying the scene are the remains of eight vertical columns of polychrome hieroglyphic text, with a smaller-scale text in black divided into two sections framing Nebamun’s standing wife. The texts were attacked during the Amarna catastrophe, and Nebamun’s titles of “scribe and accountant of grain in the granary of Amun in the estate of Amun” are largely hacked out. The inscriptions serve as labels to the scene, and as Gardiner notes in his commentary on the piece in *Ancient Egyptian Paintings* (volume 3, p. 126): “In these words, more explicitly than elsewhere, indication is given that the scene is less a record of past reality than an aspiration for the eternal lifetime about to begin.”

The larger, polychrome text reads: “Taking recreation, (2) seeing (3) pleasant things, acting as (4) the Trapping-god in the (5) works (6) of the Marsh-goddess, by the praised one of the (7) Lady of the fish and fowl chase, by the scribe of reckoning grain [in the granary of Amun] (8) [in the estate of Amun, Nebamun, the justified,] and his sister, the [Lady] of the House [whom he loves,] Hatshepsut.”

The smaller text in black offers a variation pairing life and afterlife: “Taking recreation, seeing pleasant things in the place of eternity, a lifetime (2) long and without an unfulfilled wish (an “if only”) for the revered one [Amun, Nebamun.]”

Nebamun’s tomb chapel has been reconstructed to the extent possible in Room 61 of the British Museum, and a “walk through,” complete with the photographs of the missing fishing scene, is available from the museum’s website online. In one section, however, the text preserved in the current British Museum photograph differs from the 1930 facsimile painting by Da-...
WHAT ARE MUMMY LABELS?

Mummy labels were used as a means of identifying corpses of the deceased when they had to be transported to the necropolis. Made of wood and more rarely of stone, faience, or even ivory, they were attached to the mummy with a piece of cord and inscribed in Demotic, Greek, sometimes in both languages, or, less commonly, in hieroglyphs, hieratic, or Coptic. These inscriptions usually consist of short texts giving important information, such as the name, parentage, age, place of residence, destination of the deceased, and in some cases further indications about, for example, the shipping or the lading of the corpses. In addition, especially in the Demotic texts, they often include a short formula for the welfare of the deceased in the hereafter, which testifies to the labels’ religious function. These small monuments could serve as cheap substitutes for funerary stelae, as sometimes indicated by their shapes and the fact that they could be identified as \textit{wy.t} or \textit{στήλη} “stela.”

There are approximately 3,100 known and edited mummy labels, but their publication in various periodicals and journals makes a thorough study all the more difficult to undertake. Therefore, the Mummy Label Database project is focused on making the already-published labels easily accessible to scholars as an online database. The aim is also to publish as many of the still unpublished labels as possible, to republish all those that have been defectively or incompletely edited, and to locate missing ones. Indeed, it is not uncommon for such items to pass from one collection to another and sometimes to disappear and go missing for years until they are eventually rediscovered. The most difficult labels to track include those that were part of private collections, were sold at private auctions, or disappeared, for example, during World War II.

Mummy labels represent a very interesting corpus, which has often been neglected in the study of the material and documentary evidence from ancient Egypt. Among other things, they are invaluable testimonies for socio-logical and sociolinguistic scholarship, including prosopography, genealogy, and onomastics, as well as the study of offices, occupations, and the peculiarities of a bilingual, multicultural, and multiethnic population. Such documents are, for example, the best source of information for the study of double names. Anthroponyms in Greco-Roman Egypt do not always reflect linguistic or ethnic extraction, since names from different origins (Greek, Latin, and Egyptian) often appear in the same family. Indeed, many individuals used double names: an Egyptian one at home and a Greek one in society.

“There are approximately 3,100 known and edited mummy labels, but their publication in various periodicals and journals makes a thorough study all the more difficult to undertake. Therefore, the Mummy Label Database project is focused on making the already-published labels easily accessible to scholars as an online database. The aim is also to publish as many of the still unpublished labels as possible, to republish all those that have been defectively or incompletely edited, and to locate missing ones.”
In addition to the text, mummy labels sometimes include an illustration, such as:

1. Sacred animals (for example, falcon, recumbent jackal, winged scarab with the sun disk).

2. Gods (for example, Anubis taking care of the mummy of the deceased, Anubis depicted as a guardian of the Underworld and shown in the form of a seated jackal with a key around his neck [fig. 1], protector genius holding a loop of cloth [fig. 2], Osiris wearing the atef crown and holding crook and flail [fig. 3]).

3. Religious and funerary symbols (for example, knot of Isis flanked by two djed-pillars, funerary crown, burning torch, palm leaf [?] [fig. 4]).

4. More rarely, the deceased himself (fig. 5).

5. Other illustrations, the interpretation of which can be problematic (fig. 6).
Mummy labels come in various shapes, as illustrated below with examples from the Oriental Institute Museum:

1. Stela Shape

This format is the most usual. According to Quaegebeur's classification, stela-shaped mummy labels can be characterized as having “two corners of the same end . . . rounded” (figs. 7–8) “or cut at an angle” (fig. 9). Usually such labels have a hole drilled in the narrower end, through which the cord attaching the label to the mummy was drawn.

Figure 7. OIM E25289.

Figure 8. OIM E25285.

Figure 9. LI-368:1.
2. Tabula Ansata

This type of label displays one (figs. 10–12) or two ears (fig. 13) that can be rounded or pointed. Labels with two pierced ears were fastened to the mummy and inscribed on only one side.

3. Rectangular or Arbitrary Shapes (fig. 14)
THE PROJECT

The Mummy Label Database (MLD) is a joint project of the Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona), the Universidad Complutense (Madrid), and the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. It was established in 2007 when Sofía Torallas Tovar (University of Chicago) and François Gaudard (University of Warsaw and University of Chicago) decided to join efforts to study mummy labels, a source material that requires linguistic expertise in both Greek and Demotic, among other things. They were soon joined by Raquel Martín Hernández (Universidad Complutense) and Klaas A. Worp (Leiden University), who has extensive experience in the editing of Greek mummy labels.

Since 2013, the MLD has become the core of a greater project entitled “Death On the Nile,” dedicated to the study of all aspects of death in Greco-Roman Egypt (http://deathonthenile.upf.edu/). A typical entry of the MLD (http://deathonthenile.upf.edu/database/) provides a full description of each label including, among other things, the following information:

- The name of the institution where the label can be found, as well as the inventory number, the Trismegistos number (http://www.trismegistos.org/), and occasionally a reference to any other existing catalog number.
- The date, provenance, and information relevant to the acquisition of the label.
- The physical description, including the type of material (wood, stone, etc.) and ink, the format (stela shape, tabula ansata, rectangular or arbitrary shape; see explanations and figs. 7–14, above), the state of preservation, and the dimensions of the label.
- The textual information, including the presence of an inscription on one or both sides, the language, the type of script, the presence of an illustration, the state of preservation and orientation of the text, as well as the text itself, whether written in Demotic, Greek, hieroglyphs, hieratic, or Coptic, with a transliteration, a translation, and, when necessary, a commentary.
- All bibliographical references and the URL of the museum collection website when it displays a photograph of the label. When possible, we include photographs on our own website.

THE MUMMY LABELS IN THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE MUSEUM

On the occasion of the centennial of the OI, we should now pay special attention to the mummy labels from the OI Museum. They can be sorted into three groups:

1. Greek Mummy Labels: LI-368 numbers (see, for example, figs. 1, 4, 9–14)

Sixty-one wooden mummy labels inscribed in Greek were found during the excavation of the Roman period cemetery at Medinet Habu, conducted by the OI between 1929 and 1930. From the study of the paleography and onomastics they can be dated to the third and fourth centuries AD. Only one label can be dated precisely to year 2 of the reign of Probus (AD 276–282) and a few are apparently dated to an indiction. As noted by Terry G. Wilfong, who published an initial study of these labels, they “are significant in being the largest single corpus of mummy labels
from a controlled excavation.” Unfortunately, most of them “do not have precise archaeological context” and “were found amongst the debris of plundered burials.”

2. Demotic Mummy Labels: OIM E25285, 25286, 25287, 25288, 25289 (see, for example, figs. 2, 5–8)

According to the OI Museum registration cards, these five Demotic stone mummy labels, published by François Gaudard and Janet H. Johnson, were originally purchased by William F. Edgerton in Luxor between 1931 and 1933. They were part of the antiquities received by the OI Museum from Edgerton’s collection on January 18, 1973, following his death on March 20, 1970. Their provenance is unknown, but several similarities with mummy labels from Dendera make it virtually certain that these stela-shaped labels originate from that town. Specifically, they are made of stone, and their inscriptions are incised and painted. In addition, the personal names occurring in these texts reinforce this impression. None of these labels is dated, but in comparison to the rare labels from Dendera bearing a date, it is likely that they may be attributed to the early Roman period.

3. Bilingual Mummy Label: OIM E19387 (fig. 15)

This Demotic-Greek limestone mummy label, also published by François Gaudard and Janet H. Johnson, does not belong to the preceding lot. According to the OI Museum registration card, it was collected in the Theban area by Harold Nelson and William F. Edgerton. Only part of the label is preserved. Paleographically speaking, a date no later than the second century AD can be suggested. Despite its fragmentary state, the present label is highly interesting and even exceptional. Indeed, in a bilingual label one does not expect a single text to be composed in two different languages, as is the case here with the entire inscription in Greek except for the name “Osiris,” which is written in Demotic. In fact, as stated by Quaegebeur, “Bilingual labels usually have the Greek text on one side, the demotic on the other. Sometimes, both versions are on the same face. In a few instances, the text continues from one side onto the other.” In other words, both the Demotic and Greek versions of the text were written independently of
each other. Moreover, it is also worth noting that in a Greek mummy label it is very rare for the deceased to be referred to as an “Osiris,” and this is perhaps the reason why “Osiris” was written in Demotic here.

Looking towards the future, this fully searchable database will certainly be a useful tool for subsequent studies on mummy labels and will contribute to a better understanding of the life of the multicultural population of Greco-Roman Egypt.

ENDNOTE

The current team also includes Alberto Nodar, Sergio Carro Martín (both from the Universitat Pompeu Fabra), María Jesús Albarrán, Alba de Frutos García (both from the CCHS-CSIC, Madrid), and Marina Escolano Poveda (University of Liverpool).

Over the years, the MLD has been awarded grants by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation (MICINN) and the Fundación la Caixa, supported by the Fundación Bancaria Caixa d’Estalvis i Pensions de Barcelona, “la Caixa,” which the team of the MLD would like to thank for their support and generosity.

The webpage of the Oriental Institute website dedicated to the MLD includes a description of the project, all the MLD annual reports downloadable in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF), as well as a link to the Mummy Label Database:

https://oi.uchicago.edu/research/projects/mummy-label-database-mld

The Death on the Nile website, the OI MLD webpage, as well as the database are updated on a regular basis.

FURTHER READING


TELL EDFU
NADINE MOELLER & GREGORY MAROUARD

The ancient city of Edfu, located in southern Egypt, halfway between the modern cities of Luxor and Aswan, has been an ongoing archaeological fieldwork project directed by Nadine Moeller and Gregory Marouard. Between 2001 and 2007 it was conducted under the auspices of the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and it is currently supported by the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago. This project can be considered the flagship of current research into ancient Egyptian urbanism, which adds new perspectives about Egypt to the long-term research objectives on ancient settlements and urbanism at the OI, which in the past have been mainly focused on towns and cities located in Mesopotamia.

Tell Edfu was once the capital of the 2nd Upper Egyptian nome (province) and held the status of an important regional urban center extending over an area of about 12 hectares. The recent archaeological fieldwork has focused on the exploration of the long-term development of this town, from its origins, which date back to the late Old Kingdom (ca. 2400 BC) until the most recent discovery of an elite quarter that belongs to the early New Kingdom (ca. 1550 BC). The unique potential of exploring this ancient city lies in its continuous occupation, which covers almost three thousand years of Pharaonic period history and the excellent preservation of the archaeological remains due to the hyper arid environment.

Highlights of the past eighteen years of archaeological fieldwork at the site include several significant discoveries that shed new light on ancient Egyptian history and chronology. The recent excavations of a settlement quarter that was directly founded on the natural bedrock during the Fifth Dynasty provide a new link to the activities of royal expeditions in the Eastern Desert that were sent from the capital to extract copper and other raw materials for the

“The unique potential of exploring this ancient city lies in its continuous occupation, which covers almost three thousand years of Pharaonic period history and the excellent preservation of the archaeological remains . . .”
These expeditions were initiated under King Djedkare-Isesi (late Fifth Dynasty, ca. 2380–2340 BC), who establishes Edfu as an important logistical base in the south as a departure point into the Eastern Desert regions, which were rich in mineral resources. Several hundred clay sealings from the excavation of two monumental building complexes revealed new insights about the activities of high officials from the Memphite region who were sent to Edfu to oversee such expeditions and in charge of a group of prospectors (called sementiu in ancient Egyptian) who were extracting copper (as suggested by archaeological discoveries on site), precious stones, and possibly also gold for the state.

Another important discovery at the site of Tell Edfu has been the impressive governor’s residence dating to the Twelfth and Thirteenth Dynasties (ca. 1850–1700 BC), which consists of several columned halls that revealed many traces for administrative activities. The most significant finds were forty clay sealings naming the Hyksos king Khayan, a ruler of foreign origins based in the eastern Nile Delta. The discovery of these sealings fragments, which were found on the last occupation floor level of the northern columned hall of the governor’s residence, indicate that the town of Edfu had economic or perhaps even diplomatic relations with the north of Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period, a time of political fragmentation. This offers a new insight into the relationship between the Hyksos kings and the rest of the country, which had up to then mainly been known through textual sources that concern the end of this period when the kings of Thebes fought wars against the Hyksos rulers. The sealings found in the governor’s residence at Edfu provide clear evidence for initially peaceful relations between the north and the south but also open up new discussions concerning ancient Egyptian chronology, since these finds establish Khayan as an early ruler of the Hyksos kings and not a late one, as previously assumed.
Most recently, the excavations at Edfu have revealed, after eighteen years of archaeological fieldwork at the site, some rather spectacular finds. For the first time since the beginning of this project, two small statues were unearthed, which is a rare find at a settlement site because inhabitants usually took the most valuable objects with them when they abandoned a building. Located on top of the tell, excavations have focused on a large urban villa from the late Seventeenth Dynasty to the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty (ca. 1550 bc). This mansion is part of a very rare example of an elite quarter that once stood in the center of the ancient city. During the 2018 season, the main columned hall of this mansion was first excavated, and in its northeastern corner, remains of a small shrine dedicated to the worship of the ancestors has been discovered. Two small mudbrick pedestals, a fireplace, and small plastered surface—probably for libation offerings—lie in the center of this small household chapel, which was surrounded by a wooden frame or support. In addition, various cult objects were excavated on the surrounding floor level, such as a small diorite statue of a seated scribe—whose name can be read as Iuf, and who held the title of the “scribe of the nome (province) of Edfu”—
FROM LEFT: Natasha Ayers and Aaron de Souza holding beer jars from the excavation of a large trash deposit covering remnants of the abandoned settlement in the Eighteenth Dynasty; Gregory Marouard and Emilie Sarrazin together with MoA inspector Hannan Abd el-Fatah holding a small ancestor bust; Recording of the ancient town walls using a camera on a long pole for photogrammetry; Excavations of the Old Kingdom town in progress with the Ptolemaic temple in the background, view to the east.
in addition to a small limestone bust showing probably a woman wearing a long tripartite wig. Those busts are typical for these ancestor shrines and might have been placed in adjacent wall niches. A small limestone stela showing a man and a woman was also found and probably represents two more family members and their associated titles, which mark them as the highest administrators in the town of Edfu. The shrine with its finds attests to the worship of the deceased family members who belonged to the highest elite of Edfu based on their titles, in addition to the impressive size and layout of the villa. This most recent discovery also offers a unique opportunity to investigate more closely these private religious practices, which aimed to commemorate deceased family members and also asked them for favors and help from the netherworld. Furthermore, this elite quarter dates to an interesting period within ancient Egyptian history—the transition from the late Second Intermediate Period (Seventeenth Dynasty) to the early New Kingdom (Eighteenth Dynasty)—when the kings based in Thebes had just been able to take control of the entire country after having defeated the Hyksos kings in the north. They were also actively seeking to consolidate their own powerbase and forged new alliances with important elite families in charge of the regional urban centers in the south. The discoveries of Edfu shed new lights on these histories in addition to providing new insights into the long-term evolution of an early urban center and the lives of its inhabitants.
Ancient Mesopotamia was a major focus of research at the University of Chicago from its founding in 1891. The first president of the university, William Rainey Harper, a specialist in Semitic languages, established the Department of Semitic Languages. He hired his brother Robert Francis Harper for Assyriology and James Henry Breasted for Egyptology. By 1896, the Haskell Oriental Museum had been built to house the department and its collection of antiquities. After 1900, a group chaired by Robert Francis Harper established an entity called the Oriental Exploration Fund at the University, which sponsored Edgar James Banks’s and Victor Persons’s excavations at the ancient city of Adab in southern Iraq from 1903 to 1905. The same organization was the initial source of funding for Breasted’s Epigraphic Survey in Egypt.

Like William Rainey Harper, when Breasted became head of the Semitic Languages Department in 1909, he called for an approach to the study of the ancient Near East that combined written records and archaeology with scientific methods. Breasted’s vision of a research institute came to fruition in 1919 when John D. Rockefeller Jr. made a major gift for the purpose and the Oriental Institute was born. At that time, in the immediate aftermath of World War I, Breasted led a group of scholars to Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia to scout out possible sites for excavation, as well as to buy artifacts for the Oriental Institute Museum he envisioned. At that time, the buying of antiquities was legal. His group included Ludlow Bull and William Edgerton (both graduate students in Egyptology at Chicago), Daniel Luckenbill (professor of Assyriology), and William Shelton, a former student of Breasted’s who was a professor of Semitic Languages at Emory University. In Iraq, the group viewed, among other sites, Ur, Umma, Nippur, Babylon, Aqar Quf, Nineveh, and Khorsabad.

During the 1920s, Breasted began to plan for a new building to house his institute at the corner of 58th Street and South University Avenue (its present location); the faculty club on that site was razed after a new one was built a block north.

Breasted’s vision for the Oriental Institute was that it should primarily be a research center, and he laid out a set of units with staffing to accomplish that aim. In spite of the Great Depression, a further gift from Rockefeller meant that Breasted could seek out the best talent in the US and Europe. As early as 1925 at Megiddo, in Palestine, and subsequently in Syria, Turkey, Iraq, and Iran, Breasted engaged archaeologists, epigraphers, architects, and support staff, some of whom—especially the architects—were to go from dig to dig as needed. The directors of the projects were research associates, or even research professors, who were not required to teach. As an example of how the staff was utilized, the architects Hamilton Darby and Harold Hill were mainly engaged in the Diyala region of Iraq, but they
sometimes served at Khorsabad (also in Iraq) and then went to the Amuq sites in Syria. Richard Carl Haines, another architect, was a major contributor to the Amuq operations but also served at Alişar in Turkey and at Persepolis in Iran. The staffs were engaged year-round so that plans and publications could be prepared in the summers. Only occasionally were graduate students added to field operations, since the emphasis in the research was on professional teams. That tradition still lives on at the Oriental Institute, most notably at Chicago House in Egypt, and some of the most innovative and important projects today are carried out in various countries by research associates such as Donald Whitcomb, Abbas Alizadeh, Yorke Rowan, and Gregory Marouard. In the 1990s, another research associate, Tony Wilkinson, brought revolutionary approaches concerning the study of landscapes in much of the Near East to Chicago.

For Egypt, Breasted viewed the documentation of the standing monuments as the main priority, and he established Chicago House as the headquarters. In the rest of the Near East, he sought to lay out the vertical stratigraphy of sites so that an archaeological chronology could be formed and correlated with written texts. Thus, in all their long-term commitments to fieldwork at specific sites in Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Iraq, and Iran, the teams excavated deep pits to derive that basic stratigraphy while also making horizontal exposures on layers that were seen as critical for writing the archaeological and epigraphic history of the areas. As a result, the ancient period names for those countries assigned by the Oriental Institute teams are still largely in use today. The stratigraphic and historical sequences established at Megiddo, in the Amuq valley, at Alişar, and in the Din yala region supplied the key chronological evidence for the evolution of Near Eastern cultures.
The digging staffs, because they did not teach, would stay in the field for most of the year, as Chicago House in Egypt still does. Any staff members who traveled to and from the US had weeks to work on notes or reports, as they sailed on ocean liners. Breasted required that his people travel first class because they were representing the Oriental Institute. During the summers, they analyzed the finds and wrote up results, usually doing long preliminary reports (Oriental Institute Communications) first, but also working on final monographs. The key members of the Diyala team, centering on Henri Frankfort, spent most summers in London, working in rented quarters on Sicilian Avenue.

In the Oriental Institute, Breasted established a library devoted to the ancient Near East that was to be second to none, and he hired two Norwegian librarians (Johanna Vindenas and Asgerd V. Skjönsberg) to staff it. He named George Allen (and later Elizabeth Hauser) to head an editorial office that would ensure a high level of excellence for the published results of the Institute’s basic research and syntheses, whether derived from field projects or in-house projects. The offices of the editorial section were positioned right next to the library because the editors and their assistants were expected to check each footnote against any cited source, thus ensuring excellence in publication.

Miss Vindenas and Mrs. Hauser continued in their positions until the 1960s. Ethel Schenk, Breasted’s personal assistant, served successive Institute directors until the 1970s. They, along with the faculty, were the institutional memory of the institute.
For Mesopotamia, the publications included two very large volumes on Khorsabad (ancient Dur-Sharrukin) and a series of preliminary and final reports on the Diyala Region. Only three of the projected eleven final reports on the Diyala excavations could be completed before World War II disrupted normal progress. But Frankfort, residing in Chicago for the war years, was able to prepare manuscripts of several of the other books, which went into publication in the decades after the war. The last two are not yet on paper. One, on miscellaneous objects, exists as a digitized database, and the second, a summarizing essay entitled “Four Towns in the Diyala Region,” has not been assembled.

Breasted saw the museum as a public expression of the Institute’s work, and as the field expeditions brought back artifacts, they were incorporated into the museum collection. He engaged gifted artists to prepare museum displays and install them. Like other museums of the time, the personnel of the conservation section were not as rigorously and scientifically trained as they are today, but that deficiency was corrected in the 1960s. The photography lab was also a priority, and for decades it was staffed by Ursula Schneider, who had been trained in the Bauhaus, Germany. The photographer worked for the museum, recording artifacts and preparing display material, but also took the field negatives done by the expeditions and made prints for the Institute archive and also for the dig directors and for the officials of the host countries in which excavations were carried out. It had a special role in the recording, curation, and publishing of the Epigraphic Survey.

FIELDWORK

In 1931, the Oriental Institute’s building was completed and the artifacts from the Haskell Museum were moved into it. But as indicated above, even before the inauguration of the building, the Institute had initiated archaeological investigations in Palestine at Megiddo (1925–37), in Turkey with the Hittite Survey (1926–27) and the Anatolian Expedition, mainly at Alişar (1927–34), under Hans Henning von der Osten. For coastal Syria, the Syrian-Hittite Expedition in the Amuq valley was led by Calvin McEwan (1932–38). Robert J. Braidwood, a graduate student working under McEwan, is often mistakenly credited with leading the Amuq expedition, probably because he published the survey on which his doctoral dissertation was based and, with his wife Linda, later published an Amuq excavation volume on early levels exposed in the area. McEwan, unfortunately, did not live long enough to write the final monographs. He served in Army Intelligence in the Near East during World War II, and died at the age of forty-three in 1950.

Edward Chiera, Henri Frankfort, and Gordon Loud directed the work at Khorsabad (1928–35), one of the Assyrian capitals in northern Iraq. These excavations reinvestigated and expanded areas of the acropolis that had been explored in the 1840s by a French team. The giant human-headed bull and the
reliefs in the Oriental Institute Museum represent the major part of Chicago's share of antiquities from the site, awarded by the Iraqi Directorate General of Antiquities.

Henri Frankfort had been recruited by Breasted when they met at Amarna in Egypt. Frankfort asked that Seton Lloyd, a British architect also at Amarna, be hired as well. The Diyala Project, headed by Frankfort (1930–36) explored a neglected area northeast of Baghdad, concentrating on four sites: Tell Asmar (ancient Eshnunna), Tell Agrab, Khafajah (ancient Tutub), and Ischali (ancient Neribtum). The reasons for choosing this region, as opposed to the core area of ancient Sumer and Akkad to the south and west where most excavations were being carried out, were the unexplored nature of the Diyala and the increasing number of art objects from this region appearing in the antiquities market in Baghdad. On the surface of Tell Asmar, Edward Chiera had found some bricks inscribed with the names of rulers of Eshnunna, which was known to be an important but little-researched state in the Old Babylonian period.

For the Diyala project, Frankfort, an art historian, gathered a remarkable group of scholars and technicians in addition to Lloyd. Thorkild Jacobsen, a Danish scholar who received his PhD at Chicago in 1929, was not only a brilliant cuneiformist but also a gifted archaeologist. Pinhas Pierre Delougaz (French trained Russian-born engineer) had originally been hired to move the Assyrian reliefs found at Khorsabad but spent much of the next decade in the Diyala. Hamilton Darby and Harold Hill (American architects), Rachel Levy (British artist), and Mary Chubb (British secretary to Frankfort, and recorder of finds) were later joined by Rigmor Jacobsen (photographer, and wife of Thorkild), Jacobsen, and Count Alexander zu Elst (German archaeologist). Initially, Conrad Preusser (German archaeologist) was in charge of Khafajah, but he was replaced as the head of that site by Delougaz.

Seton Lloyd, after his first season in the Diyala, was asked by Breasted to go to Egypt to make detailed plans of a typical house at ancient Amarna. His drawings of that house were the basis for a model that was featured for years in the Oriental Institute Museum.

In conjunction with the OI project at Khorsabad, Thorkild Jacobsen and Seton Lloyd conducted a study of the Assyrian aqueduct system that brought water to the fields and cities. This was the first example of landscape archaeology that combined archaeological and epigraphic evidence. Jacobsen was to carry out a similar survey in the Diyala Region in 1936 as part of the ambitious project to explore an entire region not just by excavating sites but also putting them in their geographical context, especially the irrigation system that made them possible.

To ensure long-term commitment to the excavation plans, Breasted saw the necessity for constructing housing at the sites, since the seasons of work were to add up to nine months each year. In the 1930s, even elaborate expedition houses could be built relatively cheaply. One stone-built house at Megiddo was famous—or infamous—for its tennis court. The dig houses in the Amuq in northwest Syria and at Alişar in Turkey were also of stone. In the Diyala, the house at Tell Asmar was rather elaborate, although built of unbaked mudbrick, while subsidiary, small mudbrick houses were enough for Khafajah, Ischali, and Tell Agrab. At that time, the Diyala region was almost entirely a desert, not occupied by settlements since about the thirteenth century AD. There were
“The Diyala Project, headed by Frankfort (1930–36) explored a neglected area northeast of Baghdad, concentrating on four sites: Tell Asmar (ancient Eshnunna), Tell Agrab, Khafajah (ancient Tutub), and Ischali (ancient Neribtum). The reasons for choosing this region . . . were the unexplored nature of the Diyala and the increasing number of art objects from this region appearing in the antiquities market in Baghdad.”
no real roads linking the sites, only desert tracks, but travel over them could be very efficient. The teams at the subsidiary sites would return to Tell Asmar on Thursday evening—since Friday was a day off—and go back to their work on Friday evening. This allowed them to transfer antiquities for recording, conservation, and drawing/photographing, and it also gave them a chance for a shower, good food, and pleasant company.

Jacobsen enjoyed telling a story about one of those trips: One Thursday afternoon, when Jacobsen and Lloyd were working at Ischali, they drove off toward Tell Asmar just as a sandstorm came in. They had gotten less than halfway to Tell Asmar as the curtain of sand and the coming dark made it difficult to see the track. They decided to turn around and return to Ischali, following their own tracks. Soon, in order to see their tracks, Jacobsen had to get out and walk in front of the car, using its lights to guide him. Finally, he told Lloyd that he could not see the tracks at all and was worried that they would become totally lost. He said they should just sleep in the car for the night and make it back to Ischali in the morning. They woke up to find that they were parked no more
than ten feet from the wall of the Ischali dig house. They had followed the tracks to where the car had been parked the day before.

The Diyala excavations employed many Iraqi workmen. For the first season at Tell Asmar, in addition to men from the vicinity, there were more than a hundred Sherqatis—men and boys from villages near the site of Assur, where the Germans in the early twentieth century had trained men to be diggers. Some of the younger Sherqatis in the Diyala were still working in dozens of excavations, including those at Nippur, well into the 1970s. Their sons and grandsons worked alongside them. One of the boys in the Diyala, Abdullah Sultan, was taken into the Tell Asmar dig house as a general servant. In the years following World War II, he was to become the stately majordomo at Nippur each season from 1948 until 1975.

The Diyala staff designated the cleverest of the Sherqatis as pickmen; as a result, both the staff and the pickmen improved upon the techniques of the German excavators to understand and expose mudbrick architecture. The team also expanded their techniques for recording the finds of
objects in context. These techniques, which resulted in a variety of records, established the basis for writing up preliminary reports and final monographs, which were then subjected to the painstaking editing process in the OI Publications Office. The publications that resulted are still essential for the understanding of the early historical periods of Mesopotamia and are listed at the end of this chapter. Subsequent work at Nippur and elsewhere in Iraq indicates that the Diyala reports need to be corrected, and it is the high quality of the original records and the detailed publications that make those corrections possible.

Throughout the early 1930s, Chicago’s field operations continued at a brisk pace. Well-endowed, and thus able to fund elaborate excavations at relatively low cost in a depressed world economy, the Institute could mount as many as ten field operations from Egypt to Iran in a year. But by 1936, even the Institute had to cut back. The excavations at Khorsabad and in the Diyala were stopped and the staffs were disbanded, with Loud going to Palestine to take over the excavations at Megiddo for several seasons. Delougaz carried out two more seasons at Khafajah for the University of Pennsylvania. Frankfort, Lloyd, Jacobsen, and Delougaz continued to work on the final monographs, with some contributions by the other former staff members. Delougaz was named as curator of the Oriental Institute Museum in 1947, and that stabilizing appointment made it possible for him—working closely with the editor Elizabeth Hauser—to see four more of the Diyala final reports through to publication.

In 1938, Henri Frankfort agreed to join the teaching faculty of the Oriental Institute, mentoring a number of important Near Eastern archaeologists until he left for
the Warburg Institute in London in 1948. While in Chicago, he initiated an important multi-year seminar on comparative archaeological chronology in which students such as Robert J. Braidwood (Amuq), Ann L. Perkins (Iraq), Donald McCown (Iran), and Helene Kantor (Egypt) used the Institute’s own excavated material and other scholars’ published information to develop syntheses of entire regions for doctoral degrees. The training in this seminar and the other classes in the Department of Oriental Studies, which was the teaching component supplementing the work of the Institute, had another lasting impact. In 1937, the Iraqi Department of Antiquities chose several men to send abroad for advanced degrees in archaeology and epigraphy. Fuad Safar and Taha Baqir arrived at the Oriental Institute completely unanticipated by Frankfort and Jacobsen. The arrangements for their coming had been made with the university administration, not with the Institute. Safar was already well prepared in Aramaic, and Baqir had some grounding in cuneiform. Both took a variety of archaeology and language courses and proved to be excellent students. Their progress toward PhDs was halted due to the onset of World War II, and they returned to Iraq with master’s degrees. These two men, with the cooperation of a few other Iraqis who had been sent for training in Europe, became the core around which the Antiquities Service and the University of Baghdad created a cadre of Iraqi officials and instructors in Mesopotamian studies. Their students were later sent to Europe and the US for advanced degrees, and they in turn trained others so that as the Iraqi university system expanded (Basra and Mosul in the 1960s and more than a dozen new universities in the 1970s), archaeology and cuneiform studies became a central part of the curriculum.
The outbreak of World War II had affected the Oriental Institute in a profound way, with the departure of much of its faculty and students to join the war effort. Many of the language specialists went to work for the army or other units as code breakers or interpreters. The younger archaeologists such as Braidwood and McCown served in different roles in the army. The Englishman, Seton Lloyd, had taken a position as special advisor to the Iraqi Department of Antiquities in 1939 but spent part of the war in Cairo and Jerusalem in information services for the British Army. During the war, besides reorganizing the Iraq Museum, he, with Fuad Safar and Taha Baqir, carried out extremely important excavations in Iraq, thereby establishing for the first time the prehistoric sequences in Mesopotamia. In doing this, they were extending back in time the chronological framework set out as a priority by Breasted.

After the war, the institute regained most of its faculty and began planning for new work. For Iraq, this meant two new projects. Braidwood, now a faculty member in Anthropology, laid out a plan to employ an interdisciplinary team of archaeologists and natural scientists from 1948 to 1952 that would investigate the origins of the domestication of plants and animals in northern Iraq. He hypothesized that by going to the lower slopes of the Zagros Mountains of northern Iraq—the natural setting for the right kind of wild grains and animals that existed in antiquity—he could discover evidence of that change from wild to domesticated and demonstrate the transition from hunting and gathering to settled village life. This use of the scientific method in archaeology was new, as was his successful application to the Natural Science Foundation to fund it. This was the first archaeological project ever supported by the NSF. Braidwood’s program, usually known as the Jarmo Project, has inspired thousands of similar projects worldwide, in which environment and archaeology are intertwined. A junior member of Braidwood’s staff, Robert McCormick Adams, who also became a faculty member of the Anthropology Department of the University of Chicago and later the director of the Institute, turned his attention south and mapped thousands of archaeological sites and ancient canals in the area east and south of Baghdad (Akkad Survey, 1956–57), the Diyala region (1957–58) in a project directed by Fuad Safar and Thorkild Jacobsen, the area around Uruk (1967), and around Nippur (1973–75). His work, published in three books, has formed the basis for all later studies of the southern Mesopotamian landscape.
OPPOSITE: Robert McCormick Adams. LEFT: Jarmo Project staff (University of Chicago Photographic Archive, apf3-01642, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library).
NIPPUR

The institute’s second new project in Iraq after World War II was a major program of excavations at Nippur, the most important religious city of Mesopotamia. Initially a joint project (1948–52) with the University of Pennsylvania, which had worked at the site from 1889 until 1900, this became the most sustained archaeological operation by the Oriental Institute (1948–90, directed by Donald McCown, and later by R. C. Haines, James Knudstad, and McGuire Gibson). Until the tenth season (1966–67), the Nippur program was headed by research associates; the last of these, Knudstad, was trained as an architect and directed Nippur (1964–67), but he also went to other Oriental Institute excavations such as the High Dam Rescue Salvage Operations in Nubia, following the practice set in the 1930s.

In the first three seasons of the Joint Expedition to Nippur, the focus of the work was on the ziggurat area and Tablet Hill, where two deep trenches, TA and TB, furnished a new sample of ceramics for the chronology from the Akkadian period to the Achaemenid (2300–300 BC). Because the seasons could last for nine months, the expedition rented a house in Afak, the nearby town, and Haines brought his wife Irene and his two small children, Carleton and Alice, who attended the local school and completely adapted to their surroundings. After the University of Pennsylvania withdrew from the Nippur expedition, the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR) became a co-sponsor from 1953 to 1962, often represented on the dig by Albrecht Goetze of Yale as epigrapher. During those seasons in which Carl Haines was the director, aided by research associates Donald P. Hansen and James Knudstad, they excavated eleven successive rebuildings of the Inanna Temple. This sequence of buildings and a few levels below the earliest temple building furnished more ceramic evidence for chronology, especially important for the periods between the Uruk and Ur III (3200–2000 BC). The viability of Mesopotamian cultural traditions was evident in the fact that even as late as the Parthian period (ca. AD 100) a very large version of the Inanna Temple stood at the top of the stack of buildings.

After 1962, with the withdrawal of ASOR, the Oriental Institute voting members decided formally to make Nippur the primary Institute excavation project, putting an end to the yearly prospect of closing down the operation. To mark this commitment to a long-term project, in 1964 James Knudstad built an expedition house on the site, negating the previous reliance on rented housing in Afak. The Nippur house, which still stands, was used not just for the Nippur dig, but also as a base for Adams’s survey projects in the late 1960s and early 1970s. As an adjunct to the Nippur expedition, from 1962–64 Donald P. Hansen excavated at Abu Salabikh, a site to the northeast of Nippur. This work yielded extremely valuable cuneiform tablets of the Early Dynastic Period, which were published by the Nippur expedition’s epigrapher, Robert D. Biggs.
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Nippur Inanna Temple excavation, 1962. Inanna Temple foundation figures of Shulgi, ca. 2085 BC. Workmen walking home at the end of the day, 1960s. Statue of a woman from the Inanna Temple, Nippur, ca. 2600 BC—the unique gold face must have been applied to a wooden head that was mounted onto the stone body.
With interruptions caused by wars and sanctions, the Oriental Institute has carried out nineteen seasons of excavation at Nippur and resumed its work there in the spring of 2019. Thousands of important cuneiform documents have been found at the site since Pennsylvania’s 1890s seasons. Nippur has yielded more than 40,000 tablets, and since it was a religious center, there were numerous dedications of sacred and administrative structures, usually in the form of foundation deposits and inscribed bricks. In addition, over the span of three millennia, hundreds of inscribed objects were given to temples by Sumerian, Akkadian, Babylonian, and Assyrian rulers. Such inscriptions have allowed historians to reconstruct the history not only of Nippur but also of the entire region.

Since 1972 under Gibson, Chicago has included natural scientists (soil specialists, paleozoologists, paleobotanists) in its research, resulting in evidence of environmental change and human adaptation that are not directly recorded in texts. Gradually, it has become clear that there were two major abandonments of the site in the second millennium BC, each time followed by a revival of the city. Parallel research by a Belgian expedition at the site of Tell ed-Der led its field director, Hermann Gasche, to gather evidence from dated tablets in dozens of sites in southern Iraq to show that the earlier abandonment at Nippur was part of a much greater de-urbanization beginning in the early years of the king Samsuiluna (son of Hammurabi of Babylon), which progressed over a thirty-year period from the south to the north. This phenomenon, probably linked to environmental changes and river shift, reduced irrigated Babylonia to about a fifth of its agriculturally-based populated area for more than a century and a half. After a revival of the cities in the Kassite and Second Isin periods (ca. 1400–1100 BC), there was another centuries-long abandonment of Nippur and much of the south.

Due to different methods of excavating and recording, there has been a general slowing down of the digging, but this has allowed for a more precise working out of changes in the layout of buildings through time, and the collection of carbon samples, animal bones, seeds, and other materials that can be analyzed to supplement information given in the written sources. In doing this kind of work, it has become apparent that tablets, though our most informative class of artifacts, do not record many kinds of natural or man-made phenomena, which become visible in the analysis of the archaeological evidence and the natural-science samples collected. In general, much more attention these days is paid to more precisely recording the findspots of objects and the correlation of artifacts as found in their contexts. Because there was not enough coordination of the work between epigraphers and archaeologists in earlier seasons, in 1973 cuneiform tablets were registered in the same catalog as all other kinds of artifacts. In previous years, written material was
recorded separately by the epigrapher, and there were many losses of findspot data in the long process of baking, conserving, and reading them.

