



News & Notes

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ZAFAR, YEMEN, 1984

"Maybe hieroglyphs. Not Arabic, not the *Musnad*, not the writing of the Romans or the English. Perhaps hieroglyphs." Ahmed Abd al-Waily was describing in simple Arabic a rock-cut inscription he had found on the rim of the Wadi Bana not far from Zafar. Ahmed is a sheikh from a village near Zafar. He is an educated man and has taught himself to read the *Musnad*, the ancient block letter script of pre-Islamic South Arabia. He does not speak English, but he recognizes the alphabet. He is the local authority on Himyarite remains in the area, and more likely than anyone else to know what he is talking about. His report of hieroglyphs excited my interest quite a bit. Much of Yemen is archaeologically unexplored; a Pharaonic visit to South



Bronze plaque which Yaz'an bin Zarban has dedicated to the goddess 'Am for the safety of his house and in gratitude for some cultic appointment. ZM 999



Panel with bas-relief of chest with rectangular recess motif and claw feet. ZM 825

Arabia is hitherto unattested but certainly not unimaginable. We made arrangements to go see the inscription. After driving half a day to reach the inscription I found that it was actually several meters down the rather vertical canyon wall. Being agoraphobic, only the prospect of acute personal disgrace drove me to make the climb, and when I got back to the top I simply sat flat on the rock for several minutes, digging my fingers into the crevices and privately rejoicing in the fact that it was so stable and solid. And of course, the inscription proved not to be hieroglyphic but rather some badly weathered South Arabic graffiti. It is important, but not as dramatic as hieroglyphs.

Yemen is quite unlike the rest of Arabia. While much of the rest of the peninsula is unrelieved desert, its southern corner is a region of rugged, mountainous highlands with

extensively terraced slopes and valleys. From South Arabia the Queen of Sheba came to visit the court of Solomon. In Classical times the area was known as Arabia Felix, Happy Arabia, the source of frankincense and an important center of the spice trade. There is sufficient rainfall, if used judiciously, to support agriculture, and the mountains are scattered with farming villages. This is today, and probably always has been, the most populous portion of the peninsula. For centuries Yemen has been comparatively isolated from the outside world, both by geography and politics, and it preserves in many respects an almost medieval Arab civilization. Only recently has the area begun to open up to the outside world.

I had been to Zafar twice before to do archaeological survey. This past fall, September, 1984, brought a new opportunity, the chance to lead a tour to Yemen. A grant from the American Institute for Yemeni Studies meant that I could stay on after the tour to continue my research. I approached tour-leading with a certain amount of trepidation: I am accustomed to thinking of Yemen as fascinating, but what might American tourists think? Would Sana's ancient six and seven story houses with their alabaster windows make up for occasional inadequacies in the plumbing? And all sorts of things can go wrong on a tour . . . Fortunately, none of them did. There are excellent new five-star hotels in Sana, with swimming pools and cabarets, and these help make up for more spartan accommodations outside of the capital. The local tourist agency handled all of our arrangements with remarkable

efficiency: schedules were kept and reservations worked. We saw the country from the ruins of the Marib dam to the fishmarkets on the beach at Hodeida, from the spice suq in Sana to the threshing floors in mountain villages. To judge from the amount of film we used, it must have been a very successful tour: one member of the group alone went through some seventy rolls.

Now to work. It always takes a certain amount of time to make the necessary arrangements for a survey, to get permits and buy supplies. The American Institute house in Sana offers pleasant accommodations to visiting researchers, and Paul Martin, its director, was a great help in dealing with the increasing complexities of Yemeni bureaucracy. As before, Qadi Isma'il al-Akwa', Director General of the Department of Antiquities, generously allowed me to use the Zafar Museum as my base and made available the welcome assistance of his staff.

Civilization arose in this part of the world along the eastern fringes of the highlands, facing the deserts of the Empty Quarter. While their origins are obscure, there was, by the middle of the first millennium, a series of small but wealthy kingdoms flourishing along the edge of the highlands—Ma'in, Saba, and Qataban. Their prosperity depended not only on their trade in aromatics, but on sophisticated irrigation systems which used occasional flashfloods descending from the highlands. However, about the time of Christ, a major transformation began to take place in South Arabian civilization. The older kingdoms began to decay and new highland kingdoms began to



Detail of sea monsters and riders. ZM 1000



Cyclopean fortification foundation beside the road at Zafar.

supplant them. In time, Himyar emerged supreme, at the head of an empire which, at its greatest extent, included perhaps a third of the entire peninsula. The kings of Himyar received ambassadors from Ethiopia and India, and maintained diplomatic ties with capitals as distant as Ctesiphon and Rome. Zafar became a cosmopolitan city which drew its cultural inspiration from the late Classical civilization of the Mediterranean and the Near East.

