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**Donald Whitcomb's** research at Aqaba was hampered by the uncertainty of events connected with the conflict in the Gulf. In September Whitcomb and Jim Richerson visited Aqaba for consultations on the Visitor Orientation Center and coordination of restoration and preservation work at Aqaba supported by USAID. Plans were finalized with the Departments of Tourism and Antiquities for this project (see report on Aqaba for details). While there Whitcomb and Richerson witnessed the tremendous relief efforts conducted by Jordan for the thousands of refugees from Iraq and the Gulf region.

In October Whitcomb made a trip to Syria with Tom Holland as part of the exchange program between the University of Chicago and the University of Damascus. While enjoying the generous hospitality of our friends in Damascus, they gave a series of lectures for the archaeology program at the University. Later they were able to visit Aleppo, examined a few archaeological sites of the Islamic period, and visited the old excavations at Tell es-Sweyhat (now under a new program of excavation by Holland).

This year he also gave a lecture for members of the Oriental Institute on Aqaba, his first presentation since the results of the initial season. This lecture synthesized the results of the four seasons, 1986-1989, and demonstrated the development of research design for this archaeological site.

Spring was devoted to a visit to England, where Whitcomb enjoyed the hospitality of the former curator of the Oriental Institute Museum, John Carswell. Through John's good offices, Whitcomb presented a paper to the Oriental Ceramic Society, at the British Academy on April 9th, "Glazed Ceramics of the Abbasid Period from the Aqaba Excavations." Details of this thesis have been discussed under the report of Aqaba research. During his stay in England, he pursued early records and photographs of Aqaba in the Royal Geographic Society, Imperial War Museum and other archives. The visit to the Palestine Exploration Fund resulted in the discovery of photos of the site of Ayla taken in the 1880s.

Whitcomb also gave a lecture on Aqaba at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. While at the Ashmolean, he was able to study a special collection of ceramics from Iran. These ceramics are medieval painted wares, a type which Whitcomb has published and continues to study. What make the Ashmolean