From 1972 until 1990, when the Kuwait Crisis and the first Gulf War intervened, the Nippur expedition concentrated on the West Mound, exposing several levels of a temple that can be identified with Gula, the goddess of medicine. The team also discovered an Old Babylonian house of bakers (ca. 1700 BC) beneath an administrative palace of the Kassite period (ca. 1250 BC), which in turn had cutting down into it a later burial surrounded by cuneiform tablets. These tablets proved to be records of a governor of Nippur in the ninth century BC. Other research employing aerial photographs and excavation showed that a Kassite map of the city found by Pennsylvania in the 1890s, could be oriented only one way. In relation to that work, the team traced the history of the city wall and the changing patterns of occupation of the city. The year 1988 saw a return to Tablet Hill, resulting in a major correction in the published stratigraphy that affected the history of the site and the region (mainly the work of James A. Armstrong). Finally, the expedition excavated Area WG at the topmost point of the West Mound to derive a better stratigraphy from the Parthian to the early Islamic period (150 BC–AD 700).

While carrying out the digging on the site, Gibson also assigned to Elizabeth Stone the previously exposed Old Babylonian levels of Tablet Hill. Stone used the records of work done from 1948 to 1952 to reconstruct events that related to the earlier of the two abandonments of the city. Later, Richard L. Zettler took on the analysis of the Inanna Temple and completed a dissertation (revised as a book) on the Ur III level. His reworking of that dissertation and all other material of the Inanna Temple, with Donald P. Hansen, Karen L. Wilson, and Jean Evans, has resulted in a manuscript that is in progress in the Oriental Institute Publications Office.

Until the mid-1960s, the Nippur expedition was essentially still a project carried out by paid research staff, although it occasionally included a student, and it would often have nine-month seasons. In the 1970s, John Sanders—an architect trained by Haines on site—was the last remnant of the professional staff on the dig. This loss of professional staff has not been ideal, nor have the monetary strictures that have increasingly limited the scope of work or reduced the time spent on the site each year, with three-month seasons becoming the norm. The tendency since the early 1970s on
institute digs has been to have faculty members of NELC also act as the leaders of the archaeological projects. For Nippur, besides Gibson, other faculty such as epigraphers (Miguel Civil, later Robert D. Biggs), also served on the dig. Occasionally, a photographer might be hired for a season, but there was more and more reliance on students to staff Nippur and other Institute projects. Doctoral dissertations resulted, but the level of expertise available for recording the sites and the subsequent steady progress on publications carried out by professional staff in past excavations could not be matched.

The introduction of an Otrona portable computer (64k memory, 34 pounds) to Nippur in 1981 was the first use of such machines in archaeology in Iraq. Using an AutoCAD program written expressly for him by the company, John Sanders created all the plans, while a volunteer or a student registrar created the catalog of objects using a database program. As technology has changed radically through the years, there has sometimes been a problem accessing the data from floppy discs from those early seasons.

In the 1970s, the Nippur expedition carried out two other projects in Iraq. In 1975 it excavated on the site of Umm al-Hafriyat, in the desert about 30 kilometers east of Nippur. Around the site were more than 400 pottery kilns, which were plotted on the site plan and dated by examining the often distorted, overfired sherds around them. In 1978–79, the Nippur expedition took part in the Hamrin Dam Salvage Project in an area east of Baghdad, organized by the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (a new organizational form of the Antiquities Service). There, at three mounds given the name Uch Tepe, we exposed a round fortress of the Early Dynastic period (ca. 3000–2600 BC), houses of the Akkadian period, and second millennium houses.

Returning to Nippur in the 1980s, working even while the Iran-Iraq War was taking place, the expedition exposed much of the Gula Temple and added substantially to the ceramic chronology by concentrating on Kassite and Akkadian levels.
Judith Franke’s analysis of the Kassite pottery and Augusta McMahon’s sequence from the Early Dynastic through the Akkadian were essential in that work.

The Kuwait Crisis and the first Gulf War of 1990–91 brought an end to the projected ten-year program of excavation around the Gula Temple that was planned at Nippur. The sanctions imposed on Iraq in the 1990s prevented a return, even though the Iraqis were willing to have foreign archaeologists work. During those years, the Nippur group turned to a project in Yemen (Gibson and Tony Wilkinson), and later an important operation in Syria (Hamoukar). It is important to emphasize the role of Tony Wilkinson, an Oriental Institute research associate, who had previously carried out numerous landscape mapping projects, from Greece to Iran, for various institutions. His work for the British School of Archaeology during the 1970s and ‘80s, in an area that included Nippur, was so important that, in the aftermath of the Gulf War, the Oriental Institute hired Wilkinson to conduct a series of groundbreaking research projects, including those in Yemen and Syria. His creation of CAMEL, a lab for the use of remote sensing to analyze landscapes, became a major component in research and teaching at the Oriental Institute. He trained numerous students, including Carrie Hritz and Mark Altaweel, who added thousands of sites to those already located in Iraq by Robert Adams. Wilkinson’s students have continued to do valuable work as teachers and researchers at institutions in North America, Europe, and the Near East, and they thereby project the field of landscape archaeology forward.
Since 1992, the Oriental Institute has seen the elaboration of a computerized database for the Diyala sites, initiated by Gibson and carried out by Clemens Reichel, who for a doctoral project completed a major new study of the Shu-Sin Temple and the Palace of the Rulers at Tell Asmar, which had been the focus of the first excavation report done by Frankfort. Reichel’s greatly revised and expanded manuscript is in progress an Oriental Institute publication. The database itself serves, for now, as a publication of the Diyala objects in context.

After a long hiatus caused by wars and economic sanctions, archaeology has begun again in Iraq—first in the Kurdish areas of northern Iraq. Gil Stein initiated a project on the prehistoric site of Sureisur, near Erbil. He had dug earlier at the important prehistoric site of Tell Zaidan, near Raqqa in Syria, where he discovered material that relates to the Ubaid Period of Mesopotamia. From 1999 onwards, McGuire Gibson and later Clemens Reichel dug the large early city site of Hamoukar, located 8 kilometers west of the Iraqi border in northeastern Syria. Hamoukar has furnished evidence of a northern sphere of urban origins, followed by a conquest by people from southern
Iraq, during the Uruk period (ca. 3000 BC). This project had the advantage of being put into geographical and historical context through a regional survey by Tony Wilkinson and Jason Ur.

Since about 2010, there has been a ferment of archaeological activity in the Kurdish area of northern Iraq in both excavation and survey, often accompanied by natural-science studies. But increasingly, in the south, there are new Iraqi and foreign excavations and surveys. The Nippur expedition resumed work at the site in the spring of 2019. Although in 2003 and later, there was much looting of sites in the Nippur area, it was not as systematic as that which occurred farther south. And Nippur itself was only superficially damaged for a couple of weeks in 2003. Carrie Hritz plans a long-term program of survey that will allow for an assessment of damage to sites in the region of Nippur, as well as a more precise establishment of the periods of occupation of those sites, by examining and dating the potsherds thrown up on the surface by the looters.

There is reason for optimism regarding the future of archaeology in Iraq, given that the earliest of civilizations still draws students to
the profession in universities around the globe. Nowhere is that more apparent than in Iraq itself, where hundreds of students take Mesopotamian archaeology and ancient languages as majors in more than a dozen universities.

The Oriental Institute, with its ability to make use not just of faculty but also of research associates, continues to have golden opportunities to adapt to changing conditions, mount innovative research projects quickly to seize those opportunities, and retain the ability, time, and institutional support to write up and publish the findings of such fieldwork.

FURTHER READING

Diyala

Preliminary Reports


Final Monographs


**Khorsabad**


**Nippur**


**Hamoukar**


**Survey**

ASSYRIOLOGY AND THE ASSYRIAN DICTIONARY

MARTHA T. ROTH

The Assyrian Dictionary of the University of Chicago, generally known as “The Chicago Assyrian Dictionary” or the “CAD,” came into existence in 1921 with the Oriental Institute’s founding, as part of James Henry Breasted’s capacious vision for the Institute that included archaeological field expeditions, expansion and installation of the museum, and ambitious lexical and philological projects, all with the intention of contributing to the rigorous scholarly recovery of the civilizations of the ancient Middle East. Breasted provided a survey of the CAD’s nineteenth-century precursors in his 1922 article, “The Oriental Institute—A Beginning and a Program”; almost all previous work on glossaries or dictionaries was undertaken by lone scholars and was limited in scope. But Breasted was inspired by the ambition, scale, and institutional backing for two great historical dictionary projects: the Oxford English Dictionary, supported by the British Philological Society beginning in 1857 and guided by the vision of its first editor James Murray; and the Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache, founded at the University of Berlin in 1897 by Breasted’s own professor, Johann Peter Adolf Erman. As historical dictionaries, these enterprises sought to collect the data (words or lemmata) as completely as possible, to place the citations of each lemma within its textual context (quoting appropriate semantic chunks from the written sources), and to determine the usages and nuanced meanings of the words by genre and period. Breasted furthermore recognized that to accomplish a comprehensive historical dictionary of Akkadian (the East Semitic language written in the cuneiform script, mostly on clay tablets recovered from archaeological excavations, with written sources spanning more than two millennia and documenting numerous Assyrian and Babylonian dialects) would take significant institutional commitment and the dedication of many scholars both in Chicago and collaborating from afar. The first scholar placed at the helm of the CAD was Daniel David Luckenbill, who began the essential task of deciphering and editing texts, and collecting and organizing the file cards in 1921; at the time of Luckenbill’s untimely death just a few years later, more than five hundred thousand file cards had been produced, organized, and filed under his direction.

Following Luckenbill’s death, Edward Chiera was called in 1927 from the University of Pennsylvania to take over the Assyriology program and the CAD, and a reinvigorated staff continued to produce, collect, and organize the dictionary card files. In 1930 the project moved to the newly constructed Oriental Institute building, to room 323, specially reinforced to support the weight of the file cabinets and books. The program of collecting citations continued apace until Chiera’s death in 1933 when the directorship of project was taken over by Arno Poebel, who had joined the University of Chicago in 1930 from the University of Rostock in Germany; Poebel led the project until his retirement in 1946.
Daniel David Luckenbill was born in Hamburg, Pennsylvania, the son of a Reformed Church minister. He studied at the University of Pennsylvania, earning his bachelor of arts in 1903, and remained there for three more years pursuing postgraduate work in Semitic languages under the tutelage of Albert Clay, Hermann Hilprecht, Morris Jastrow, and Hermann Ranke. After one year in Berlin furthering his study of Egyptology with Adolf Erman, Luckenbill came to the University of Chicago for the 1906–07 academic year to study Egyptology under James Henry Breasted and Assyriology under Robert Francis Harper. With the publication of “A Study of the Temple Documents from the Cassite Period” in *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 23, Luckenbill was awarded his doctorate from the University.

Breasted tasked Luckenbill with launching the first great lexicographic project to define the research agenda of the Oriental Institute. Both Breasted and Luckenbill had studied in Berlin with Adolf Erman, one of the founders of the *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache* (also known as the “Berlin Dictionary”), begun in 1897 at the Prussian Academy of Sciences; the Berlin Dictionary, whose volumes were published between 1926 and 1961, served as an explicit inspiration and model for the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary*. It may not be coincidence that the Berlin dictionary was financed also by John D. Rockefeller Jr. The lessons of the *Oxford English Dictionary* and the *Berlin Egyptian Dictionary* clearly showed that lexicographic projects could no longer be “the work of a single devoted scholar” but “must be expanded and carried on by a permanent office staff, assisted by group of outside collaborators” supported by clerical staff. Breasted outlined the work process in his “The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago: A Beginning and a Program,” and appointed Luckenbill “to take full charge of the entire dictionary project,” assisted by John A. (sometimes erroneously cited as “H.”) Maynard, graduate students and clerical staff, and three outside collaborators: Leroy Waterman (University of Michigan), S. A. B. Mercer (Western Theological Seminary), and Theophile J. Meek (Bryn Mawr College). Hoping to enlist additional collaboration from European scholars, Breasted made the first of many “ten-year predictions,” writing in 1922 that “eight to ten years of such progress as has already been made will probably be sufficient to bring [the Dictionary] near completion.”

Luckenbill shared Breasted’s vision for the Oriental Institute, and the two scholars planned their publications to further this vision. Luckenbill’s major publications included *The Annals of Sennacherib*, an edition of a six-sided prism detailing the military conquests of the Assyrian king; the prism was purchased for the Oriental Institute by Breasted in 1919, and published in 1924 as Oriental Institute Publications 2. His *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia* was published in two volumes in 1926 and 1927, explicitly as a complement to Breasted’s 1906 five-volume *Ancient Records of Egypt*.

Luckenbill married Florence Parker in 1914; they had no children. On a research trip to the British Museum in 1927, Luckenbill, who had always been a robust and tireless worker, complained of poor health. He died in London on June 5, 1927, a few weeks before his forty-sixth birthday, of an illness variously reported as either typhoid or scarlet fever. His early death—*ina īm la šīmātišu*—came as a blow to the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* and initiated the first reconceptualization and reorganization of the project under the next editor, Edward Chiera.
Following World War II, a significant reorganization of the project was undertaken by Ignace Jay Gelb, who had come to the University of Chicago in 1928 after earning his doctorate at the University of Rome, and who became editor-in-charge of the Dictionary in 1947, proposing a new “ten-year plan” for its completion. At that time, too, the University of Chicago—through the efforts of Gelb as CAD editor and of Thorkild Jacobsen as director of the Oriental Institute—secured appointments for accomplished scholars displaced by the war years, including: Benno Landsberger, who had been a CAD collaborator since 1932, working from Leipzig and then Ankara; A. Leo Oppenheim, from Vienna, Paris, and New York; and Erica Reiner, from Budapest and Paris. These three scholars were to prove decisive for the accomplishment of the project. Indeed, by the time they came to Chicago—Landsberger in 1948, Oppenheim in 1947, Reiner in 1952—although Gelb estimated that “over nine-tenths of all the Akkadian sources” had already been collected, there was still no publication in sight.

At this crucial juncture, with Landsberger’s arrival at the Oriental Institute, the Materialien zum Sumerischen Lexikon (MSL) project took on new importance. The first volume had been published by Landsberger in 1937, an edition of the Sumerian-Akkadian lexical series ana ittišu, a compendium of legal forms, terms, and clauses. This series and other native Mesopotamian lexical series provide crucial insights into how Mesopotamian scholars perceived, organized, and related to their material and cultural world. The editors of the CAD recognized that systematic editions and publications of all these series would be essential to the Dictionary, and Landsberger, one of the foremost Sumerologists of his generation, assumed responsibility for this publication project. The second volume appeared in 1951, followed by another sixteen volumes over the next thirty-five years, drawing on the in-house expertise and collaboration of Landsberger’s OI faculty colleagues including, in addition to those mentioned above, R. Biggs, M. Civil, H. G. Güterbock, R. Hallock, and A. Sachs, and visiting research associates A. Cavigneaux, I. Finkel, D. Kennedy, and M. Roth. MSL, a CAD “daughter project,” operated independently of the CAD and, after Landsberger’s retirement in 1955.
and death in 1968, responsibility for the MSL project was assumed by Miguel Civil.

In the early 1950s, before any volumes of the CAD were produced, Gelb was particularly concerned with establishing process rather more than with accomplishing the task. Reiner wrote of Gelb that his “interests lay more in the theoretical questions of lexicography and lexicology than in practical questions of dictionary-making. The latter he considered ‘a rather dry and rewardless undertaking.’” Indeed, Gelb composed memos and procedural manuals for both internal and external audiences, including memoranda on the establishment of scholarly standards for transliteration and transcription of Akkadian that were presented for discussion at scholarly meetings, and a 129-page “Standard Operating Procedure for the Assyrian Dictionary” (SOP) that was circulated in 1954, first to the in-house Assyriologists and then, when it failed to elicit meaningful comments within the Oriental Institute, to the international Assyriological community for comments and criticisms. The SOP was a product of Gelb’s structural linguistics training and presented his lexicographic insights and priorities, along with sample articles on the verb šaṭāru, “to write,” and eight derived lemmata. Gelb requested that feedback be given within three months. This pressing deadline, after thirty-three years of reference-gathering, may well have been due to ongoing tensions: internal conversations and disagreements among the Assyriologists resulted in the project being reorganized and the leadership taken from Gelb and given to A. Leo Oppenheim; an editorial board consisting of the senior scholars Gelb, Jacobsen, Landsberger, and Oppenheim was formed.

Oppenheim established a new protocol and pushed the team hard to realize the publication of the first volume, a push characterized by Landsberger (per Reiner) as a “mad rush” or “insane haste.” But as Reiner often stated, Oppenheim understood well that there had been enough discussion about the project, and that “the only way to actually produce a dictionary is to write it.” It was at this point in the early 1950s—some thirty years after the launch of the project and with the intense work of draft-writing, editing, and production of the first volume—that Erica Reiner’s narrative of the CAD becomes her own story, and in her Adventure of Great Dimensions she hints at the
internal strife, ego clashes, and jockeying for intellectual dominance that plagued the Dictionary in the 1950s and 1960s. Gelb resigned from the project at the end of 1954. The first volume, devoted to the words beginning with the letter Ḥ, was sent to press in October 1955 and the second volume, devoted to G, went to press in July 1956. The two volumes appeared within a few months of one another in 1956 and 1957—largely the work of Oppenheim and the junior members of the team, Erica Reiner, Richard Hallock, and Michael Rowton—and received harsh criticism, especially for inadequate citation checking. The third volume, E, became the focus of the feud between Jacobsen and Oppenheim—understandably so, given that the E volume included terms (such as ēnu and ēntu, “priest” and “priestess”; and ērsētu, “earth, nether world”) that were crucial to Jacobsen’s evolving positions on Mesopotamian religion, yet the volume was sent to press in August 1957 without Jacobsen’s systematic input.

Contributing to the post-war “insane haste” may well have been the competition from another project devoted to the Akkadian language, this one based on the data sets that had been assembled in Germany by Bruno Meissner at the University of Berlin. His files formed the basis of the Akkadisches Handwörterbuch (AHw) under the direction of Wolfram von Soden, who had earned his doctorate from Benno Landsberger at the University of Leipzig, and who held professorships after World War II—first at the University of Vienna and then Münster. Beginning in 1959 with the letter A, and continuing at regular intervals until 1981, sixteen fascicles were published and later bound into three volumes, totaling over 1,500 pages. The intention of the AHw, largely the work of a single scholar, was to assemble and organize the lexicon by citing and organizing references by semantic, historical, and grammatical criteria, but with minimal context. In the AHw, as Lambert observed, “[m]eaning, especially its more sophisticated aspects, is given little attention: the careful organization of passages serves as a guide through the material presented.” This left an obvious opening for the CAD, and Oppenheim stated that the CAD did not intend “to make an orderly though not always definitive presentation of the accumulated material” (Reiner), but rather, following Breasted’s vision, to be “a compendious encyclopaedia of the literal contents of Akkadian texts and, indirectly, of Mesopotamian civilizations” (Stolper). This intention to present interpretation and assessment—rather than simply organization—inevitably led to conflicts and ultimately to the departure of Thorkild Jacobsen, who had come to Chicago in 1928 as a research assistant on the CAD, earned his doctorate from the University of Chicago in 1929, and remained at the Oriental Institute as a faculty member, field epigrapher, director of the Oriental Institute (1946–50), and dean of the Humanities Division.

A series of faculty offers, appointments, and promotions fueled the feuding with Jacobsen and continued to roil the Dictionary and the Oriental Institute: in the spring of 1959, both Oppenheim and Reiner received offers from, respectively, Johns Hopkins University and Harvard University; Jacobsen resigned from the Editorial Board (1959); and successive OI directors found themselves having to defend the scholarly integrity of the Dictionary and of Leo Oppenheim and Erica Reiner against charges from Jacobsen—charges that were renewed after the publication of the fifth volume, I/J. Reiner quotes a letter from Landsberger to Jacobsen dating to February 1961: “I have felt justified in protecting two people—not from attack or constructive criticism but from a threat of extinction of a worthwhile project. . . . I cannot but suspect . . . that the truth [that is, the impetus for Jacobsen’s attacks] lies in the embers of a quarrel which was originally not concerned with the project itself.” After Reiner declined a second offer from Harvard in 1962, it was extended instead to Jacobsen who then left the University of Chicago. It remains unclear whether the “embers of a
Ignace Jay Gelb was born in what is now Tarnó, Poland, in 1907. Gelb studied at the University of Rome, earning his doctorate in 1929 under the direction of Semiticist G. Levi della Vida and Sumerologist A. Deimel. He came to the University of Chicago and the Oriental Institute in 1929 as a Travel Fellow. He married Hester Mokstad in 1939; they had two sons, Walter and John. Gelb joined the faculty in 1941 and was promoted to professor in 1947.

From 1944 to 1946, Gelb was on leave from the University and attached to the US Army, where his knowledge of the languages and history of Eastern Europe was of use in the preparations for the Nuremberg war crimes trials. He returned to Chicago and, after the retirement of Arno Poebel in 1946 (Poebel had been the editor-in-charge of the CAD since 1933), Gelb was named interim editor and then in 1947 editor-in-charge. He brought to the task an enormous interest in lexicography and linguistics, a detailed and organized mind, and a ten-year plan to complete the project. He actively pursued a collaboration with European colleagues Adam Falkenstein and Wolfram von Soden, who had revived a dictionary project begun by Bruno Meissner to coordinate the two projects: according to the 1950 “Marburg Agreement,” the German project the Akkadisches Handwörterbuch (AHw) was to be a one-volume work with comprehensive citations and minimal context, while the Chicago project was to be a multi-volume work that provided ample context and English translations and thus would be of utility to a wider range of scholars. The formal collaboration proved impractical, but the goodwill effort established the CAD as an international project. Gelb also secured in 1951 the imprimatur of the Union Académique Internationale (UAI) for the CAD. This affiliation was an important marker of the CAD’s standing when the project later earned funding in the 1970s from the National Endowment for the Humanities under Reiner’s leadership; and in the early 2000s, when Roth was the delegate to the UAI for the American Council of Learned Societies, it became clear that the CAD was one of the UAI’s exemplary long-term scholarly projects.

Differences among the senior scholars about the approach and direction for the CAD led Gelb to resign from the Dictionary board in 1954, although he continued to be a valuable colleague and resource to the team as well as a revered teacher and mentor, until his death in 1985. His “Introduction” to the CAD, published in 1965 in volume A/1, traces the history of the project from its beginnings in the basement of Haskell Museum and recounts his own intellectual story.


Gelb was recognized for his scholarly excellence by the University of Chicago with the assignment of the Frank P. Hixon Distinguished Service Professorship in 1965. He was elected to the American Philosophical Society (1975) and served as president of the American Oriental Society (1965–66).

Martha T. Roth
quarrel” referred to disagreements of a scholarly nature—Jacobsen was a “creative humanist with an intense personal vision of scholarship and its priorities” (Brinkman)—or to deep personal conflicts. Certainly, it was personal for Reiner: until Jacobsen’s death, Reiner chose to absent herself from the city when he was in Chicago, and she walked out of the banquet hall before Jacobsen delivered his presidential address to the 203rd annual meeting of the American Oriental Society, held in Chapel Hill in April 1993.

In the 1960s and 1970s a number of new collaborators joined the project as permanent faculty members, including Robert Biggs, John A. Brinkman, Miguel Civil (all arriving in 1963), and Hermann Hunger (arriving in 1970), and in the following decade Walter Farber (arriving in 1980, CAD Editorial Board member 1996), Martha Roth (arriving 1979), and Matthew Stolper (arriving in 1980). When I arrived in 1979 from the University of Pennsylvania, where I was a graduate assistant on the newly launched Pennsylvania Sumerian Dictionary, I came as a research associate with responsibilities to both the CAD and its daughter project, MSL. I expected to remain for one or two years and then, like many others, move on to another institution. I certainly never anticipated that I would spend the rest of my career at the University of Chicago and that one of my proudest accomplishments would be to see this extraordinary dictionary project to completion.

Oppenheim, who from 1955 to 1971 shepherded to publication twelve tomes (H, G, E, D, I/J, Z, Ṣ, A/1, B, A/2, K, L), had retired in 1972, leaving the Dictionary in the hands of Reiner, a fierce advocate for the project. Reiner secured the invaluable support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, whose funding from 1975 through 1993 was crucial in allowing the project to bring to Chicago dozens of junior and senior scholars from around the world. When Reiner retired in 1995 after overseeing the publication of ten more tomes (M/1, M/2, N/1, N/2, Q, S, Ṣ/1, Ṣ/2, Ṣ/3, T), I assumed the reins and responsibility for finishing the project. All the remaining letters (R, P, Ṭ, and U/W) had begun, and one by one they have moved through the pipeline of draft-writing, editing, citation-checking, proofing, and publication.
A. LEO OPPENHEIM
Project Director and Editor-in-Charge, Chicago Assyrian Dictionary (1995–73)

A. Leo Oppenheim (1904–74) was one of the most influential Assyriologists in the discipline’s still-formative years of the mid-twentieth century and, followed by Erica Reiner and Martha Roth, the first of the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary’s three editors-in-charge in the years of its publication. Born and raised in Vienna, Oppenheim was educated in the city’s university, initially in Hebrew and Semitics and ultimately in Assyriology, the field in which he took his PhD (1933). Despite post-graduate qualifications in ancient law and significant contributions to that and other areas, Oppenheim failed to obtain an academic position in his native land. Following the Anschluss, he found haven in Paris, though with the outbreak of war, his then-German nationality landed him in a French internment camp. Freed paradoxically by the German invasion, Oppenheim attempted to escape to the United States and barely managed to do so in the spring of 1941.

In his early years in the United States, Oppenheim took temporary work where he could find it, including at Johns Hopkins University as a substitute for W. F. Albright, whose position he was later offered to succeed. His scholarship from this period remained centered on Assyriology, though it included Hebrew lexicography as well. All the while he persisted in efforts to locate his parents and secure their release. Word of their death reached Oppenheim only after the war’s end.

In 1947 Oppenheim accepted the invitation that, according to family correspondence, had long been his dream: a position at the University of Chicago’s Oriental Institute intended to help revive that institution’s Chicago Assyrian Dictionary project (1921–2011). In the following decade the editorial team assembled under Oppenheim began publication of individual volumes; this team included Ignace J. Gelb, Thorkild Jacobsen, and Benno Landsberger—major figures in Assyriology and fellow European émigrés. Under his leadership ten of the dictionary’s twenty-one volumes were completed and published, and substantial portions of others were written as well.

Throughout his years at Chicago (retired 1973) Oppenheim also pursued his own research, which addressed an incomparably varied array of topics pertaining to Mesopotamian civilization; this work culminated in monographs on dream interpretation, beer brewing, and glassmaking, as well as often groundbreaking studies on international trade, fiscal practices, legal terminology, third-millennium seafaring, first-millennium history, prayers, rituals, astrology and astronomy, medicine, and more. Additional work from this period attests to a continued engagement with questions about Mesopotamia’s legacy in the broader Near East, in particular with respect to Israel and her writings.

Yet it was also during this time that Oppenheim penned his most influential work, Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization (1964; rev. ed. 1977), the title of which hints at a basic rupture between its subject matter and our modern experience. The work offers several basic parameters to its topic of study that have since been adopted in the discipline’s self-understanding; these, too, highlight an otherness to Mesopotamian civilization and echo its portrayal as ultimately irretrievable owing to its extinction. But a sense of Mesopotamia’s place in the broader ancient Near East is also witnessed in his Ancient Mesopotamia, which, paradoxically, is replete with references to non-native Mesopotamian sources with or against which Oppenheim strives to delineate his subject. The tension between these perspectives offers a sense of Mesopotamia as a world unto its own, the accurate rendering of which Oppenheim is, enigmatically, uniquely equipped to portray.

Abraham Winitzer

SELECTED OBITUARIES
ERICA REINER
Project Director and Editor-in-Charge, Chicago Assyrian Dictionary (1972–95)

Erica Reiner (1924–2005) was born in Budapest, Hungary, where she earned her Licence in 1948 in cuneiform and Semitics, studying with Antal Dávid at Pázmány Péter University. She then moved to Paris to study literature, linguistics, and Assyriology with Jean Nougayrol and Jean-Robert Kupper, earning her Diplôme from the École Pratique des Hautes Études in 1951. Reiner arrived at the University of Chicago in 1952 to work on the Assyrian Dictionary as a research assistant. She enrolled in the graduate program, earned her doctorate in 1955 with a study of the incantation series šurpu, and joined the faculty as a tenured associate professor in the Department of Oriental Languages and Literatures (later Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations) and the Department of Linguistics in 1959.

Reiner’s arrival at the Oriental Institute provided the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary with a dedicated, intelligent, and enthusiastic collaborator. A. Leo Oppenheim credited Reiner with providing the skills and drive that finally moved the project from the planning stage to the actual production of volumes. She worked tirelessly over the following five decades to maintain the requisite momentum and was involved in almost every aspect of producing every volume of the Dictionary, from H (1956) to U/W (2010). Although the CAD is without question Reiner’s greatest legacy to the field of ancient Near Eastern studies, her interests in linguistics, Elamite language, Babylonian literature, and ancient astronomy all resulted in incisive articles and monographs.

Reiner never married or had children. Raised in Budapest to a prominent Jewish family, she later passionately embraced Catholicism. She was known in Chicago for her lively dinner parties, permeated with Mitteleuropa sophistication, at which Nobel laureates and Pulitzer Prize winners in astronomy, law, medicine, and literature rubbed elbows with young Dictionary research associates and visiting collaborators.

Among the honors by which the University of Chicago recognized her scholarly distinction were the assignment of the John A. Wilson Distinguished Service Professorship (1973) and her selection to deliver the University’s prestigious Nora and Edward Ryerson Lecture (1980). External recognition came in the form of significant grants from the American Council of Learned Societies (1961) for her work in Elamite and from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation (1974) for her work on Babylonian planetary omens; elections to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (1976) and the American Philosophical Society (1982); the presidency of the American Oriental Society (1983–84); the presentation of a Festschrift (1987); honorary doctorates from the University of Pennsylvania (1987) and the University of Leiden (1990); and the award of the American Oriental Society Medal of Merit (2005).

Martha T. Roth
The single editorial vision that A. Leo Oppenheim successfully imposed on the project persisted for more than sixty years, continued by his successor Erica Reiner, and then passed on to me. At the same time, however, the imprint and intellectual insights of many of the more than ninety scholars who worked on the CAD can be discerned in individual articles. The project was enormous and absorbed the energies of generations of Assyriologists, and in turn the experience of working on the Dictionary influenced these scholars and their students.

All throughout the history of the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary project, the Oriental Institute faculty members pursued their own scholarly investigations alongside their collaborations on the CAD, and their teaching and University service responsibilities took more and more of their energies. Today (2019), the faculty includes scholars who could never imagine Assyriological research without the CAD: Susanne Paulus, Hervé Reculeau, John Wee, and Christopher Woods all began their studies of ancient Mesopotamia only after the AHw was fully published and when the final volumes of the CAD were on the horizon. They are now taking the Oriental Institute’s research agenda to its next ambitious iteration.

With the conclusion of the project in 2011, after a period of ninety years and with the labor of almost ninety scholars, the CAD stands as a realization of the University of Chicago’s intention to pursue enduring, foundational scholarship and to make discoveries of lasting impact. And the Assyriological faculty is no longer tied to a group project that was built on early twentieth-century lexicographic principles and unified by the force of powerful personalities. Instead, we pursue collaborative and individual projects on irrigation and climate impact, astronomy and mathematics, the history of writing systems, the economy, and socio-legal systems. None of us can imagine pursuing these interpretive studies without the foundation of the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary.

FURTHER READING
ROBERT JOHN BRAIDWOOD (1907–2003)  
AND LINDA SCHREIBER BRAIDWOOD (1909–2003)

Robert John Braidwood (allegedly the inspiration behind *Indiana Jones*) was a leading pioneer in prehistoric archaeology, transforming research methodology with the introduction of the notion of the testable hypotheses and investigating transitions in human cultural evolution through archaeological survey of entire regions. His introduction of an interdisciplinary team of specialists from the natural sciences in his work in the Middle East brought about a new set of standards for fieldwork. Yet the impact and significance of Braidwood in postwar archaeology goes beyond the Middle East. He not only transformed research methodology, but also the Oriental Institute’s character and identity.

Braidwood was born July 29, 1907 in Detroit, Michigan, to Walter John Braidwood and Reay Nimmo. As a boy, Bob Braidwood worked in his father’s pharmacy after school and held occasional part-time jobs at a grocery store and a bank. He was educated at the University of Michigan, receiving first a degree in architecture in 1929 and, after returning for more studies, a bachelor’s and master’s in ancient history and anthropology in 1933. While enrolled at Michigan, Braidwood served as an architectural surveyor for the University’s excavations at the Parthian site of Tell Umar (ancient Seleucia-on-the-Tigris), directed by Leroy Waterman. Within a year of graduating, he was hired by James Henry Breasted to join the Oriental Institute’s expedition to the Amuq Plain in northern Syria. Braidwood served as a field assistant until 1938, when the geopolitical situation in the region prevented the continuation of the project. From his work in the Amuq, Braidwood developed a sequence of twenty-two levels of material culture, labeled Phases A through V from the earliest to the most recent, based on discoveries from several Amuq sites spanning more than nine thousand years. Archaeologists still use this sequence today to date archaeological contexts and interpret material culture for Anatolia, the Levant, and northern Mesopotamia.

When Braidwood was returning by steamship to the United States in 1936, he met someone he had first encountered during his undergraduate days at the University of Michigan: a young woman named Linda Schreiber, who was working as a buyer for a large downtown Chicago department store. After marrying in January of 1937, they carried out some fieldwork in the Middle East before returning to graduate studies at the University of Chicago, which they continued throughout World War II. Robert was also in charge of a meteorological mapping program for the Army Air Corps. In 1943 Braidwood received his PhD under the supervision of Henri Frankfort and immediately joined the faculties of the Oriental Institute and Department of Anthropology.
A collaboration that began in 1947 between Braidwood and Willard Libby at the University of Chicago led to the invention of 14C-carbon-dating using archaeological samples from OI excavations; Braidwood would continue to use this method for dating materials at his prehistoric sites. That same year the Braidwoods established the Prehistoric Project at the OI, driven by their combined interest in the time—about ten thousand years ago—when early inhabitants of the Near East made the revolutionary transition from a hunter-gatherer way of life to sedentary food production in the region surrounding the Mesopotamian Plain. The Braidwoods began their fieldwork at Jarmo, a site in northern Iraq. From 1948 to 1952, Robert Braidwood led an innovative prehistoric project at the site that employed an interdisciplinary team of archaeologists, including botanists, zoologists, agronomists, geologists, and survey personnel. Together, the team sought to investigate the origins of domestication of plants and animals and the transition from hunting
“The legacy of Robert Braidwood lives on in his publications, including countless articles and a book entitled *Prehistoric Men*, and the generations of archaeologists whom he has inspired with his passion for discovery and exploration.”

and gathering to settled village life. This use of scientific method in archaeology was new. This was also the first archaeological project ever supported by the National Science Foundation. Braidwood’s program, known as the Jarmo Project, has inspired thousands of similar projects worldwide, in which environment and archaeology are intertwined.

Work at Jarmo came to an end in 1958 when the commander of the Iraqi Army, General Abd al-Karim Qasim, staged a coup d’état and toppled the monarchy. The chaos that followed the revolution made the continuation of the Oriental Institute Prehistoric Project untenable. A chance meeting with Ezat Negahban—a graduate of the University of Chicago—at the International Congress of Prehistoric Archaeology in Hamburg, Germany, set the stage for the Braidwoods to continue their research in the Zagros Mountains of Iran. In 1959, the interdisciplinary team of the Jarmo Project moved operations across the border to Iran and became the Iranian Prehistoric Project, which is still in operation at the Oriental Institute to this day.

Braidwood was the first archaeologist to initiate systematic and scientific research in early Neolithic archaeology in Iran, making numerous major contributions in theory, methodology, and empirical data that set the course of Iranian prehistoric archaeology. In the 1959–60 season, the team carried out excavations at the rock shelter of Warwasi, and at two open sites of Tepe Asiab and Tepe Sarab. Other groundbreaking research by the Iranian Prehistoric Project included ethnoarchaeological research conducted by Patty Jo Watson at several contemporary villages in the region and a very important palynological study at lakes in the Zagros Mountains by another team member, Herbert Wright, that resulted in radically altering the understanding of Holocene climate and environment in the entire Middle East. When Braidwood left Iran in 1960, Frank Hole and Kent Flannery, graduates of the University of Chicago, initiated their own research in the Deh Luran valley of southwestern Iran.

Next, the Braidwoods began the Joint Prehistoric Project with Professor Halet Çambel of Istanbul University, which focused on the early Neolithic site of Çayönü in southeastern Turkey. The excavations at Çayönü constitute the culmination of the Braidwoods’ long and distinguished investigations into the origins of agriculture and animal husbandry in the ancient Middle East. Some of the most notable finds at Çayönü include evidence of early copper metallurgy and terrazzo technology, as well as cold-hammered copper tools, domesticated flax, and some of the earliest textile. The Braidwoods’ last season was in 1989.

The legacy of Robert Braidwood lives on in his publications, including countless articles and a book entitled *Prehistoric Men*, and the generations of archaeologists whom he has inspired with his passion for discovery and exploration. Robert Braidwood died on January 15, 2003 in the University of Chicago Hospitals at age ninety-five; his wife and lifetime companion and colleague, Linda, died the same day. They are survived by a daughter, Gretel Braidwood; a son, Douglas Braidwood; and two grandsons and one granddaughter.

*Abbas Alizadeh & Kiersten Neumann*
After the Oriental Institute initiated large-scale, long-term archaeological projects in Egypt and around the arc of the “fertile crescent,” the term Breasted had coined to designate the areas where the oldest complex literate societies of Western Asia had arisen, Breasted and his colleagues paid increasing attention to opportunities in what he called “the highland zone” adjoining the fertile crescent. The eastern territory of the highland zone became accessible to his ambitions when the French monopoly on archaeological excavation in Iran ended in 1927.

The OI’s research in and on ancient Iran falls into three periods: interwar, 1931–39; postwar, 1945–78; and post-revolutionary, 1979 to the present. These periods are bounded by political and economic conditions, but they are also marked by changing intellectual, methodological, legal, and ethical conditions that affected American academic research in general, the mission and structure of the Oriental Institute as a whole, and its research on ancient Iran in particular.

INTERWAR
Ernst Emil Herzfeld had been one of the advisers who shaped the new Iranian antiquities law that went into effect in early 1931. By then, the bleak conditions of the Great Depression had dampened even Breasted’s soaring hopes, so he asked Herzfeld to apply on the OI’s behalf for only an option on a concession to begin archaeological work at Persepolis. Herzfeld obtained not an option but an actual concession. Breasted received funding from Mrs. William H. Moore, though she chose to remain anonymous at the time, and the Persian Expedition of the OI began to excavate under Herzfeld’s direction in the spring of 1931.
ERNST EMIL HERZFELD

Ernst Herzfeld was the first archaeologist with links to the OI who worked in Iran. A brilliant scholar and a tireless renaissance man, he changed the course of Iranian archaeology from a parochial, Susa-oriented, French-dominated field to an important arena for international research. In many of his publications, his mastery of Latin, Greek, Arabic, Persian, Syriac, and cuneiform sources is evident.

