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News & Notes

*Issued confidentially to members and friends
Not for publication*

EL-QITAR

Thomas L. McClellan

I first saw el-Qitar on a hot windy July day in 1976 when a group of us drove up from Tell Hadidi. Rudy Dornemann showed us the large tower on the bank of the Euphrates River with its cyclopean sized rocks. After struggling with buried mudbrick it was a magnificent structure. Behind it walls littered the flat from the river up to the foot of the small mountain and I could recognize the shapes of rooms and the lines of streets, but bedrock cropped out in many places too. So I left the site with mixed feelings, believing that bedrock lay centimeters beneath all those assorted walls. How wrong I was; a few days of minor soundings that year demonstrated that occupation debris was meters deep in many places and that the ruins belonged to the second millennium BC of the Late and Middle Bronze Ages.

It was a long 6½ years before I again set foot on el-Qitar. One cold December morning when covered in fog, it seemed like a desolate moonscape devoid of human habitation and a moment of panic set in as I led newcomers around and said this is where we will dig. A lot had happened to me in those six plus years. A season in Turkey at Kurban Höyük as associate director was behind me where I had worked with Lee Marfoe and his team. But with regrets I had abruptly left my first association with the Oriental Institute and a job at Bowie State College in Maryland to travel half way around the globe in the pursuit of Syro-Palestinian archaeology when I took up an appointment at the University of Melbourne.

That second visit to el-Qitar was the beginning of three "summer" holidays in Syria during the dead of winter, and it began a new chapter in Syro-Australian relations, with a few Yanks and Poms (an Australian term of affection for the British) sandwiched between. The cast of characters includes Abu Akif and his yellow '55 Chevrolet, the Mukhtar of Yusef Pasha who was our landlord, my partner the late Bill Culican (we were co-directors for the first two seasons) who truly deserved a Boswell to record his delightful conversations, our surveyor Cliff, and Bryan, carpenter, electrician, mechanic and budding Aramaic and Syriac scholar, my wife Joanna and our daughter Katie. Of course I am leaving out many others, including several unnamed cooks and unmentionable Landrovers.

We learned how to fly kites that year. Originally we planned to build a wooden bipod and from a height of five meters take stereo pairs of five by five meter units and rapidly record all the above-ground architecture but it tur-

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THE CHICAGO MEDIEVAL LUXOR PROJECT (OR "CAMELS")

Donald Whitcomb and Janet Johnson

When we first met our inspector for our new excavations near Luxor temple, we asked if he came from Luxor. "Oh, yes," he said, "my family has been here for over 700 years." Abd al-Gawad's family name is Haggagi, descended from Abu'l Haggag, the patron saint of Luxor. This holy man came to Luxor at the end of the 12th century and his shrine was placed near the center of the town inside the temple.

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The staff mugging in Trench A-D. From the left; Robert Schick, Lisa Heidorn, Don Whitcomb, Beth Mosher, Ann Roth and Jan Johnson with John Meloy deep in the pit.

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Abu Akif, our driver, in his yellow '55 Chevy.

ned out to be impossibly slow, so we reserved it only for excavated trenches and used the kite for the rest. The majority of the time there was no wind, but when it did come up enough to lift the 35mm camera it also nearly took us with it. There is nothing more exhilarating than hanging on the line for all you are worth, with a tinge of fear of shaking the camera loose or unmercifully burning your fingers, or losing the only good wind and light you've had for weeks, or being carried away off the mountain. The day we found our one and only cuneiform tablet I was flying the kite; it was a good half hour before I got to see the best find

of the season, an adoption contract of the Middle Assyrian period that provided over a score of Hurrian names.

It was the first season when Abu Yakub was our cook. He was good but I never realized how good until later seasons when he was gone, lured away by oil prospectors. A more dour man you will seldom meet, never cracking a smile and always telling me how much better kitchen conditions were at that American expedition down near Deir ez-Zor. But there was the time when we ran out of petrol a few kilometers from Membig. When the traffic kept passing us by, he forcefully stopped a motorcycle, hopped on the back, and made the driver return to Membig. Half an hour later a taxi brought us gasoline; Abu Yakub, not waiting around, was already half way to Aleppo. Could he cook: cakes at tea time, exquisite sauces, tender meat, crême caramel, crepe suzettes. Oh where were you the last two seasons Abu Yakub!

The discoveries of the North Tower and the orthostats in the passageway of the Lower West Gate round out my memories of the first season. It was the second or third day at the site when Cliff and I were walking around the summit of the site seeing what architecture should be planned that we stumbled across two weathered but well-cut upright rocks. I could not believe it; there projecting above ground were the facing blocks for the piers of a large defensive gate like Woolley found upstream at Carchemish and over at Alalakh to the west. Then at the end of the first week at the site the Australian ambassador paid us a visit in the yellow '55 Chevrolet. Taking him and the third secretary to the summit of the site I bade them go to the far north end of the summit to take in the full beauty of the scene of the Euphrates River, our village, the mountains and alluvial plain. The third



First season staff at el-Qitar: to left of Abu Yakub, our cook, is the late Bill Culican, co-Director. I stand behind them.



Looking north from el-Qitar near the North Tower. Our camp in Yusef Pasha is upper left, the Euphrates is upper right.

secretary stepped a little bit closer to the edge of a cliff, looked down and said what interesting walls those were. I too looked down and to my amazement and chagrin saw for the first time the North Tower, about 15 meters square, and with surviving foundations stones matching those of the tower by the river.

