

EDITORIAL

THE full account of the School's 1966 season of excavations at Tell al Rimah given here by the Director, Mr. David Oates, is a fitting prelude to the striking discoveries made in this current year's expedition.

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At the thirty-fourth Annual General Meeting of the School held at the British Academy, Burlington Gardens, London on July 26th, 1967 Mr. Oates reported on the further work carried out on the Rimah temple and ziggurat and on Site C in the town. The main architectural discovery was a projecting stair leading up from the town to the temple terrace, a remarkable and elaborately contrived system of brickwork.

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Among outstanding finds this season were more than two hundred Old Babylonian tablets, including letters, economic and administrative texts. Since some of these are dateable to the reign of Zimrilim and refer to individuals named in the Mari correspondence, they are likely to be of extraordinary interest for the information they will yield on external relations of Rimah with Mari and the neighbouring city-states.

A finely carved and inscribed stela depicting Adad-nirari III was found in a late Assyrian temple built against the north side of the then ruined ziggurat. Flanking the entrance to the cella were two limestone orthostats each bearing a lion's head with a dagger-blade projecting downwards from the mouth.

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Thanks to a generous grant by an anonymous donor the School was able to initiate work at Tell al Taya in the vicinity of Tell Al Rimah under the direction of Mr. J. E. Reade. Here a large area of buildings of the third millennium B.C., almost two kilometres across, surround the central mound. The unique town plan and occupation from the Agade period into the second millennium were traced and a valuable sequence of pottery obtained.

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During the winter Dr. Joan Oates continued her survey of ancient sites in the Mandali-Badra region on the eastern edge of the Mesopotamian plain with the

aid of a Fellowship granted by the Guggenheim Foundation. A site of the Jarmo period was the earliest, and the first of this date, discovered in the district. Other sites have yielded Samarra and later material, including for the first time pottery of both north and south Mesopotamian cultures together with apparently Iranian material. Excavations are planned for this coming autumn.

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The first fruits of the work of cleaning, cataloguing and preparing for publication the many ivories discovered by the School's excavations at Nimrud (1948–1963) can now be seen in the volume of *Equestrian Bridle-barness Ornaments* (Ivories from Nimrud, Fasc. I; part 2) by Mr. J. J. Orchard, Assistant Director of the School. Copies may be purchased from the Honorary Secretary at four guineas, post free.

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Fellowships of the British School of Archaeology in Iraq for the year 1967/8 have been awarded to Miss S. Page, B.A. for the study of the old Babylonian texts from Tell Rimah and to Michael Jarman, M.A. for work on early agriculture in Mesopotamia.