Not much is left of Zafar today, only rubble-strewn hills, a small village, and perhaps the world's most remote museum. However, out of the rubble come fragments of inscriptions, architectural elements, and elegant bas-relief. This season's work saw over two hundred new pieces catalogued, photographed, and incorporated into the Zafar Museum collection. At the end of three seasons, we have over a thousand objects registered and perhaps two thousand five hundred more unregistered. The Zafar Museum houses the most extensive collection from any South Arabian highland site and provides the best cultural profile for any part of the region during the first millennium A.D.

A number of the new objects merit particular attention. Among these is ZM 772, a new monotheistic inscription with the dedication, "Blessed and be hallowed the Name of the Merciful, Lord of Heaven, Lord of Israel." Another, ZM



Retaining wall on the acropolis at Zafar.

999, is an inscribed bronze plaque dedicated to Am, the Goddess, Mistress of the fields of Yath'ar," a deity hitherto unknown at Zafar. And then, on my last day for registration at the site, in came a rather scruffy individual with some more objects. Having already seen enough nondescript rocks, I was groaning inwardly until out of his bundle began



Retaining wall on the acropolis at Zafar.



Himyarite tomb near Zafar. The first chamber is empty, but a heavy boulder embedded in one wall appears to protect an inner chamber, perhaps un plundered.

to come pieces of finely worked alabaster. When cleaned and fitted together, they formed the upper portion of a beautiful monolithic window frame two feet wide, decorated in high-relief vine rondels and crested at the top with two figures in flowing robes riding fantastic sea creatures. ZM 1000 is one of the finest objects in the Zafar or any other South Arabian collection.

In addition to cataloguing and photographing objects in the Museum, I visited a number of nearby villages, photographing objects originally from Zafar, and located three sites not previously reported. One of these, badly plundered for building stone, was located on the slope of Jebel Shamir Yu'erish, apparently preserving a name born by as many as three Himyarite kings during the second and third centuries. Another, atop Jebel Haqlain, is roughly ten acres in extent and appears to preserve significant walls and foundations below ground. This site is currently occupied by a small army post, and in some cases the soldiers have dug their installations down into ancient Himyarite rooms. They took some delight in showing off their work, pointing to composite walls with the explanation, "From here up, army; from here down, Himyar." I also located two apparently undisturbed tombs which pose an interesting challenge for the future.

A number of archaeological missions have been active in Yemen during the last few years, and two of the most productive have been the Italian under Professor Alessandro de Maigret of Naples and the German under Professor Jurgen Schmidt of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institute. One of the major puzzles of South Arabian archaeology has been, "Where is the Bronze Age?" Stone Age material has been reported, and the historical sequence at Marib has been reconstructed backward, at the most optimistic, to about 800 BC. This leaves a block of perhaps two thousand years and a major segment of the normal cultural sequence for which no material has been attested.

Apparently that gap is now being filled. Just recently the German institute has published a geomorphological study of the irrigation system at Marib which indicates that its origins date to around 2000 B.C., and the Italian Mission has located sites southeast of Sana with material which is comparable to Syro-Palestinian from the fourth and third millennia B.C. It appears that we have literally just begun to scratch the surface of South Arabia. The next few years should be very interesting.

Raymond D. Tindel



Beer into Bread

The ancient Egyptians regularly turned bread into beer, however, they never seemed to have thought of trying to reverse the process. From Cissy Haas, wife of Oriental Institute Visiting Committee member Albert Haas, comes a wonderful and easy recipe for turning beer into bread.

Mix together in a bowl:

- 3 cups *self-rising* flour
- 1 can or bottle (12 oz.) beer
- 2-3 tablespoons of sugar
- ($\frac{1}{2}$ -1 teaspoon salt)

Put immediately into a greased $9\frac{1}{2}$ " x $5\frac{1}{2}$ " loaf pan and drizzle melted butter over the top. Bake for 55 minutes at 350° . Serve warm from the oven. One could add dill seeds, chopped onions or chives, raisins or any number of other spices or nuts and fruits for variety. **NOTE:** You **MUST** use self-rising flour.