When Herzfeld finally received permission to work at Persepolis, because of the economic crisis neither any German institution nor the University of Pennsylvania Museum was able to support him. Undaunted, Herzfeld contacted Breasted, with whom he had already discussed his plans in 1928. Breasted accepted his plans and Herzfeld became director of the OI Persepolis excavations in March 1931. That was the first OI archaeological expedition in Iran. Other American institutions also took advantage of the new opportunity. In the same year, the University of Pennsylvania launched its first expedition at Tepe Hissar under the direction of Erich F. Schmidt, and the Atkins Museum of Kansas City started excavations at Tureng Tepe under Frederick Wulsin. Herzfeld was born on July 23, 1879, in Celle, Germany. His father was a medical doctor and major in the Prussian army. Herzfeld received his high school diploma in Berlin in 1897. Following a year of military service, he studied architecture at the Technical University in Berlin, and later Assyriology, art history, and philosophy at the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Berlin. His first fieldwork was at Assur as an assistant to Walter Andrae. After the excavations, he visited Iran for the first time in 1906. On his return to Berlin, he submitted a PhD dissertation on Pasargadae in 1907.

At the outbreak of World War I, Herzfeld was drafted and stationed first in France and then in Poland. On his request he was sent to Mesopotamia, where he worked as surveyor, mapping the province of Mosul. In 1917, while still there, he was appointed associate professor for Historical Geography and Art History of the Ancient Orient at the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität. In 1920, he was promoted to become the first full professor of Middle Eastern archaeology in the world.

In 1917, in collaboration with, among others, members of the Iranian Embassy in Berlin, Herzfeld founded the German-Persian Society. In 1923, despite the French monopoly, and with the aid of local Iranian dignitaries, he surveyed and excavated at Pasargadae. In 1928 he undertook the first major excavation there. He was commissioned to describe the condition of Persepolis and to make plans for its restoration, a report he published in German and Persian in a report published in 1929–30 in Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran 1.
Herzfeld’s exploration and description of important archaeological sites in Iran such as Bisotun, Rayy, Tepe Giyan, Nishapur, and Tepe Hissar served as a major guideline for future archaeological research in Iran once the French monopoly was lifted in 1927. Early in 1934, despite the previous friendly relations between Iran and Germany, the accusation that Herzfeld used his diplomatic passport for illicit export of archaeological and art objects—along with the removal of his government supporters—exacerbated the situation. Herzfeld was dismissed by Breasted from his directorship at Persepolis and had to leave Iran.

In November 1934, Herzfeld went to London to deliver the Schweich Lectures (published in 1936 as *Archaeological History of Iran*) and never returned to Iran. When he came to America at the end of 1934, colleagues at New York University and the Princeton Institute for Advanced Studies, along with the emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced German Scholars, strove to arrange a new academic appointment for him. In the autumn of 1936, he gave the Lowell lectures in Boston (published in 1941 as *Iran and the Ancient East*) and took up a professorship in the School of Humanistic Studies at Princeton, while teaching at the Institute of Fine Arts at NYU. The wide-ranging contents of his London and Boston lectures include the extensive publication of his work at Persepolis under OI auspices. He retired from Princeton in 1944 at the age of sixty-five and sold most of his library to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. In 1947 he published two volumes on Zoroastrianism as *Zoroaster and his World*. His latest work concerned Islamic architecture of Damascus and Aleppo. While working on these manuscripts in Cairo in 1947, he fell ill and went to Basel, Switzerland, for medical care. He died there on January 20, 1948. His papers were donated to the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, and have been used by many scholars.

Herzfeld can be justly considered one of the last examples of the all-encompassing, erudite learning of the nineteenth century humanistic cultural tradition. Although trained as an architect and appointed professor for historical geography and art history, he also translated and published new texts and inscriptions in Akkadian, Elamite, Old Persian, Middle Persian, and Arabic. He was instrumental in establishing the field of Islamic art history, but also made major contributions to study of the history and culture of the Neolithic, Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sasanian periods. Herzfeld was also the first to address the semiotic significance of prehistoric art represented in the painted pottery and stamp seals. His most lasting achievement, nevertheless, was the opening of Iran for archaeological research.
ABOVE: Breasted and Herzfeld at Persepolis (N. 12882).
The focus of the Expedition was the great terrace of Takht-e Jamshid, Perseopolis (as it was called in Greek), Pārsa (as it was called in Old Persian). Darius I began to build the complex of palaces, ceremonial buildings, and structures housing support facilities in about 518 BC. Darius’s Achaemenid successors completed, extended, maintained, and renovated the complex, and Alexander III of Macedon sacked and destroyed it in 330 BC.

In the views of Breasted and Herzfeld, the Achaemenid Persian Empire was the final synthesis of ancient Middle Eastern civilizations, the hinge that connected the mission of the OI to the established history of western civilization. In Iran, even before the nationalistic climate of the early Pahlavi regime, Persepolis was the emblem of continuity with a triumphant past. Herzfeld had passionately urged for the excavation and conservation of Persepolis as one of the foremost desiderata of ancient Middle Eastern studies. By the end of the last season of the OI’s work, the structures on the terrace had been cleared. Almost the entire plan of Persepolis as it is seen today is the result of these excavations. Extended clearance and restoration, continuing to the present, builds on this work.

Early results were spectacular. As Herzfeld foresaw, the rubble accumulated during and after the destruction of the site preserved an array of architectural relief sculptures in nearly perfect condition and in undisturbed arrangement. The Apadana reliefs that Herzfeld cleared in 1932 became the foremost corpus of Achaemenid monumental art. As Herzfeld’s architect Friedrich Krefter recognized, undisturbed foundation deposits were to be found under the buried corners of the Apadana. In 1933 they yielded gold and silver tablets with trilingual inscriptions of Darius I. No one had anticipated that tens of thousands of Achaemenid administrative records on clay tablets and fragments were to be found in a salient of the fortification wall around the site, where they were unearthed earlier in 1933.

Krefter’s name is inseparably associated with Persepolis as an architect, excavator, and researcher for much of his life. As Herzfeld’s assistant, he was responsible for the reconstruction of the ruins at Persepolis. He had already worked under Herzfeld at Pasargadae in 1928. In 1931, when Herzfeld began his excavations at Persepolis, Krefter rejoined him. It was Krefter who reconstructed the so-called Harem, one of the Persepolis buildings, in its entirety, bringing
stout poplar trees from near Isfahan for the rafters. This building was used from 1933 on as the expedition living quarters, workshops, offices, and museum. His discovery of the gold and silver tablets during Herzfeld’s absence from the site in 1933 led to a personal rift between Krefter and Herzfeld that never healed. Still, while Krefter was a junior officer stationed in Normandy before the Allied landings in 1944, he drafted the dissertation on architectural style at Persepolis that he and Herzfeld had discussed at the site; events overtook Krefter, and the dissertation was never submitted.

During Herzfeld’s tenure at Persepolis, Breasted had also hired Alexander Langsdorff. A German like Herzfeld and Krefter, he was assigned to assist Herzfeld in excavations at the prehistoric site of Tall-e Bakun A, near Persepolis, where Herzfeld had already dug a test trench as early as 1928. Langsdorff’s use of the stratigraphic method, then a novelty in Middle Eastern archaeology, and his meticulous recording of objects and potsherds with exact provenance and elevation, are evident in the final publication of the site. It was because of Langsdorff’s recording of details of stratigraphy that forty-five years after the excavations at Tall-e Bakun, the OI’s Abbas Alizadeh was able to reconstruct the spatial distribution of the door sealings and certain sophisticated painted pottery within this prehistoric settlement.

Langsdorff was assisted by Donald E. McCown, a student of A. T. Olmstead and Henri Frankfort at Chicago. He had an excellent artistic appreciation for prehistoric painted pottery; his description and analysis of the Bakun painted pottery is still unparalleled in its deep understanding and accuracy. When the Persian Expedition ended in 1939, McCown returned to Chicago and earned an MA and a PhD in 1941. For his dissertation, he used his field experience in Iran and his knowledge of the results of Iranian archaeology to produce the first comprehensive comparative stratigraphy of Iran from prehistoric times to the Akkadian period. In the following year he became a faculty member of the OI and of what was then called the Department of Oriental Languages in the Division of the Humanities.

The discoveries at Persepolis, like those of the other great interwar archaeological projects in Mesopotamia and Egypt, were international news, reported in the Illustrated London News, the Times of London, the New York Times, Time magazine, the Scientific American, and newspapers in Chicago and Berlin. The site became a destination for a new class of European travelers for whom the modern automobile made the Middle East accessible. Persepolis was glamorous; as John A. Wilson, Breasted’s successor as director of the OI put it, “a public relation man’s dream.”

In 1934, however, the Persian Expedition passed through a crisis. The new antiquities law included provisions for the division of finds between foreign institutions sponsoring excavations and the archaeological and antiqu-
uities services of Iran. Iranian ministries held that both the OI’s original conces-
sion of 1930, which had been limited to clearance, restoration, and preservation,
and the revision of the concession in late 1931, which authorized archaeological
explorations within a 10-kilometer radius around Persepolis, exempted discoveries
at Persepolis from such division. Breasted, Herzfeld, and the American diplomats in
Iran acting on behalf of the OI insisted otherwise, demanding what they considered
an equitable return for their efforts, expenses, expertise, and success. After months
of tense negotiations, reluctant Persian ministries conceded, and a first division
took place in December 1934.

Herzfeld, however, fell victim to the negotiations. He was a man of vast knowl-
edge and strong opinion and he had a knack for creating enmity among rivals and
colleagues alike. As a consequence, he had strained relations with practically ev-
erybody, from his teachers and academic colleagues to agencies of the Pahlavi gov-
ernment. When he was accused of sending antiquities out of the country illegally, a charge that he
denied and that seems in modern perspective to have been a pretext, the government of Iran told
the OI that although he would not be declared persona non grata, he must be relieved of his post as the
head of the Persian Expedition. The OI complied but announced it was “retaining him without field
duties to publish the results of his successful campaigns at Persepolis and the neighboring sites.”
Friedrich Krefter took over direction of the Persepolis excavations during the 1934 season, cospon-
sored with the OI by the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the University of Pennsylvania Museum.

The Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the University of Pennsylvania Museum also sponsored
excavations at Rayy that began in 1934 under the direction of Erich Schmidt, whom OI director John
A. Wilson later remembered as “a meticulous craftsman . . . a curious combination of the methodical
German worker and the highly emotional romantic.” Schmidt took over as director of the Persepolis
excavations in 1935.
ERICH F. SCHMIDT

Erich F. Schmidt was born in 1897 in the province of Baden-Baden, Germany, to Frida Loeffler Schmidt and Erhard Friedrich Schmidt, a university professor and a Lutheran clergyman who died when Erich was ten years old. When he graduated as a lieutenant from the military school in Karlsruhe, Schmidt fought in World War I on the eastern front.

In 1916 he was wounded and captured in Galicia by the Russians, who sent him to a Siberian prison camp. He escaped in 1920 and found his way back to Germany where he learned that his mother and three siblings had died. Schmidt left the army and from 1921 to 1923 he studied political science at Berlin’s Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, where he became interested in archaeology and ethnography. In December 1923 he came to America and studied at Columbia University as a student of the great anthropologist Franz Boas. His archaeological career began in 1925 when he became a staff member of the American Museum of Natural History that supported his excavations at Pueblo Grande and La Ciudad, two Hohokam sites in Arizona, the results of which became the basis of his doctoral dissertation. In an era when most archaeologists still had object-oriented approaches to archaeological sites, Schmidt’s approach was informed and oriented by his anthropological training at Columbia University, where he had learned to apply scientific methods to the study of human culture and societies with an emphasis on a contextual approach.

Schmidt’s reputation as a meticulous field archaeologist reached Breasted, who in 1927 invited him to join the OI Anatolia-Hittite Expedition as an assistant archaeologist to, and later codirector with, Hans Henning von der Osten at Alişar Höyük (see the chapter on Anatolia). After excavating in 1931 and 1932 at Tepe Hissar near the city of Damghan, 360 kilometers east of Tehran in northeastern Iran and at the Early Dynastic site of Fara (ancient Shuruppak) in Mesopotamia, both under the auspices of the University of Pennsylvania, Schmidt directed the OI expedition to Persepolis from 1935 to 1939.

To give an idea of Schmidt’s level of organization, discipline, and energy, suffice it to mention that while he was directing the excavations at Persepolis he was also excavating the prehistoric and Sasanian/Islamic site of Cheshme Ali/Rayy near Tehran from 1934 to 1936 and, after 1936, conducting excavations at Surkh Dum Luri in the Zagros Mountains, as well as his aerial survey over Iran. Amid all these activities, after he
excavated Tall-e Bakun A and B (with Donald McCown) he left Iran at the end of July 1937 to be naturalized in the States, a process that had been delayed because of his responsibilities in the field.

Between 1935 and 1937, with photographer Boris Dubensky, he conducted the first extensive and systematic aerial survey in the Middle East over western, southern, and northeastern Iran with a Waco biplane purchased by his first wife, Mary-Helen Warden, christened *Friend of Iran*, and eventually donated to the government of Iran in 1939. When Mary-Helen gave Schmidt the airplane, she made a significant contribution to archaeology. Mary-Helen accompanied Schmidt in his surveys and excavations at Persepolis, Rayy, and Luristan, managing the camp and restoring pottery. She also cared for Schmidt’s health when he contracted malaria at the Persepolis dig house.

Schmidt also befriended key politicians and bureaucrats in the Iranian government who paved the way for his numerous projects despite the turbulent American-Iranian relationship, and despite stiff resistance of some government officials in permitting the import of his plane. To ameliorate the situation, then-Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Foroughi advised Schmidt to host Reza Shah and the crown prince at Persepolis.

Schmidt fostered Breasted’s view that historical sites and periods cannot be satisfactorily understood in isolation, and that one must study history and archaeology in a wide chronological and geographical context. It was this understanding that spurred him to explore prehistoric and historic sites in many regions of Iran. Upon return to Chicago in 1939 he worked on publishing his work resulting in the beautifully illustrated *Flights over Ancient Cities of Iran* (1940), and the three monumental volumes on Persepolis (1953, 1957, and 1970).

These publications earned him an associate professorship at the University of Chicago in 1954 and full professorship in 1962, when he left his house on Kimbark Avenue in Hyde Park and moved to Santa Barbara, California. He died there on October 3, 1964, at the age of sixty-seven; his ashes were buried in Ottawa, Illinois.
By the late 1930s, the Chicago archaeologists were finding Iran to be an inhospitable place. By 1939, the OI’s deteriorating relations with Iranian authorities led OI Director Wilson to give notice that the Persian Expedition would end. The final season of the excavation at Persepolis took place under the ominous conditions that followed the German occupation of the Sudetenland. By the time Schmidt left Persepolis in October 1939, the invasion of Poland had begun World War II. The US was not yet a combatant, but the war ended all OI fieldwork for the duration.

As was true of all of the OI’s early expeditions, the amount of raw data that had been accumulated by the Persian Expedition was staggering, and the preliminary announcements promised transformative results, but the reality behind what Breasted described as “efficient and scientific field expeditions . . . associated with the home staff of philologists and historians” was not balanced. Fifteen years after the interruption of large-scale fieldwork, OI Director Carl Kraeling remarked in his annual report, “the printer [was] still catching up with the spade.”

Brief reports of the Persian Expedition’s work in some journals nominally discharged an academic duty, but included few illustrations and no detail, so they lacked the impact and even the archaeological value of contemporary newspaper and magazine notices. In 1939, Schmidt’s preface to his substantial preliminary report on the work of the Persian Expedition summarized Herzfeld’s work on the terrace but did not describe or illustrate it. The report focused on the main area of the terrace explored under his own direction, the Treasury, but he also gave extensive accounts of work at Naqsh-e Rostam, Tall-e Bakun A and B, and Istakhr, and summaries of his aerial survey of the Marv Dasht. In 1942, the OI published the first nominally final report of the Persian Expedition, Langsdorff and McCown’s monograph on Bakun.

The “home staff” of philologists began to report on some of the Persepolis texts with exemplary speed, venturing first observations without full comprehension. The Assyriologist Arno Poebel organized a team to work on the Persepolis Fortification tablets and published two prompt articles on their chronology, the latter soon corrected by junior members of his team, George G. Cameron and Richard T. Hallock. Especially remarkable for detail and promptness (though now all but forgotten) were the extensive reports that Martin Sprengling published about the Sasanian inscriptions on the Ka’aba-ye Zardusht: two on the Middle Persian version of the Shapur inscription cleared in 1936; one on the Kartir inscription; and three on the Shapur trilingual, cleared in 1939.

The most imposing of the Persian Expedition’s early publications, however, was not the outcome of excavation or philology. It is the sumptuous folio publication of photographs made by what Schmidt dubbed the “Aeronautical Department,” including not only aerial imagery of Persepolis and its surroundings, but of sites, buildings, and environments of northeastern, northwestern, and west central Iran as well.

POSTWAR

This is where the work of the Persian Expedition stood when the war disrupted every aspect of American life. At the end of World War II, the prosperity and political reach of the US were even greater than they had been after World War I, but the conditions of 1945 did not foster the ongoing work of the OI as well as the conditions of 1919 had favored its creation. As American universities and American research underwent deep changes in the postwar period, the very existence of the OI was precarious.

“As was true of all of the OI’s early expeditions, the amount of raw data that had been accumulated by the Persian Expedition was staggering . . . OI Director Carl Kraeling remarked in his annual report, ‘the printer [was] still catching up with the spade.’”
George Glenn Cameron treated the smaller of the Achaemenid Elamite administrative archives, the Persepolis Treasury Archive, in an OI publication in 1948. Cameron was born in Washington, Pennsylvania in 1905. After graduating from William Rainey Harper’s alma mater, Muskingum College—from which Cameron also received an honorary degree in 1952—he came to the Oriental Institute in 1929 to study with historian Albert Ten Eyck Olmstead and received his PhD in 1932.

The University of Chicago Press published a revised and expanded version of his dissertation in 1936 as The History of Early Iran, treating the written record of pre-Achaemenid Iran and especially the Elamite world. Notwithstanding the faint praise of a promotion review that considered it “the bones of history” but lacking “synthesis,” the University of Chicago Press reprinted it in 1958 and again in 1975. It merited such durability. Its economy of method, its subdued style, its careful setting of the geographical stage, its avoidance of the fanciful notions attached to many key texts by their earliest editors, and its compelling narrative order made it the framework on which most later research on the written record of early Iran built.

For his dissertation, Cameron began to compile a glossary of known Elamite texts, a crucial tool for the team that took up work on the Elamite tablets brought back from Persepolis after 1936 and for Cameron’s work on the tablets and inscriptions at the site and at the new National Museum of Iran during and after the final season of the Persian Expedition in 1939.

Cameron often questioned his own methods and insights, seeking collaboration, critique, and corroboration, but in most of the work that led to his publication of the Persepolis Treasury Archive in 1948 he was cut off by World War II—not only from senior European scholars but also from American contemporaries who had left academe for national service. Nevertheless, the editions of the Treasury texts opened a new stage of Elamite and Old Iranian language study, and the introductory essays opened a new source on Achaemenid Persian history, institutions, economy, and religion.

Between 1941 and 1948, as first editor of the newly reorganized Journal of Near Eastern Studies, Cameron worked closely with Roland G. Kent of the University of Pennsylvania to incorporate
findings from Persepolis in new editions of the Old Persian versions of Achaemenid royal inscriptions. These were incorporated in Kent’s authoritative grammar and compendium of Old Persian texts and were the basis for Cameron’s summaries in Erich Schmidt’s final publications of the Persepolis excavations.

In 1948, Cameron left the Oriental Institute to become the first chairman and sole professor of a newly constituted Department of Near Eastern Languages and Literatures at the University of Michigan. He was to continue as chairman for twenty-one years, presiding over a department that grew to a faculty of seventeen. Before he took up this post he went to Iran for his most dramatic project, retracing the steps of Henry Rawlinson at the monument of Darius I on the cliff at Bisotun, in western Iran, the font from which knowledge of cuneiform writing and of Achaemenid inscriptions rose. Working from a painter’s scaffold, he checked the unpublished early Elamite version, collated all three versions, checked proposed readings and emendations, tried to remove incrustations that obscured some passages, and made latex squeezes. He made several more visits to the monument in the following years, taking a new latex squeeze of the Babylonian version in 1957.

The dramatic appeal of this work brought him celebrity, honors, and academic stature, and Bisotun became as much the hallmark of his standing in the study of ancient Iran as Persepolis had been. The eventual result, however, was not the new synoptic edition that many hoped for, but a series of concise articles, contributions to Roland Kent’s edition, a circular letter among Iranist colleagues organizing debate on problematic passages, and a full edition of the Babylonian version by his student Elizabeth von Voigtlander published shortly before Cameron’s death at his home in Ann Arbor in 1979. His groundbreaking work on the Persepolis Treasury Archive awaits full reedition and reinterpretation in the light of new knowledge of the Persepolis Fortification Archive produced by his early colleague Hallock, and by Hallock’s successors.
Still, even before the resumption of its archaeological work in Iran, the OI continued to publish the results of the Persian Expedition.

In 1939, Erich Schmidt had promised not to postpone the final publications, but not to rush them either. The first two volumes of his final report of the excavation appeared in 1953 and 1957. The third volume, substantially complete when Schmidt died, appeared in 1970. Their contents were hampered by the lack of information from Herzfeld, but drawings and photographs were published with sumptuous quality in large format.

Some of the results of Herzfeld’s work came into print at last long after Herzfeld’s death, and still without the OI’s direct participation, when Friedrich Krefter, the last survivor of the original Persian Expedition, published detailed observations on the architecture of the terrace along with suggested reconstructions of the buildings.

Far less grand was Martin Sprengling’s final version of the Shapur and Kartir inscriptions from Naqsh-e Rostam. The trilingual *res gestae* of Shapur was unquestionably the most important historical inscription from Iran since the Bisotun trilingual of Darius I, yet Sprengling’s work was published not in the fine letterpress form of the Oriental Institute Publications series, but as a Roneotype facsimile of a typescript. The parentage of this orphan of the publishing storm is barely acknowledged on the title page with the phrase “Prepared and distributed at the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago.” Antipathy to Sprengling’s pro-German views had forced his resignation as editor of the *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* in 1940. Citing an article by Albert T. Olmstead, who had been dead
Albert Ten Eyck Olmstead was not a specialist on Iran, but no OI scholar has had a wider effect on knowledge of ancient Iran than Olmstead. His History of the Persian Empire, edited by his student George Cameron and published posthumously in 1948 by the University of Chicago Press, sold out printing after printing for decades, and it is still available via print-on-demand. It was published with a blurb by Michael Rostovtzeff, the greatest ancient historian of the day, was received as the authoritative history of the Achaemenid Empire, and is still widely read years after being rendered out of date by (among other things) ongoing OI research on Achaemenid Iran.

Olmstead was born in 1880, in Troy, New York, and educated at Cornell University. He held faculty positions at the University of Missouri and the University of Illinois before Breasted recruited him for the Oriental Institute. He came to Breasted’s attention by championing the idea, also fostered by Breasted, that the description, analysis and narration of ancient Middle Eastern history ought not to be stepchildren of philology, but products of historical methods. At a time when histories were sometimes uncritical pastiches of royal inscriptions, Olmstead promoted text criticism and source criticism again and again, from his 1908 dissertation on Western Asia in the time of Sargon of Assyria, through his influential 1916 monograph on Assyrian historiography, to personal reflections in an address on “Problems of Attitude and of Method” in 1943. In 1910 he was one of the group that founded a section on ancient history in the American Historical Association. His histories of Assyria (1923) and of Palestine and Syria (1931) were explicitly modeled on Breasted’s History of Ancient Egypt in their aim to bring ancient civilizations to life as histories in their own terms and in the widest context of the ancient Middle East.

The History of the Persian Empire was the last published example of this effort. Its larger agenda is evinced most stirringly in the book’s first sentences: “When Cyrus the Great entered Babylon in 539 BC, the world was old. More importantly, the world was aware of its antiquity.” Despite his avowed intent to present the Persian empire from the Persian point of view, however, Olmstead was obliged to draw on Greek and Latin literary histories for his narrative framework. The sections on Persepolis showcased the discoveries of the Persian Expedition, still mostly unpublished when he wrote, sometimes with startling insight.
for five years, Sprengling’s preface hints broadly at ongoing intramural professional hostility that must have contributed to this embarrassing treatment of one of the Persian Expedition’s greatest discoveries.

An important part of the unpublished balance consisted of texts in several languages. Herzfeld and others had published many of the Achaemenid royal inscriptions from Persepolis soon after they were discovered. Cameron and Schmidt had made their photographs and notes available to Roland G. Kent for use in his edition of the entire corpus of the Old Persian versions of the royal inscriptions. Kent’s publication stood for decades as the definitive edition of the Old Persian corpus, to such an extent that it was sometimes perceived as a definitive publication of all the Achaemenid royal inscriptions from Persepolis. Schmidt’s final publications included high-quality photographs of all the versions—Old Persian, Elamite, and Babylonian—accompanied by Cameron’s translations. By the time these volumes came out, no separate synoptic edition of the royal inscriptions was evidently thought to be needed, and none has yet been published. The long pre-Achaemenid Elamite inscription on a bronze plaque excavated in the Treasury resisted comprehension, and no full edition has yet been published. After conservation at the OI in 1940, the plaque was sent to the Iranian embassy in 1942 for return to Iran.

The tens of thousands of tablets of the Persepolis Fortification Archive discovered in 1933 had been on loan to Chicago since 1936, but the war had broken up the team that Poebel had formed to study them, and it fell to Richard Hallock to resume the work.

The work of Raymond A. Bowman on another unparalleled corpus from Persepolis was less fortunate. His treatment of the inked Aramaic texts on more than 200 stone mortars, pestles, and other implements that had been discovered in the Treasury, published in 1970, received scathing reviews and met with general rejection of its main interpretations.

The entire scope of the Persian Expedition’s fieldwork was displayed in 1976 when the OI released an experimental publication of 999 photographs compiled by OI photographer Ursula Wolf Schneider on 4 x 6 inch microfiches with eighty-four images each, accompanied by a printed introduction and catalog. Included were photographs of excavations, structures, and finds from Persepolis, Naqsh-e Rostam, Tall-e Bakun, and Istakhr, as well as from Schmidt’s aerial surveys. Many otherwise unpublished images appeared in this publication that provided for the first time a coherent view of the range and depth of the Persian Expedition’s ambitions and efforts. When the once-promising medium of microfiche faded and the internet came into common use, a digital version of Schneider’s compendium was made available on the OI’s website.

The resumption of OI fieldwork in Iran was hesitant. When OI Director Thorkild Jacobsen decided to reopen excavations at the Sumerian cult center of Nippur in 1948 (see Mesopotamia, archaeology), he chose Donald McCown to lead the expedition. Eager, however, to resume archaeological
RICHARD TREADWELL HALLOCK

Richard Treadwell Hallock was born in Passaic, New Jersey, in 1906. After graduating from the University of Toronto in 1929, he came to Chicago to study Assyriology under the supervision of Edward Chiera, taking an MA in 1931 and a PhD in 1934. He began as an assistant to the Assyrian Dictionary project at the Oriental Institute, then directed by Chiera, in 1932. He was still on the CAD staff when he took unpaid leave for war work in 1941, first as a civilian cryptographer at the War Department, then as a junior officer in naval intelligence, and again as a civilian intelligence worker until 1947, when he returned to the CAD. He saw the first volumes through publication as the Dictionary’s editorial secretary until 1957. After a stint as an OI research associate, he was appointed to the university faculty as associate professor only in 1963, shortly before he completed the basic draft of his magnum opus on Persepolis Fortification texts. He was promoted to professor in 1970, shortly after the volume was published. He retired as professor emeritus in 1971. He died in Chicago after a short illness, in November, 1980.

The publications of the first half of Hallock’s academic career, on syllabaries and grammatical texts from the stream of Mesopotamian scholarship, were among the prolegomena of the Assyrian Dictionary. His later career focused almost entirely on the immense Elamite component of the Persepolis Fortification Archive, and after 1947 he worked on it almost alone.

He faced a daunting task. The Elamite language was a linguistic isolate, “not,” in Cameron’s understated terms, “a language with which it can be said that we are familiar.” The cuneiform script of the tablets was an idiosyncratic variant of Mesopotamian cuneiform, and despite the groundwork of the Poebel team, even some signs, sign-values, and orthographic rules were not yet understood. The Iranian vocabulary transcribed in Elamite form was unparalleled in extant sources that were dominated by royal inscriptions and religious texts. The recognizable contents—wine and beer, barley and flour, livestock and workers—were terse, tedious, and repetitive. The prospects of brilliant discoveries were small. Thousands of individually trivial data points had to be put together before patterns of meaning could emerge. Only one other text of this kind had been published before and it was incomprehensible, a useless point of comparison.

Every aspect of the Archive required fundamental work, for which Hallock was perfectly suited. He was exact, disciplined, perspicacious, and indefatigable, even by the standards of obsessive cuneiformists. His wartime work in cryptography (where he made a crucial breakthrough in decrypting Soviet communications) had sharpened his ability to organize masses of detail. His first studies on Achaemenid Elamite script and grammar were rounded out by his magisterial edition of 2,087 Elamite Fortification documents, published at last in 1969. The front and back matter included summaries of chronology, metrology, writing, Iranian lexicon in Elamite transcription, identifications of the seals impressed on the documents, a grammar of Achaemenid Elamite and a compendious glossary of all known Achaemenid Elamite texts. The central part of the work or-
ganized the documents in thirty-three formal and functional categories that reflect the flow of information through the Archive and the flow of commodities through the administrative institutions that compiled the Archive at the Persian court. He continued to work on the Archive until the last days of his life in 1980, leaving draft editions of another 2,500 Elamite documents, now being prepared for final publication by the Persepolis Fortification Archive Project.

Hallock’s writing style was so economical and self-effacing that it conceals the effort needed to arrive at outwardly plain statements and even masks the amount of information and implication that those statements convey. Readers who discover something new in the texts often find, on careful rereading, that Hallock saw it first, and noted it in just a few words. His book was, in effect, a complete, self-contained toolkit and sourcebook for research on the Archive and its language. He indicated some directions for research in two synthetic studies, one on the historical and economic evidence of the texts and another on the historical and administrative geography.

Hallock wrote that the Fortification Archive adds “a little flesh to the picked-over bones of early Achaemenid history,” an understatement so extreme that it might have been ironic. His election as a Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy was a recognition of the impact that his work was beginning to have on all aspects of research on ancient Iran. An obituary by OI Director John A. Brinkman rightly said that Hallock laid “the groundwork for a whole new sub-discipline of Iranian studies.” Herzfeld had called the Fortification documents “business texts,” and Breasted had suggested that these tedious scraps might be harbingers of better and richer texts to come, but Hallock’s work began to transform the study of Achaemenid Persian languages, institutions, society, religion, geography, and history to a degree that far exceeded Breasted’s hopes for more glamorous texts and in ways that continue to advance and expand today.
activities in Iran, Jacobsen sent McCown from Baghdad to Iran in January 1949 to find a multi-period site for excavation. To this end, McCown and his wife Garnet conducted a surface survey in the Ram Hormuz region in southwestern Iran and chose Tall-e Geser (a.k.a. Tall-e Ghazir) for excavation. In 1950, after the second season at Nippur, the McCowns, accompanied by Joseph R. Caldwell, a graduate student at the Department of Anthropology, went from Baghdad to Iran to resume excavations at Tall-e Geser. Their results were published by A. Alizadeh in 2014. From 1950 to 1955, McCown concentrated on teaching and publishing the results of his excavations at Nippur.

After that, OI surveys and excavations in Iran did not resume until 1959, and when they did, they were not a continuation of the prewar work, but of McCown’s initiative. The emphasis was now on prehistory and on the Zagros valleys that were part of “the hilly flanks of the fertile crescent” (Robert J. Braidwood’s adaptation of Breasted’s coinage) and the plains of Khuzestan.

In 1959, in response to revolution in Iraq, Braidwood’s Iraq-Jarmo Project moved operations across the border to Iran and gave birth to the Iranian Prehistoric Project, which is still in operation at the OI. In 1959–60, the team carried out excavations at the rock shelter of Warwasi and at the mounds of Tepe Asiab and Tepe Sarab. Other innovative research included an ethnoarchaeological project conducted by Patty Jo Watson at villages in the region and palynological study at lakes in the Zagros Mountains by Herbert Wright that resulted in radically altering the understanding of Holocene climate and environment in the entire Middle East. Although Braidwood never returned to Iran, Frank Hole and Kent Flannery, both graduates of the University of Chicago’s Department of Anthropology and trained by Braidwood, continued his pioneering research in the region and initiated their own research in the Deh Luran valley of southwestern Iran in 1961 (though not under OI auspices).

Robert McCormick Adams’s contribution to Mesopotamian archaeology is well-known. Less known is his groundbreaking work in southwestern Iran. In Iran, as in Iraq, Adams’s research focused on the relationships between societies and their environment, with interest in social evolutionary theory and how irrigation and agricultural technology is connected to societal and political structure. Adams used historical and ethnographic data combined with aerial photos and satellite images to interpret settlement patterns and their evolution through time.
Robert McCormick Adams was born in Chicago on July 26, 1926. His father was a tax lawyer and a distant relation of the McCormick family that owned the Chicago Tribune. As a boy, he attended intertribal ceremonies in New Mexico and later attended a natural history summer camp, which must have instilled in him his early interest in anthropology and archaeology. In 1943, he enrolled at MIT to study physics but joined the Navy in 1944 as a radio technician. At the end of World War II, he was reassigned to a destroyer in Shanghai. On his return to the United States, with the help of the GI Bill he enrolled in the University of Chicago with new interest in the social sciences. In 1950, Adams was working the swing shift at a South Chicago steel mill and a Ford assembly line while studying part-time at the University.

While a student at the Department of Anthropology, Adams wrote regularly for the Chicago Maroon, thinking that he might become a journalist. This idea died when Robert Braidwood invited him to participate in the excavations at Jarmo, in Iraqi Kurdistan, as a member of the team had dropped out at the last minute and Adams was chosen to replace him because, according to Adams in a Washington Post interview, “...he wanted to take along someone who could fix his cars.”

In 1960 and 1961, Adams carried out the first systematic survey of the upper plains of Khuzestan (ancient Susiana), southwestern Iran, and used combined ecological, archaeological, and geomorphological data to infer long-term population fluctuations and socioeconomic history of ancient Susiana from ca. 6000 BC to Islamic times. Adams's pioneering work in Khuzestan showed the importance of going beyond the limits of excavation for broader understanding of cultural processes. His work became a blueprint for many who followed him in the region.

Adams met and married his wife, Ruth Salzman Adams, in Chicago; Ruth went on to become the editor of the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois, and founding director of the MacArthur Consortium on International Peace and Cooperation. She died in 2005. Adams became associate professor in 1961, professor in 1962; director of the OI from 1962 to 1968 and again from 1981 to 1983, dean of the Social Science Division from 1970 to 1980, the provost of the University from 1982 to 1984 and secretary of the Smithsonian from 1984 until he retired in 1994. In a Washington Post profile, Adams was described as a “tall, rangy and slightly bowlegged man who looks and talks like a cross between Walt Disney and Walter Cronkite. He dresses sloppily by Washington standard, often has a clump of keys hanging from his belt like a janitor and you get the feeling he’d just as soon hop into a Jeep and be off into the desert.” Adams died on January 27, 2018 at age ninety-one.
It was Adams who recognized the importance of Chogha Mish in southwestern Iran, which he had located and surveyed in 1960–61. It was the largest prehistoric and proto-literate settlement after Susa, and it extended the history of the region’s cultural development to early Neolithic times. Pinhas Delougaz was chosen to excavate the site on behalf of the OI. Born in 1901 in Ukraine, he was sent to school in Palestine in 1913. He studied mathematics and physics at the Sorbonne in Paris, where he also developed his interest in architecture and art. Participating in the Harvard-Baghdad School Expedition to Nuzi, Iraq, in 1930, he met Edward Chiera, then director of the new OI Iraq Expedition at Khorsabad. At the end of excavation season, Chiera assigned to Delougaz the difficult task of transporting the gigantic blocks of the Assyrian winged bull and reliefs from Khorsabad to the OI.

Already in 1947, Delougaz had obtained a general concession from the Iranian government to conduct archaeological investigations in lowland Susiana, southwestern Iran. It was not until 1961, however, that he could realize his plans to work there. He chose Helene J. Kantor as codirector. Delougaz was also the curator of the OI Museum from 1944 to 1967. Although he moved to UCLA at that point, he continued his collaboration with the OI Iranian Prehistoric Project at Chogha Mish. On March 29, 1975, Delougaz climbed into the expedition Land Rover to drive to another trench on the terrace of Chogha Mish. The car stopped midway and Helene Kantor sent a worker to find out the cause of the sudden stop. The worker found Delougaz dead of a massive heart attack, peacefully leaning against the steering wheel. Delougaz’s body was buried in Jerusalem as he had wished.

Having started her archaeological field experience with Delougaz, and working closely together with him for more than three decades at several sites in Israel and in the Susiana, Helene Kantor continued Delougaz’s Iranian Prehistoric Project. The excavations at Chogha Mish revealed a hitherto unknown stage of the Neolithic period in southwestern Iran, known now as Archaic Susiana, that extended the Susiana prehistoric sequence by about a thousand years, back to the beginning of the Neolithic period. Helene Kantor’s numerous preliminary analyses of the Archaic Susiana period contributed greatly to the understanding of the prehistoric and protohistoric life in southwestern Iran. She worked not only at Chogha Mish, but also at the important sites of Boneh Fozieili and Chogha Bonut until 1978, when the Iranian revolution made archaeological research in the region impossible. Kantor also mentored three generations of archaeologists from Iran and trained numerous Iranian students of anthropology in Khuzestan.
POST-REVOLUTIONARY AND PRESENT

One of the Iranian archaeologists who studied with Kantor is Abbas Alizadeh. Born in Tehran in 1951, he took his BA in Iranian archaeology and art history at Tehran University in 1975. He continued his studies in the US and received his PhD in 1988 at Chicago. He moved to Harvard University to become associate curator of the Semitic Museum and assistant professor as well as associate director of the Ashkelon Expedition and director of Ashkelon archaeological lab at the Albright Institute from 1990 to 1991. In 1991, when Helene Kantor retired, William Sumner, then director of the OI, offered Alizadeh a post as senior research associate to direct the decades-old Iranian Prehistoric Project; Alizadeh is now a research associate professor at the OI and director of the OI Nippur Expedition.

The political turmoil that followed the Iranian revolution in 1978 made foreign archaeological research in Iran impossible. This situation was a blessing in disguise for many archaeologists who had worked in Iran for many years but had not published the results of their work, or had passed away. Alizadeh systematically began to publish the results of all the fieldwork conducted by Alexander Langsdorff, Donald McCown, Erich Schmidt, Helene Kantor, and Pinhas Delougaz at Tall-e Bakun A and B, Tall-e Geser, Chogha Mish, and Chogha Bonut. Most of the excavated materials and records from Schmidt’s excavation of Bakun B were lost to a submarine attack in the Caribbean in 1942. Alizadeh re-excavated both mounds and finished the publication as the foundation for a study of state formation in Fars, fulfilling the aims of the original excavators in terms that they would scarcely have recognized.

Alizadeh formulated an alternative model for the development of early state organizations in south and southwestern Iran. This model focuses on the role of ancient nomads of southwestern Iran and their interactions with the settled farmers as key factors in the formation of the early state in the region. Spurred by his model, many Iranian archaeologists conducted field research that focused on finding archaeological evidence of the existence of ancient nomads in both highlands and lowlands of western and southwestern Iran.

