

TELL ES-SWEYHAT EXPEDITION TO SYRIA

Thomas A. Holland

Although it was not possible to conduct a major field season of archaeological excavations at Tell es-Sweyhat during 1994 due to insufficient funding, some study of the unprocessed pottery sherds was done in conjunction with Holland's visit to Aleppo in September to attend an International Colloquium, which had as its theme "Aleppo and the Silk Road."

At the end of the colloquium, Holland and a Syrian Department of Antiquities' representative rented a car with driver and went to the Euphrates River area of the Jazirah in order to pay the year's wages and storage fees to the guard at Tell es-Sweyhat and to conduct study of some of the unprocessed material from previous seasons of excavation. Holland was very fortunate and grateful for the hospitality that was afforded to them by Dr. Uwe Finkbeiner, the director of the German excavations that were being conducted at Tell Abd, about twenty kilometers to the southwest of Sweyhat. They were housed and fed by the expedition during the two days of sorting pottery sherds at Sweyhat for removal to Aleppo for study as well as given a thorough tour of the Bronze Age site, where Clemens Reichel, Jerry Lyon, and Kate Sarther (graduate students in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations) were working as part of the excavation team. Holland studied the pottery for five days in the Ramsis Hotel in Aleppo, primarily describing and drawing pottery vessels that had been excavated from the Wall Painting building in Operation 5 during the 1993 season. Unfortunately, it was impossible to complete this task in the short time available, but it is planned that the work will be concluded during the Oriental Institute's 1996 season of excavations.

In Chicago, work proceeded on preparing objects, sections, plans, and pottery illustrations for inclusion in the first volume of a final report on excavations at Sweyhat. Elizabeth B. Tieken, one of our more loyal supporters, very kindly undertook the task of restoring one example of the "Vounous" type storage jar excavated from Sweyhat so that it can be photographed for publication. She is also working on a very brittle Roman cooking pot, broken into numerous fragments, from one of the later phases of occupation on the site. A considerable number of Early Bronze Age metal objects were sent to the Smithsonian Conservation Analytical Laboratory for analyses and inclusion in the forthcoming report, the results of which were expected during 1994/95; however, due to extensive construction at the Smithsonian's laboratories, these results will be delayed.