FREE SUNDAY FILMS

March–June 1985

All films are shown at 2 PM in Breasted Hall, The Oriental Institute



Donald E. McCown

It is with sadness that we announce that Donald E. McCown, former Field Director of the Joint Nippur Project, died in Silver Spring, Maryland on January 19, 1985. Dr. McCown was a member of the staff and faculty of the Oriental Institute from 1933 until 1955. He was Field Director for the Iranian Project in 1947-48 and Field Director for Nippur from 1948-1954. Among his publications were O.I.P. 59, *Tall-I-Bakun A, Season of 1932* (with Alexander Langsdorff); O.I.P. 78, *Nippur I, Temple of Enlil, Scribal Quarter and Soundings* (with Richard C. Haines); and O.I.P. 97, *Nippur II, The North Temple and Sounding E.* (with Richard C. Haines and Robert Biggs). Dr. McCown is survived by his wife, Garnet, and children, Timothy and Rebecca.

March	10	The Big Dig
	17	Rivers of Time
	24	The Egyptologists
	31	Iran: Landmarks in the Desert
April	7	Turkey: Crossroads of the Ancient World
	14	Of Time, Tombs and Treasure
	21	Iraq: Stairway to the Gods
	28	Egypt: Gift of the Nile
May	5	Myth of the Pharaohs/Ancient Mesopotamia
	12	Preserving Egypt's Past
	19	Megiddo: City of Destruction
	26	Egypt's Pyramids: Houses of Eternity
June	2	The Big Dig
	9	Rivers of Time
	16	The Egyptologists
	23	Iran: Landmarks in the Desert
	30	Turkey: Crossroads of the Ancient World

MUSEUM EDUCATION OFFICE

The Museum Education Office is pleased to announce the publication of "Art Projects from the Oriental Institute Museum," its new manual of arts and crafts projects inspired by objects in the Museum galleries. Ten craft projects are featured, each with patterns, instructions, a list of materials needed, and a background essay providing historical and cultural context for the artifact being replicated. The projects include a cardboard pyramid model, Pazuzu demon puppet, clay cylinder seals, "ancient" pottery, Megiddo game board, Persian lion tapestry, gold foil jewelry, Egyptian sock doll, Egyptian cartouches, and magic amulets. The crafts are adaptable to both elementary and high school age levels, and all can be implemented by an interested novice or embellished by an experienced art teacher.

The projects in this manual are based on those done in the popular Children's Workshops offered as part of the Museum's public program. Development and publication of the manual were supported in large part by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council. It can be purchased from the Museum Education Office for \$10 plus \$2 shipping and handling charge. Please make check payable to the Oriental Institute and mail to Education Office, The Oriental Institute, 1155 East 58th Street, Chicago IL 60637.



Tapestry by Ray School students used as full color cover on "Art Projects from the Oriental Institute Museum."

LECTURE SCHEDULE

All lectures are at 8 PM in Breasted Hall at the Oriental Institute. Reminders of the upcoming lectures will be printed in each issue of the *News & Notes*. Institute members may make dinner reservations at the Quadrangle Club, 1155 East 57th Street, 753-3696 before membership lectures. They will bill the Oriental Institute and we, in turn, will bill you. Please print your name and address at the bottom of your dinner check, as well as signing it, so that we know where to send your bill.

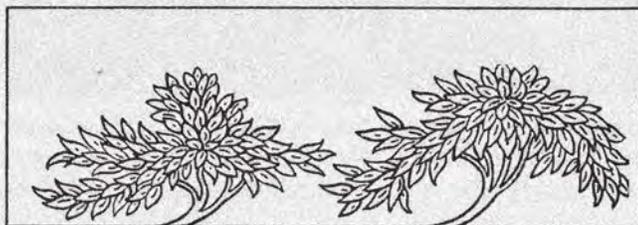
March 20, 1985	Robert M. Whiting, The Oriental Institute, <i>Tell Asmar Tablets: Three Hundred Years of Palace Administration</i> .
April 17, 1985	Bruce B. Williams, The Oriental Institute, <i>A New View of Pharaonic Culture in Nubia: The Beginning, the End and the Crossroads</i>
May 13, 1985	Annual Oriental Institute Dinner in the Museum
May 29, 1985	Donald Whitcomb, The Oriental Institute, <i>Persepolis Revisited: Oriental Institute Excavations at Istakhr</i> .