When, in 1995, archaeological research became possible again in Iran, Alizadeh seized the opportunity to test his ancient nomadic model and conducted his first field survey in Fars. This was followed in 1996 by excavations at Chogha Bonut, the earliest aceramic settlement in Khuzestan, where the technique of wet sieving to retrieve carbonized seeds was introduced to the Iranian students. In 2000, Alizadeh, with Nick Kouchoukos of the Department of Anthropology and Tony Wilkinson of the OI, conducted a series of archaeological and geomorphological surveys in Khuzestan and excavations at the prehistoric nomadic campsite of Dar Khazineh. During that season, the director of the
HELENE J. KANTOR

Helene Kantor was born in Chicago in July 1919. Soon after, her parents moved to Bloomington, Indiana, where her father, Jacob R. Kantor, took up a teaching position at the Department of Psychology of Indiana University. Helene was born with congenital myopathy, a rare muscular disease that progressively robbed her of her muscles and increasingly made her great mind the prisoner of her body. Because of that disease, she was taught at home by her mother, Helen Rich, until the age of fifteen, when she entered college. Her impressive knowledge of classical, medieval, and Renaissance art and literature was the product of her “cottage” education and her mother’s devotion to her upbringing.

As she grew older, the disease became more active, forcing her to abandon her cherished extra curriculum of playing piano. Confined to a life at home in the countryside, Kantor developed an intense interest in animals and plants. She entered college in Indiana and took a BA in zoology/biology. She initially wanted to become a physician, but she was dissuaded by her father, who believed medicine was not a suitable profession for a woman.

Kantor came to the University of Chicago in 1938 and completed her PhD in 1945 under the supervision of Henri Frankfort. She was awarded the Alvin K. Brown Fellowship in 1943 and the Ryerson Fellowship in 1944 for outstanding study in archaeology. She accepted a research assistant appointment in 1945 and became assistant professor in 1951. She was promoted to professor in 1963. She retired from the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations in 1989 after a long and productive career in teaching and scholarship. Helene Kantor died of heart failure at Mitchell Hospital on January 13, 1993.
National Museum of Iran invited Alizadeh to establish a pottery research center at that museum using the masses of unpublished potsherds that had been collected during various surveys by both foreign and Iranian archaeologists for decades prior to 1978. This Pottery Bank was completed in April 2001 and developed into a major research and education center for Iranian archaeologists and students.

Another early student working at Chogha Mish was Donald Whitcomb, current associate professor of Islamic archaeology at the OI. He was born in 1944 in Elizabeth, New Jersey. After graduating from Emory University, he joined the Peace Corps in 1966 and taught English in Bushire on the Persian Gulf. Two years later he became a member of the Asia Institute at the Pahlavi (now Shiraz) University in Shiraz. While there, Whitcomb participated in a wide range of archaeological excavations, including Chogha Mish, Hasanlu, Dinkha, Godin, and Siraf. Whitcomb moved to Chicago to study with Robert Adams in 1971.

For a long time, Islamic archaeology had been limited to standing monuments and art historical interpretations of Islamic art and architecture (see Islamic archaeology). His training in Chicago made Whitcomb aware of the importance of site morphology and urbanism in a much wider regional context than isolated buildings and art historical concerns. He was the first to introduce, describe, and date a class of unglazed painted pottery of the eleventh to fourteenth centuries that was found in southern and southwestern Iran, known as “pseudo-prehistoric” and “Arab geometric ware. He also single-handedly developed a curriculum for Islamic archaeology in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. Currently, Whitcomb is interested in the resumption of the OI’s excavations at the important Sasanian/early Islamic city of Istakhr, near Persepolis. Since 2004, he has traveled several times to Iran to secure a permit, but geopolitical problems have interfered.
After the Iranian revolution, the OI’s publication of the Persian Expedition’s backlog continued at stately pace. It was now in the hands of scholars cut off both from Iran and from living memory of the excavations. In 1968, four years after Erich Schmidt’s death, Maurits van Loon had announced that “steps have been taken to process for publication his meticulous records of his work in Luristan, Rayy, Istakhr and Tall-e Bakun,” and he added that his own presentation of the expeditions to Luristan under Schmidt’s direction, including the 1938 season that occupied the Persepolis field staff, was already in draft form. But the final form appeared only in 1989.

George Miles published coins from the Istakhr excavations, and Donald Whitcomb teased a detailed plan of the early Islamic city from Schmidt’s aerial photographs, but publication of the Persian Expedition’s work at Istakhr remains to be completed.
Hallock’s pioneering work of 1969 had recognized that identifying the seal impressions on the Persepolis Fortification tablets was essential to interpreting the contents of the texts and understanding the structure of the Archive. Margaret Cool Root began work on this corpus in 1979 and continued in a sustained collaboration with her student Mark B. Garrison. This culminated in the OI’s publication in 2001 of the first of three volumes presenting more than 1,160 seals impressed on the 2,083 tablets that Hallock had published. The drawings and the accompanying discussion present an unparalleled corpus of Achaemenid art, exceeding Albert T. Olmstead’s prediction that it would make available “a whole new museum to present Achaemenid art,” as rich in implications as the reliefs that Herzfeld revealed.

A legal crisis sparked the formation of the current Persepolis Fortification Archive Project at the OI. In 2001, a US federal court awarded a large monetary judgment against the Islamic Republic of Iran to families of victims of a bombing perpetrated in Jerusalem in 1997. In 2004 the plaintiffs sought possession of the Fortification tablets, held at the OI on long-term loan from Iran since 1936.
The fact that the tablets had been loaned to Chicago is remarkable in itself. The Iranian antiquities law that was in effect when they were discovered and that remained in effect until 1972 provided for a division of excavated finds between the host country and the institutions that sponsored the excavations. Groups of tablets that were associated with each other by findspot and by contents could be divided in this way, as were the Persepolis Treasury tablets, excavated between 1936 and 1938. But in the division negotiated in 1934, the first tablets found at Persepolis, the Fortification tablets, were not divided, but loaned to the OI as an intact group, a coherent assemblage of several components.

The largest number of the tablets and fragments are documents bearing cuneiform texts in Elamite language and bearing the impressions of cylinder seals or stamp seals, the remains of more than fifteen thousand original documents. At least 850 tablets have texts in Aramaic script and language, all of them with impressions of seals. Many others, about five thousand, have no texts, but have impressions of one or more seals. Herzfeld recognized a unique Phrygian text in 1933, and there are also unique items with texts in Greek, Old Persian, Demotic Egyptian, and Babylonian.

These classes of documents are components of one archive—administrative records produced and stored by a single administrative organization in the time of Darius I. They fit together as parts of a system through which information flowed, structured in a way that tells about the social and in-
stitutional environment. At the same time, these components are the topics of distinct modern academic fields that analyze and discuss them in different terms for partially different audiences. The problem they pose is that responding to the Archive’s complexity requires the components to be treated by specialists, but maintaining the Archive’s integrity requires keeping the components connected.

That did not happen when the Fortification tablets came to Chicago. They were parceled out, but the results were not integrated. After Hallock finished the manuscript of his magnum opus, he continued to read Elamite Fortification documents. He compiled draft editions of about 2,500 more documents before he died; they have remained unpublished, but since the middle 1980s they have circulated widely in *samizdat*. Bowman worked on the Aramaic Fortification texts for decades, making careful autographed copies and draft editions, with a glossary, of more than five hundred of them before he died. The manuscript left at his death shows that he had little contact with Hallock and less understanding of what Hallock had accomplished. Kantor began to organize the corpus of seal impressions on all classes of Fortification tablets, including the uninscribed tablets, relying especially on photographs made under a grant from the Works Progress Administration in 1940–41, but she set this work aside.

In 2005, responding to the legal crisis, the OI initiated the Persepolis Fortification Archive Project under the general direction of Matthew W. Stolper. Stolper was born in Philadelphia in 1944 and took his PhD at the University of Michigan in 1974 under the supervision of Persepolis veteran George Cameron. Between 1968 and 1976, he took part in excavations at Hajji Firuz, Dinkha, and Hasanlu in northwestern Iran, and at Tall-e Malyan (ancient Anshan) near Persepolis. He studied Elamite with Cameron at Michigan and with Erica Reiner at Chicago. When he came to the OI in 1980,
his primary responsibility was to the CAD. After experiments with digitizing Persepolis Fortification texts beginning in 1988 and multilingual Achaemenid inscriptions from Persepolis beginning in 1992, he undertook the Persepolis Fortification Archive Project with emergency priorities: to enable future research by making useful records of as much of the Archive as possible, and to enable current research by distributing useful records quickly and continuously. The records include legible images of all categories of documents made with several electronic techniques, as well as cataloging, editorial, and analytical information compiled by a team of specialists: Annalisa Azzoni of Vanderbilt University (Nashville) on the Aramaic documents, epigraphs, and seal inscriptions; Mark B. Garrison of Trinity University (San Antonio) and Elspeth Dusinberre (Denver) on the seal impressions; and Wouter F. M. Henkelman of the École Pratique des Hautes Études (Paris), on the Elamite documents. Preliminary results are organized and published in electronic form through two online applications—InscriptiFact, based at the University of Southern
California, and OCHRE (the Online Cultural and Historical Research Environment), based at the OI. Authoritative book-form publications are in preparation. As of 2018, about 11,500 tablets and fragments have been recorded in varying detail, increasing the number of known Elamite Fortification texts—the largest Elamite language corpus anywhere—by more than 40 percent, the number of Aramaic texts—the largest still unpublished corpus of Imperial Aramaic—by more than 80 percent, the number of analytically legible seals—the largest corpus of Achaemenid art anywhere—by more than 110 percent. This is the largest source of new information anywhere on Achaemenid languages, institutions, art, religion, society, and administration. Members of the PFA Project and their students have published dozens of articles and books drawing on this new data to continue transforming our understanding of the empire of Darius I and his Achaemenid successors.

PROSPECTS

The lawsuit over the Persepolis Fortification tablets made its way through years of appeals to the Supreme Court of the United States. The Supreme Court’s ruling against the plaintiffs in 2018 was on a narrow point of law, with uncertain implications for other cultural heritage concerns, but it left the OI free to return the tablets to the National Museum of Iran. If the data harvested by the Persepolis Fortification Archive Project accompanies the objects, Iran can once again become the center for international research on the Achaemenid Persian Empire.

Optimism and aspiration call for a long view of the history of the Oriental Institute and its research in and on Iran. Western Asia and North Africa have changed profoundly, sometimes convulsively, during the century of the OI’s existence. Geopolitical circumstances have often impeded, interrupted, or redirected the OI’s fieldwork, as much in Iran and the Iranian world as elsewhere. These interruptions and convulsions were sometimes accompanied or followed by dramatic developments in intellectual contexts and agendas and in research techniques and technologies. That was true at the OI’s founding, again at the end of World War II, and perhaps again when digital and remote-sensing methods became practical in the 1990s and after. The depth of the OI’s experience and capabilities and the volume of information it has accumulated give it exceptional ability not only to weather present geopolitical storms but also to embrace the unforeseeable evolution of research. That is certainly true of OI work in and on Iran—for the accumulated experience, data, and disputation of the Persian Expedition, the Iranian Prehistoric Project, and their successors have laid a wide and solid foundation for new investigations, findings, and presentations, and for new understandings of ancient societies of Iran.

“This is the largest source of new information anywhere on Achaemenid languages, institutions, art, religion, society, and administration.”
OI CULTURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION
PROJECTS IN AFGHANISTAN
GIL STEIN

Preservation of cultural heritage has been an integral part of the Oriental Institute’s mission since its inception. James Henry Breasted founded Chicago House and the Epigraphic Survey in 1921 to preserve and document the monuments at Luxor and other Egyptian sites that were at risk for damage due to environmental factors and economic development. In the 1960s the OI participated in the Nubian Salvage project by conducting rescue excavations at multiple archaeological sites scheduled to be flooded by the construction of the Aswan High Dam. Similar projects of rescue excavations in Turkey, Syria, and Iraq in the 1970s, ’80s, and ’90s made important contributions to preserving the archaeological treasures of these countries as well. The Oriental Institute’s current heritage preservation work in Afghanistan continues this mission.

Afghanistan is the quintessential “crossroads of cultures” where the civilizations of the Middle East, Central Asia, South Asia, and China interacted over the millennia in a constantly shifting mixture of trade, cultural borrowings, migration, imperial conquests, and periodic conflict. This complex history of contacts gave rise to some of the most important archaeological, artistic, architectural treasures in world cultural heritage—encompassing cultures as diverse as the Bronze Age cities of Bactria, the Persian Empire, and the easternmost colonies founded by Alexander the Great and his Hellenistic successors. Tragically, the cultural heritage of Afghanistan has been devastated by four decades of continuous war from the Soviet invasion of 1979 and continuing up to the present. The National Museum of Afghanistan—the most important repository of cultural heritage in that country—was devastated in this conflict. An estimated 70 percent of the objects were looted, while 90 percent of the object registration records were destroyed. Since 2012, the OI’s heritage preservation projects in Afghanistan have conducted outreach programs, docu-

“Afghanistan is the quintessential ‘crossroads of cultures’ where the civilizations of the Middle East, Central Asia, South Asia, and China interacted over the millennia . . .”
mentation, and trained Afghan heritage professionals through hands-on work in conservation, object curation, database management, and the use of GIS (geographic information system) technology. Our ongoing efforts, sponsored by the US Department of State and US Embassy Kabul, focus on developing a well-trained, well-equipped cohort of Afghan professionals who will be responsible for the stewardship of the unique historical treasures of their rich history of civilizations.

The OI’s core activities in Afghanistan center around a partnership with the National Museum of Afghanistan (NMA) to: a) develop a bilingual objects management database, b) conduct a full inventory of the NMA’s holdings, c) make conservation assessments for the museum’s objects, d) rehouse the objects in archival quality containers, e) restore sculptures from the early Buddhist monastic complex of Hadda, e) conduct museum outreach programming for students across Afghanistan, f) train the NMA staff in conservation, database management, and artifact curation procedures, and g) determine what objects from the National Museum have been looted or destroyed. Additionally, the OI is conducting the Afghan Heritage Mapping Project (AHMP) in partnership with the Afghan Institute of Archaeology (AIA) to train their staff—and concurrently develop a geospatial database—whose ultimate goal is to use remote sensing data to document all the main archaeological sites in Afghanistan.

NMA INVENTORY

The OI and NMA have now completed their inventory efforts, with 136,131 pieces inventoried in 45,795 records. These figures include both the objects in the museum and the highest value objects stored in the vaults of the Presidential Palace. The inventory will continue to grow as the museum acce-

“arions new objects—most notably from the ongoing rescue excavations by the Afghan Institute of Archaeology at the ancient city of Mes Aynak in nearby Logar province.
CONSERVATION TRAINING AND THE HADDA SCULPTURAL RESTORATION PROJECT

Our project conservators in Kabul work closely with the staff conservators of the National Museum to train and assist them in condition assessment, stabilization, and restoration of museum objects. Much of the recent hands-on conservation training has taken place as an integral part of our Hadda Sculptural Restoration Project. The 1,500-year-old sculptures from Hadda in the NMA’s holdings were recovered in French excavations conducted from 1926 to 1978. The approximately three thousand sculptures from Hadda at the National Museum of Afghanistan and in the Musée Guimet in Paris form one of the most important collections of Early Buddhist (Gandharan) art in the world. The sculptures at the National Museum were systematically smashed by the Taliban over three months from January to March 2001. At great personal risk, the NMA staff secretly collected and stored the smashed fragments of these sculptures. The Hadda Sculptural Restoration Project is designed to assess, stabilize, and restore as many as possible of the Hadda sculptures in the National Museum.
OPPOSITE: Multiple formats of 3-D scans of an early Buddhist sculpture in the NMA.

LEFT: Partially restored early Buddhist sculpture from Hadda in the NMA. BELOW: More than seven thousand fragments of sculptures from the early Buddhist monastery center of Hadda near the Khyber Pass in southeast Afghanistan are being restored by conservators in the OI-NMA partnership.
MOBILE MUSEUM

The Mobile Museum Outreach Project (MMOP) is a three-year collaboration between the Oriental Institute and the National Museum of Afghanistan to develop and deliver the first national-scale program of outreach education to raise awareness of the National Museum among high school children (grades 10–12) through in-class presentations in schools in six cities across Afghanistan: Kabul, Herat, Mazar-I Sharif, Bamiyan, Kandahar, and Jalalabad. Presentations materials are also being made available at the US Embassy’s Lincoln Learning Centers across the country, and at orphanages. The grant combines innovative digital technology, “object-based learning,”

FROM LEFT: Afghan high school students engaging with the Mobile Museum Project posters showing highlights from the NMA. The posters are given to every school where the program is taught.

Students examining 3-D printed replicas of objects from the NMA.

Mobile Museum Project presentation at a school in Kabul.
and traditional educational tools in multiple pathways of engagement with students to create a “Mobile Museum.” The in-class programs of the MMOP give students the opportunity to handle and examine 3-D printed replicas of actual objects in the National Museum in order to discover a) what is in the NMA, b) what were the main civilizations that characterize the history of Afghanistan, and c) how they can use these objects to better understand the history of their country. Currently, this project is on track to reach over ten thousand students and children in Afghanistan.

“The in-class programs of the MMOP give students the opportunity to handle and examine 3-D printed replicas of actual objects in the National Museum . . .”
THE AFGHAN HERITAGE MAPPING PROJECT (AHMP)

The work of the AHMP is conducted in parallel in Chicago and in Kabul. In Chicago, the project draws on satellite imagery and other geospatial technologies to build a comprehensive geographic information systems (GIS) database of identifiable archaeological sites across Afghanistan. The goals in creating this database are to:

1. Inventory and map known and previously unknown archaeological heritage sites, especially in areas threatened by future mining development, urban expansion, and looting;
2. Document the current state of archaeological site preservation and analyze spatial and temporal patterns in looting;
3. Create a planning tool that will allow heritage protection to be incorporated into mining, economic, and urban development projects.

In Kabul, AHMP focuses on building capacity and infrastructure, where Afghan and foreign archaeologists have been teaching intensive classes to train a cohort of Afghan heritage professionals at the Afghan Institute of Archaeology (AIA) and other organizations in the use of GIS technology for cultural heritage management and especially the location and documentation of archaeological sites. The OI has also convened AIA staff for an intensive two-week training at the Oriental Institute’s Center for Ancient Middle Eastern Landscapes (CAMEL) Lab in Chicago.
The OI’s projects to build infrastructure and train conservators, curators, and archaeologists at the National Museum and the Archaeological Institute of Afghanistan have made significant contributions to preserving the cultural heritage of Afghanistan. This heritage is fragile and it is a non-renewable resource. As the Oriental Institute moves into its second century, we will continue with our efforts to preserve this irreplaceable legacy of civilization in the Middle East and neighboring regions.
HITTITE AND ANATOLIAN STUDIES AT THE OI
RICHARD BEAL

L and of the Rising Sun,” or “Anatolia”: that’s what the ancient Greeks called modern-day Turkey. The Anatolian west coast had been a popular destination for Greek settlers and traders since at least the Late Bronze Age (1600–1200 BC). Many of the famous Greek authors and philosophers were born and grew up there. It was partly thanks to them that the ancient civilizations of Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Iran, and the Levant never left the historical consciousness of later, mostly western European, generations. Monuments like the pyramids and ziggurats kept their memory very much alive, well into modern times. But the memory of the once powerful Hittite kingdom in Anatolia and its so-called Neo-Hittite successor states—around the corner, so to speak, and closer to the Greeks than any of the other population groups—seems to have faded almost instantly. The fifth century BC Greek historiographer Herodotus, among those Greeks born and raised in Anatolia, already mistook the thirteenth century BC inscription of a local Anatolian king for that of an Egyptian pharaoh. Encountering similar Anatolian monuments and ruins, early European travelers in the Age of Enlightenment therefore had nothing to relate them to. It was only around the turn of the nineteenth century AD, when the Egyptian hieroglyphs and the cuneiform script of Mesopotamia had been deciphered, and the written records of these civilizations had become accessible, that the Hittites gradually reentered history.

Hittitology as a modern discipline started in 1906 when the German archaeologist Hugo Winckler was finally able to identify the ruins in the little village of Boğazköy in Central Anatolia as the original seat of the great kingdom of the Hittites. On the basis of written sources from Egypt and Assyria as well as the Old Testament, their kingdom was thought to have been located in northern Syria. With Winckler’s identification, everything fell into place. What those outside sources called “Hittites” were mostly smaller, and above all later, successor states that we nowadays refer to as “Neo-Hittite.” The true Hittite kingdom that was once a superpower in the ancient Middle East—along with Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia—had ruled in Central Anatolia in the Late Bronze Age. Three excavation seasons (1907, 1911–12) and over ten thousand clay tablet fragments later, there was another surprise: In 1915, the Hittite language was recognized as the oldest known Indo-European language. As such, it was related to Greek, Sanskrit, Latin, and many more languages, among them our own English language.

BREASTED AND ANATOLIA

James Henry Breasted, the OI’s founder, was quick to pick up on the new discoveries. Already in 1923, only four years after the founding of the Institute, Daniel Luckenbill offered a course called “Hittite texts from Boghazköy,” followed in 1924 by “Babylonian, Assyrian, and Hittite Law Codes.” Luckenbill had received his PhD at Chicago in 1907 under Robert Francis Harper—an Assyriologist and brother of the University’s first president, William Rainey Harper—and had been hired by Breasted to head the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary (CAD). His long article translating Hittite treaties and letters written in Akkadian may indicate that his classes mostly covered the Akkadian-language texts, but it was a beginning. After his early death in 1927 at the age of forty-seven, Edward Chiera succeeded Luckenbill as professor of Assyriology and head of the CAD. Chiera carried on the young tradition started by Luckenbill and, in his first year at Chicago (1927–28), offered “Hittite Texts from Boghazköy.” Like his predecessor, Chiera was to die young, aged forty-eight, in 1933.
But Breasted was not only interested in texts and language. In 1926 Hans Henning von der Osten, a young student from Germany, came to the OI with a plan for a survey of Anatolia. He had some, but woefully insufficient, funding from the Carnegie Corporation and a private donor. Like Breasted, von der Osten had studied in Berlin. After this he had moved to New York University but was well aware that for his plans Breasted was the man to contact. Fortunately for him, Breasted jumped at the chance and decided to support the project. Von der Osten had an automobile and so was able to explore many regions not previously entered by archaeologists. His expedition consisted of himself, his Venezuelan wife María Isabel, née Baptista, who was in charge of keeping the field book and the registration of photographs, a Turkish translator, and a driver, Hüsein, about whom von der Osten wrote, “There was no road so poor or so difficult that he could not conduct us over it.” Hüsein also learned to assist in all sorts of technical work. The plan was to visit all villages whose names hinted at a long history. Pretty much anything old or interesting, archaeological or ethnographic, was to be noted and photographed. On his first trip in Anatolia, von der Osten ran into Emil Forrer.

**Below:** Signature of Hans Henning von der Osten. **Right:** von der Osten in the field (N. 8857).
THE TROUBLED TENURE OF EMIL FORRER

In that same year, 1926, another student from Berlin, Emil Forrer, likewise made a research trip by car in Anatolia. A Swiss citizen, Forrer was the son of an archaeologist/antiquarian at the University of Strassburg. He had received his degree in Assyriology at Berlin under Friedrich Delitzsch and Eduard Meyer in 1917. From then on, he had practically lived in the Berlin museum and was better acquainted with the Hittite cuneiform tablets than anyone else. Unlike Luckenbill and Chiera, he could call himself a true Hittitologist. He was no doubt a brilliant scholar who was always thinking outside the box, but he also had a penchant for sometimes grandiose theories. Forrer made important contributions with a long article based on his scouring of the more than ten thousand tablets from the Winckler excavations, several volumes with text editions, and a list of Hittite cuneiform signs. He also started work on a Hittite dictionary. However, Forrer was not socially adept and refused to go along with some of the scholarly mores of the day. As a consequence, he gradually fell out with the keeper of the Berlin tablets and lost his museum space. When a visitor asked after Forrer at the museum he was surprised to be told, “We’ve never heard of him!” Unable to fall in step with the academic world of his time, Forrer failed two attempts at a habilitation (an academic stage following the PhD) and managed to anger much of German Hittitology with his dogged insistence that the Akhiyawans mentioned in some Hittite texts were in fact Homer’s Akhaeans, or Greeks—a position now thought to be essentially correct. Meanwhile, Forrer had come on Breasted’s radar, and finally the two met for lunch in Berlin on Thursday, April 19, 1928. It was here that Breasted offered Forrer the position of associate professor of Hittite, with a three-year renewable contract for the 1929–31 terms, at a salary of $5,000 per year.

Breasted explained to Forrer that he would be required to teach four hours per week, with an occasional two-hour seminar. “It would obviously be highly desirable,” he continued, “to produce a Hittite dictionary. I would be very glad to see a preliminary Hittite Dictionary growing out of our Oriental Institute work on the Assyrian Dictionary, and the facilities and practical arrangements now possessed by the dictionary organization might make it relatively easy for you to organize the available Hittite materials in the form of a Hittite dictionary.”

However, neither the dictionary nor Forrer himself ever materialized: Forrer never took up residence in Chicago. Before leaving for the USA, Forrer wrote to Breasted that he

LEFT: Emil Forrer in 1929.
CENTERFOLD: Traveling in Anatolia with (from left) von der Osten, his wife Maria Baptista, the driver Hüssein, and the translator (N. 6775).
had a chance to copy, photograph, and publish the Minoan/Mycenean Linear A and B tablets, long moldering away on Crete. Although there was no immediate connection with Anatolia, Breasted gave him permission to spend part of his first year doing this at the OI’s expense. After Forrer’s work was well along, Sir Arthur Evans, the excavator, refused to grant Forrer permission to publish any of the tablets. Forrer then went to Strassbourg to work on the tablets newly discovered at Ugarit by his brother-in-law, Claude Schaeffer. Ordered by Breasted to set up an OI dig on Cyprus, Forrer ran into difficulties and finally went off to Anatolia in order to look for the Hittite holy city of Arinna, to copy some hieroglyphic inscriptions, look at a few mounds in Cilicia, and other such pursuits. All the while he told Breasted about the myriad projects he was working on, none of which seemed to get off the ground. He also kept asking for additional funding. Breasted’s patience finally ran out; he did not renew Forrer’s contract.

Meanwhile, von der Osten (having received his University of Chicago PhD in 1928) kept traveling, often under difficult conditions. Once, he almost got lost in a deep cave, and he frequently had to deal with wild dogs and other animals. In 1929, traveling on horseback, he investigated some tombs in the mountains south of Maraş that “were literally alive with mosquitoes and snakes . . . In very few minutes our faces and hands were swollen beyond recognition by mosquito bites.” In that same year, von der Osten and Forrer, still on the OI payroll, crossed paths again. The season got off to a rough start when the dig truck carrying equipment, provisions, and staff on its way to Alişar got stuck in the mud. All of the boxes had to be unloaded through knee-deep water and mud, piled up, the truck dragged out of the mud and the boxes reloaded. This was repeated three more times on that stretch of road. Sometimes the car had to be abandoned and an araba (local carriage) hired. Many times, oxen had to be rented to pull the car free. Broken springs and flat tires were a regular occurrence. One day when von der Osten, his wife María, and Forrer were surveying in the newly repaired car, they were forced to continue driving after sunset—dangerous under the best of conditions. Then the headlights died. “Another opportunity for us all to express in Turkish, English, German, and Spanish our appreciation of the marvelous repair work of the Angora (i.e., Ankara) garage. . . . Anatolian roads are very difficult to follow, even the regular ones in the daytime. At last we arrived at Bahla, Forrer sitting on the radiator and illuminating the road gloriously with his pocket flashlight.” Despite all of these hazards and adventures, over the four summers of explorations (1926–29), von der Osten covered 12,263 kilometers by car and 1,177 kilometers on horseback or on foot.
“Sometimes the car had to be abandoned and an araba (local carriage) hired. Many times, oxen had to be rented to pull the car free.”
In 1929 von der Osten traveled in the plain of Elbistan where a band of Kurdish brigands had just been defeated, requiring the escort of two gendarmes. “At the foot of a hûyük we became imbedded, for the third time, in the mud. Frantically we worked to extricate our chariot. A few Kurds came indolently toward us, but neither the offer of money nor the threats of the gendarmes could persuade them to help us. They merely sat and watched as we tugged and pushed and jerked, and the expression on their faces was none too kind. It was very hot and our supply of drinking water low, but the Kurds even refused to show us where the nearest spring was located. One of our gendarmes went off to the village, two hours away, in search of oxen. Meanwhile we succeeded in our frantic efforts to get out of the mud. But our rejoicing was brief. We were soon immersed in even deeper mud; and then we heard a foreboding click, and the motor began running wildly. This was just the sort of experience we had had near Malatya in 1928. But this time we should not have to wait a day, for we had a spare axel. . . . In the afternoon Rustem (one of the gendarmes) arrived, visibly furious, escorting two . . . natives with oxen. From the outset the whole village had passively resisted him, and he had succeeded in getting oxen only after many dire threats. Within ten minutes the car was on dry ground. . . . A hasty examination revealed the differential was broken! . . . A steadily increasing group of natives became impertinent and jeered. . . . We went to sleep around the car, changing the guard every three hours.” The next day reveals that the car needs even more parts, the nearest Turkish village is four hours away, an impossible distance to drag the car, and the nearby Kurdish village is not about to rent a horse to anybody. Therefore, von der Osten decides to take the list of parts, borrow a rifle from a gendarme, and walk to Elbistan, 22 kilometers away, there notifying the gendarmerie, telegraphing for parts, and ordering a car sent from his dig headquarters to pick him up. The gendarmes send a patrol out with supplies, drag the car into the village, put the surveying instruments, film, and other valuables onto their horses and post a guard on the car. Von der Osten rides back on a rented horse, only to have the Kurdish villagers steal it within minutes of his dismounting, forcing him to again walk the 22 kilometers back to Elbistan and impatiently wonder why his telegrams still have not been answered. Finally, a gendarme explains that the escaping brigands have cut the telegraph wires. So, after ten days unplanned stay in Elbistan, with an escort of eleven mounted gendarmes, von der Osten rides back to Gürün and connections to the outside world.
FROM SURVEYS TO EXCAVATION: THE OI AT ALIŞAR

Since there had not yet been a full-fledged excavation in Central Anatolia that had yielded a cultural or pottery sequence, the OI considered it imperative that a large mound, or höyük, be excavated. Such sequences are important chronological and diagnostic tools for archaeologists in dating and classifying their finds. The choice fell on Alişar Höyük. It was a large mound, which was surrounded by a lower terrace and so was probably an important site. It was near enough to Boğazköy, the site of the former Hittite capital, to probably be Hittite and, important for working conditions, it had a good water supply and no malaria. A large staff was hired. From 1927 to 1929 Erich Schmidt directed the excavations under the overall supervision of von der Osten, who continued his surveys. Schmidt had received his PhD from Columbia under the famous anthropologist Franz Boas, with a dissertation on the pottery sequence in south-central Arizona, which is still in use. Schmidt interrupted his work at Alişar in 1928 for eight days to explore the large site of Kerkenes Dağ in Central Anatolia. He wanted to see if there was any evidence of Hittite occupation. In that short period he dug no less than eighteen trenches only to come to the conclusion that the ancient fortress was an Iron Age site and thus a post-Hittite foundation. Nevertheless, after seventy-five years the OI would return to Kerkenes.

At the end of 1929 there was a falling out between the two codirectors, von der Osten and Schmidt. In a letter to von der Osten, Breasted explained that, although generally not “in favor of double control,” he had thought that two Germans, both World War I veterans, would collaborate well together. But “I have had more trouble and anxiety in administering our Oriental Institute work in Anatolia than in carrying on the work of all the rest of the Institute expeditions combined.” Breasted decided to keep von der Osten on site, mainly since it had been the latter’s idea for the expedition. So, in 1930–31, he ordered Schmidt back to Chicago to publish his findings. Alişar Höyük afforded a glimpse of Old Assyrian colonies as well as Hittite and Phrygian structures. Thanks to Schmidt’s meticulous attention to stratigraphy and excellence in publication, Alişar importantly provided for the first time a full pottery sequence for central Anatolia from the Neolithic to the early Turkish periods.

“WALther, IMMigrANT”

Back in Chicago, frustrated with Forrer, Breasted hired Arnold Walther as the editorial assistant on the Assyrian Dictionary in 1930. Walther had written his dissertation on Old Babylonian Law at the University of Leipzig under Heinrich Zimmern (1914) and then served as a translator in the Ottoman Empire during World War I. Upon his return, he worked as a research associate in the Middle Eastern section of the Berlin museum and became well acquainted with the Hittite material there. His job consisted of making pen-and-ink copies of the Hittite tablets that
IN THE PRESENCE OF A GREAT MAN:
VON DER OUSTEN ON MEETING ATATÜRK

On May 17, 1930, the American Embassy in Ankara notified von der Osten that the President of the Republic of Turkey Gazi Mustafa Kemal Paşa (Atatürk) invited him for dinner at his home. After some preliminary chit-chat, the President talked in French for about an hour and a half on his understanding of early Turkish history and the development of the Mediterranean basin. Von der Osten reported that he was amazed at the Gazi’s deep and accurate knowledge. Others in the room looked alarmed when von der Osten gently corrected the Gazi that Akkadians and Sumerians were not the same race, but the Gazi took notes and asked questions and inquired after bibliography.

The president spent most of dinner, which included the entire cabinet and his two adopted daughters, talking to von der Osten about American life and universities. At and after billiards, he expressed his gratitude for the work the Oriental Institute was doing in Anatolia. The Gazi asked if the OI could do a small excavation near Ankara that he could visit. Personnel and equipment were diverted to a fortress above the Hittite rock relief at Gavur Kalesi and excavations began. The Gazi arrived on May 31 with various high officials, foreign ambassadors, and a swarm of foreign and Turkish reporters. He watched for two hours and asked questions. Von der Osten later reported: “I had the impression of being in the presence of a great man. . . . He and he alone is the modernizer of Turkey.”
the Germans had excavated at Boğazköy and he must have known Forrer well. Walther’s work resulted in the publication of no less than six volumes with hand copies of cuneiform tablets. Most of these copies are of the difficult-to-read oracle inquiries. It was his meticulous copying, rather than brilliant insights, that made his name.

Unlike Forrer, Walther was eager for the job and made it clear that he wanted to devote the rest of his life to Chicago. So, with the job offer in hand he applied at the US consulate in Berlin for an immigrant’s visa. But getting a US visa then was as problematic as it can be today. His immigrant’s visa was denied, and he was told that he could only come as a visitor and the University needed to guarantee that he would return to Germany. Apparently, the consulate told him that he wasn’t qualified for a university job because he hadn’t been teaching. On August 20, 1930, he complained in a telegram to Breasted, “Cannot ten years’ scientific research at the museum and six volumes KUB pass for missing teachers’ work?”

Walther indicated that he really didn’t like the idea of moving to Chicago on a visitor’s visa, settling in, and then having to return to Germany and start the process all over again. The OI and the University laid Walther’s situation before the Immigration Service of the US Department of Labor and on September 3 got a ruling that Walther was eligible for a non-quota visa. Although this decision was forwarded to the consul in Berlin, on September 25 Walther reported that the consulate had turned him down for a non-quota visa. A few days later Walther communicated that he would now have to wait for a quota-visa and suggested that in the months he would have to wait, he could work exclusively for the CAD in the Berlin Museum, coming to Chicago on a visitor’s visa when he ran out of work to do. Needless to say, with the recent experience with Forrer in mind, the OI did not take up this suggestion. Walther added: “I tried to write English in my letters in order to prove my good intention. But in telegrams I henceforth shall avail myself of the German language because it seems to need a smaller number of words.” On October 1 the OI told Walther they had cabled the consul, asking him to issue Walther a temporary visitor’s visa. The next day Walther replied that he had just visited the consul, who remembered the request for an immigrant’s visa and said that in a fortnight he would know how many quota-visas had been declined and how many slots would be available. Finally, on October 9 Walther sent a brief telegram signed “Walther, immigrant” and boarded the steamship Albert Ballin, due to arrive in New York on Saturday, November 8.

Once settled in, Walther started by publishing an English translation of the Hittite laws (1931). With the expiration of Forrer’s contract, Walther was promoted to assistant professor of Hittite. On October 3, 1932, at 9:00 a.m. in OI room 318, Walther offered Elementary Hittite, the first class in Hittite at the University. In addition, a sequence of Hittite historical texts, legal texts, and religious texts was offered in autumn, winter, and spring. Walther would also offer “Cuneiform Historical Sources III, esp. Hittite.”
CHICAGO HOUSE IN ANKARA?

By 1932, five excavation seasons at Alişar later, Breasted was disappointed and ordered von der Osten to finish up and close the dig. His archaeologists might have found their pottery sequence but Breasted wanted more. He had been urging von der Osten to try to get the expired German concession to Boğazköy, but the Germans had won the day and reopened the dig in 1931. In correspondence in mid- and late April 1932, von der Osten and Breasted discussed where in Anatolia to excavate next. Breasted wanted von der Osten to find a site further to the east “in which monumental building with architectural sculptures is practiced.” Arslantepe was mentioned as ideal in case the site became available. Breasted was even negotiating with the Turkish authorities to build a branch of the OI in Ankara. Then, just a month later, he informed von der Osten that due to an unexpected diminution of OI funding—the Great Depression was beginning to affect even the Rockefellers—there would be no new site (and probably no Ankara Chicago House). All equipment not worth shipping to Chicago should be sold. Von der Osten replied that he could not sell anything since the depression had by now caused building activity in Turkey to come to almost a complete standstill and the country was awash in abandoned equipment. He had entrusted Chicago’s equipment to the German Institute for safekeeping. Archaeologists like Calvin McEwan and architect Richard Haines were to be transferred to other OI digs, which were soon found, as we will see shortly.
A final problem was that of Josef Reifenmüller, the Alişar camp superintendent—described as a combination of “doctor, stock expert, general factotum,” a “perfect book keeper” with “a remarkable talent for supervising workmen,” and “the camp mother.” Reifenmüller had been accused of embezzling. Von der Osten countered that due to this accusation he and Haines had gone through all of Reifenmüller’s accounts and found nothing amiss. At least at Alişar, he had been an honest and extremely useful employee. It is unknown what the accusation was based on and where it came from, but in 1933 Reifenmüller was hired to run the German excavation’s camp at Boğazköy. He was either exonerated or the Germans didn’t care.

The replacement for the Alişar campaigns had already offered itself in 1931 when the OI received a permit to excavate Çatal Höyük and Tell Judeidah in what was then Syria. The hope was that these sites would elucidate the next phase of Hittite civilization, the Iron Age Hittite successor states in Syria. Richard Martin was detached from the Anatolian expedition to set up the camp and begin a survey. Claude Prost of the (French) Syrian Department of Antiquities (and an expert on Islamic façade tiles) was named field director for 1932–33, assisted by Anatolian expedition architect Haines. In subsequent seasons Anatolian expedition alumnus McEwan directed (1933–38) the new project, assisted by Haines as well as Robert and Linda Braidwood.

Excavations in the Amuq, at Tell Judeidah, and Tell Tayinat, supplemented by other excavations, established once again a complete pottery chronology. But this time some monumental architecture was unearthed as well, and it revealed what the capital—Kunuluwa, of the Neo-Hittite state Patina—had looked like. The stone sculptures no-doubt would have pleased Breasted, but they came too late. In 1935, he died at the age of seventy.

