

Thomas A. Holland

Thomas A. Holland continued again, intermittently, due to other duties, to assist in the final preparation of the Tell es-Sweyhat, Syria, excavation report for publication. Unfortunately, as reported in last year's *Annual Report*, the production of this report was delayed for various reasons and was not published early in this fiscal year as expected. The present plan is for the Publications Office to complete this report and to see final publication during the autumn of 2006.

INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH

As 2006 marks the 100th anniversary of Oriental Institute Publications, Holland worked on a new volume to mark this important event: *Publications of The Oriental Institute 1906–2006: Exploring and Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Investigations into the History and Civilizations of the Near East*, edited by Thomas A. Holland, with an introduction by Gil J. Stein, Director of the Oriental Institute. Members and others interested in research projects conducted at the Oriental Institute may wonder why this is the 100th anniversary of publications since the Institute was not officially founded until 1919 by James Henry Breasted. Before the establishment of the Institute Breasted already had envisioned a series of volumes collectively known as “Ancient Records,” which he edited while he was a professor at the University of Chicago. The first of his planned series was entitled *Ancient Records of Egypt* and consisted of five volumes that were published during 1906. How they came to be incorporated into the Oriental Institute’s publications series is best described by Breasted himself in *The University of Chicago Survey*, Volume 12: *The Oriental Institute*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933:

The Ancient Records series of translations. — In order to assemble the original narrative sources of ancient oriental history, to co-ordinate them, and to make them accessible to all, it has long been the intention of the orientalist group in the University of Chicago to issue a series of translations which should eventually include all the important written sources for the history of the ancient Near East. This series was given the general title *Ancient Records*, and a prospectus of the translations to be published was issued by President William Rainey Harper five or six years before his lamented death. The first installment to be printed comprised the historical sources of Egypt from the earliest times to the advent of the Persians in 525 B.C.

The death of President Harper, followed by that of his brother, Dr. Robert Francis Harper, necessarily resulted in the discontinuance of the plan. After the organization of the Oriental Institute, however, this series was incorporated in the plans of the Institute, and a new printing of the *Ancient Records of Egypt* was issued.

The translation of the historical records of Babylonia and Assyria for the *Assyrian Dictionary* made it feasible to produce very rapidly a complete corpus of the historical records of the Tigris and Euphrates country. Two volumes of *Assyrian records* edited by Professor Luckenbill appeared before his untimely death, as a further installment in the realization of the comprehensive plan under Oriental Institute auspices.

It is hoped that work on the *Assyrian Dictionary* and related investigations may make it possible to expand the series of ‘*Ancient Records*’ so as to include the Hittite materials, the Syrian and Phoenician sources, and also the extra-biblical sources for the history of Palestine. [From *The University of Chicago Survey*, vol. 12 (1933): 407–08]

At the end of this fiscal year Holland completed his twenty-first year of work in the Oriental Institute’s Publications Office, serving in many capacities that included working as editor-in-chief, supervising the in-house Sales Office (before Oriental Institute book sales were outsourced to the David Brown Book Company, U.S., and Oxbow Ltd., U.K., during 2003), contributing material to various publications, and acting in the role of a co-managing editor during this fiscal year to help transition the Publications Office into a new digital era utilizing all the latest electronic devices now available for state-of-the-art volumes in print as well as on universal Web sites.

Holland decided that he would officially retire from his position in the Publications Office during the middle of the forthcoming fiscal year in December 2006, but the Director and Associate Director for Administration and Finance graciously honored Holland with the title of “Publications Consultant,” effective until the end of June 2007. During this time, he will be available to undertake assignments, if needed, from his home office and to help facilitate the smooth transition of the Tell es-Sweyhat excavation records into the Oriental Institute’s permanent archives. Holland will also continue in his capacity as a Research Associate at the Oriental Institute and

plans to write a detailed report on his archaeological work at a number of Near Eastern sites, apart from Tell es-Sweyhat, and on his travels and colleagues in the Near East during the last forty-five years.

It is with a sense of humility that Holland states that he has been very privileged to have had the opportunity to participate in and to help disseminate the results of the research projects conducted at the Oriental Institute during this past quarter of a century. Unfortunately, space here does not allow a complete listing of all the colleagues and friends he has had the good fortune to work with and to know better — to all of you he is indebted for your kindness and support.