MARCH LECTURE

Robert M. Whiting of the Oriental Institute will present an illustrated lecture, *Tell Asmar Tablets: Three Hundred Years of Palace Administration*, March 20, 1985 at 8 PM in Breasted Hall.

APRIL LECTURE

Bruce Williams of the Oriental Institute will present an illustrated lecture, *A New View of Pharaonic Culture in Nubia: The Beginning, the End and the Crossroads*, April 17, 1985 at 8 PM in Breasted Hall.



ORIENTAL INSTITUTE 1985 ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOUR

Cyprus and Crete October 11-27, 1985

Our tour of Cyprus and Crete will be led by Joseph A. Greene, a Ph.D. candidate at the Oriental Institute, who has spent several seasons digging in Cyprus and has led other tours to the Mediterranean. The trip will visit the important archaeological sites in the area, as well as museums, temples and towns. There will also be a special reception at the Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute (CAARI) and lecture by its director, Stuart Swinney. Enough time is left for individual exploration of the various places visited. A complete itinerary is available from the Membership Office. The cost of the trip from Chicago is:

Land arrangements	\$1795
Round trip air fare from Chicago	\$1273
Single supplement	\$ 300

plus a \$350 tax-deductible contribution to the Oriental Institute. This includes deluxe accommodations or best possible, all land arrangements and most meals. A \$300 deposit is required at the time of booking.

Arrangements may be made beforehand with the travel agent (Archaeological Tours) to travel in Europe or the Near East before or after the tour. Archaeological Tours will be glad to help you with these arrangements but you will be responsible for any additional travel costs or surcharges.

Information on all tours is available from the Membership Office, The Oriental Institute, 1155 East 58th Street, Chicago, Illinois, 60637. (312) 962-9513.

Please enroll me/us in the Institute's 1985 Archaeological Tour to Cyprus and Crete: October 11-27, 1985

- Share room (with?) _____
 Single room
 Send detailed itinerary

Name(s) _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Daytime telephone _____ Home telephone _____

Enclosed is \$____ (\$300 per person) as a deposit to hold my/our place, payable to

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOURS, INC.

Mail to: Membership Office, The Oriental Institute,
 1155 East 58th St., Chicago IL 60637 (312) 962-9513.

SPRING MEMBERS' COURSES

Literature from the Land of Gilgamesh: The Mesopotamian Literary Tradition

From the third millennium B.C. through the end of the first, the scribes of ancient Mesopotamia copied down and preserved a literary tradition so rich and variegated that it had few, if any, rivals in the ancient world. The discoveries of Mesopotamian literary compositions at Tell el-Amarna in Egypt, at Boghazköy in Turkey, and at Megiddo and ancient Ugarit in the Levant attest to the popularity and influence of this tradition. It is not surprising, therefore, to discover that in the Hebrew Bible certain stories—the Flood, the Tower of Babel, and Job among others—manifest unmistakable Mesopotamian influences, if not direct borrowing. Myths and epic tales, such as the Epic of Gilgamesh, are the best-known today, but they were not the only literary work produced by the ancient Mesopotamians. There are preserved also hymns, prayers to the gods, laments, incantations, oracles, debates, dialogues, and 'wisdom' compositions such as fables, proverbs, and aphorisms, as well as works that are not so easily categorized.

This course will trace the development of the Mesopotamian literary tradition and will provide an opportunity to read and discuss English translations of selected texts from this fascinating corpus.

INSTRUCTOR:

Steven W. Cole, Ph.D. student in Assyriology at the Oriental Institute.

Lord of the Two Lands: Egyptian Kingship and the Development of Monumental Architecture

This course will survey the ideology of Egyptian kingship primarily through the examination of royal, monumental architecture. The survey will proceed chronologically, beginning with the first royal tombs of the early dynasties, progressing on to pyramid complexes of the Old Kingdom, through the famous Theban area temples and tombs of the 18th and 19th dynasties, and ending with the great building projects of Ramesses III. This architecture will serve as a point of departure for discussing such issues as the relationship between king and commoner, the nature of the king's divinity and how he graphically and ideologically portrays this special status, the king's role in Egyptian religion and the afterlife, and the ebb and growth of the king's position in various periods of Egyptian history. A substantial portion of the class will be devoted to slide presentations. No text books are required, although some will be recommended for supplementary reading.