While the excavations at Alişar wound down and the focus shifted to the northern Levant, Walther continued teaching at Chicago. However, on September 23, 1934, at 3:30 p.m., while attempting to cross Lake Shore Drive at 49th Street, he was struck by a southbound car driven by a twenty-year-old Indiana man. The police rushed him to Illinois Central Hospital, ten blocks south. He was unconscious and had no identification on him. It was not until the following day that he came to and could be identified. He had a concussion and was covered in cuts and bruises from head to toe but had no broken bones. When Breasted was able to visit him three days later, Walther was alert and clear minded but had difficulty speaking English. Breasted suggested he speak German, but in what seems typical, Walther replied: “I like to speak the language of the land where I belong. It is a good land and they have good police.” As Breasted later reported: “Walther himself is pathetically grateful for the attention he has received.” Breasted helped him understand his legal rights and secure his expenses from the other driver’s insurance. Walther never fully recovered from his accident, which no doubt diminished his scholarly output, but his class offerings continued as before. In 1934–35 and 1938, he offered the class once taught by Luckenbill, “Akkadian Texts from Boğazköy,” and he produced at least one PhD student, Robert S. Hardy, who wrote “A History of the Old Hittite Kingdom” (1937).

Arnold Walther died of a heart attack in May 1938, just shy of his fifty-eighth birthday.
A BRIEF INTERLUDE: JAY GELB

In the midst of the troubles with Forrer, the OI received a letter in 1929 from Italian Semiticist Levi della Vida at the University of Rome, asking them if they could find a position for a fine student that he had just produced, Ignace Jay Gelb, who as a Polish Jew had no chance of landing a job in Italy. Fortunately for all concerned, the OI hired Gelb as a research assistant. Although primarily an Assyriologist and working for the CAD, Gelb showed an interest in ancient Anatolia. Fascinated by foreign scripts, he was probably charmed by the local Anatolian “hieroglyphic” script. In the 1934–35 term, Gelb offered “Cappadocian Inscriptions,” a class on the so-called Old Assyrian texts. These were the records left behind by Assyrian merchants who had set up a trading network covering Central Anatolia in the period ca. 2000–1725 BC. Two years later, he offered “Hieroglyphic Hittite,” which he would continue to offer biannually. The term refers to the stone inscriptions written in a strongly pictographic script (hence the name “Hieroglyphic”) and associated with the Hittite kingdom and its successors. He also published the hieroglyphic and Old Assyrian epigraphic finds from the OI’s Hittite expeditions. At Walther’s death in 1938, Gelb, now a research associate and instructor, took over Walther’s Hittite courses, with the elementary and advanced courses in alternate years. After 1949 he devoted himself to Akkadian and linguistics, retiring in 1976.

THE FIRST REAL HITTITOLOGIST AT CHICAGO: HANS GÜTERBOCK

In 1948, Carroll C. Pratt, a professor of psychology at Princeton, who had spent 1945–47 as a professor at Ankara, tried to interest American universities in one of his former colleagues, Hittitologist Hans Gustav Güterbock. In his letters to the OI and the Carnegie Company, Pratt declared Güterbock “an invaluable addition to faculty,” “greatly admired and liked by his colleagues in Ankara,” “best as a research professor and a guide to advanced students,” “competent over the whole range of Near Eastern cultures, and . . . a remarkable linguist.” The assistant director said the OI was aware of Güterbock, but that there was no position available. However, the director Thorkild Jacobsen was to be in Turkey and would talk to Güterbock, so there was hope.

Güterbock was from a Christian family with Jewish ancestry. His grandfather Gustav was a banker, which allowed his father Bruno to get a PhD in linguistics (Königsburg, 1882), and to live as an independent scholar. Hans’s moth-
er, Grethe Auer, had a doctorate in literature from Bern, Switzerland, lived in the Jewish Mellah of Magadan (El Jadida), Morocco, from 1898 to 1903, and became a successful writer. Young Hans Gustav’s career was hardly surprising considering that his father was the secretary of the Deutsche Orientgesellschaft (German Oriental Society) from 1901 to 1936. Hans studied Assyriology and received his PhD at Leipzig under Benno Landsberger (1933). In 1926, while von der Osten and Forrer had their first adventures in the Anatolian heartland, he started taking Hittite courses with Hans Ehelolf in Berlin. He later worked as a research associate at the Berlin Museum under Ehelolf from 1933 to 1935, and just like Forrer and Walther before him, was given two volumes worth of hand copies of Hittite cuneiform fragments.

For the third year of renewed German excavations at Boğazköy, the epigrapher, Ehelolf, was prevented by poor health from going. So, Güterbock was to be sent. Except that this was 1933, and the person in charge of paying his fare said that he couldn’t pay because the Nazis would fire him if he did. He was fired anyway, and his Nazi replacement gave Güterbock the money, with the advice “Don’t come back.” He served as epigrapher in 1933, 1934, and 1935 until the Nazis noticed his ancestry, and the excavator, Kurt Bittel, was forced to replace Güterbock with Heinrich Otten, whose ancestors were acceptable to the Nazis. Unable to return to Germany, Güterbock found refuge in Turkey. Atatürk, Turkey’s new head of state, was eager to establish a Turkish higher education system modeled after European universities. To this end he sent promising young Turkish students to Germany to get their degrees, while hiring many exiled German academics. Güterbock thus became the first professor of Hittite at Ankara. Among other things, he was instrumental in putting together the Hittite Museum in a former covered bazar in Ankara. After the war, however, many young Turkish scholars, their new degrees in hand, returned expecting jobs in their homeland. Once more, Güterbock felt himself unwanted but with the OI unable to hire him then and there, it was not easy to find a new home. Güterbock spent a year as visiting professor in Uppsala, Sweden. But before the year was up, to Güterbock’s good fortune, Chicago professor of Assyriology and Elamitology George Cameron left for a position at the University of Michigan.

On January 26, 1949, the director, Jacobsen, offered Güterbock a visiting associate professorship for one year at the salary of $5,200 ($55,953 in 2019 money), with the hope that this could be made permanent later. He would be expected to revive Hittitology at Chicago, dormant “since the lamented death of Professor Arnold Walther,” while also teaching a two- or three-semester sequence in Western Asiatic History. Güterbock replied a month later, accepting in a letter including phrases such as “not only interested . . . but most grateful,” “great honor,” “delighted!” He began in October, and by December of that year, the OI recommended him for promotion to associate professor with tenure. Leaving aside Forrer—who never took up residence and therefore never taught at Chicago, and Walther whose primary job was that of editorial assistant to the Assyrian dictionary—with Güterbock, the University now had its first official Hittitologist.
“Having basically built the field themselves from scratch, Güterbock’s generation was one of generalists, covering not just philology, but also history, linguistics, archaeology, and art history.”

Having basically built the field themselves from scratch, Güterbock’s generation was one of generalists, covering not just philology, but also history, linguistics, archaeology, and art history. And, of course, since they all started out as Assyriologists, they were at home in many branches of Mesopotamian studies as well. While in Chicago, Güterbock published three extremely important works: editions of the Deeds of Šuppiluliuma I, the Ullikummi myth, and The Hittite Instruction for the Royal Bodyguard. This is in addition to over one hundred articles on a wide range of subjects. After the end of World War II, Güterbock also resumed his position as epigrapher for the Boğazköy excavations, now as co-epigrapher with Otten, a position he retained despite the shifts in his employment.

BACK TO TURKEY

Ever since the OI had discontinued the excavations at Alişar in Central Anatolia, Hittite archaeology had been somewhat neglected compared to other areas. This came to an end in the 1960s when Robert and Linda Braidwood started excavations at the site of Çayönü in eastern Turkey, in Diyarbakir province, the so-called Joint Istanbul-Chicago Prehistoric Project. Its goal was to understand “ancient ecological and cultural conditions within which plants and animals were domesticated and the so-called ‘food-producing revolution’ was achieved” (OI Annual Report 1970–71). At about the same time, 1968–70, Chicago responded to the call to quickly excavate sites in the upper Euphrates river valley—known to the Hittites as Isuwa—in eastern Turkey, before it was flooded because of a new dam. The site of Korucutepe was chosen because it had layers ranging from the early Chalcolithic (ca. 4500 BC) to the Seljuk and Mongol era (AD 1200–1400). The Hittites were represented with ceramics and all kinds of small finds, among which was a collection of seal impressions with Anatolian hieroglyphs. The latter were edited by Güterbock, who served as the expedition director. Archaeologist Maurits van Loon, a Dutch student at Columbia University, was field director.

THE SECOND COMING OF A HITTITE DICTIONARY: HARRY A. HOFFNER

In 1974, the OI learned that Harry A. Hoffner Jr., then associate professor of Hittite at Yale, was about to become available. Director John A. Brinkman, realizing that Güterbock would reach mandatory retirement in two years, quickly hired Hoffner before someone else did, beginning in the fall of 1974, thus overlapping with Güterbock for over a year.

Hoffner had been a student of Cyrus Gordon at Brandeis University, where he learned just about all languages of the ancient Middle East. After teaching at Wheaton College (1963–64), he returned to Brandeis (1964–69), and from there moved south, succeeding Albrecht Goetze as associate professor of Assyriology and Hittitology at Yale. Much to Hoffner’s shock, Yale claimed that his associate professorship (contrary to custom) did not include tenure and Hittitologists were, to this administrator, superfluous.
At Chicago, Hoffner started teaching Elementary Hittite for two years but soon took over all advanced classes from Güterbock, who retired in 1975. Meanwhile, Güterbock received two so-called Festschriften, or honorary volumes, one at his sixty-fifth and one at his seventy-fifth birthday, but for his seventieth, the staff of the Chicago Hittite Dictionary put together a “Farce-schrift” of funny and fake articles. The most memorable “article,” submitted by Hoffner, was by someone named Yuv ben Hadd. Güterbock realized that there was something important in the “author’s” name. He performed the most scholarly of gymnastics trying to analyze it: Hadd is, of course, Hadad, the Syrian storm-god—so Syria? No? OK—storm god—Teššub? Tarḫunt? Thunder and lightning? Meanwhile, his wife Frances was failing to suppress giggles.

HISTORY OF THE CHICAGO HITTITE DICTIONARY

Thus far, Hittite scholars working at the OI had followed their own research interests and had been working largely alone. But now with Hoffner freshly hired and Güterbock perhaps officially retired but still very active and coming into the Institute on a daily basis, the OI basically had two full-fledged Hittitologists for the price of one. This opened perspectives for a joint project. Hittitology was a young field, with new texts coming out of the ground every year. A real dictionary such as the one that Breasted had envisioned was a clear desideratum, the best one at this time being Johannes Friedrich’s Hethitisches Wörterbuch, which was more of a short glossary, and published in 1953. Already in 1948, Albrecht Goetze, an exile like Güterbock and professor at Yale, had tried to organize a new Hittite dictionary project based on international cooperation between the most prominent Hittite scholars of the day. But the combination of tiresome communications through snail mail and the company of too many leading scholars with strong opinions may have proved too much, and by the end of the 1950s the project had died.
To make up for the lack of a good dictionary, all Hittitologists created their own lexical files. Over the course of his career, Güterbock had made his own cards, sometimes standard size, sometimes on the back of pieces of correspondence or library slips. He transliterated by hand a section of text and underlined an interesting word in that section. If there was a second interesting word in that section, the transliteration was then written out again and the word underlined. Ordinary words did not get a file card. So when Güterbock was asked by the German publisher to do an update of Friedrich’s glossary, he declined since he felt his files were not systematic enough.

Hoffner, too, had been gathering his own files. He typed up several cards on a sheet of mimeograph paper, running off perhaps one hundred copies on the mimeograph machine, cutting the cards to 4 × 7 inches, and underlining every word, particle, and anything else considered interesting.

He now suggested that he and Güterbock team up to write a Hittite dictionary patterned after the CAD. It was specified that it would be based on all “published” texts because although Güterbock was co-epigrapher at Boğazköy and had access to most unpublished texts, the other epigrapher, Heinrich Otten, insisted that Güterbock could only use unpublished texts “in his own work” but not for the planned dictionary. Nevertheless, Güterbock and Hoffner decided that sufficient texts were published to make a useful dictionary. They put together a funding proposal and submitted it to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The project was planned to be completed in ten years. The NEH came through and on January 1, 1976, the Chicago Hittite Dictionary (CHD) Project began.

The first step was to augment Hoffner’s files, kept in his office, to cover all words in
all published texts. A PhD of Güterbock’s, Howard Berman (“Howie the Hittite”) was hired as research associate to aid Hoffner in transliterating texts. Berman made meticulous scores of the texts and then converted these onto handwritten cards.

In publishing the dictionary, it was decided to begin with the letter L. Just a few years before Güterbock and Hoffner decided on their CHD, Annelies Kammenhuber, professor in Munich, had started a new “Friedrich”: the Hethitisches Wörterbuch. This German project began with A, as any normal dictionary would, but Güterbock and Hoffner considered it not very useful to simultaneously analyze the same material all over again and by starting with L, scholars would have more words analyzed between the two dictionaries. Our first “fascicle,” as we call the installments in Chicago, was published in 1980.

With some of the original assistants moving on to other careers, it was time to renew. Hoffner wrote a progress report, collected reviews and praise from colleagues, came up with a budget, negotiated it with the OI and with the grants office at the University, and finally sent off the finished application of around a hundred pages to the NEH. Sixty plus duplicate copies needed to be xeroxed and collated, stapled, put into a large box, and dragged to the University post office. The application was successful! When the grant was renewed in 1982, the NEH acceded to the request for a second research associate, and Silvin Košak, a student from Lubljana (then Yugoslavia), was hired. His primary responsibility was writing first drafts of dictionary articles, which were then read and commented on by the rest of the staff and argued over and edited by Hoffner and Güterbock.

When Berman and Košak left, a string of young and newly minted PhDs followed in their footsteps: Richard Beal, Hoffner’s own student; Ahmet Ünal, Kammenhuber’s student at Munich; Theo van den Hout, from Amsterdam, the Netherlands; Silvia Luraghi from Pavia, Italy; and Billie Jean Collins, from Yale. When Collins departed in 1995 for a job as publisher with the Society of Biblical Literature, Oğuz Soysal, who had received his PhD in Germany, joined the project and stayed until 2018. Soysal is one of the world specialists on Hattian, a language spoken in northern Anatolia in the days of the Hittite kingdom but unrelated to any of the other known languages in the area.

The CHD is a comprehensive dictionary covering the entire lexicon known from published texts. Because Hittite is no longer a living language, the CHD is a passive dictionary—that is, it is meant to be used in translating and interpreting the source language (Hittite) into the target language (English) only. In such a field with native speakers no longer available, a top-quality dictionary is the most important tool of every philologist and an indispensable work of reference for historians and all others professionally involved in the study of the ancient Middle East. According to its reviewers, the CHD is a top quality dictionary.
GÜTERBOCK’S DEATH, THE END OF AN ERA

Although Güterbock had retired in 1976, he never stopped working and came in to the OI every day, at first on foot and later by taxi and wheelchair. When his eyesight was failing and two operations for cataracts left him seeing less than before and practically unable to read, we read to him—at first in his office, and then in his home. Not being able to look things up, he felt frustrated at what he could no longer remember, but he still knew and remembered more than those of us who were still sighted. We jokingly said he was the last native speaker of Hittite. He was working on the CHD at home with Hoffner the morning before he died at the age of ninety-one, March 29, 2000.

His obituary in the Chicago Tribune described him as “a formal man who wore dark suits and tailored shirts, omitting a tie from his ensemble only while at home.” His sons remember that while he was otherwise a good father, he had no clue about sports, building things, or repairing cars. His wife remembered: “He didn’t suffer fools lightly.” Even his successor and coeditor, Hoffner, had to endure the occasional “How could you, Harry!” in the margin of a dictionary draft. Scholarship “was his first love. It was work, work, work. Hittite, Hittite,” as his wife said.

THE OI RETURNS TO CENTRAL ANATOLIAN ARCHAEOLOGY

For years, art and archaeology of the Hittite kingdom had been underrepresented both in research and teaching. It was therefore decided to augment the philological strength of Güterbock and Hoffner with a true Anatolian archaeologist. The search committee’s picks were mostly archaeologists from Iraq, who because of the Iraq War had been forced to dig across the border in the Mesopotamian part of Syria and thus claimed to be Syro-Anatolianists. The only candidate digging in Anatolia was Aslıhan Yener, who was hired in 1993. Yener had received her PhD in 1980 at Columbia University. She had excavated the Early Bronze Age tin mining site at Kestel/Göltepe in southern Turkey, proving that in this period tin was produced in Anatolia and that already in the Early Bronze Age Anatolians were capable of utilizing rock-tin. After finishing her work at that site shortly after coming to Chicago, the OI received permission to reopen the Syro-Hittite Bronze Age site of Alalakh in Turkish Syria, codirected by Yener and David Schloen, professor of Syro-Palestinian archaeology. In 2005 Yener returned to Turkey and went to Koç University in Istanbul, taking the Alalakh project with her.

The Hittite Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, or CHD as we call it, is a comprehensive, bilingual Hittite-English dictionary. The CHD is not just a list of words and their meanings, but rather a lexicon of Hittite society that reflects its ideas and material world in all its aspects. A good dictionary is like an encyclopedia reflecting a culture through its lexicon. Published letter by letter, the CHD is a long-term project and the result of a painstaking process of cultural, historical, and lexical investigation. The CHD is the only such project in the English-speaking world. The CHD is published in printed form and, thanks to the World Wide Web, in electronic form as the eCHD, which also has Turkish meanings added to the English.
In 1993, the year Yener was hired, the OI returned to Central Anatolia. In that year, Chicago graduate Ronald Gorny successfully applied for a renewal of the old excavation permit of Alişar. Intensive survey and test trenches in the first season confirmed the Hittite presence there. Unfortunately, the permit was not extended, and in 1994 he was offered in compensation the site of Çadir Hüyük, just a stone-throw away from Alişar. Under the heading of the “Alişar Regional Project,” the digs continued with OI affiliation from 1998 to 2009, and from 2011 to the present, now under the direction of Gregory McMahon, another Chicago graduate, and Sharon Steadman.

Another site of OI involvement was that of Kerkenes Dağ, close to Çadir. In 1928, Schmidt had briefly dug there but had given up when the trenches did not yield any obvious Hittite material. The British archaeologist Geoffrey Summers reopened excavations in 1993, and OI Research Associate Scott Branting became codirector in 2004. With him the site became a showpiece of modern technology. Years of geophysical exploration of the site has revealed an intricate street map of this one-period site from the Phrygian kingdom, part of the realm of the famous King Midas, the man with the legendary golden touch. Kerkenes is important not only archaeologically but also in terms of the excavation team’s efforts to introduce renewable energy sources to this area—for the local population and to spur rural development.

THE CHD IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

In 2000, the same year that Güterbock passed away, Hoffner retired. Former research associate Theo van den Hout returned, now as professor and coeditor of the Hittite Dictionary, with Hoffner filling the role that Güterbock had played before with him. After funding the CHD for many years longer than the ten years initially requested, the NEH decided that we had had our fair share and discontinued their support. Since then, the CHD has been funded by the OI and several large donations from private sponsors. With the completion of the CAD, the Hittite Dictionary Project was allocated the large room formerly occupied by the files and lower level staff of our sister project. The dictionary files and library kept for many years in Hoffner’s office were moved upstairs, as were the desks and books from the CHD research associates’ room and the Güterbock files.

On March 10, 2015, Harry Hoffner passed away, completely unexpectedly, in Hilton Head Island, SC. Hoffner was a prolific scholar with interests that focused on lexicography and grammar. His lexicographic interest clearly speaks from his Alimenta Hethaeorum: Food Production in Hittite Asia Minor (1974), a detailed analysis of all terms that relate to foodstuffs and their role in Hittite society. With H. Craig Melchert he wrote the magisterial A Grammar of the Hittite Language (2008), and he also produced a volume of translations of Hittite Myths (1st ed. 1990 and 2nd ed. 1998) and Letters from the Hittite Kingdom (2009). Through the generosity of his wife, Winifred Hoffner, the OI received an important part of his books that now grace the Hittite Dictionary room as the “Harry A. Hoffner Jr. Library of the Chicago Hittite Dictionary.”
PRESENT AND FUTURE

The twenty-first century started with two important hires—those of Petra Goedegebuure, a linguist, in 2006, and of James Osborne in 2015, a new Anatolian archaeologist. Together with van den Hout, Goedegebuure and Osborne are able to offer a full program that does justice to the various aspects of Anatolian civilizations.

In August of 2017, over one hundred colleagues, archaeologists, and philologists alike—from the most senior scholars to students just getting started, coming from Japan, China, Australia, Israel, Turkey, Georgia, Poland, Denmark, Germany, the UK, Netherlands, Slovenia, France, Spain, Italy, and from many places within the US—descended on Chicago for the week-long 10th International Congress of Hittitology. This gathering takes place every three years and is the main meeting point of the field of Anatolian studies. Faculty, staff, and students worked hard to organize this conference and to make it a success.

Right now, in 2019, the Hittite dictionary that Breasted once dreamed of is a reality. We have finished the letters L, M, N, P, and S, and currently the T is being written. Once we reach Z, we will turn around to the beginning of the alphabet and cover A–K. Our work has considerably changed since the founding of the CHD in 1975. The most important development is the digitization of our field. Photos of practically all cuneiform texts, once a prized possession for the happy few, are now at the fingertips of every scholar. All kinds of applications allow us to ask questions of our material that once were considered impossible. Thanks to the collegiality and generosity of our colleagues in Mainz, Germany, our paper files have been complemented by a large chunk of electronic ones, and the coverage of published textual material is virtually complete.

Projects such as the CHD take a long time to complete. The writing of a dictionary is painstaking work that has to be carried out beside teaching, research, and service to the University. The CAD took ninety-one years to finish. Looking back at our first product, the letter L, we see how far we have come. Thousands of texts have been added, secondary literature has mushroomed, and many opinions, among which our own, keep changing. There are new words, new grammatical constructions, new meanings, new spellings, and new forms. In the old days, this was something one had to take in stride and wait for the next generation to tackle new discoveries in supplements and additions. That is no longer necessary. The computer age now makes it possible to publish updated versions of earlier work online, and that is what we plan to do in the near future.

Thus, 100 years after the founding of the OI, 128 years after the founding of the University and of what is now the University of Chicago’s Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 93 years since its Anatolian expedition began, 88 years after the first course in Hittite was taught at the OI, and 2 years after the 10th International Congress of Hittite Studies was hosted here, the OI is a thriving center for Hittite and Anatolian studies.
NORTHWEST SEMITICS IN THE OI:
RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LAST HALF CENTURY
DENNIS PARDEE

A generations-old fallacy among students interested in studying Hebrew, Aramaic, Phoenician/Punic, or Ugaritic, the primary languages belonging to the so-called Northwest Semitic group, is that this can be done “at” the Oriental Institute. Some might call it a distinction without a difference, but I prefer to say that these languages and civilizations may be studied “in” the Oriental Institute. This is because the OI is not a degree-granting body (so in fact no students study “at” the OI in the sense of gaining a degree there) and because there have been no primary faculty appointments in the OI in the field of Northwest Semitic, at least not over the past half century. On the other hand, all of the specialists in these areas who will be named here had an office in the OI and, until recently, the office of the Department of Near Eastern Languages, the arm of the degree-granting Division of Humanities where most students who study “in” the OI are registered, was located in the OI. Though it does not grant degrees, the OI has always been dedicated to teaching: there are two classrooms in the OI, and many of the offices are large enough for small classes to be offered in them. Research on the Northwest Semitic fields has been fostered not only by housing the relevant faculty but also by the heads of the Research Archives making every effort to cover the Northwest Semitic fields, with the exception of Hebrew Bible exegesis and its various critical approaches because of space and budget limitations. Thus, despite the somewhat tangential nature of Northwest Semitic studies for the OI, it has made an enormous contribution by housing the teaching and the research that are done in those areas under the formal auspices of NELC and Humanities and in providing at least partial funding for the projects of faculty associated with the OI. It must be added that for Biblical Hebrew, the best known of the ancient Northwest Semitic languages, there has always been a close relationship between the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament faculty in the Divinity School and the Northwest Semitic specialists in NELC, with the latter providing instruction in basic Biblical Hebrew and the closely related languages, in other Semitic languages such as Akkadian or Arabic, in Comparative Semitic linguistics, and of course in those areas in which the OI has concentrated from the beginning: Egyptology, Assyriology, the archaeology of the entire Middle East, and more recently, the relatively young discipline of Hittite studies. Thus, over the years, many Divinity School students—not to mention students of Linguistics, Anthropology, History, or Comparative Literature—have studied “in” the Oriental Institute, whether concentrating in one of the core OI fields or in one of the areas of Northwest Semitics.

When I began my studies exactly a half century ago (autumn quarter 1968), Raymond A. Bowman was teaching elementary Biblical Hebrew for his last time, still using the *Method and Manual* authored...
by the founder of the University of Chicago, William Rainey Harper. Bowman was also the Aramaist of his time and devoted a good deal of his research to the Aramaic epigraphs on the Persepolis Fortification tablets (see the contribution in this volume by Alizadeh and Stolper).

Stanley Gevirtz, my advisor, offered courses in advanced Biblical Hebrew, the history of Palestine and Syria, and as his schedule permitted, in the other Northwest Semitic languages. In my fourth year, he offered a course in Ugaritic that sparked my career-long concentration on the texts in that language.

Two specialists in Aramaic studies succeeded each other after Bowman’s retirement: Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Stephen A. Kaufman. Each left after a two-year stint, but they subsequently cooperated on one of the foremost lexical projects in Aramaic studies: the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon, still progressing today and permanently available online as it evolves.

Gevirtz left the University of Chicago in 1972 for Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles, and died tragically young in 1988 at the age of fifty-nine. After Gevirtz’s departure and before his own, Kaufman saw me through the completion of my dissertation, on a topic in Ugaritic grammar (“The Preposition in Ugaritic”).

Though I did not do formal coursework with Norman Golb, he administered my comprehensive examination in postbiblical Hebrew and, when he found the results lamentable, offered to tutor me in Mishnaic Hebrew and to allow me to participate in his courses in the Hebrew texts of the so-called Dead Sea Scrolls. Golb went on to a long career at the University of Chicago, retiring only in 2016, and though his primary appointment was in NELC, he was also a voting member of the OI, an honor that was extended to me some years later. Golb is a scholar of remarkable breadth. He considers his principal area of expertise to be Judeo-Arabic—that is, texts written in the Arabic language but in Hebrew script—but he has published mainly on the Dead Sea Scrolls, on Khazarian Jewish texts, and on the Jews of medieval Europe. He had the
acumen to observe that a place-name previously read as “Rome” in a number of medieval manuscripts in fact referred to Rouen, and some of these references led him to propose that a Jewish school must have been located there. Shortly after publishing these observations, he had the great good fortune for this school to be discovered by accident during renovation of the parking lot at the town hall in Rouen. This led to a book on the Jews of medieval Normandy, first published in French, then in English. Though he taught the texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls primarily from epigraphic and philological perspectives (determining the basic readings and interpretations)—and thus instilled in generations of students the understanding that a text cannot be interpreted until it has been properly read—his published work was primarily of a historical nature, attempting to determine the origin of these texts and the identity of the inhabitants of the settlement at Khirbet Qumran, near which most of the scrolls were discovered. For him, the texts were highly diverse, and they could not all have been written by a “community of monks,” a phrase in common use in the first decades after the original discovery of the scrolls in 1948. Most of the texts must have been brought from elsewhere and hidden in the caves where they were found, primarily during the turmoil of the Roman invasions. The origins of the texts would thus have been as diverse as were the Jewish populations fleeing the invader. The settlement itself he took to be a fortress. Though his views flew in the face of the commonly accepted historical reconstructions of the time and were highly controversial, much of the scholarly community has gravitated in the direction pointed out by Golb, most notably in accepting the diverse nature of the texts themselves.

Throughout his career—indeed, before becoming a major contributor to the discussion on the origins of the Dead Sea Scrolls and of the settlement at Khirbet Qumran—one of Golb’s principal interests was in the texts from the Cairo Geniza, which included many in Judeo-Arabic. The texts represent the contents of the repository for sacred texts (a “geniza”) in the synagogue in Old Cairo; when wholesale removal of these texts began in the very late nineteenth century, they had been accumulating for a millennium. These did not only represent disused Torah scrolls but many other types of documents, including mundane accounts useful for the reconstruction of socioeconomic history. It is not without irony that the OI acquired seven of these documents from an antiquities dealer in 1932, but Golb was unaware of their existence until shortly before his retirement. They came (back) to light when a museum exposition on Old Cairo entitled *A Cosmopolitan City: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Old Cairo* was put on in the Oriental Institute (accompanied by a catalog edited by Tasha Vorderstrasse and Tanya Treptow, *Oriental Institute Museum Publications*, vol. 38, 2015). It is fitting that the catalog entries for these seven documents were prepared by Michael Wechsler,
one of Golb's last PhD students (pp. 116–29 in the catalog just cited, accompanied by excellent color photographs).

After this mention of documents held by the OI that fit directly with one of Golb’s principal interests, a smaller collection of texts of a related nature but quite different in origin may be mentioned briefly. The OI museum holds four documents of Samaritan origin, three pages from a fourteenth-century Torah codex, two missing pages from a fuller triglot Torah codex (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic) held in the British Library and dated to approximately 1300 ce, a portion of a liturgical collection, and a complete Torah scroll of much more recent date (late nineteenth century). The first two of these texts are currently being prepared for publication by one of our current PhD students, Joseph Cross, who has prepared a preliminary report for the Oriental Institute News & Notes, no. 242 (summer, 2019), illustrated with excellent color photographs.

I noted above that my interest in Ugaritic studies began with a course taught by Gevirtz during the 1971–72 academic year and that I went on to do a dissertation in the field. I have also had an interest in ancient epistolography—in particular the pre-exilic Hebrew letters—and in the nature and structuring principles of Hebrew and Ugaritic poetry; indeed, my first book was on the first topic and the third on the other (the function of parallelism in the two corpora). My career took a sharp turn, however, when I was granted a Fulbright fellowship to teach Ugaritic in Aleppo, Syria, during the 1980–81 academic year, with a good deal of free time to collate Ugaritic tablets in both Aleppo and Damascus and, for that matter, in the Louvre on my way to and from Syria. During that year I became good friends with Pierre Bordreuil, epigrapher for the Ugaritic texts discovered by the French excavations at Ras Shamra, the site excavated from 1929 to the present where large numbers of tablets dating to the Late Bronze aged (mid-fourteenth to early twelfth century) have been discovered. The majority of these texts are in Akkadian, the international *lingua franca* of the time, but many are in a previously unattested script and language. These texts were rapidly deciphered because the script is cuneiform—but alphabetic in nature—hence consisting of a relatively small number of signs (thirty), and because the language was fairly closely related to Hebrew and Phoenician. It was dubbed “Ugaritic” after the ancient name of the city that became Tell Ras-Shamra. In 1984, Bordreuil invited
me to join the French team and, until his death in 2013, we authored singly or jointly a good number of publications, including—under both our names—a catalog of all inscribed objects discovered at Ras Shamra through 1988 as well as the edition of the Ugaritic texts discovered at Ras Shamra and the neighboring site of Ras Ibn Hani during the last decades of the twentieth century. Under my own name I completed the reedition of texts by literary type (equine medical texts, mythological texts of a peculiar nature that I dubbed “para-mythological,” ritual texts, and—a career-long effort that is finally nearing completion—more than a hundred letters). We also jointly authored a manual of Ugaritic, first in French, then in English, where the emphasis is on philological and epigraphic tools: a grammar followed by a selection of texts for each of which a photograph, hand copy, transcription, and annotated translation are provided. I do homage here not only to the French, who were kind enough to accept cet étranger (this foreigner) as a regular member of the team, but also to a long line of directors of the Oriental Institute and deans of the Division of Humanities, who granted me the resources necessary to travel regularly to Syria and to France and who—in this case the OI—provided for the printing out of my tablet photographs done on film before digital photography came to the fore. More recently, the OCHRE database platform pioneered by J. David Schloen has allowed for a new project under my formal direction, the Ras Shamra Tablet Inventory, though in fact Miller Prosser, a NELC PhD on an Ugaritic topic, conceived of the project and runs it. The long-term goal of RSTI (nicknamed “Rusty”) is to make the tablets discovered at Ras Shamra readily available in digital form on a platform available online and in various formats (photograph, hand copy, transcription . . .). My fumbling beginning with very traditional epigraphic tools is thus being carried on in proper twenty-first century form by Prosser and Rusty.

Finally, in a new chapter in the study of Northwest Semitic in the Oriental Institute, the renewed excavations of the Turkish site of Zincirli—launched by David Schloen of the Oriental Institute over a decade ago and now run jointly by him and a graduate of NELC, Virginia Herrmann, now at the university of Tübingen—have, during the first decade of excavations, unearthed three inscriptions that may be identified as Aramaic in character but show varying dialectical features, as well as five small texts of which the linguistic
identification is uncertain: three stele fragments, an inscribed seal, and a jar inscription. As the resident Northwest Semitist, I have been tasked with the publication of these texts and have associated with me several NELC students: Samuel L. Boyd, Humphrey H. Hardy II, and Benjamin D. Thomas for the stele fragments, and Madadh Richey for the seal and jar fragments, under her name, and under both our names the Aramaic stele fragment and the most recent discovery: a cosmetic plaque inscribed with a magical/medical inscription. The well-preserved inscribed stele discovered in 2008 has already found a place in the overviews of Aramaic culture and religion and was the centerpiece of an Oriental Institute exposition in 2014, with another beautifully produced catalog, edited by Herrmann and Schloen (In Remembrance of Me: Feasting with the Dead in the Ancient Near East, Oriental Institute Museum Publications, vol. 37).

RIGHT: Digital reconstruction of memorial stele of Katumuwa (ca. 735 BC) from Zincirli.
THE OI’S EXPEDITION TO MEGIDDO, 1925–39
ERIC H. CLINE

The Oriental Institute’s excavations at the ancient site of Megiddo, better known to some as biblical Armageddon, began in large part because Lord Edmund Allenby used James Henry Breasted’s *Ancient Records of Egypt* volumes to help him win a major victory at the site during World War I, in September 1918. Abandoning the military plan of attack sent to him from London, Allenby used Breasted’s translation of Thutmose III’s battle tactics from 1479 BC to successfully emulate them 3,400 years later. After the war, when Breasted was looking for a site that the new institute could excavate, Allenby suggested Megiddo. And so it came to pass.

During the course of fifteen years, from 1925 to 1939, and under the leadership of three successive field directors (Clarence Fisher, P. L. O. Guy, and Gordon Loud), the team exposed portions of twenty major strata dating back to the Neolithic period. They introduced a number of innovations over the years, including the sustained use of balloon photography, Munsell color charts, an elaborate small railway and chute system for transporting excavated dirt off the mound, and code books for sending cablegrams.

Despite the fact that most of the staff members were not formally trained as archaeologists, but rather as architects, geologists, and the like, as a whole they were among the best excavators working in the region at the time. Their discoveries are justifiably famous, including stables, ivories, and an impressive water tunnel. The team often made the news with their discoveries, beginning with a cable sent by Guy to Breasted in June 1928, announcing that they had found “Solomon’s stables.” This catapulted the site into the limelight, where it has remained ever since. Ironically, discussions about the stables and who built them have also continued to the present day.

The initial permit to dig at the site was granted in 1920, exactly one hundred years ago, although the actual project did not begin until 1925. After an initial pledge of $60,000 to cover one season of excavation, John D. Rockefeller Jr. eventually agreed to fund the expedition’s first five years at a total cost of $215,000, which is approximately the equivalent of $3,000,000 today.

At first, the expedition members lived in tents, though these were fairly luxurious, with white bed sheets, woven grass rugs, and washstands for each person. The dig house was constructed as soon as possible, within the first year, and then renovated and enlarged a few years later. One visitor subsequently noted its opulence, stating “It was worth going there just to see how an expedition can be conducted when money is no object,” and noting in particular the tennis court, the marble windowsills, and the large bathrooms, as well as the rooms devoted specifically to photography, drawing, and storage for the artifacts that they were
finding. It was during the initial construction of the dig house that the well-known fragmentary inscription of Pharaoh Sheshonq I, dating to ca. 945–925 BC, was found in a back-dirt pile on the mound, next to a trench that had been dug earlier during the excavations of Gottlieb Schumacher from 1903–05.

Great attention was also paid to the care and feeding of the Chicago archaeologists right from the beginning, with Fisher arranging for five-course lunches and seven-course dinners, plus several additional breaks for tea, even when they were initially living in the tents. Guy continued the tradition of multiple daily tea breaks and large quantities of food, but the extravagance and waste of time was severely curtailed when Loud took over in 1935, in part because of budgetary constraints but also because of the difference in his style of leadership.

During the first few years of the expedition, malaria took an unexpectedly large toll, to the extent that at one point there was nobody up and about in order to greet the British high commissioner when he came to visit. The first director, Clarence Fisher, suffered in particular, and was relieved of his position as field director in 1927 in part because of his health problems.

Over the years, the expedition had its share of additional problems, mostly relating to the personnel. This led to continuous changes in the junior staff, most of them sent by Breasted from Chicago, often without consulting the directors beforehand, but it also included the appointment of P. L. O Guy as the second field director (1927–34) and Gordon Loud as the third field director (1935–39), as neither Fisher nor Guy met Breasted’s exacting standards.
The expedition began with a survey of the site during the fall of 1925, with four participants—Clarence Fisher and his nephew Stanley; Daniel Higgins, the surveyor; and Edward DeLoach, Higgins’s assistant. When digging began during the spring of 1926, they were supposed to have been joined by another four team members, but there was only one—John Payne Kellogg, a recent graduate from Yale, who became Breasted’s “eyes and ears,” reporting back to him on the various developments. The work proceeded slowly, in large part because of problems between Fisher and Higgins. Eventually, Breasted fired Higgins when Breasted came to visit during the season, after which work proceeded more smoothly.

Fisher was subsequently reassigned by Breasted one year later, to a consulting position, and Guy was appointed field director in his place in April 1927. Guy then led the expedition for the next seven years, until he was fired in turn in August 1934 and later replaced by Loud, who directed the work until its end after the spring 1939 season. The team lived at the dig house almost all year round, with time off for vacations, and thus were able to conduct two field seasons per year—one in the fall and one in the spring. They frequently employed as many as two hundred or more local workmen, all under the direction of Egyptian qufts who came for each season.

Fisher and Guy both conducted horizontal excavations at Megiddo, first exposing and then stripping off the strata one by one, beginning with Stratum I at the top. This proved to be an expensive and time-consuming process, which also left nothing for future archaeologists to check as corroboration. As time went on, Breasted grew increasingly impatient
and frustrated with the slow pace of excavation and even slower pace of publication, which were high on his list of complaints when he finally fired Guy.

Eventually, under Loud, who had been transferred from directing the excavation of Khorsabad in Iraq, the team switched to vertical excavations in selected portions of the site, including in Area BB, where they dug all the way down to bedrock and established the “skeletal stratigraphy” of the site, as Loud put it. They now had levels from the Neolithic right through the beginning of the Hellenistic period, at which point habitation on the mound ceased for some unknown reason; the subsequent Roman occupation of the area took place off the mound.

Beginning at the top of the mound and going down through the different layers, Strata I–III cover the Persian, Neo-Babylonian, and Neo-Assyrian periods. Strata IV and V, which date to the Israelite period, have been the focus of much discussion over the years, for the Chicago excavators as well as right up to the present day. Both were eventually split into two phases, A and B, as were many of the other strata that came earlier.