INSTRUCTOR:

Mary Wright, Ph.D. candidate at The Oriental Institute.

Classes will meet every Saturday morning from 10 a.m. to noon, April 13—June 8, 1985 (No class May 25, Memorial Day Weekend) at the Oriental Institute. Tuition is \$60 for members. For more information call the Education Office, 962-9507.

Please register me for the course

- Literature from the Land of Gilgamesh
 Lord of the Two Lands
 I am a member and enclose a check for : \$60
 I am not a member but enclose a SEPARATE check for \$25 to cover a one year Oriental Institute membership.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime telephone _____

Please make all checks payable to THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE. Please register by Wednesday, April 10 • Mail to: EDUCATION OFFICE, The Oriental Institute, 1155 East 58th Street, Chicago, IL 60637.

HIEROGLYPHS-BY-MAIL TO BEGIN IN APRIL

The Introductory Hieroglyphs-by-Mail course taught by Frank Yurco will begin in early April. It will consist of ten lessons. As you complete each lesson and return it to the instructor, he will correct the exercises, answer any questions you might have, and return them to you along with the next lesson. It will take about twenty weeks to complete the course.

The two necessary texts will be Gardiner's *Egyptian Grammar* and Faulkner's *Middle Egyptian Dictionary*, both of which can be ordered from the Suq.

Tuition is \$80 plus the annual membership fee of \$20 (\$25 in the Chicago area). Please register by April 1.

Please enroll me in Egyptian Hieroglyphs-by-Mail course.

- _____ My check for \$80 is enclosed
 _____ I am a member
 _____ I enclose a *separate* check for annual membership
 _____ I would like to order Gardiner's *Egyptian Grammar* from the Suq and enclose a separate check (price: \$37.50 less 10% member discount, plus 8% sales tax if shipped to Illinois address, plus \$3.00 shipping charge).
 _____ I would like to order Faulkner's *Dictionary* from the Suq, and enclose payment (price: \$21.00 less 10% member discount, plus 8% sales tax if shipped to Illinois address, plus \$2.50 shipping charge).

Name _____

Address _____

City, state and zip code _____

Please make all checks payable to Oriental Institute with separate checks for tuition, membership and Suq. Return to Education Office, Oriental Institute, 1155 E. 58th St., Chicago, IL 60637

NEW "FEATURED OBJECT" PROGRAM

February marks the beginning of the Museum's new "Featured Object" program which will highlight a series of objects from the permanent collection. The featured object will be the subject of an educational brochure that visitors can read and take home.

The program will give visitors, especially returning visitors, something "new" at the Oriental Institute, where the permanent exhibits seldom change and temporary exhibits are few and far between. Each of the approximately 5000 objects on display has its own interesting story to tell, and it is hoped that this program will help the thoughtful visitor to understand an object beyond merely knowing its identification or reading the small bit of information a label usually contains. The educational brochure will examine the object from one or more different perspectives—its use, its artistic or historical significance, perhaps its discovery—whatever is interesting and important about the particular object.

The first "Featured Object" is part of an astronomical instrument of King Tut-ankh-Amun. Often overlooked because of its small size and plain appearance, this object is part of one of the oldest astronomical instruments known. It was made in the reign of the renowned King Tut and

bears an inscription of some historical significance. The brochure tells how the artifact made its way from its ancient origin in Upper Egypt to its present home in the Oriental Institute, describes the artifact and its use, and translates, with commentary, its inscriptions. The research for this "featured object" was done by Museum Archivist John A. Larson who became intrigued with the piece while gathering information on it in response to a request.

The "Featured Object" Program is made possible through a grant to the Museum Education Program from the Illinois Arts Council which helps pay publication costs of the educational brochures. It is planned that there will be three objects featured throughout the year. The King Tut astronomical instrument will be featured through April.

A workshop for teachers and the general public will be held in conjunction with the Featured Object program on Saturday afternoon, April 13, 1985 from 1-4 p.m. Museum Archivist John Larson will speak about the Tut-ankh-Amun astronomical instrument and Sara Schechner Genuth of the Adler Planetarium will present information on ancient astronomy in general. Fee for the workshop is \$10; \$5 for Oriental Institute or Adler Planetarium members. To register, call Museum Education Office, 962-9507.



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