Guy thought that the stables, which belonged to Stratum IVA, dated to the time of Solomon, but now they are seen by many to date to the time of Omri and Ahab or perhaps even later. Prominent scholars, such as Albright and Wright, later suggested that Strata IVB and VA went together; eventually Yadin proposed that it was this period that dated to the time of Solomon, but this has also now been called into question by some archaeologists, who would date them instead to the time of Omri and Ahab (placing IVA in the time of Jeroboam II).

Stratum VIA, burnt and likely ravaged by an earthquake, is thought to have been either the last of the Canaanite cities or the first of the Israelite cities, while Stratum VII is dated to the Amarna Age in the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries BC, ending in collapse at the close of the Late Bronze Age, along with the rest of the region. Stratum VIII (or perhaps IX) is thought to possibly be the city captured by Thutmose III in the fifteenth century BC, while Strata X and earlier stretch back through the Middle Bronze Age to the Early Bronze Age and thence into the Chalcolithic and Neolithic periods.

The Great Depression eventually had a financial effect on the expedition, as it did on the Oriental Institute in general, though matters did not come to a head until after Breasted’s sudden death in December 1935, while returning from a visit to Megiddo and the other Oriental Institute sites in the Middle East. In May 1936, the order was given to terminate the excavation and to liquidate the dig house and all its possessions. However, because of the beginning of the Arab Revolt (1936–39), it was decided to postpone the fire sale and eventually additional money was found at the last moment, which allowed them to continue for another few seasons. It was during this “last gasp” of time that they discovered the famous ivories, were able to dig down to bedrock, and uncovered several important structures, including the palace of Stratum VII.
The two major publications covering the field seasons are *Megiddo I*, documenting the 1926–34 seasons, and *Megiddo II*, documenting the 1935–39 seasons. The latter was written by Gordon Loud, but ironically neither of the first two field directors was very prolific in terms of publishing. As a result, it was two junior staff members, Robert Lamon and Geoffrey Shipton, who published the first volume, covering the years directed by Fisher and Guy. In fact, Lamon and Shipton wrote or coauthored as many volumes as the three directors combined. All told, the volumes written by the various team members included specific studies of the ivories, the famous water tunnel, early pottery, and cult objects and buildings, as well as the *Megiddo I* and *II* volumes. All of the numerous publications are well-known and are still used, and debated, by archaeologists working in the region today.

The dig came to an end after the spring 1939 season, despite Loud’s valiant efforts to enlist personnel for a field season in the fall. Thereafter, when he himself joined in the war effort, the dig was put on hold, although they were provided assurances by the British Mandate government in Palestine that they would have the right to begin excavations again up to two full years after hostilities ceased and World War II ended. However, that never came to pass, and soon after a battle that was fought at Megiddo during the Israeli War of Independence in May 1948, the dig house was looted and then caught fire.

A settlement was eventually reached between the Israeli government and the University of Chicago, with compensation awarded for loss and damages. In January 1955, the land, and what remained of the dig house, was signed over by the Oriental Institute to the Israeli Department of Antiquities and Museums for the nominal sum of one dollar. Thus ended Chicago’s involvement at Megiddo, exactly thirty years after the first team from the Oriental Institute began work at the site.
FURTHER READING

Megiddo Publications Resulting from the OI’s Excavations


Author’s note: Much of the material for this essay is drawn from the author’s forthcoming book on the Oriental Institute’s excavations at Megiddo, to be published by Princeton University Press in Spring 2020; full references can be found there.
THE OI AND NUBIA
BRUCE B. WILLIAMS & LISA HEIDORN

The Oriental Institute Nubian Expedition’s eleven operations in the field, and over twenty years’ work in laboratory, office, and library have been a continuous journey into the unexpected, and sometimes the entirely unknown, very much because of the way Nubia is viewed.

Nubia, in northeast Africa and south of Egypt, occupies an ambivalent place in the study of the ancient world. Except for the Bible, ancient civilizations other than Greece and Rome were long considered worthy of study only if they were thought to contribute to the rise of the West. Although more a posture to attract public attention and support than a real belief, the viewpoint of core versus periphery affected our view of the world, ancient and modern. Nowhere is this truer than for Nubia, which has been called a “Corridor to Africa” in the title of a book that remains in the canon of texts used in Nubian Studies. The concept has more fallacies than words, for Nubia and Egypt are firmly in Africa, culturally as well as geographically, and Nubia is the home of distinctive cultures of high achievement. It is truly traversed by the Nile, but desert routes lead out in north-south and east-west directions, connecting Nubia with regions as distant as East and West Africa. Like all large countries it was a land traversed by traders, travelers, nomads, migrants and soldiers, but it was always much more than a complex of routes. Nubia, seen as a country to be passed through, has challenged its study for two centuries and made its exploration episodic and unsystematic, a situation that is righting only slowly.
Nubia was centered on the Middle Nile, otherwise known as the Cataract Nile, that extends from the confluence of the Blue and White Niles at Khartoum, passing over six cataracts, to Aswan. It is the greatest water source in the Sahara, and its very openness is a mighty attraction. In places there is alluvium drawn from Ethiopia, but here it is not continuous as it is in Egypt. The productive alluvium sometimes exists on both sides but often on just one side or the other, and sometimes there is desert on both banks, making a string of oases. All could be nodes of settlement, and the larger ones were centers of culture.

Unlike Egypt, whose single cultural development can be traced continuously for over four millennia, Nubia contained a variety of cultures, and developments in any one region were not always continuous. No one region had such a great potential that it was a permanent center, nor was the dominance of one culture ever so complete as to exclude diversity detectable in the archaeology.

The Oriental Institute has played a very significant role in the archaeology of Nubia. Without a specific institutional commitment, it has nevertheless provided major impetus at key points in the progress of major campaigns there, not only for archaeology, but also to conserve some of Nubia’s greatest treasures. In the process, it has created a substantial publication series; it has amassed and displayed one of the three major collections of Nubian antiquities in North America, a collection that was almost entirely acquired through excavation and agreed division as suggested by UNESCO.
Discovering New Pasts: The OI at 100

Right: OI sites in Nubia.
PRELUDE, BREASTED IN NUBIA

Almost a decade and a half before there was an Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago, James Henry Breasted made two major journeys by boat down the Middle Nile (see image below left). This is the region of the river from the junction of the Blue and White Niles at Khartoum to Aswan, also known as the Cataract Nile after the six stretches of rapids where zones of hard igneous rocks cross the river's course.

Breasted, of course, was interested in inscriptions and in generally sizing up the opportunities for research in Sudan, newly reopened to the outside world by the Anglo-Egyptian reconquest of 1898. Unusually for the time, Breasted was accompanied by his wife and son. He went to Nubia twice, first in 1905–06, to record inscriptions in Lower Nubia—the region from the Sudan frontier to Aswan—a formidable undertaking because of the wealth of monuments, especially those at Abu Simbel. A second season had him traveling from Khartoum to Wadi Halfa with photographer Horst Schliephack and the legendary artist Norman de Garis Davies, the academic high point being the discovery of the great victory inscription of Thutmose I at Tumbs. Well supplied as they were, Breasted still had to hunt birds to add to the diet, while nights on the river were often disturbed by a “carnival of rats” (see image below right). Breasted’s projected third season in Nubia was canceled, and he stayed on leave in Switzerland for months. The cancellation had been based on the advice to the supporting donor that Assyria and Babylonia were more important to Western Civilization than Egypt, which was played out in the later expansive projects of the Oriental Institute in the Middle East.
THE HIGH DAM AND THE NUBIAN EMERGENCY

In the end, Egypt was not abandoned for exploration, but Nubia was until 1959. In 1958 the USSR had confirmed a billion-dollar loan to build a High Dam (Sadd el-'Aali) south of Aswan, a sum much larger than an offer from the US and Britain. UNESCO and the government of the United Arab Republic agreed on the need for a massive effort to salvage the cultural heritage of Nubia, both through archaeology and by protecting monuments, and they thus published an appeal in February 1960. Although there had been smaller efforts due to the heightening of the old Aswan Dam in 1907–11—which resulted in the flooding of the temple of Philae and led to widespread dismay—and in the 1930s, the scale of this challenge was unprecedented. Two faculty members at the Oriental Institute, John A. Wilson and Keith C. Seele, quickly emerged as major leaders in the salvage effort. Wilson concentrated his efforts on organization and support of the US National Committee, while Seele, though not an archaeologist, traveled to Nubia to evaluate potential sites.

BEIT EL WALI AND BAB KALABSHA

Later in 1960, Seele had secured the collaboration of the Schweizerisches Institut für Bauforschung und Altermuskunde and its director, Herbert Ricke. In addition, the entire staff of Chicago House was to join in the first season; the concession chosen included the temple of Ramesses II at Beit el Wali, which had never been completely documented. It was as though two expeditions worked at once, the epigraphic and the archaeological-architectural, the latter studying a late shrine complex and a series of cemeteries that belonged to the Blemmyes, a desert people who played a major and famous role in the disturbances of late antiquity in the third, fourth, and fifth centuries AD.

Living was fairly reasonable for the 1960–61 season. Seele had rented an old Thomas Cook & Son side-wheeler, the Memnon, the same boat that later starred as the Karnak in the film Death on the Nile, upstaging even Peter Ustinov! Being kind of cranky due to wear and tear, it was tough to keep her going, and she burned an oil known locally as mazut, a heavy, partly refined oil now made and used mainly in Russia and Central Asia.

Issues soon arose. The response to the appeal had been overwhelming, and ultimately over sixty expeditions took
part. The expense soaked up the entire fieldwork budgets of whole research institutes, including the Oriental Institute. This situation left archaeologists working elsewhere in the Middle East without resources to pursue their own projects. Because the excavation work was salvage, and not directed toward an academic problem-oriented research agenda, there were objections to the campaign that was taking place in Egypt and Sudan. There was even a certain willingness expressed publicly to just let the great temples and other cultural remains be flooded without salvaging information or acting to preserve the monuments. But through creative thinking, Professor Pinhas Delougaz of the Oriental Institute noted the money produced by the sustained food aid given to the UAR for Egypt (Public Law 480, Food for Peace, 1954). The food was free, but the UAR paid for transport in funds that could only be used in Egypt and Sudan, and there was a hefty surplus. Delougaz suggested Seele apply for these funds, which he successfully did, resulting in enough funding for the rest of the Oriental Institute’s excavations in the salvage campaign.

**FIRST SEASON IN SUDAN: SERRA EAST 1961–62**

While this new resource was consolidated, work went on. The Oriental Institute had committed to excavations in Sudan as well as Egypt, and the next season in 1961–62 saw the Memnon splashing upstream to the Middle Kingdom fortress of Serra East, where George Hughes directed the expedition. Charles Nims was the photographer, Myrtle Nims acted as the house manager, Ronald Williams of Toronto and Labib Habachi were archaeologists, and James Knudstad served as architect and archaeologist. The site and concession were challenging. While not the largest of Senwosret III’s forts, Serra East (Khesef-Medjay, translated as “Repelling the Medjay”) was big.

**TOP CENTER:** Abu Simbel before removal. Photo: Keith C. Seele. **MIDDLE CENTER:** Philae before the dam. Photo: Bruce Williams. **BOTTOM CENTER:** The Memnon and Memnon deck chairs. Photo: James E. Knudstad. **RIGHT:** Eastern Desert Ware excavated near Bab Kalabsha.
ABOVE: Panorama of Serra East Fortress.
Comprised of photos by James E. Knudstad.
Not only that, atop the earlier remains stood medieval buildings, including four churches, and numerous houses and workshops. East of the fort was a group of monumental Nubian tombs (image opposite), the last of which was a pyramid, while far to the south was a Nubian cemetery of stone tumuli from a time just preceding the fortress. All of this had to be dug credibly in a season or two by a small professional team, most of whom were not archaeologists, and about a hundred Nubian workmen supervised by ten or so experienced foremen from Quft in Upper Egypt. They managed to excavate the cemeteries and outline much of the fort in the first season, but they were certainly not finished.

**ABU SIMBEL TO THE SUDAN FRONTIER, 1962–64**

Seele, who had been absent with illness, returned to set up the next season, again in Egyptian Nubia. There had been some confusion about concessions and his original choice, Arminna, was assigned to the University of Pennsylvania-Yale expedition under William Kelly Simpson.

Seele rather reluctantly accepted a concession to the south, extending from the temples of Abu Simbel to the Sudan frontier, and including the villages of Qustul and Adindan on the east bank of the river, and Ballana on the west bank. The area had been previously explored by Walter Emery and Laurence Kirwan, with spectacular finds from the Nobadian royal tumulus tombs of the fourth and fifth centuries AD, but further surveys two years before had resulted in the recommendation that “further excavation [in the area] was not recommended.” It was advice Seele emphasized in lectures and print. It is fortunate that this advice was not heeded.

Seele purchased an old steamer in 1962, the *Fostat*, getting the engines removed to increase available space and free the expedition from engine
“The Nubian royals had been buried not just with a wealth of crowns, jewels, and weapons, but also with both human and animal companions.”

maintenance, and also a baby-blue jeep to explore the large new concession. Organization was much the same, but the team was younger, and the most experienced archaeologist was Knudstad. The first strategy was to explore around the tumuli of Qustul to find out whether they were just huge mounds or parts of complexes, the latter of which turned out to be true. The Nubian royals had been buried not just with a wealth of crowns, jewels, and weapons, but also with both human and animal companions. The human burials were commemorated by rows of chapels erected north of the tumuli, with libation tables, and there were also pits with the dismembered remains of horses. They soon came upon a very large Meroitic cem
Area of Research | Nubia

etery of almost seven hundred tombs, which dated ca. 200 BC–AD 300. Knudstad, trained in the painstaking tradition of Mesopotamian architectural excavation, worked systematically, but Seele was impatient to explore areas of the concession previously untouched.

In this, Seele did something unusual. Overwhelmingly, archaeologists had shied away from exploring within Nubian villages and towns, which were not organized into compact units, but were long strips of large compounds extending along the arable land next to the Nile. Occasionally they were separated: one strip closer to the Nile, one farther away, above the occasionally disastrous floods which had destroyed houses lower down only a few years before. Such was the case at Qustul and Adindan. Seele, along with the little blue jeep, began exploring to the south of the great tumuli, looking for sites between the modern houses of Qustul. He found neither settlements nor large cemeteries, but under the sand and debris of the village he found scattered clusters of tombs of A-Group (fourth millennium BC), earlier New Kingdom (ca. 1550–1300 BC), and Nobadian X-Group date (late fourth–sixth century AD). Some of the A-Group tombs, though robbed, were quite large and had an unusual shape that indicated they were originally very rich, though now thoroughly plundered, while one of the New Kingdom tombs was also rich, containing the most graceful object found in Nubia, a bronze caryatid mirror. The season ended with the start of work on two C-Group (ca. 2000–1550 BC) stone cairn-cemeteries in the north part of Adindan.

“... one of the New Kingdom tombs was also rich, containing the most graceful object found in Nubia, a bronze caryatid mirror.”
“However, that cemetery, together with the one at Qustul, made up one of the largest bodies of Meroitic material found in Nubia.”
For the next season, projected to be the last, there were to be two operations. One, with the senior staff, would continue north of the Sudan border; the other, headed by Knudstad, would complete work at Serra East and excavate a new, equally huge site: the fortress of Dorginarti. Seele began the work on the West Bank, in another Meroitic cemetery, this one of later date, i.e., second and third centuries AD, and a Meroitic settlement. The settlement he had to quickly give up, because the West Bank had large sand dunes that covered the area too deeply. However, that cemetery, together with the one at Qustul, made up one of the largest bodies of Meroitic material found in Nubia. These two compact sites enabled the construction of the first clear chronology of Meroitic occupation in northern Nubia.

By early 1964 Seele returned to the East Bank, where he resumed operations in the C-Group cemeteries, again unearthing such a large body of material that the chronology of the culture created by Manfred Bietak could be verified. He made his greatest discovery, Cemetery L, in February. This was a group of thirty spectacularly wealthy tombs of A-Group date (before Egypt’s First Dynasty) whose size, design, and royal contents upended our understanding of this early period in Nubia.

“He made his greatest discovery, Cemetery L, in February. This was a group of thirty spectacularly wealthy tombs of A-Group date (before Egypt’s First Dynasty) whose size, design, and royal contents upended our understanding of this early period in Nubia.”
QASR EL-WIZZ 1965

The site of Qasr el-Wizz (“Palace of the Flying Goose”) is located on the west bank on a high bluff almost at the border of Egypt and Sudan and just north of Faras, which could be seen clearly from the monastery to its south. The place became the site of an important monastic center in the eighth to twelfth centuries AD.

Seele closed his last season in Nubia, 1964, with a brief excavation at Qasr el-Wizz, where H. S. Smith had excavated graves for the EES in 1961 and had indicated the need for further excavation. The work soon uncovered two monk’s cells with inscriptions, followed by a number of tombs that indicated the location of the chapel, about half of them excavated, along with two catacomb-like multiple graves to the south.

George Scanlon was appointed to finish the excavation, which was done in six weeks during October–December 1965. The team completed the monastery plan, with its complex of cells, refectory, and even a latrine. The church (katholikon) had three phases, according to a recent study by Artur Obłuski. In the first, the church was a simple three-aisle basilica with doors on the south and west, and a western transverse passage. The central aisle of the nave ended at the altar, which was just behind a triumphal arch, and finally an apse with three niches flanked by two pastaphoria. In the second phase, the southern sacristy acquired a baptismal tank and a decorated ambo with steps was installed beside the north-central pier. In the third phase, the apse was filled with a synthronon, with bishop’s throne in the center. The sanctuary was walled off from the nave, the altar moved westward, and the central pillars joined. To the west, new rooms accommodated a staircase to the roof, and room possibly for resting, and a long exonarthex. All of
these changes point to the church having a more distinguished function in this late phase.

One of the major finds at Qasr el-Wizz was a well-preserved illuminated prayer book, the discovery of which was reported in a number of popular newspapers on December 24, 1965, including the *New York Times*. The prayer book, or codex, was found in one of the larger cells in the compound, and was written in Sahidic Coptic. The manuscript was found almost intact, with virtually the entire text preserved. Among the colorful illustrations in the margins are a crocodile, an ostrich, a peacock, a vase of leaves and tendrils, and a human face, recalling motifs from the Meroitic past and clearly executed by a Nubian, perhaps a monk recruited from the local population. Interestingly enough, in the same cell, a letter from the abbot to the bishop of Faras was discovered. It was in Nubian, indicating that during the course of the Classic Christian period, this newly evolved written language had achieved parity with Coptic. All other epigraphic material from Qasr el-Wizz was written in Coptic. The Qasr el-Wizz codex was initially housed in the Coptic Museum in Cairo but was later moved to the new Nubian Museum in Aswan.
Knudstad and his mostly hardy crew went to Sudan for what turned out to be a season that lasted more than half a year, starting in Khartoum in November and ending in June, when temperatures were furnace-like. Excavating two large sites in one season was a huge job. They began it at Serra by cleaning the Christian Period houses, workshops, churches, and cemetery. It’s clear from the records, and from the drawings Knudstad made, that he loved working with standing buildings—an architect’s dream. But the dam had doomed Serra East, so when the excavation and recording were completed, the upper level houses and workshops were demolished to reveal the early fortress remains below. He wouldn’t remove the churches or the graves that were not found by accident, but only lamps that had been lit in niches again and again, as still found in cemeteries all over the Christian world.

As they removed the houses, they sometimes found vessels deposited under the corners. Three deposits from one house contained ostraca with magical texts and symbols. Under one house they found a manuscript (see Serra Codex below). The team member in charge of the epigraphic studies, Alexandros Tsakos, remarked in his chapter in OINE 13: “The work has been identified as a pseudepigraphic homily of John Chrysostom, the most prolific writer among the Early Fathers of the Eastern Church, Bishop of Constantinople during the reign of Emperor Arcadius and Empress Eudoxia.” It is the “Sermon to the Venerable Cross.” This is the longest text in the Old Nubian language, a direct ancestor of the languages
still spoken by people that live along the Nile between Aswan and the tip of the Great Bend far to the south, where the river curves from a northeast-southwest to a south-north direction. This written language began to replace Coptic in Nubia as Arabic replaced Coptic in Egypt in the eleventh century, and it was used along with Greek in the church. The last texts in Old Nubian are known from the late fifteenth century, while Christianity survived in Nubia well into the sixteenth. This same text names the town where it was deposited as Cerre Matto (Serra East). This is a key confirmation that a trove of documents, some of which also name the place of their deposit as Serra East—which were sold to the British and Berlin Museums over a century ago—were also originally from Cerre Matto. Clearly Serra was the site of a significant library, if not a scriptorium.

Also found at the site was a displaced gravestone that named Eparch Philoxenos of Nobadia, who died in 1025. At this time, just after the rule of the Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim in Egypt, Nubia from the Fourth Cataract to the First was a powerful kingdom with its capital at Old Dongola (Nubian Tungul)—and called Makuria (Nubian Dotawo). Nobadia (Nubian Migitin Goul) was once a pagan kingdom stretching from the Third to the First Cataracts.

Beneath this town of Cerre Matto they found remains of New Kingdom buildings, some that had belonged to the owners of the great tombs in Cemetery A to the east, and who were probably the rulers of a region called Teh-Khet in Egyptian texts. One such ruler’s tomb, that of Djehutyhotep, is located just to the south at Debeira. In the levels below this was the Middle Kingdom fortress. The western wall and nearby buildings were destroyed, with only the foundations of administrative buildings, possible barracks, and a granary surviving. In the center of the fortress was a unique, stone-revetted depression or basin that may have served as a prison. Three clay quarries, located outside the eastern wall and used as dumps during the time of the Middle Kingdom fortress, contained a trove of inscribed seal impressions and quantities of Egyptian and a type of Nubian pottery previously unrecorded in contexts of this date. Similar pottery types were found again over forty years later in the Oriental Institute’s Fourth Cataract salvage project in 2007–08.

The final stages of work at Serra East overlapped with the beginning of the second task of the season, the excavation of the fortress on the island of Dorginarti.
Knudstad was still undertaking the final excavations and recording at Serra East, so Richard H. Pierce, the Egyptologist and epigrapher of the expedition, was placed in charge of work at the fortress. When the team arrived at the site, the water-scoured structure was so ruinous that they doubted intelligible strata could be uncovered. According to a letter written by Knudstad to the director of the Oriental Institute, Robert McCormick Adams (February 5), the site was “stratigraphically complex and fussy . . . a veritable monstrosity of mudbrick laminations and repair work,” appearing as a mass of impassive brick before excavation. Wind-blown sand and Nile flooding over the millennia had eroded the multiple rebuilding layers of its walls and scoured the middle of the West Sector free of its remains. The force of the floodwaters from the southwest channel of the river caused breaches in all the enclosure walls except at the eastern end. It was assumed at that time that the site represented another Middle or New Kingdom establishment similar to the other Second Cataract forts, of which so much was already known.

The Pierces stayed on until their contract ended at the beginning of April, after which Knudstad began to transfer operations over from Serra East to Dorginarti, where he continued the work with the help of archaeologists Rudi Dornemann, Al
Hoerth, and Mel Thurman. He appealed for more money to continue the excavations at the site for at least another month, since it had been noted by then that the fortress architecture and its pottery were different from the other Middle and New Kingdom fortifications along the Second Cataract region.

Between fifty-two and one hundred and thirty-one workers were busy at Dorginarti on any given day, including Egyptian, Nubian, Shilluk, and Nuba laborers, all under the direction of four to seven Egyptian Quftis. This number of workers, and the mix of cultures—with cultural and language misunderstandings and identity issues amongst them—was a handful to manage on a daily basis. In addition, the job of moving the enormous debris and silt from atop the outlines of the fortification, and excavating the remains within the enclosure, was immense.

The pottery encountered was unlike any known types, as mentioned above, but the intrusive Meroitic burials atop the latest fortified structure, and the scatter of pottery resulting from their looting, led to the initial belief that Level II was perhaps Meroitic. The dating of Level III and IV was believed to be late New Kingdom. (Some of the pottery does indeed compare with materials now dated to the early Third Intermediate Period, that is, the early first millennium BC.) But late New Kingdom and first millennium pottery was not well known at the time. William Y. Adams knew the Nubian pottery sequence better than most salvage archaeologists then working, and he ventured that it might date to the late New Kingdom or Napatan period.
But there was not much time to process the pottery in the manner of a normal excavation, for this was fast-paced salvage work. It is fortunate that the remains have waited some sixty years for their final publication, and that many of the remains are housed at the Oriental Institute Museum and could be studied, since the pottery development during the Third Intermediate period in Egypt and the Proto-Kushite period in Nubia is now better known from excavations in both Egypt and Nubia from the mid-1980s until the present. A corpus of local handmade pottery and stone arrowheads were also found in Level III/IV contexts.

The establishment and renovations of the earlier fortress are now thought to date between the ninth and the mid-eighth centuries BC, while the East Greek and Phoenician amphorae from the Level II fortress date it to the sixth century BC. Intrusive late Meroitic graves were dug into the walls of the compound and the Level I architectural remains atop the Level II platform structure are Christian.

Unfortunately, the site was not completely excavated in the limited time available, but the amount of work accomplished in five months was admirable. The materials from the work of the OI team at Dorginarti have entirely changed our knowledge of Lower Nubia’s early first millennium BC history, a period long thought to represent an episode of withdrawal from the region by both the Egyptian and Kushite states.
SEMNA SOUTH 1966–68

For two seasons between 1966 and 1968, Louis V. Žabkar and Gerhard Haeny directed the excavations at the Middle Kingdom fortress of Semna South, located around 1.5 kilometers south of the larger fort at Semna West. Their team also excavated parts of a large Meroitic cemetery, and a smaller number of X-Group and Christian period graves. It is assumed that the fort was probably the landing place for boats portaging over the cataract region. The fortification was joined to the main fort by a desert wall running west of the site, and this wall was also connected to a segment running north and near to the fortress at Uronarti, a total length of 5.5 kilometers. This cataract area was also very close to a cluster of Middle Kingdom gold-working sites, located inland and west of the river. Evidence from the sealings found at the fortress indicate it was active between the reigns of Senwosret I to Amenemhet III.

Previous excavation was conducted in the late 1950s by the Sudan Antiquities Service under the direction of Sayed Thabit Hassan Thabit and Jean Vercoutter. The Oriental Institute work exposed more of the architectural features of the fort and the remains of the Christian settlement within the enclosure, its church, and the Meroitic, X-Group, and Christian tombs more fully.

The fortress was built on undulating, though fairly flat, ground. The inner enclosure was built upon an artificial platform above the steep banks of the river. It was nearly 35 square meters in plan and had a sloping stone glacis piled up against the battered wall of the outer enclosure. The outer wall enclosed an inner ditch surrounding the raised terrace mentioned above, upon which a curious fortification with crossed-corner wall construction was built. The outer enclosure wall had evidence for square corner bastions, or projecting piers, at the northwest and northeast corners, which were joined by an oblique outer enclosure wall built of stone at the north. The latter was considered a later renovation, as was a second glacis layer built on a steeper slope. An earlier river stairway was located at the inner fortress’s northeast side, which went under, or was later covered over by, both enclosure walls and the stone glacis. An early residence was exposed at the northern corner, which stood atop an earlier “libation structure,” both located between the inner and outer fortification walls. A surrounding wall at the south enclosed an annex, which also had buildings and evidence for temporary occupation within it.

The center of the fortress was unfortunately free of pharaonic buildings, perhaps because of the damage from, and reuse of earlier materials by, the Christian houses built within it and a Christian church located at the northeast edge.

The dating of all the structures found at Semna South was highly dependent on the objects from the quarry dump next to the fortress, which contained a large number of inscribed Middle Kingdom official and private seal impressions that became a major emphasis in the site’s preliminary publications. The sealings’ study provided new information about the administrative structure of the Second Cataract fortresses and their relations with Egypt, and gave the Egyptian name for the fortification, “The Subduer of the land of Seti.” Middle Kingdom objects and pottery were also found in the dump, including a Middle Kingdom copper axe.

The 494 early Meroitic graves and lesser number of X-Group and Christian tombs provided leather, textiles, objects, and pottery. Meroitic pottery, much of it complete, was also found. There were preliminary reports of the excavation, but the fortress itself remains unpublished.
THE FOURTH CATARACT, HOSH EL-GERUF, AL-WIDAY, AND THE ISLAND OF UMM GEBIR 2006–08

To build its new wing in the 1990s, the Oriental Institute packed up the entire collection for storage except for its colossal statues of King Tut, the Assyrian winged bull, and the head of the guardian bull from Persepolis. After construction, one phase at a time, the display collection was re-curated and reinstalled. Nubia had never had a permanent display and was the last to be installed. The installation project in 2005–06 aroused considerable interest in Nubia and Sudan.

At the same time, a new dam emergency had arisen. A great dam for power was under construction just upstream of Kareima, near the site of Gebel Barkal, which was to flood some 170 kilometers of the river, almost reaching Abu Hamed. The area was not only large, it was quite remote, with neither roads nor towns, markets, or clinics, resembling what some NGOs refer to as the “deep field.” That fact and the lack of flagship monuments to stir public interest meant that the number of expeditions participating in the salvage was limited. Geoff Emberling, then in charge of the Oriental Institute Museum, took an interest in fieldwork there and in 2006 secured a concession in the center of the reservoir area. The dam project caused considerable conflict with the largest group of inhabitants, known as the Manasir, unhappy with their treatment, level of compensation, and their displacement. They refused to cooperate and forbade archaeological salvage in their area. Traveling to the Fourth Cataract in the spring of 2006, it was clear to Emberling and Bruce Williams, who was codirector of the proposed project, that the mission to the concession on Shirri Island was not welcome. In late summer, Williams travelled to a Nubian Studies Conference in Warsaw, where he met with Henryk Paner and Zbigniew Borcowski of the Gdansk Archaeological Museum, who offered four sites within their expedition’s large concession. The Oriental Institute expedition obtained grants from National Geographic and from the Packard Humanities Institute.
So enabled, the team traveled to Sudan in January 2007 for the first season, staying a few days in Kareima, where they were greeted, astonishingly, by an extended rainstorm. Emberling, Williams, and the inspector Mahumud Suleiman el-Bashir went with the Gdansk team to examine sites and look for housing. After selecting Hosh el-Geruf, nestled in a bay of granite rocks, and al-Widay, on the high desert, a house to the east of both was rented.

The team left Kareima one afternoon, split between the expedition’s rented Toyota SUV and a truck with the expedition equipment, which promptly got stuck in the sand. Williams went ahead with half the crew and the GPS to the rented house, where the chief man of the village greeted them. He announced that they were in Manasir country and had to vacate. Using GPS in the dark with no visible landmarks, the Toyota went back toward Kareima, stopping at the Gdansk team’s headquarters, where Williams received a warm welcome and assurance that all would be made well. The hearty hospitality was soon extended to Emberling and the rest, who had arrived and discovered, to their astonishment, accommodations and dinner. The local omda, Hassan Mohammed Hassan, arrived, a good friend of the Gdansk expedition, and he assured the team that complete accommodation at al-Widay would be secured the next day.

This indeed happened, and the OI crew took possession of a typical walled compound with a house, a kitchen, and a shower room. A private latrine was dug, for private latrines were not customary in this region. Some electricity was provided for laptops, lamps, phones—including a satellite phone—and the GPS. Water was brought in daily by donkey from the river, over a kilometer away.

Hosh el Geruf was an open space partly facing on the river and almost surrounded by dikes of gneiss boulders. There were plentiful sherds of Mesolithic/Neolithic (eighth–fourth millennium BC), Kerma or Old Kush (2500–1500 BC) and Napatan (750–600 BC) date. Most interesting were some fifty-five large, heavy grindstones scattered about the site. These were not the smaller, flat stones used to grind grain, but tall, with deeply ground depressions in the upper surfaces. This is the
type that was used to reduce fragments of quartz to powder when mining gold, and they are often found at gold mining sites in the Eastern Desert. Along with large amounts of pottery, numerous spherical quartz hammerstones and elongated grindstones were found, and even one seal impression of Kushite King Piankhy’s queen, Khensa. What was not found, digging down all the way to consolidated natural substrate, was convincing remains of structures. Nevertheless, what the largest gold processing installation along the Nile river was discovered, and it made clear that the slighter evidence elsewhere in the Fourth Cataract really did indicate gold mining. It was exciting enough that the gold processing center at Hosh el-Geruf was reported in a major story in the New York Times, as well as the Guardian and by the BBC.

Excavations moved by stages to al-Widay, where a large and small cemetery awaited excavation. The small, earlier cemetery was excavated completely in 2007, but the large one, al-Widay I, was only sampled.

Work was continued at al-Widay I in the 2008 season, and a survey—in conjunction with the Gdansk expedition—was conducted on an island just to the south, Umm Gebir (Mother of Tombs). Expeditions in the Fourth Cataract were spread out, with wide areas to cover. Cemeteries were not normally completely excavated but sampled. One exception was a huge Christian cemetery on a neighboring island. Al-Widay I was large and important, however, and no cemeteries of size from the Kerma or Old Kush period had been fully excavated, so it was decided to work systematically, to clarify chronology, and permit the study of a population by the team bioarchaeologists. This was long and arduous work, first clearing around superstructures to the ground, then conducting overhead photography, then the removal of the stones and excavation of the shaft. At that point work became even more painstaking as the archaeologists then slowly excavated around the burial and its associated pottery and objects, leaving the burial itself untouched as much as was possible. After the removal of objects and stones that had supported the superstructure from the shaft, the burial was slowly excavated by the bioarchaeology team, which generally worked long hours to clean and extract the remains, including easily-lost small bones from the inner ear.

Survey was initially started by a separate team, but it was completed as a late afternoon task, since the demands of digging kept all at A-Widay during the normal work day. This was not just for reasons of time, but also because debris from sites is far easier to see when the low sun casts long shadows. With the completion of al-Widay and the survey, the group was split into
teams to work on the island, excavating a Nubian New Kingdom cemetery, a Neolithic settlement, a cluster of Napatan domed graves, and a Napatan settlement, which we shared with the Gdansk team. There was rock art also, mostly studied by the Gdansk team, but Carol Meyer discovered a representation of a large sailing boat that compares well with those from the Kerma period, proving such communication existed in the cataract then. All in all, it was a great deal of work, but work was still not finished. Only a little of the New Kingdom cemetery—a period rarely found in the Fourth Cataract—had been dug, and there were large islands that had received only cursory attention. Sadly, only shortly after the Meroe 2008 Conference in Vienna, the dam was closed, the reservoir filled rapidly, and the people from Amri and Manasir were “forcibly relocated.” It was a chaotic scene of boats racing back and forth, removing people and belongings to the overland transport by which they would be officially moved to distant settlements where they might find work and lodging.

RESEARCH, WRITING, AND PRODUCTION

Extensive and intensive as it was, archaeological work only begins in the field. Documenting, researching, and reporting take far more time and also require resources. Most important, the process of discovery also only begins in the field. This is especially true of salvage archaeology and other fieldwork, which is primarily done to complete a documentary record of sites that will be lost to dams or the growth of settlements. It has been especially true of the Oriental Institute’s work in Nubia, where new information and conclusions have emerged from almost all of the materials after fieldwork. Records and materials from well-supported field operations with a pre-defined research agenda and disciplined professional staff also tend to be well-organized and relatively coherent. They tend to yield fewer surprises than the remains from salvage excavations, especially where staff have limited training and time is short. It is often highly rewarding to work with the records of quite difficult excavations. There have been two major phases of research and publication: one with subdivisions lasting from the mid-1960s to the end of 1990, and the second beginning in 2010 and extending to the present.

RESEARCH, WRITING, AND PRODUCTION 1961–90

In the first subphase, members of the expedition actually prepared the first volume on the temple of Ramesses II at Beit el-Wali. OINE 1 was done in normal Oriental Institute style: large format, with photographs and drawings for each part of the walls, and an explanatory text. This volume was a complete epigraphic study. The second volume was prepared by Herbert Ricke, with other contributors, and covered the architectural remains at the site. But it did not present complete records of finds or even full plans of the cemeteries. It concentrated on the cemetery sites and the buildings. Also included were important cemeteries with unusual domed tumuli and enclosure walls. Seele thought these tombs belonged to the Blemmyes, known to occupy the area. Striking, decorated handmade pottery from
this volume, excellently drawn, is found across the Eastern Desert, as were the Blemmyes. Their presence is recorded by Olympiodorus in 410 AD, who was the Roman envoy and a native of the Thebaid. At this writing, the location of excavation records, apart from an object register, is unknown, but there is significant additional material in the Oriental Institute Museum. These volumes were produced in the manner of the time. Typescript was submitted and reviewed for corrections, which were approved by the authors; Illustrations at original size were attached to page-size poster board, pages were typeset, and after approval of galleys, also set up for reduction and printing. In 1967 they were printed.

In the meantime, Seele, and later Carl de Vries, spent much time organizing both records and finds. Many vessels were broken and had to be repaired, primarily by a talented benefactor, Mrs. Elizabeth Tieken. In 1976, several years after Seele’s death in 1971, Bruce Williams was invited to undertake the publication project, not necessarily to complete it but to make progress by identifying coherent groups of material from the Abu Simbel–Sudan Border campaign. Williams’ research would provide the cultural and historical background for an upcoming exhibit, and also for the publication of a catalog of textiles at the Art Institute of Chicago, undertaken by both Williams and the curator, Christa C. Mayer-Thurman.

Seele had envisioned a publication of all sites in his concession in separate text and plate volumes, roughly like the publications issued in the 1930s. This was no longer considered appropriate in the 1970s, and a more integrated approach was needed. Contexts needed to be described in detail and finds needed much more detailed presentation. This was especially true of Nubian pottery, which is often decorated in intricate detail, or with such nuances of execution that only large-scale drawings could adequately reproduce them. This meant not only large books, but talented artists who would prepare detailed drawings at full size, and not mechanically drafted abstractions. Photography was an equal challenge, since presenting a dozen objects side by side on one page seldom is sufficiently detailed. Thus the design of each volume would include an introduction, a chapter on the sites as well as their location and architecture, a chapter on pottery, a chapter on small objects, a conclusion identifying or proposing results, a complete and illustrated register of finds, and plates—all intended to systematically present a cultural phase. Seven volumes were planned, and all but volume 4, which combined three phases, followed this general plan. Work proceeded from the best understood phases to those less well known, beginning with the C-Group (vol. 5), completed while the textile volume was in process. Cemetery L at Qustul came next (OINE 3), with the documentation of the enormous but fragmentary wealth that culminated in the successful restoration of the Qustul Incense Burner as a fully royal or pharaonic document. The identification of other documents in this cemetery and elsewhere led to the recognition that they belonged to a Nubian kingdom, not an Egyptian one. The discovery resulted in a story on the New York Times front page, March 1, 1979.

Shortly afterwards, work began on volume 4, comprising the remains from periods preceding and post-dating the A-Group, and then volume 6, on the New Kingdom remains. By 1982, the Oriental Institute had submitted a grant to the National Endowment for the Humanities to do research on the Meroitic and X-Group (Noubadian) remains, which was granted. This success led to a hectic overlap in effort, since Williams was soon also assigned the publications from Serra East and Dorginarti. Soon thereafter, Lisa Heidorn joined the project to work on art and production, and in 1986 she took up the study of Dorginarti as a dissertation. This led to a second major discovery. For many years, conventional wisdom held that Nubia north of the Second Cataract
This led to a second major discovery. For many years, conventional wisdom held that Nubia north of the Second Cataract was depopulated after the end of the New Kingdom for many centuries, including during the time of the famous Twenty-fifth Dynasty. However, some burials and their materials from Qustul did not fit with the New Kingdom date they had been assigned, and instead compared well with Twenty-fifth Dynasty and later remains from the great sites upstream at Napata and Meroe. This matched Dorginarti’s general time frame, although Dorginarti was a pre-Twenty-fifth Dynasty site with a later Saite occupation. Thus, the evidence for earlier first millennium BC occupation is emerging in the region, especially near the Second Cataract. So the planned volumes went from seven to eight.

By the mid 1980s, personal computers became available, along with fairly primitive word processing. While this sped editing, production was as primitive as ever. For example, photographs had to be stuck to boards with wax, and the hot wax tended to get into everything. Painted Meroitic pottery vessels were produced in different colors, and to clarify the tonal decoration Joanna Steinkeller, Kathryn Cruz-Uribe, and Lisa Heidorn used diluted ink washes and paintbrushes. The result was pleasing and accurate but had to be published as a halftone-linework hybrid. That is, the linework had to be solid, the painted areas screened. The problem was solved by an amazingly talented vendor, Lynn Michaels of Color Concept, who cut two Kodaliths for each figure—one to outline-mask the solid areas when the painted areas were photographed, the other to mask the painted areas for the solid-area photograph, and the two were subsequently combined.

By 1990, resources to support research were no longer available for Nubia. The Oriental Institute was planning to build a new wing and a complete renovation of the museum, which would make records and archaeological materials unavailable for study indefinitely. In 1990, however, four OINE volumes were completed and submitted, and were published between 1991 and 1993. It represented a complete cycle of major remains from the Abu Simbel-Sudan Frontier and an additional volume on cemeteries at Serra East, all together eight volumes in nine books. With the textile volume, the OINE publication project had completed nine volumes in fourteen years. In 1992, the Oriental Institute mounted a small exhibit of Nubian antiquities, which led to another story in the New York Times.

RESEARCH, WRITING, AND PRODUCTION 2010–18

Although both Heidorn and Williams were away from the publication project for twenty years, things did not stand still. Williams began participation, with Oriental Institute support, in archaeological exploration and excavations in Sudan in 1997, which led ultimately to the generation of field seasons in 2007 and 2008. Also by 2008, the Oriental Institute had undertaken a massive project to scan and deliver all of its publications to the internet, free for download, liberating untold
numbers of people all over the world from the need to seek out a large-scale academic library to consult them. To our Sudanese colleagues, this new freedom of research was galvanic.

Twenty years’ progress in digital technology had also produced revolutionary change in publication. Color was now a practical option for routine publication. Word processing could be done in any modern language, and the presentation of ancient languages was much easier. Production was now entirely digital. Portable Digital Format documents could, by 2010 or so, support illustrations in three dimensions and with layers. Similar changes had dramatically affected research. As the Oriental Institute reinstalled its collection, storage, and archives in the 2000s, volunteers scanned masses of documents, including those of Serra East and Dorginarti. It was now possible to create completely digital plans that could be used for fully three-dimensional reconstructions using survey data gathered in a more traditional way.

By 2010, the storage collections had been re-housed in such a way that it was now possible to renew research in the museum. At the same time, a renewed interest in the Oriental Institute records emerged and was expressed to Williams during the 2010 Nubian Studies Conference in London, which resulted in assembling a publication team. Artur Obluski of Warsaw and Alexandros Tsakos of Bergen approached Williams at the conference and asked about the publication status of Qasr el-Wizz, and Frederike Jesse asked if Heidorn was interested in presenting at a conference in Cologne on fortifications. The latter was a result of the recent discovery of Gala Abu Ahmed fortress in the Wadi Howar of Sudan.

The director of the institute, Gil Stein, readily agreed to assign the publication of Qasr el-Wizz to Obluski and Tsakos, and Heidorn gave her paper—resuming activity, ultimately full-time—to prepare the publication of Dorginarti. The next year, while on an expedition with the Universities of California and Purdue, Williams recruited an architect skilled in the ways of complex design and 3-D, Nadejda Reshetnikova, to reconstruct the plans of both Dorginarti and Serra East. In the next year, Obluski arrived with a team of researchers from Warsaw to study for the next two years. Moreover, Joanna Then-Obluska, a specialist in the study of beads and their value in determining trade
connections, undertook a complete analysis of the Nubian beads. Meanwhile, to support a growing international team, John Sanders, then systems support at the OI, set up a server for the publication project with partitions dedicated to each phase. This permitted the ready exchange of masses of data far in excess of the norm. Williams and Heidorn successfully applied for three grants: from the Michaela Schiff-Giorgini Foundation to support architectural drawings of Serra East fortress; from the American Research Center in Egypt Antiquities Endowment Fund to support drawing, architecture, and photography; and the largest, from the Shelby White-Leon Levy Program of Archaeological Publication for the same activities and research, both of the last applied to Serra East Christian Period remains and Dorginarti.

At this writing, OINE 14 (on Dorginarti) is nearing publication; OINE 12 (about the architecture of Cerre Matto) is being edited; OINE 13 (on the pottery, small objects, and inscriptions from Cerra Matto has been approved for publication and OINE 16 (the first volume of two on beads) has been submitted to the publications committee. We expect to submit OINE 11 (on the fortress of Serra East) shortly. Database work is ongoing for the materials from Dorginarti and Serra and will make them accessible online for interested scholars. The preparation of a 3-D model of the fortress at Dorginarti is also now complete.

RESEARCH, WRITING, AND PRODUCTION 2018–PRESENT

With the Serra East and Dorginarti phase of the publication project nearing completion, Heidorn and Williams, with the help of Adrian Chlebowski, Geoff Emberling, Jim Harrell, Jacek Kabaciniski, Carol Meyer, Sasha Rohret, Randy Shonkwiler, Aaron de Souza, and Joanna Then-Obłuska are beginning work on the materials from the Oriental Institute excavations at the Fourth Cataract. Two or three volumes are projected in a three-year project. Since some of the research and all of the planning, photography, and drawing will have to be compensated, we have applied and successfully received grants from the Shelby White-Leon Levy Program for Archaeological Publications at Harvard University and the National Endowment for the Humanities, which means that work on the last stage of the Oriental Institute’s Nubian publication project can now proceed.
Already before the founding of the Oriental Institute, scholars at the University of Chicago showed an interest in the Islamic period. Starting with the establishment of the Haskell Oriental Museum in 1894 (the building was completed in 1896 and now houses the Anthropology Department), Islamic period objects were being acquired by the museum. It is evident that the purpose of the museum was initially biblical, however. When the building opened, George Stephen Goodspeed, who wrote on biblical, Assyriological, and Sumerological subjects, noted that Caroline Haskell had donated the building in order “that oriental studies . . . should find their center and their greatest utility in their contributions to the better knowledge of the divine revelation contained in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures . . .”

This was made manifest in the Islamic period objects that the museum acquired, the majority of which in this early period were somehow connected to the Bible. A student, Alfred Place, went to Palestine and brought back modern farming implements with the belief that they would shed light on biblical agricultural practices. In 1901, the museum acquired the collection of Edward Cushing Mitchell, who had visited the Middle East in 1869. In 1870, he became professor of Hebrew and Old Testament Literature at the Baptist Union Theological Seminary in Chicago, a position he served until 1877, by which time it had become the Divinity School of the first University of Chicago, to differentiate it from the institution founded in 1890. It should be noted that both institutions were Baptist, as was Mitchell. Although Mitchell moved away from Chicago, ultimately becoming president of coeducational African American school Leland University in 1887 in New Orleans, it was evident that he still maintained strong ties to Chicago and his widow was prevailed upon to donate his collection.

Islamic Collections After the First World War

While James Henry Breasted did not mention any Islamic period objects in his 1922 description of the OI, he had clearly collected them on his 1919–20 trip to the Middle East in the aftermath of World War I. Further, the OI from its inception had Islamic period projects under Martin Sprengling, who was one of the most important and influential scholars of the Islamic period to work at the OI. Although controversial, as we will see, Sprengling had become part of the University of Chicago in 1915 as assistant professor of Semitic languages and then professor in 1927, ultimately retiring in 1943. Sprengling was spoken of with great fondness by his student and successor, Nabia Abbott (see below), but even she admitted that, “when he had cause for righteous indignation he was an outspoken protestant heedless of personal consequences.” In 1922, Sprengling was heading the Kalila wa Dimna project, which would investigate the origins of this famous Arabic language collection of stories and also produce a definitive translation based on manuscripts from around the world. In his seminal The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago: A Beginning and a Program of 1922, Breasted tried to place the Kalila wa Dimna within the American context when introducing it, noting that its animal stories would doubtless be of interest given animal stories of Uncle Remus that were very familiar to his audience. He then states: “It is quite evident that body of
negro folk-lore contains fundamental elements which have migrated to America from the slave markets of Africa, having crossed the Dark Continent from the eastern to the western coast” and goes on to discuss parallels with Shakespearean England, ancient Egypt, and Mesopotamia. In that same year he reports that 19 manuscripts were photographed, with a total of 2,990 photographs in the OI from different manuscripts in European collections. Two years later, the number of manuscripts photographed had increased to 35 from European and American collections. Sprengling was actively seeking the location of certain important manuscripts whose location was lost at the time and wanted to include manuscripts in Istanbul and the USSR. By 1924–25, Sprengling had increased the number of photographs to 5,300. Oddly, it was reported in 1926 that Sprengling had been commissioned with the task by the OI, even though he had clearly been at work on this for some time. Indeed, the entire task would prove to be beyond Sprengling. This was already alluded to by W. Norman Brown in 1922, who noted that the current editions of Arabic were not sufficient and that there were great difficulties with the text. He was aware that Sprengling was at work on a definitive edition and prophetically wrote, “it is hoped that he will not find the difficulties insuperable.” Sprengling’s interest in other projects like the Bernhard Moritz collection and the Peshitta (see below), meant that by 1933, work on the *Kalila wa Dimna* had been postponed. Or, as his later student Thorkild Jacobsen put it, “one major quirk in Sprengling was that as soon as he really mastered a field of scholarship he tired of it and moved on to something else.”

In addition to Arabic manuscripts, there were also Christian manuscripts written in the Islamic period that will be considered here as part of the study of the material from that period. At the same time that the Arabic *Kalila wa Dimna* manuscripts were being studied, there was also a study of Syriac manuscripts that focused on the translation into Syriac of the Old Testament known as the Peshitta. Work on this project had already been started by William Creighton Graham, who wrote his dissertation and subsequently published two articles on the Scholia (or ancient commentary) of Bar Hebraeus at the University of Chicago and then became professor of Old Testament languages and literatures there from 1926 to 1938. According to him, he started working on this due to Martin Sprengling. In order to arrive at a more accurate translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, they wished to start making an investigation into the Syriac version (Peshitta) and looked at the thirteenth-century Syriac author, Bar Hebraeus, and his commentary on the Peshitta, *The Storehouse of Mysteries*. In order to do this, Graham obtained photographs of the manuscripts. He was the sole head of the project, but one year later, both Sprengling and Graham are listed as joint leaders of the Peshitta project. Again according to Jacobsen in 1992, Graham had “tired” of the project, and Sprengling, having “tired” of his *Kalila wa Dimna* project, took over, and the first volume of Bar Hebraeus’s work appeared in 1931 as OI Publications 13. Already in 1929 Sprengling described the project as having a large number of men working on various aspects, including about a dozen on Bar Hebraeus’s *Storehouse of Mysteries*. Another outgrowth of the Peshitta project was James Elmer Dean’s translation of the Syriac version of Epiphanius’s *Weights and Measures*, which although originally written in Greek in the fourth century, was only preserved in later Syriac versions. Dean had also written a dissertation on Bar Hebraeus, but this was never published. The OI did not publish any further volumes concerning Syriac, although photographic copies of some of the manuscripts consulted for the project can still be found in the OI Museum archives. One notable student included the already mentioned Jacobsen, who wrote a PhD on a text by the twelfth-century Syriac writer, Dionysius bar Salibi, but soon went back to Assyriology (see Assyriology).
It does not seem coincidental that it is in the time of Sprengling that the OI acquired its various medieval manuscripts, including the 1929 purchase of Bernhard Moritz’s second private collection, which was bought by Breasted on Sprengling’s recommendation. Moritz, director of the Khedival Library in Egypt, had a large collection of Arabic papyri, as well as stone inscriptions, Arabic, Persian, and Turkish manuscripts, and other materials including bookbindings. Sprengling apparently began cataloging the Moritz collection with his students and assigned the Qurrah ibn Sharik papyri to Nabia Abbott (see below). Sprengling was listed as being involved with the administration and installation of the Haskell Museum starting in 1927–28 along with Graham (see above). In addition, Sprengling's students produced a number of editions of Arabic literature. In 1928, Sprengling purchased a number of Syriac manuscripts from Mor Severius, Syriac Orthodox bishop of Syria, who in 1932 became Mor Ignatios Aphrem I Barsoum, patriarch of Antioch (based in Damascus). In 1927, Mor Severius had been sent as an emissary of the Syriac Orthodox church to the United States and apparently worked at the OI until he returned to the Middle East in 1929.

In his article for *Scribner's Magazine*, written in 1928, Breasted noted that Mor Severius was made a member of the OI and there was a new project initiated to publish Syriac manuscripts in the monasteries under the latter’s control. The *Oriental Institute: General Circular No. 2, 1928*, announced that Mor Severius would select the most important manuscripts, and then Sprengling and Graham would publish them. In the 1928–29 University of Chicago register he is listed as being in charge of the “Early Syriac Documents.” Mor Severius also copied one Arabic manuscript (A12007) of the tenth-century Syriac philosopher, Yahya ibn Adi, which is now in the collection of the OI. Other collections of Islamic period manuscripts included those from the English scholar of Arabic, Charles Lyall and the Druze manuscripts that were acquired from French Orientalist Clément Huart.

Despite all his considerable achievements at the OI, Martin Sprengling was a controversial figure who became the head of the *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* in 1932 and was then forced to resign his editorship in 1940. In a “postlude” to his 1940 article on the Sasanian ruler Shahpur I, Sprengling makes his feeling about the situation clear by writing: “He [Sprengling] now finds himself in sufficient disagreement with a sufficiently large majority of his colleagues to make it to the best interest of his Department, the OI, the Journal, the Press, and the University that he relinquish to them editorial control . . .” He then goes on to state he has no regrets in any of his actions or leaving the journal to others. The journal then changed its name and became the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* in 1942 in an effort to increase a declining readership and presumably distance itself from Sprengling. Sprengling is known for being acquainted with the Nazi spy and propagandist Colin Ross, who visited the United States on propaganda trips, gave lectures, and during his visit to Chicago stayed with Sprengling. Further, Sprengling’s son Kurt oversaw an exchange program for American boys to Nazi Germany. It should also be noted that Sprengling was not the only person involved with the university to be associated with Ross. Charles H. Swift who was a major donor to the University of Chicago and Professor William Nitze, who was the head Romance Languages department at the University of Chicago, were also apparently sympathetic to Ross. Both of them were reported to have invited Ross and his wife to dinner. A newspaper article of 1943 quoted by the US government noted that they had chosen “their dinner guests with care. . . . Anti-Nazi sentiment being what it is, not everyone can be trusted to stay on an even keel conversationally, even on such social occasions as at a dinner party . . . Mr. Ross . . . and Mrs. Ross are house guests of Dr. Martin Sprengling, professor of Semitic languages at the University of Chicago’s OI.” Therefore, it is clear that Sprengling’s sympathies were well-known and he evidently expressed
them to people. According to Samuel Noah Kramer, leading Assyriological scholar, Sprengling, who was chairman of the Department of Oriental Languages and Literatures from 1933 to 1936, told him that he would not be able to be anything more than an assistant professor in the department because he was Jewish. Furthermore, although he had received an appointment as an instructor, they would have to appoint a Gentile as an instructor to make a balance in the department. It does not seem coincidental that William Nitze retired in 1941 and William Sprengling in 1943, given their views.

In 1933, Sprengling’s student Nabia Abbott became a staff member of the OI and remained there for another thirty years. Born in Mardin in Turkey in 1897, her family left the region, and in 1907 traveled to Iraq and then on to Bombay. Nabia Abbott received her BA at the Isabella Thorbom College for Girls in Lucknow, India, which at the time was affiliated with Allahabad University (now it is affiliated with the University of Lucknow). Nabia then worked with Gertrude Bell in Iraq to set up education for girls, before moving with her family to Boston in 1923. She received her MA at Boston University in 1925 and moved to Asbury college, where she stayed for eight years. She moved with her family to Chicago and began studying with Martin Sprengling at the OI. She was initially traveling fellow and research assistant before coming first assistant professor, associate professor, and then professor of Islamic studies. Her dissertation was on the Qurrah papyri and appeared in 1936. Other notable works on Arabic paleography and the world’s oldest known Arabian Nights fragment soon followed. Her work on Arabic manuscripts and papyri remain major contributions to the field, and she also wrote about history of Muslim women. She published much of her work on different papyri in the 1930s but her most famous work remains the publication of the earliest known Arabian Nights manuscript in 1949.

Contemporary with Martin Sprengling and his activities, the OI began excavations that would reveal Islamic period levels at sites from around the Middle East. As noted in the 1924–25 General Register of the University of Chicago: “While the Institute was not planned to carry on excavations, it was designed from the first to furnish its members with occasional opportunities to make rapid exploring expeditions in the Near East and to study original materials in the great museums both in the Near East and Europe. It was planned that these expeditions should acquire by purchase new bodies of original documents for the expansion of the collections in Haskell Oriental Museum and thus make the Museum a more adequate magazine of materials for research. . . .” The archaeological expeditions were not formed with the purpose of trying to find Islamic materials, but the OI scholars were careful to note the existence of Islamic levels (including Ottoman levels that others often completely ignored) and frequently published or intended to publish Islamic remains rather than simply removing them without comment.

In the case of the Alişar Höyük excavations in Turkey, Hans Henning von der Osten (see Anatolia) treated the Islamic levels as he did the rest of the archaeological material and published them accordingly. Already in 1926, he had visited central Turkey to try to find archaeological re-
mains of the Hittites. In order to date the mounds that were visited, von der Osten looked at the pottery as he noted that for the pre-Classical period, little architecture survives above the ground. The difficulty, however, was that there was simply not that much known about Hittite pottery. In the course of 1926, he visited a number of sites and in some instances objects were collected, including Seljuk (1081–1243) coins. Von der Osten recorded the presence of Islamic monuments when he saw them and did not ignore their presence in the landscape, leading to a much more thorough description of the region in the Islamic period than would have otherwise been possible. The next season, in 1927, von der Osten decided to begin excavations with Erich Schmidt using the stratigraphic techniques that Schmidt had used when excavating in the southwest of the United States. Indeed, Schmidt was the actual excavator rather than von der Osten, who was busy making archaeological observations in the Turkish countryside, writing valuable reports of the state of different archaeological sites and monuments at the time. These journeys in 1927–30 continued the work he had done on the 1926 journey, and once again he noted earlier as well as later (Islamic) monuments. Von der Osten also welcomed the Islamic scholar Paul Wittek’s one-week visit in 1930, when he investigated the Islamic remains in the area around the site. It is evident that von der Osten found that Wittek’s knowledge of the Seljuk and Ottoman (1299–1922) periods placed the material they had uncovered at the site in its context. He was also able to photograph some manuscripts in the area. Excavations in Alişar ended in 1932 (see Anatolia), but in 1993, the site was surveyed by Ron Gorny, and excavations began at the nearby site of Çadır Höyük in 1994 (continuing until the present). A limited amount of medieval Islamic material of the twelfth/thirteenth centuries has been found at the site.

As the expedition at Alişar came to an end in 1932 (see Anatolia), the OI’s involvement with Iran was starting to increase, beginning with the work at Persepolis and Istakhr (see Iran). The OI’s involvement with Persepolis was really a happy accident, thanks to the troubled economic situation in Europe at the time. Ernst Herzfeld had been trying to work at Persepolis for some time and had been investigating various sources of funding. The German government was not in an economic situation to help, and it is likely that Herzfeld’s mentor, Eduard Meyer, recommended that Herzfeld approach Breasted about the OI sponsoring the work. Herzfeld then began working for Breasted at Persepolis between 1931 and 1934. As part of this work, Herzfeld started excavating at Istakhr, a site he had been interested in working at since at least 1929. In 1932, he made a test at the site and excavated further in 1934. In contrast to other sites excavated in the 1930s
outside of Iran, where the Islamic period was more of an afterthought, the Islamic period was the primary period that was uncovered in the excavations. Herzfeld had considerable experience working at Islamic sites. He and his colleague Frederick Sarre had recorded Islamic sites during their journey along the Euphrates in 1907–08, and as a result they chose the site of Samarra to excavate from 1911 to 1913. One might assume, therefore, that he had investigated Istakhr solely with the idea of excavating a Sasanian and Islamic site, but later on (see below) this turned out not to be the case. Herzfeld evidently believed that there was an Achaemenid occupation at Istakhr where the population lived, while the royal residence was at Persepolis. Herzfeld only ever briefly reported on his findings at Istakhr and never published them.

As noted above, Erich Schmidt (see Iran and Anatolia) had worked with Hans Henning von der Osten at the site of Ališar Höyük in Turkey. Schmidt was field director through the 1929 season at Ališar but seems to have had a falling out with von der Osten. After that, he worked in Iran first for the University of Pennsylvania and then for the OI. From 1934 to 1936 Schmidt excavated at Rayy, largely with support from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the University of Pennsylvania Museum. The site of Rayy, which has now been subsumed by modern Tehran, had been known as the source of fine Islamic pottery and textiles since the end of the nineteenth century. Indeed, Schmidt discovered a large amount of Islamic glazed pottery fragments, some of which were put on display in 2007 as a special OI Museum exhibition. While Schmidt was interested to use the archaeological excavations to date Islamic pottery types, his main interest was in the larger span of history. He hoped to document the development of Persian culture at the site and to discover the development of trade through time, including but not exclusive to the Islamic period. The beginning of the early Islamic period was largely absent at Rayy except for the material from the nearby palace site of Chal Tarkhan. The material starts to increase in the ninth/tenth centuries and particularly in the eleventh to early fourteenth centuries. Schmidt also suggested that there might have been a Sasanian settlement next to Rayy.

In addition to working at Rayy, Schmidt took over from Herzfeld at Persepolis from 1935 to 1939 when the expedition ended and began working at Istakhr in 1935. He found the 1937 season quite disappointing since he discovered that the Sasanian and Islamic levels were not built on top of anything earlier. Herzfeld, Schmidt, and Breasted had all believed that Istakhr would show development from 2000 BC–AD 1000, showing the cultural development of Persia until the beginning of the Islamic period. Schmidt, on the other hand, noted that while the site was evidently occupied over millennia, there was no sign of Achaemenid occupation (though he had indeed initially expected to find it) and instead suggested that it had been founded in the Seleucid period. Schmidt’s aerial survey of Iran also photographed and collected pottery from Islamic sites.

While Mesopotamia was being investigated in the 1920s and 1930s, with the excavators concentrating on earlier periods, they nonetheless did find and publish Islamic remains. At Khorsabad, for example, which was excavated for seven seasons between 1928 and 1935, they published photographs of eleven Islamic coins that were apparently a sample of the many that were found in the debris of the site. They note that there were various phases of occupation in the forecourt of the Nabu Temple in the post-Assyrian period, but the mudbrick remains were fairly poorly preserved. They found a group of whole pots that they compared to contemporary Islamic ones, suggesting that there may have been an Ottoman (1533–1922) level at the site. At the same time in Iraq in 1936–37, Martin Sprengling’s one-time student Thorkild Jacobsen was trying to use survey to understand the relationship of site location and irrigation in the Diyala region (see below).
The 1930s was also a time of considerable archaeological work in the region around Antioch (modern Antakya, Turkey) in the so-called Amuq valley. This can be thought of as the period of greatest archaeological work in the area. While many of the excavations focused on later periods, the work of Sir Leonard Woolley—at al-Mina and Alalakh—and the OI largely focused on the Iron Age and earlier. The OI had two main projects in the Amuq: the Braidwood Survey (1932–38, published in 1937), which formed the foundation for archaeological survey in the Middle East in the modern period, and the excavations at different sites inland and along the coast between 1932 and 1938. The Braidwood survey marked an important step forward in the use of archaeological survey to understand regional dynamics rather than simply as a tool to locate sites to excavate. Braidwood was not particularly interested in the Islamic period, but nevertheless designated sites as being “medieval Arab” or “recent Arab.” There were also excavations as part of the Syrian-Hittite expedition, which primarily (but not exclusively) focused on the sites of Tell Judeidah, Çatal Höyük, and Tell Tayinat with the goal of finding monumental architecture that dated to the Neo-Hittite period. While the division of the Islamic period into only two phases (medieval Arab phase or Phase U and modern Arab or Phase V) was problematic it nevertheless reflected at least a desire on the part of the excavators to record the Islamic period, and the architecture of the Islamic levels at Çatal Höyük was published by Richard C. Haines (see Mesopotamian archaeology). Nevertheless, study of the Islamic material has been hampered by the fact that very little of the Islamic period material other than the coins can now be located, and much of it
was apparently not recorded or saved. It was possible to correct this somewhat in the study of the Islamic period survey material from the more recent Amuq Valley Regional Project survey of 1995–2005 with the OI. A preliminary report on the different phases of the Islamic period materials came from Asa Eger and Tasha Vorderstrasse. It showed that the same sites were not occupied after the end of the Byzantine period, and many new sites were founded. The number of sites decreased but then increased again in the middle Islamic period.

After the end of the Syrian-Hittite expedition, the OI was interested to explore further eastwards to investigate the question of different cultural influences. Therefore, they wanted to examine Tell Fakhariyah in Syria, which was thought to be the capital of Mittani. The permit for the site had been secured by Baron von Oppenheim, but after World War II, it was canceled and a new permit given the joint OI–Boston Museum of Fine Arts Expedition. It is evident that the re-assignment of the permit was particularly contentious, and the expedition under Calvin MacEwan was only able to work for a brief time at the site in 1940. Baron von Oppenheim apparently was extremely upset by these events and lodged a protest with the Vichy government, and MacEwan had to leave the site...
suddenly. There is considerable controversy about precisely what happened with the permits and the political situation, but the OI did not return to Tell Fakhariyah, and in 1955 the von Oppenheim foundation went back to the site. As Oppenheim had died in 1946, excavations resumed under Anton Moortgat. While Moortgat thanked Kraeling, the director of the OI, for his assistance, it is evident that there was still ill feeling. In Kraeling’s preface to the publication of the 1940 volume of the OI excavations, he indicates that he takes full responsibility for the discrepancy between what he wrote in his introduction about the issue of the permission and what Moortgat had written. A further indication perhaps of the political situation comes from the name of the expedition, which was the James Theodore Marriner Memorial Expedition, after the American consul who had been assassinated in 1937 in Beirut by a mentally unstable individual. The Islamic period was represented by some pottery and glass found in the soundings, including material they dated to the eighth to tenth and twelfth to thirteenth centuries. Coins were also found, but none of them were identified.

At the site of Megiddo, now Israel, which the OI excavated from 1925 to 1939, there was limited evidence for the Ottoman (1516–1918) period, which again the OI duly recorded. In the early Ottoman period, the mound of Megiddo was the seat of the local governor, and the excavators reported finding a small building of that period along with cattle enclosures just beneath the soil. The coins, published by Edward Newell, dated to throughout the Islamic period, clustering in the middle and late Islamic periods.

In Egypt, the work at Medinet Habu, mortuary temple of Ramses III, started in 1927 with what Breasted in 1933 described as “clearance” that was as deep as 7 meters in some places. A church that had been built into Ramesses III’s mortuary temple was uncovered in 1931, and William Edgerton (see Egyptology) recorded Coptic graffiti. Also, Coptic wall paintings were documented, which were dated on stylistic grounds to the middle of the eighth century. In his 1934 report, Hölscher did not describe the surrounding early Islamic village in glowing terms, stating: “It must have housed a large number of inhabitants, perhaps some tens of thousands, closely penned together, wretched, and dirty as became the oppressed condition of the Copts” and that it was a “waste of ruins, barrenness, hopelessness, and decay.” Despite this gloomy assessment of the material from this period, Hölscher resolved to record all architecture: “whether considered a period of prime or of decay, [the remains] are indeed equally qualified for, and entitled to, a place in the history of culture and art.” Therefore, it is evident that despite his personal distaste for the later materials, Hölscher was determined on scientific grounds to record and publish it anyway. It is interesting that elsewhere in his publications he is far less negative about the period. He states that the problem was “keenly fascinating” and was eager to find the site that was so frequently mentioned in papyri (see below). Hölscher used the term “Coptic” to describe the ruins he found that dated to this period, although it is a cultural rather than archaeological term, but it nevertheless indicates that the site was occupied in the late antique period (sixth to eighth centuries AD). While the site is famous for its Coptic papyri primarily, the excavations also uncovered ostraca. This was evidently to Hölscher’s disappointment, as he stated in his 1931 report that finding papyri was his “secret ambition.” While the Coptic ostraca were published, the Greek ostraca that could include material from the early Islamic period have never appeared.
AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

After Sprengling’s retirement in 1943, it is evident that the OI’s interest in Islamic studies began to wane. While Nabia Abbott continued to produce important individual works of scholarship, the OI was no longer involved in any large text projects such as those run by Sprengling. While Abbott’s student Miroslav Krek produced a catalog of the Arabic manuscripts in the OI collection in 1961, no catalog of the Persian or Turkish manuscripts has ever appeared. The most important post-Sprengling acquisition of papyri was the collection from which the Arabian Nights fragment came, purchased from a collection in 1947 when Thorkild Jacobsen was head of the OI. After this, however, the OI largely ceased purchasing Islamic period objects. In 1952–53, the OI excavated at the site of Khirbet el-Kerak to try to understand Hellenistic Palestine but found a church instead. They carefully excavated the Islamic occupation over the church, as well as the church itself. In 1963, new excavations started again at the site to explore the early Bronze Age levels. OI archaeologist Donald Whitcomb (see Iran) identified the large house excavated as a palace and suggested that Khirbet el-Kerak should be identified as a palace called Sinnabra in the early Islamic period. In 2018, the OI returned to Khirbet el-Kerak with Whitcomb and found what appear to be the remains of a mosque.

Meanwhile, at Nippur in southern Iraq (see Mesopotamia, archaeology), it was clear that there were early Islamic levels, but that was not the initial focus of the excavation. Nippur had originally been excavated by the University of Pennsylvania in 1889–1900 before the “Joint Expedition” of the University Museum, Philadelphia, and the OI began excavations in 1948–52. The OI continued working there from 1953 through 1990. Excavations resumed once again in 2019. Haines was the first head of excavations for the OI, and despite excavating Islamic levels in the Amuq, he made it clear that the Sumerians were his main focus. Indeed, he referred to a 30 foot “overburden” on top of the Sumerian period Inanna Temple. Initial excavations mentioned Islamic burials at the site, but no Islamic levels. In 1972, McGuire Gibson became the head of the Nippur excavations and specifically noted in 1993 that he wanted to investigate the Sasanian and Islamic levels because they have rarely been investigated in Mesopotamia. In his initial descriptions of the site, however, he noted: “A major problem at Nippur is the great burden of Seleucid, Parthian, and Islamic material covering large portions of the site” and that trying to find earlier levels was “difficult and frustrating.” Therefore, the initial excavations under Gibson concentrated on areas where the earlier University of Pennsylvania had already removed the later levels in order to get at the earlier levels of the site as quickly as possible, which has clearly been a recurring theme throughout the excavations at Nippur. Nevertheless, in the late 1980s the excavations did investigate the early Islamic town that covers most of the site, including an early Islamic house with incantation bowls found in situ, and a small Islamic site located outside the city wall that dated to the fourteenth century and later. Earlier, a coin hoard of seventy-eight Umayyad (661–750), Abbasid (750–1268), and north African Idrisid (788–990) silver dirhams of the eighth century—as well as hoard of Sasanian, Arab-Sasanian, and Umayyad silver coins—had been discovered.

At the same time that excavations started at Nippur, Donald McCown (see Mesopotamia, archaeology) began excavations at the site of Tall-e Geser in southwestern Iran in 1948, and there was a second season in 1949. There seems to have been continuity from the Sasanian to the early Islamic period, and while the site was not extensively inhabited in the eleventh to fourteenth centuries, there seems to have been extensive occupation from the Safavid (1513–1736) period
onwards, even if no architecture was found. The material was not published until 2014, when it was combined with the 2005–08 survey of the region. The survey suggested that the region’s settlements contracted and expanded from the early Islamic period through the Timurid (fifteenth century) and Safavid periods (sixteenth/seventeenth centuries AD) into in post-Safavid and Qajar (1796–1925) times.

Starting in the 1950s, Islamic archaeology was once more on the agenda of the OI, this time as part of larger settlement patterns. After receiving his PhD from the University of Chicago, Robert McCormick Adams (see Iran) became a faculty member from 1955 to 1984. He was interested in looking at change over time, and it was this that informed his work first in Iraq and then in Iran. In Iraq, he was involved in a series of surveys and excavations that included work on the Islamic period. Adams and Vaughan Crawford made a survey of the Akkad region from 1956 to 1960 as part of a joint project between the American Schools of Oriental Research and the OI. At the same time, in 1957–58, Adams began to document settlement in the lower Diyala plain in Iraq as part of the Diyala Basin Archaeological Project where Jacobsen had earlier made a survey in 1936–37. Extensively using historical records, Adams suggested that settlement there began to decline in the ninth century. The project conducted excavations at the sites of ‘Aberta, which was said to be an early Islamic city of considerable size, and Uskāf, where they found signs of construction of a palace and a mosque. Adams characterized the Diyala region as a rural backwater but also noted that there were difficulties in trying to identify the Islamic period and to make finer detailed chronological observations. By the Ottoman period, however, there was very little settlement. In 1967, Adams was involved with a survey around Uruk in southern Iraq with Hans Nissen, and subsequently Adams made surveys around Nippur. Adams and Nissen suggested that in the Uruk area the Islamic conquest led to the abandonment of the region due to the founding of new urban centers in the area (cities of Kufa, Basra, and Wasit), the disappearance of Sasanian towns, and the loss of agricultural regions to swamps. Further, most early Islamic settlements were abandoned by the middle Islamic period when the entire region was essentially abandoned. As carefully documented by Adams and Nissen, settlement returned to the area in the Ottoman period. This attention to the Ottoman period is exceptional, given the fact that even today it is often neglected archaeologically. Between 1968 and 1975 Adams undertook more surveys, and this became the basis of his ultimate survey volume, Heartland of Cities. After the first survey season, however, he realized that there was a large amount of Sasanian and early Islamic remains, but that there were still a lot of questions about the sequence of the pottery."
Sarifa in order to try to resolve these ambiguities. He determined that the Sasanian period was the time of the greatest population density in the area. It declined after the early Islamic conquest and climbed again during the late Islamic. Adams in general saw a decline in population in southern Iraq in the early Islamic period, but as OI archaeologist Tony Wilkinson would point out in 2000, some of the pottery he identified as Sasanian may in fact be early Islamic. In any case, Adams’s work on the Islamic period settlement in Mesopotamia remains the main source for understanding settlement in Islamic Iraq outside of the Samarra excavations.

There were also surveys that documented the Islamic period that had been carried out by McGuire Gibson. In 1966–67, he was able to work in the Kish area and noted again the large amount of settlement in the Sasanian period followed by a change in numbers in the early Islamic period. At that time, sites along one particular canal were abandoned, but otherwise the sites were largely not impacted by the Islamic conquest before the area experienced considerable revival in the late Abbasid period, which approached nearly the same amount of settlement as it had in the Sasanian period. Most sites survived the Mongol conquest in the thirteenth century and continued to do well, suggesting that the area was quite prosperous. Some sites were abandoned, but others continued before there was an attempt to revive the area in the nineteenth century. In the 1970s, Gibson was also involved in the Hamrin Dam salvage project to the north of the Diyala Basin. The project was a collaboration between the OI and University of Copenhagen over several seasons from 1977 to 1979. He reported that there was a dense Islamic occupation in the Hamrin valley with fortresses and other sites in addition to smaller occupations and a large number of graves in tells. The exact chronological divisions within the Islamic Period were unclear, but Gibson did categorize the Ottoman period separately. It appeared that at least by the sixteenth century there was little occupation in the region. At Tell Razuk, for example, there were Sasanian, medieval Islamic, Ottoman, and “fairly recent” archaeological levels on top of much earlier Akkadian/Isin-Larsa levels.

Adams’s work in Iran first focused on Khuzestan and looking at the location of settlements through time. When examining the later periods, he particularly emphasized the impact that the Sasanians had on the landscape, which was a point that he had already made in Mesopotamia. His work on Islamic settlements in the area did not examine sites that post-dated the ninth century AD. He generally felt that the Islamic period was a time of economic downturn, and therefore was not something that he was interested in studying, although he had done so for Iraq and observed similar circumstances. In Iran, one town did stand out for him in Khuzestan, that of Jund-i Shapur. Adams surveyed the site of Jund-i Shapur in 1961 through aerial photos and discovered that it lay at the center of a Sasanian irrigation system. Donald Hansen mapped and excavated the site in 1963, finding water and bridge systems and an Islamic palace. It was evident, however, that the site did not yield the expected results. There was no sign of archaeological accumulation and the so-called city wall identified on the photos turned out to be probably a canal. It seemed that the grid plan seen on the photo was actually planned but never built. There was no evidence of any architecture in the excavations, but they did find pottery that dated from the Sasanian to the tenth century, with the site at its maximum size in the Sasanian period. In addition, the excavations examined the site of Qal’ah-i Khān, which was located 1,200 meters to the north of the site. This was a monumental building with two construction phases and seems to have been constructed in the late Abbasid (750–820) period at the earliest and may in fact be an Ilkhanid (1221–1353) or Timurid building (1389–1501). The brief excavation report by Adams and Hansen did not include a publica-
tion of any of the pottery, although the Iranian government did allow a small study collection to come to the OI Museum. Later examination of the aerial photos by Whitcomb show that there is a round city within the orthogonal city identified by Adams.

Surveys continued in the later 1960s up to the present. In 1964, Maurits van Loon of the OI and Ralph S. Solecki of Columbia University surveyed around Balis on the Euphrates as part of the Tabqa Reservoir Survey. The survey did not identify any early Islamic sites, but Eger’s re-study of the material shows clearly that material was misdated, and there were early Islamic sites found in the survey. There were also “great quantities” of middle Islamic material dating from the eleventh to thirteenth centuries AD. Then, in 1969, van Loon and the University of Chicago moved on to excavate the site of Korucutepe in the Elaziğ area in Turkey (see Anatolia), in 1968–70, for three seasons, as the area would be flooded by the Keban Dam. While it was not the main focus of the excavation, the archaeologists found a level they dated from AD 1200–1400 (the Seljuk and Mongol layer) that included ovens, pits, and glazed pottery that was evidently made at the site.

In 1970, Hans Nissen conducted a survey in Iran, with Charles Redman, a graduate student of the Department of Anthropology. This was in the Behbehan region, part of Khuzestan. Once again, the main interest was looking at this area as a crossroads of trade routes. Interestingly, the sites reached their peak in the medieval Islamic period. The material has not been published, however. Reinhard Dittmann’s study of the survey material focused on the earlier periods, although he did note at which sites Islamic settlement was found. Nissen and Redman also excavated at the site of Tepe Sohz.

Another survey that took place, this time in Syria, was the Sweyhat Survey, which focused on the area on the Euphrates around Tell Sweyhat. The survey was started in 1974 and then continued in 1991 and 1992. According to the survey, the area went into “terminal” decline at the end of the early Islamic period, although a few middle and late Islamic sites are attested in the survey area. The suggestion is that the population became non-sedentary, and only a few Islamic sherds were found at the site of Tell Sweyhat itself in the excavations, which lends to this impression. Further salvage work occurred in Turkey in 1980–84 along the Euphrates to the north of Urfa, around the site of Kurban Hüyük. The survey of this area once again showed a decline in the seventh to tenth centuries AD, with a possible hiatus in the seventh and possibly part of the eighth century (Period M), rising slightly in the medieval period in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries AD (Period N). The archaeological record is not particularly good for the thirteenth to nineteenth century, perhaps because the region was populated by nomads. They also identified a “way station” dating to the ninth century in the excavations of the site of Kurban Höyük, and it is thought that the site ended in the tenth century except for some later medieval burials. In 1992–95, Tony Wilkinson collaborated with Peter Akkermans of the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden (Leiden, Netherlands) to work on a survey of the Balikh region in Syria tracing canals, including those dating to the early Islamic period when there were a large number of settlements in the region, with a decline in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries AD. In 1997–98, Wilkinson and Jason Ur surveyed the area around Tell Beydar, which showed an overall decline in settlement after the end of the early Islamic period, and in 1999–2001, Ur surveyed the area around Tell Hamoukar and noted settlement expansion in the Sasanian/early Islamic periods. On the other hand, there was little evidence of middle Islamic or late Islamic occupation, although Ur admits that identifying these in survey is problematic. This survey also recorded modern settlement. There was also early Islamic settlement at the site of Tell Hamoukar itself that is described as a village.
In 1981, there was a major exhibition of the Bernhard Moritz bookbindings (see above) thanks to the appointment of John Carswell as head of the OI Museum. The exhibition is considered an influential work in the study of Islamic bookbinding. The bindings had been studied by Gulnar Kheirallah Bosch in 1952 for her PhD, after which they were largely forgotten until 1977 when Carswell, newly appointed, found them “languishing on top of a cupboard.” Although there had been a number of earlier studies of bookbindings, it is this publication, largely based on Bosch’s dissertation (originally suggested by Martin Sprengling, whose student she had been), that Karin Scheper, an authority on Islamic bookbinding, in her 2015 book describes in the following terms: “The importance of Islamic bindings and bookmaking cannot be understated. It has informed and shaped the ideas of the scholarly community working with manuscripts.”

Overlapping in time with some archaeologists working in Turkey and Syria, Whitcomb started investigating the Islamic period specifically. This marked a step forward in the study of Islamic archaeology by the OI. Previously, excavations and surveys had included the Islamic period because archaeologists had just happened to find them. Now, the Islamic period was being investigated as its own focus of research. First, Donald Whitcomb and Janet Johnson excavated the port site of Quseir al-Qadim in Egypt in 1978, 1980, and 1982. This was a Red Sea port that was occupied in the Roman as well as the middle Islamic (thirteenth–fourteenth centuries) period. The purpose of excavating this port was to examine “the international commercial activity of the town, its social interaction, and the town as one part of a symbiosis of a port and its urban hinterland, that is, the urban center within the Nile Valley to which it transported its merchandise.” Supporting the port was evidently a major issue in both the Roman and medieval periods. There was no agricultural hinterland around the site, and even water had to be brought in. According to Whitcomb and Johnson, it never became a particularly large or important port site in either the Roman or the Islamic periods. In the end, the artificiality of its location meant that the port could not be supported and ultimately collapsed. Information about the port is extremely detailed thanks to the dry climate of the site. This has meant that there was extensive preservation of organic objects, including wood, textiles, leather, and paper documents. There were many fragments of textiles found at the site, including resist-dyed cotton textiles that are believed to be from India. These therefore attest to the rich Indian Ocean trade that took place in this period. Some of the well-preserved paper fragments detailed the business transactions of Sheikh Abu Mufarraj and his son Abu Ishaq ibrahim, who largely traded in grain.
After Quseir, Whitcomb turned his attention first to Luxor. In 1985–86 he studied archaeological material from what was left of the medieval mound of Luxor that had been cleared away around the Luxor Temple between the years of 1881–1960. Late antique (fourth–eighth centuries AD) and middle Islamic material was found as well as three copper coins that dated to 1917. One particularly exceptional find was a head of Thutmose III. After a year at Luxor, Whitcomb left Egypt to work in Jordan at the port of Aqaba in 1986–95. It was an important port which was occupied after the Islamic conquest until AD 1116 when the Crusaders arrived. The Islamic settlement was a new urban center built next to the existing one, which moved again in the twelfth century. At that point, a small fort was constructed, and a new settlement began around it. Whitcomb’s excavations revealed fortification walls, large monumental buildings, and a mosque. The material found shows connections with China, Iraq, and Ethiopia.

At the same time that Whitcomb was working in Jordan, the OI had also started working in Yemen. The Dhamar Survey Project (DSP) extensively surveyed part of Yemen and also conducted some limited excavations from 1994 to 2008. This included sites from the Paleolithic to end of the Islamic period, but it is evident from the preliminary reports that the pre-Islamic periods were the main area of interest for Gibson, Wilkinson, and Ray Tindel. An overview of the periods collected by the surveys that appeared in 1997 (Wilkinson, Edens, and Gibson) did not include the Islamic period, although an article in 1999 (Wilkinson and Edens) publishing the results of the 1996 and 1998 seasons did do so briefly. The work by Daniel Mahoney, however, has demonstrated the importance of the area in the Islamic period. As Mahoney notes, the Dhamar region demonstrates the importance of studying rural ceramic production, which is often a lacuna in Islamic ceramic studies. Further, the area of Dhamar in the central highlands of Yemen was a local population that tried to maintain its independence despite the attempts of various dynasties to control it. Perhaps not surprisingly, Mahoney’s studies have shown that while the material shows some similarities to material from elsewhere in south Arabia, it is nonetheless distinctive and very few imports can be attested. This also makes dating the material within the Islamic period challenging.

Continuing on with investigating early Islamic urbanism, Whitcomb turned his attention to the site of Hadir Qinnasrin in Syria, which is located to the south of Aleppo. As in the case of Aqaba, there was an early Islamic settlement built next to the earlier Byzantine settlement. It is possible that this foundation was established on a pre-Islamic Arab camp and then transformed into a city as the nomads urbanized, becoming the capital of northern Syria. After an initial visit, the first season of investigations in 1998 primarily focused on a survey and two soundings, followed by a more extensive second season in 2000. In addition to early Islamic remains, there is evidence of occupation into the middle and late Islamic periods. Excavations under Marie-Odile Rousset continued in 2003 and 2005, with a study season in 2007. In 2008, Rousset moved on to the neighboring Byzantine town of Chalcis to see how it was transformed after the Islamic conquest and continued to be the site of significant occupation into the tenth century AD.

Yet another early Islamic urban center was investigated by Whitcomb after Qinnasrin, this time the site of Khirbat al-Mafjar in the Palestinian Territories. Instead of an urban center, Khirbat al-Mafjar was an agricultural estate that had the potential to help better understand proto-urban settlements in the early Islamic period. Originally excavated by Dmitri Baramki starting in the 1930s and continuing in the 1940s, the site was occupied starting in the eighth century with spectacular mosaics, featured in a recent OI publication, and then through to the twelfth century. Hamdan Taha, of the Palestinian Department of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage began new exca-
In 2010, he entered into cooperation with Whitcomb to form the Jericho Mafjar project. The idea was to integrate the older excavations with new work. Excavations in 2011–12 revealed that the palace, mosque, and bath that had been uncovered in the earlier excavations was part of a larger estate. The Jericho Mafjar Project also marked a shift in the way in which the OI approached Islamic archaeological projects. In this case, the OI was actively involved with building a museum on the site, and a museum was opened on May 28, 2014. The last excavations occurred in 2015.

In Nubia (see there), the OI took part in the salvage campaigns to begin to investigate areas that were to be flooded by the Aswan High Dam. Starting in 1960–61, the OI began working in the area. Keith Seele describes excavating the island site of Dar Mus in the Bab el-Assas as a “deplorable ruin,” although he would describe it as “charming” in the final publication, which included Islamic coins and an Arabic parchment document of 1267–68. Islamic glazed ware (some produced locally in Nubia, others imported from Egypt) can be found at Serra, which was investigated in 1961–62 and 1963–65. The glazed pottery from Serra is forthcoming by Whitcomb and Vorderstrasse. The Islamic period in Nubia does not start until considerably later, given the fact that the Muslims did not initially conquer it in the seventh century when they took Egypt. Technically, the Islamic period in Nubia in northern Nubia is said to start in 1500, but the glazed pottery is noted here because of the connections to the Islamic world.

Returning finally once more to philology, investigations into Islamic period textual material largely ceased after the work of Nabia Abbott and the publication of the Medinet Habu Coptic ostraca. The main exception to the cessation of Islamic period manuscript projects was the Syriac Manuscript Project (originally called the Syriac Manuscript Initiative) that was active from 2003 to 2009 under Stuart Creason. Initially, the purpose of the project was to document Syriac manuscripts in Turkey and Syria, which had a similar scope to the 1930s project of Sprengling, but by 2005 the project had changed to include digital scanning of the Arthur Vööbus Syriac Manuscript photography collection at the Lutheran School of Theology. Arthur Vööbus was an Estonian refugee who worked at the Lutheran School of Theology and had an extensive collection of photographs of Syriac manuscripts in Middle Eastern collections.

The first (and so far only) OI project in Armenia took place between two seasons in 2014–15. The project, under Tasha Vorderstrasse and Kathryn Franklin, investigated a village site in
Armenia, which was called Ambroyi. The site dates to the thirteenth/fourteenth century and represents an opportunity to investigate Armenian village life in detail, something that had previously been ignored in Armenian archaeology. The OI had previously published material from the work of Adam Smith (then in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Chicago), but had not been part of his Project ArAGATS survey.

**CONCLUSION**

While Breasted might not have specifically been interested in Islamic collections, it is evident that he was certainly interested to sponsor Islamic period text projects, and archaeologists who worked for him recorded Islamic period material culture. The archaeological material they found was clearly seen as part of a long pattern of settlement at different sites that was not ignored but rather recorded. As noted above, this included material from the Ottoman period. After the death of Breasted, the number of Islamic period textual projects diminished, but archaeological work on the Islamic period continued, particularly through the work of Adams and then Whitcomb. As this survey of the different projects indicates, it is evident that the OI has always had an interest in the Islamic period and its different aspects.

**FURTHER READING**


APPENDICES
DIRECTORS OF THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE

1919–1935
James H. Breasted

1936–1946
John Wilson

1946–1950
Thorkild Jacobsen

1950–1960
Carl H. Kraeling

1962–1968
Robert McCormick Adams

1968–1972
George Hughes

1972–1981
John Brinkman

1981–1983
Robert McCormick Adams

1983–1989
Janet H. Johnson

1989–1997
William Sumner

1997–2002
Gene Gragg

2002–2017
Gil Stein

2017–
Christopher Woods

For the early directors, see Oriental Institute Annual Report, 1968–69.
CURATORS OF THE MUSEUM

—HASKELL ORIENTAL MUSEUM—

1896–1904
William Rainey Harper

1904–1935
James H. Breasted

—ORIENTAL INSTITUTE MUSEUM—

1931–1935
James H. Breasted

1944–1967
Pinhas Delougaz

1969–1976
Gustavus Swift; Judy Franke acting curator 1976

1977–1985
John Carswell; Barbara Hall acting curator 1984–85

1985–1987
Thomas Logan

1987–1988
Raymond Tindel

1988–2005
Karen Wilson

2005–2010
Geoff Emberling

2011–2015
Jack Green

2016–2017
Kiersten Neumann

2017–
Jean M. Evans
ADVISORY COUNCIL

Each division and major unit of the University of Chicago has an advisory body of civic, corporate, and cultural leaders who provide support in many ways. The Oriental Institute’s Visiting Committee was formed in 1951 and originally comprised five members. Now called the Advisory Council, the body today has thirty-eight members, of whom seventeen are life members. The Advisory Council meets twice a year with the Oriental Institute director to discuss issues facing the institute and the progress on ongoing projects. While the role of the council is advisory only, it provides a link to the broader community and leadership in fund raising. The 1993–98 Legacy Campaign, for example, raised $11 million for the renovation, climate control, and expansion of the institute building.

Advisory Council members are honored to serve the Oriental Institute in this capacity.

BREASTED MEDALLION AWARDEES

The Breasted Medallion is awarded to individuals in recognition of their extraordinary philanthropic and volunteer service to the Oriental Institute.

1997..........................................................Carlotta Maher
1999..........................................................Elizabeth Tieken
2000..........................................................Janet Helman
2002..........................................................Albert Haas
2004..........................................................Margaret Grant
2009..........................................................Rita Picken
2011..........................................................O. J. Sopranos
2013..........................................................Jeanne & John Rowe
2015..........................................................Thomas Heagy
2017..........................................................Misty & Lewis Gruber
2019..........................................................Howard Hallengren
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A FEW FACES OF THE OI

DANIEL BLOOM
I volunteered for the Oriental Institute’s docent program in 2011 and now work there as a front desk receptionist and museum attendant. I have a BA in Classics from the University of Massachusetts Amherst and have always been captivated by the ancient world and anthropology. I was first drawn to the OI because of its focus on the Eastern aspects of the origins of human civilization. Coming from a background in classics, it was refreshing to learn about an even more distant past and to view a picture of human history that does not point only to Athens or Rome as the cradle of Western civilization.

As a volunteer docent I became familiar with the museum’s vast collection and facilitated tours of its galleries. I learned how to attempt to convey the significance of the museum’s collection in less than an hour, which can be a challenge, to say the least. As a museum attendant, I help safeguard the collection and I welcome guests to the museum, offering them any information or assistance they require.

As a front desk receptionist for the museum, I greet and speak to people of many different ages and from many different places all over America and the world. It’s a privilege to help keep the OI open and running to anyone investigating either the art and culture of the ancient Middle East or the origins of human civilization. I hope the OI continues to enlighten anyone making the trip to its doors.

KNUT BOEHMER
I was born in Dortmund, West Germany, in 1980 and grew up in the nearby town of Lünen. From 2001 on I attended the University of Münster, studying business informatics, sinology, Near Eastern archaeology, and medieval European history while working as an IT student on the side for most of the time. After graduating with a magister artium in 2011 I started working as an IT consultant for the university’s press department and in 2013 branched out with a second day job as a web developer and SEO (search engine optimization) specialist for a local advertisement agency.

I married my wife, Susanne Paulus, in 2015 and, when she was hired as an assistant professor by the OI the same year, moved to Chicago with her. Since the former IT support specialist had just left, I was hired in October 2015 and was promoted to IT manager in 2018.

My work day is likely among the least predictable in the building, since I never know what’s waiting for me (or what might develop over the day). The tasks can range from purchase assistance for computers, assisting with software questions, and resolving hardware issues to networking with other IT units on campus or representing the OI on the University of Chicago IT Leadership Council. (I like to joke that anything that has a cable plugging into the wall is likely something I will get involved with at some point.)

One thing I really enjoy about working at the OI is that I get to interact with everyone in the building and beyond, get around a lot, and know that my work—while not changing the world in itself—makes it possible for a lot of people to work more productively.
ROBERTO CEPEDA

As a university graduate with a few degrees and various certificates, I considered myself a reasonably well-educated man. Although I had always subscribed to the adage “the more I studied the more I realized how little I knew,” I was in for some earth moving and incontrovertible bits of evidence.

“The OI is an organized endeavor to recover the lost story of the rise of man by salvaging the surviving evidence...” James H. Breasted, 1933.

I originally visited the OI museum in the late ’80s with a self-guided tour of a church youth group. I found the museum fascinating. As we walked through it, I couldn’t help but feel the gravitas of it—monumental architecture, everyday household items, scribal practice tablets, or evidence of man’s earliest literature, thousands of years old. I was transfixed by the enormity of experiencing these objects in such close proximity.

Through the years I kept returning to the museum, during lunch breaks, on weekends, with family or friends, or solo.

As we know time seems to fly, so at the end of my professional career, I began to contemplate volunteer options. After another solo visit to the OI, on a whim I emailed inquiring about volunteer opportunities. I was accepted into a new docent class and trained by no less than professors of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations of the OI.

I’ve been certified to conduct tours of the galleries in the museum, not only for guests from grammar school through college, but also for limited vision and blind visitors.

So after leading tours for five years, attending members’ lectures, or volunteering at international conferences hosted by the OI, I can truly state that the OI museum experience has been enlightening and rewarding.

VICK CRUZ

My name is Vick Cruz, visitor services and security manager at the Oriental Institute. I was born and raised and lived in Chicago until I reached my eighteenth year. When I graduated high school in the year 2000 I joined the Marine Corps, where I was assigned the 1st Marine Division out of Camp Pendleton, California, as a field artillery cannoneer. I reached the rank of sergeant at the age of twenty and under three years of enlistment. My service in the Marine Corps took me around the world, where I set foot on many lands and sailed just as many seas. I came home to Chicago in 2004, where I took a year to gather myself, adjust to civilian life, and attend the University of Illinois at Chicago full-time, majoring in electronic visualization and simultaneously working a full-time job in the security field. I’ve been working in the corporate security sector ever since, which led me to work in many prestigious locales within the Chicago area, including high rises such as the Aon Center and the Citi Group building. I have worked as a security guard, shift supervisor, security director, field manager, and vehicle fleet manager. My career has allowed me to work side by side with many prestigious entities in Chicago including SWAT, the Chicago Fire Department, the Federal Aviation Administration, the US Secret Service, and some of the biggest security companies in the country. Through my tenure with my previous employer, I was given an assignment to report to the Oriental Institute to fill in as interim visitor services and security manager until such time as a permanent candidate assumed the role. Unbeknownst to me, the Oriental Institute would be the site where many security professionals would find to be a delight to encounter in their careers and so I took on the role permanently. Here I supply training for the guard staff, liaise with the university’s
facility departments to ensure the OI’s operation is meeting all of our staff needs, and work with all departments and staff members to help bring the OI closer to its Centennial, and beyond.

POLINA KASIAN

I first heard about the OI during my freshman year at Saint Petersburg State University in my Ancient Art History class. For the final exam, we had to memorize an enormous number of images of artifacts and what collections they are in. Since the OI museum houses one of the most extensive collections of art from the ancient Middle East, many of its artifacts were featured in the exam. Following that class, and my studies in general, I wanted to visit the OI as a tribute to my first university, and professor Alexander Butyagin, whom I learned so much from. Ten years later, in 2017, I moved to Chicago, visited the OI, and fell in love with the place.

Shortly after I started volunteering in the Research Archives, I was offered a temporary position in the Education Office. Six months later, a full-time opportunity opened with the Development team and I happily accepted. We have a great team, and it’s exciting raising funding for all the noteworthy research carried out by the OI’s faculty, researchers, and staff. As part of the Development Team, my colleagues and I have the pleasure of sharing the OI’s current projects, research, and archaeological discoveries with the greater community of friends, members, and supporters by organizing public lectures, openings, and other private events.

Being a part of the OI, a place with such a long history of study in the ancient Middle East, means I learn something new every day from amazing scholars and other professionals from different fields, and that’s really important to me. I’m proof that the OI and its museum’s collection is well-known worldwide, and it’s a great honor for me to work to help this institution maintain its status and attract new audiences.

SUSAN PADULA

My name is Sue Padula. I live in Barrington, recently retired as in-house counsel for a software company, and am a graduate of Northwestern University. None of these aspects intuitively point to the Oriental Institute, and yet I have been involved with the OI for over four years. Initially, I got involved through a combination of business and friendship. Our company works with small museums to help them create mobile application tours. I also have a good friend on staff who was simultaneously encouraging me to come learn more about the OI. Our company successfully helped the OI implement a mobile tour of the museum, and as I spent more time exploring the museum I became totally entranced and sought to become more involved. Since then I have gone through the OI’s fantastic docent training and now help lead tours on certain Wednesdays. The docent training was incredibly enriching and engaging and also gave me the chance to hear directly from some of the world’s most renowned scholars about their work in the field. But most exciting for me, as a result of my volunteer work I have had the opportunity to help Professor Susanne Paulus on a conservation project of ancient Mesopotamian cuneiform tablets. It has been wonderful to spend time working with her and to be part of the team working to conserve and extend the research on these tablets. In addition, I have had the pleasure of serving on the OI’s advisory council for two years now. Recently I was able to connect my volunteer work with Barrington’s cultural programming at the Barrington White House and the OI’s wonderful scholar program, culminating in four lectures by staff members during the spring season.
MARIANA PERLINAC

Greetings, I’m Mariana Perlinac, executive assistant to the director. My job is very exciting because I have the pleasure of meeting every person that comes to the director’s office; I’ve met some wonderful people from all corners of the world! The most important part of my job is to make sure that the director’s ever-changing, demanding calendar is accurate so that he is at the right place at the right time.

I started my career at the University of Chicago working at the Graduate School of Business, which at that time was on the main quadrangles. In the spring of 1994 the University of Chicago’s Gleacher Center opened on the banks of the Chicago River for their part-time MBA programs, and the director of the executive MBA program asked me to be his assistant, which I gladly accepted. From there I went to work at the Pritzker School of Medicine before coming to the OI in 2007.

Working here has really been the highlight of my career; it is truly a unique place. I’m honored to be included in the centennial book because as the OI turns 100, this year marks my 30-year anniversary at the university. Happy birthday to the OI: I wish you much success as you aspire to reach all your hopes and dreams for the next centennial!

DEloris Sanders

Growing up in New York I was regularly taken to museums by family and school. At Brooklyn College, the required classes included reading the classics of Greek and Roman civilization. These turned out to be some of my favorite classes, and though I knew that this would not become my major, as I needed a job after graduation, I tucked that interest away in the back of my head for later.

When our family moved to Chicago in 1977 the OI became a place to take our children, and when I left my position as executive director of KAM Isaiah Israel Congregation at the end of 1992 my husband gave me a gift trip to Egypt with the OI. That sealed the deal, and upon returning I joined the docent training program for the last year of Janet Helman’s reign as docent manager. The faculty lectures, readings, and gallery work were fascinating and exciting. I loved them. I became the captain on Tuesdays and then on Wednesdays. I helped the late Debbie Aliber in reorganizing our docent library. I loved welcoming visitors to the OI and giving tours to students young and old, visitors from near and far, folks with good backgrounds and beginners.

Best of all, I loved working with our docents and making wonderful new friends. The strengths of the docents in our group were amazing. I started a series of learning sessions for our docents where we studied the display cases and made presentations to each other about our findings. We learned from each of the talented and knowledgeable people on our team and we all became better presenters. Great fun!

Being a part of the OI has enriched my life in so many ways. The continuing education, great friendships, incentive for extensive travel that my husband and I did in support of learning about antiquity, opportunity to travel with OI (former) director Gil Stein (a great teacher), the help Emily Teeter offered from her extensive collection of museum catalogs from all over the world, availability and access to the great scholars on our faculty, and the resources of our library and archives. And let’s not forget the fun of shopping at our Suq.

Now, as being part of the docent book club and again attending the docent training lectures, there is always something interesting and fun going on.
When I was nine years old (1954) I saw the movie *The Egyptian*. It was the story of Sinuhe, and I was hooked by the pomp and glory—however Hollywoodized—of pharaonic times in Egypt. Sometime between then and my sixteenth birthday, I became enamored with the idea of discovering the remains of that early history as I read C. W. Ceram’s *Gods, Graves & Scholars*. Growing up in Hyde Park, trips to the OI encouraged my love of all things ancient, with Egyptian things at the top of the list.

My family moved to New York before I could expand that early intrigue into my adult life, and it remained a hobby rather than a vocation. After a long career in various businesses, I retired to pursue my childhood passions. Living back in Chicago, the first item on my retirement to-do list was volunteering at the OI where I could renew my love affair with the ancient world. It began with an OI trip to Israel in late 2010, led by Yorke Rowan. Toni Smith and Andrea Dudek, both OI volunteers, were on the trip and told me all about their volunteer “jobs” and how easy it was to get involved. Once back in the United States, Andrea led me to the Research Archives—the OI’s specialty research library—where I met Foy Scalf, the head of the library. I have been working in the archives ever since, and I love it. My project is to go through each book and check it against what is listed in the database (digital card catalog) to ensure completeness and correctness. That may sound boring to some, but I get to read whatever piques my interest: old and new discoveries, new interpretations, revisiting sites seen on my now many OI trips, and following journeys I will never get to make.

Last year, I decided to add OI time to my life by becoming a volunteer for the Diyala Project. The Diyala Project publishes archaeological materials from the OI Diyala Excavation, which was a large Iraqi dig excavated during the early to mid-1930s. We are digitizing and posting online all the information gleaned from that excavation; every picture, every note. It is a massive undertaking, but I am learning about an entirely new culture and part of man’s time on earth.

The nine years so far spent at the OI have been very rewarding. I have learned a tremendous amount and made so many new friends that my retired life is quite happily very full.

MARY G. SHEA

My wonderful adventure at the OI began in 1979 following a day spent at the British Museum racing through the exhibits of ancient civilizations, where I encountered the ancient Middle East for the first time. I was particularly struck by the strange, huge copper relief from Mesopotamia mounted above a doorway. It was a lion-headed bird holding two deer, a terra incognita.

The relief was “thought to have been placed above the entrance of the Ninhursag temple at Tell al-Ubaid from 2500 BC” (Julian Reade, *Mesopotamia*, Harvard University Press [1991], p. 38). I understand the reconstruction has since been questioned, but I found its powerful presence weirdly intriguing.

Upon my return I had the great good fortune to meet Carlotta Maher, whose interest in archaeology was immediately revealed. After I described my ancient Middle Eastern epiphany she invited me to join the docent training program. It was an amazing opportunity to hear lectures from the University of Chicago faculty and become part of a band of curious volunteer educators. The program was well led by Peggy Grant and Joan Barghusen out of a tiny office next to the archives. After several years of this stimulating experience, I found my way to the Returning Scholar
program and focused on art and archaeology of the ancient Middle East. There I studied with the venerable Helene Kantor, who guided my investigation of Luristan bronzes. One could not be in her presence for five minutes without learning something. The classes added up to the idiosyncratic MA degree in General Studies in the Humanities.

Our dedicated Wednesday docents formed deep friendships sustained by shared interests and enthusiasms. We developed special interest tours, did innumerable weekly school groups, introduced University of Chicago students to the OI, and enjoyed presenting adult tours. We helped plan and execute fundraising events. Members’ lectures and classes—as well as travel to Egypt, Turkey, and Iran—further enriched the experience.

I have benefited immeasurably from my affiliation with the OI and have not lost the sense of wonder upon encountering artifacts from distant cultures that are so revelatory of our shared humanity. Museums do serve. It has been a privilege to have participated in this worthy effort.

EMILY SMITH

My name is Emily Smith. I’m a fifth-year PhD candidate studying Hittite and Linguistics at the University of Chicago. I like to tell people that I took the scenic route to Middle Eastern studies: I got my BS in Fashion Design from the University of Cincinnati, before moving to Boulder, CO to pursue an MA in Linguistics. When I moved to Chicago in 2012, I started taking classes at the university as a part-time student, where I was introduced to the world of the Hittites during a class on linguistic methodology in extinct languages taught by Prof. Petra Goedegebuure. From there, I was hooked. I’d always been fascinated by ancient history, and at the OI I found a place where all of my interests came together: languages, history, literature, art, and even fashion.

I also work an editorial assistant in the Publications Office at the Oriental Institute. I was originally hired as a “Photoshop guru,” and was given the task of editing and color correcting photos of gold jewelry from the royal tombs at the ancient city of Nimrud. Since then I’ve worked on a number of books and educational materials about different parts of the Middle East, including cylinder seals from Persepolis, prehistoric settlements at Jarmo, and most recently a two-part series documenting the final phases of the Oriental Institute’s excavations at Kerkenes in the 1930s.

I’m currently writing my dissertation, which is about reflexive constructions in Hittite and other Anatolian languages. Of course, I find my research topic fascinating, but still the most common response that I get when I tell people I study the Hittites is, “The what?” So, while I spend a lot of time thinking about the Late Bronze Age, I spend nearly as much time thinking about how to make the subjects that are studied at the OI more accessible to people who aren’t pursuing a PhD in ancient history or philology, and this is part of the reason that I’m so dedicated to my work in the Publications Office. Publishing books about the things we study here, and making many of those book available for free online, allows me to both continue to learn about and to promote public interest in the humanities.

STEVEN WEINGARTNER

I’m a military historian and author of books, articles, essays, and numerous other publications, and a staff member in the Oriental Institute’s Department of Security and Visitor Services. In my writings I have explored the history of armed conflict from antiquity to the present, writing about soldiers’ lives, the profession of arms, and the past, present and future of warfare. I’m particu-
larly interested in ancient warfare, and in recent years my research and writing focus has been fixed upon the history of chariots, chariotry, and chariot warfare, and many topics related there-to. Current and ongoing writing projects deal with the Battle of Kadesh, the Kikkuli method for conditioning chariot horses, the relationship between tactics and technology on the development of chariot warfare, and an operational history of the campaigns of the thirteenth century Anatolian warlord called Piyamaradu. Additionally, I have written extensively on warfare in the modern era (twentieth century to the present), national security and defense issues, and geopolitical conflict. I served thirteen years as editor of the Cantigny Military History series, producing books on U.S. Army history and related topics for the First Division at Cantigny in Wheaton, IL. My professional background further encompasses extensive multimedia writing and production experience, including consulting and providing on-camera commentary for the History Channel’s Battles BC series and National Geographic International’s History of Ground Warfare series, and developing content for videos, blogs, and multimedia lecture presentations on military topics. Additionally, I am an experienced oral history specialist proficient at conducting audio and video interviews, transcribing recordings, and fashioning resultant text into compelling historical narratives. I am currently employed as the senior editor/writer for the Near Eastern Center for Strategic Engagement (NEC-SC). In that capacity I am responsible for developing content for the NEC-SC’s blog (see nec-se.com) and for assisting in the operations of the Assyrian army in Iraq.
Chicago, April 10, 1919

Mr. Starr J. Murphy
26 Broadway, New York City

My dear Mr. Murphy:

Your favor of the 8th inst. is received. If the fund is provided for the Oriental Institute the University will gladly house the work in the Haskell Oriental Museum, and cooperate in any other way that may seem desirable. In this connection I may say that at the meeting of the Board of Trustees on the 8th inst. plans for the theology building were approved and the architect instructed to proceed at once with the working plans. At the earliest possible moment consistent with the cost of construction we shall proceed with that building. The completion of the theology building will at once free Haskell Oriental Museum entirely for oriental work, and by the time the Institute is ready to develop there will be ample room.

With best wishes, I am,

Very truly yours,

H.R.J. - L.
March 9, 1913.

Dear Dr. Judson:

Dr. Breasted has presented to Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., a plan for the organization of an Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago. This is predicated upon the fact that the ancient lands of Western Asia have now, for the first time in history, been rendered safe and accessible to research and investigation. I presume you are familiar with his plan; if not, I have no doubt that he will be glad to furnish you with a copy of the memorandums. Mr. Rockefeller has asked me to investigate the matter.

The question would arise as to whether it might not be taken up by the General Education Board.

It seems to me of the utmost importance that the records of antiquity should be preserved and made accessible to the civilized nations. In fact, I have so much to say about this subject that I was forced to put it in writing. This past summer, I was able to make access to these records for the first time and it could be determined whether or not they would be worth while to have the subject brought to light. In the case of the Pe文案 Conference at Paris, so that in any case of getting access to these records may be of great importance. Professor Breasted asks for an endowment.

It is desirable to begin with an endowment in the first years by annual grants, but it could be determined whether or not the matter be left in your hands; to take up with me if you think it desirable. I am assuming that there are opportunities now for the purchase of material of great importance, which have not existed before and may not exist again. It is with this thought in mind that I am writing this letter.

Very cordially,

John D. Rockefeller.
December 5, 1919.

Dear Dr. Judson:

In line with our talk several weeks ago about an additional sum of money available for expenditure by Dr. Breasted in the purchase of important historic pieces which he may come upon during his expedition to the Holy Land, I will provide an additional sum for this purpose up to Twenty-five thousand Dollars (25,000), to be used by Dr. Breasted as you may think wise.

I think it would be better, for the present at least, that Dr. Breasted should not know where this fund comes from, but should simply be given to understand that friends of the University, interested in his expedition, have provided it.

Payments on account of this pledge will be made from time to time, as you may request.

Very sincerely,

[Signature]

President Harry Pratt Judson,
University of Chicago,
Chicago, Ill.
PLAN FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF
AN ORIENTAL INSTITUTE AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

1. THE OPPORTUNITY AND THE OBLIGATION.
Within a few weeks the ancient lands of Western Asia where civilization and the great world religions were born, have for the first time in history been rendered safe and accessible to research and investigation. Here lie the unexplored areas of history. The study of those lands is the birthright and the sacred legacy of all civilized peoples. Their delivery from the Turk brings to us an opportunity such as the world has never seen before and will never see again. Our Allies in Europe are financially too exhausted to take advantage of the great opportunity. This makes both the opportunity and the obligation all the greater for us in America.

2. THE IMMINENT DESTRUCTION OF THE MONUMENTS AND THEIR INACCESSIBILITY EVEN IN THE WARTIME.
It is evident that the opening of Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia and Babylonia to modern business and to enlightened exploitation in mining, railroad-building, manufactures and agriculture, means the rapid destruction of the great ruined cities and buried records of early man, with which those lands are filled. They must be studied soon before they are lost forever.

Great numbers of accessible monuments in the Near East are still unpublished, and the museums of Europe are likewise great storehouses of unpublished documents. Every season in western Asia and Egypt a large body of new documents is turned up; some in scientific excavations, some in illicit native diggings, some by accident. In the hands of natives, documents of priceless value frequently knock about for months or years, and then disappear. This happens all the time, In many cases the camera of the visiting archaeologist might have rescued the document in a few minutes, even if he was unable to buy it; or an hour's work would have produced a copy of it in his note-book.

When taken out by alleged scientific excavators, the documents are often never published. In the last twelve years probably two or three thousand packing boxes have wandered from Egypt to the Museum of Turin, Italy, where their contents have been unpacked and installed. No account of these monuments or of the excavations which produced them has ever appeared or is likely to appear. Of such unpublished records there is therefore a vast and ever-growing body.

Besides these, there are the unvisited sites of ancient cities, with much more often be saved by a mere examination of the surface. At the Hittite capital of Khatti in Asia Minor, Winkler on his first visit to the place kicked out with his boot heals documents from the royal archives of the Hittite foreign office, which were lying only a few inches below the surface. Wages loads of royal records lay just below. The result was the discovery of the materials which have made possible the decipherment of the lost Hittite language... At Sidon Dr. George Ford now has lying in his house ten or more splendid Phoenician sarcophagi of stone, discovered by accident. They have been lying there for years and no one has given them any attention. Many more such examples might be adduced.

3. THE NECESSITY OF COLLECTING THE AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS INTO SYSTEMATIC ARCHIVES.
It is needless to point out that the university teacher is as unable single-handed to cope with a situation like this as would be the astronomer to study the skies without his observatory or his staff. In France the national Academy or the Government partially meets the difficulty by occasionally granting French savants a subscription for a visit to the Orient. This practice does not solve the difficulty, because the French savants' tenure of the subscription is temporary, and there is no common file or body of archives where the documents brought back are collected. They are thus scattered through the papers of a large number of different scholars who may at different times have held the subscription. The scattered fragments of man's story have never been brought together by any one. Yet they must be brought together by some efficient organization and collected under one roof before the historian of today can piece together and reveal to modern man the story of his own career. A laboratory containing all the available early human records necessary to a study of man's career as an astronomical and religious activity, and the equipment of natural science at a vast body of documents has left behind must play as are the observations of the astronomers.

4. THE NECESSITY OF REGULAR AND PERIODIC ACCES.
The astronomer is sometimes required to observe. This is constantly true of the written materials, he must be granted the time and the astronomical assistant at large. The Near Orient collecting activity covering many years might then be able to visit at short intervals all the museums of Europe or in the Orient, and even pervasive ruins and bodies of documents, likely. By means of the camera he could rescue monumentals still unsurveyed. His photography, especially if he had an assistant to aid in a more comprehensive group of documents. They would be accessible, and for the first time, if he could spend all his time at the collection, even for the first time, if he could spend all his time at the collection, even for a few months would be more efficient, and they could be made a part of all the prehistoric life and the various eras in the history of the Mediterranean and Mesopotamia at least a systematically built up documentary basis, such lost chapters of the career of man.

5. THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE.
Housed in the Haskell Oriental Museum of Documents would constitute a historical laboratory. Just as the astronomical observatory its records and files, so the Oriental Institute would constitute the files in order, to arrange, accession and preserve. This would enable the director to maintain a complete body of sources in the files of the Institute, to study them.

The ultimate aim of all this organisation from the remotest ages, in order thus to trace barbarism, from successive stages of advancement of the earliest great civilised states, and the influence which we have inherited. In short the writing of a great history of the Orient and Europe.

7. ADDITIONAL ADVANTAGES TO AMERICAN INSTITUTES.
Frequent visits to the Orient, now so far as the Institute makes use of the unusually available opportunities and monuments at relatively low prices. Funds outside of the budget of the Orient are constantly traveling in the Near Orient in order to assist institutions in taking ancient monuments and documents found in the boxes, and building up the Oriental Museum of the University for original investigations by all the members of the materials which should be brought of the Department also, and furnished with men who would be transformed into a much more productive
The presence of an American representative who is frequently on the ground in many different regions of the Near Orient would be of substantial value in other ways—especially because it would keep Americans constantly informed of favorable opportunities, not only for purchases as just indicated, but also for newly discovered openings or sites for excavation, to which the attention of American museums or interested patrons could be called. Eventually reports of the Oriental Institute on present-day conditions in the Near East might also be of value to our government, to our educational and relief organizations, and even to our business men.

5. THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE NOT AN EXCAVATION ORGANIZATION AND HENCE A MODEST BUDGET.

While the Oriental Institute might accomplish much in suggesting and encouraging excavation, its plan does not contemplate supporting from its own budget any costly excavation campaigns. Its budget is therefore a modest one. It could be set going for about $10,000 a year. An endowment of $250,000 would therefore be necessary to launch it. As its collections of documents increased and it grew into larger opportunities of work, as it undoubtedly would, it would soon need a larger income. If the General Education Board would grant the University of Chicago an endowment of $250,000 to set the Oriental Institute going, it would without doubt be possible, as the need arose, to raise additional endowment for it from other sources.

J. MINIMUM BUDGET FOR PRELIMINARY AND EARLY STAGES

| Salary of director (supplementing University salary) | $1,500.00 |
| Salary of Curator in charge of all files | $2,000.00 |
| Salary of stenographer & cataloguer (one person at first) | $1,500.00 |
| Draughting, photographing and supplies for same | $1,000.00 |
| Cases and files as records grow | $500.00 |
| Bulletins, reports and office supplies | $1,000.00 |
| Traveling expenses | $2,500.00 |
| **Total** | **$10,000.00** |

The above budget would suffice to inaugurate the enterprise. The organization would be much more effective if it could include a permanent field assistant, residing probably in Aleppo, or perhaps in Cairo, with two rooms for headquarters, used chiefly for storage of field equipment. As the bulk of the files and records increased, additional help would be needed to care for them, and a staff photographer to furnish prints and care for the great file of negatives, precisely as is done in an astronomical observatory. For this expansion I am confident I can secure the endowment needed, once the enterprise has demonstrated its efficiency and its possibilities. In order to make this demonstration the General Education Board is asked to contribute the above initial endowment.

Respectfully submitted,

(Signed) James H. Breasted