Our second season was a time of disastrous cooks and vehicles, misadventures in kite flying, the silver hoard, more orthostats, visions of palaces and temples, and explorations around Jebel Khalid and Jebel Ahmar.

That year Cliff made topographical surveys of two nearby sites, a large impressive settlement on Jebel Khalid, a mountain two km south of us that also overlooked the Euphrates. It has heavy fortifications and carved rock chambers whose function puzzles us; possibly they were initially quarries that were converted into sepulchers or even monastic chambers. Graeme Clarke later discovered a Syriac inscription in one. I've been interested in Jebel Khalid because it seems to have operated in Roman times the same way el-Qitar did in the Late Bronze period.

Jebel Ahmar is a tiny conical mountain almost directly across the river from el-Qitar. Ahmar and Qitar flank one of the narrowest points along the Euphrates, and when in visits across the river we collected some Middle and Late Bronze Age pottery we seriously considered that it was somehow connected to the defensive strategy of el-Qitar, either as a rival across the river or a subsidiary defensive position. Wall systems are visible on the surface and we wanted to record them with our kite photography and ground survey.

We continued digging the Lower West Gate the second season and uncovered two more orthostats facing the second set of piers. The passageway made a sharp turn to the right on the inner side of the second pair of orthostats. Elsewhere on the upper settlement I had observed the top

of a thin cut stone slab over three meters long and, opening up trenches there, we began excavating our Orthostat Building in which we have found over twenty orthostats lining the walls of two rooms. They are similar to ones found in Middle Bronze palaces by Woolley at Alalakh, Matthiae at Ebla and the excavators of Ugarit.

On the last digging day of the second season there was a strong wind for kite flying so we photographed most of the upper settlement and then promptly the camera apparatus came loose and crashed to the ground. Meanwhile nearby in a 2.5 x 2.5 meter square statistically chosen at random, Bryan was in the process of discovering about 2.5 kilograms of scrap silver jewelry in a jug. So the day was not a total loss.

During the third season we felt the modern world relentlessly closing in on us. The new superhighway from Aleppo to Membig and beyond was about to open and a new string of high voltage electrical towers crept closer to el-Qitar. This was the season too when five-year-old Katie became close friends with Aziza, the Mukhtar's daughter. We concentrated on the Lower West Gate and the Orthostat Building, solved some architectural puzzles and recovered a good stratigraphic sequence of Middle and Late Bronze Age pottery.

Our plan is to return to Syria again this summer to tie up loose ends from the first three seasons so that work can be published in an interim report. Then in the spring of 1987 we will begin another round of several seasons of full field operations to complete excavation of el-Qitar.

Thomas L. McClellan joined the Oriental Institute in January of 1986 as an Associate Professor. We look forward to hearing more from him as he continues his excavations in Syria.

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Egyptologists have cleared the temple and the work of recording continues by the Chicago Epigraphic Survey. The only part which is inaccessible is the shrine of Abu'l Haggag, which his descendants refuse to move; it stands high above the floor of the temple approached by a stairway outside the temple. By chance, the shrine is built on top of the ruin of a church; so one has the temple, last used in the Roman period, the church of the 6th century, and the shrine of the end of the 12th century. This provides an architectural stratification at 600 year intervals, the last of which is just over 600 years from the present, showing the continuity of Luxor as a religious center.

We came to Luxor to find another stratification of the urban history of this town. Unfortunately the zeal of Egyptologists in uncovering the avenue of the Sphinxes cut through the center of the Roman and medieval town and cleared away 10 to 15m of debris, as well as several hundred houses. One of the houses belonged to Mustafa, a relative of Abd al-Gawad, who actually lived in a house inside the temple. Mustafa is 80 years old this year and happily told us about the town, including the house of Andraus Pasha. This fine old house was built near the river and when the town was removed a mound was left as protection. We received permission to make two trenches into this mound (promising not to endanger the house).

View of the pylon of Luxor Temple from the north with the remains of the Roman city in the middle ground and Trench D (with John Meloy and Beth Mosher) in the foreground, also excavated to Roman levels.

Small trenches necessitated a small staff, Lisa Heidorn, Beth Mosher, Robert Schick and John Meloy, all students from Chicago. Later we were joined by Ann Roth and her husband Everett Rowson. One of the criteria for the staff, at least at first, might have been mountain climbing as the upper portions of both trenches were high constricted spaces with rather steep drops. Fortunately everyone mastered the art of removing each layer of debris while clinging on. These upper layers were mostly of the 19th century, which nevertheless produced a fascinating array of objects including several coins dated to 1917. Below this was the only disappointment of the season, a hiatus of 700 years when this part of the town was either unoccupied or, more likely, the debris of these centuries had been removed. Thus while Don and Abd al-Gawad were frustrated, Magdi Mullah, our inspector for Pharaonic periods, was destined to be very pleased. Next came a sequence of 10th to 12th century Islamic materials, then walls and floors of the 9th century and a sequence of buildings and layers through the earlier, Coptic, period. In trench A, the lowest of the Coptic levels was apparently associated with a large bath; there are substantial walls and the floors had numerous vessels broken in place. Some of the walls were reused and, with lower walls, were associated with Roman and Ptolemaic ceramics.

The Islamic period in trench B ended (or, rather, historically, began) with a baked brick floor beneath which were Coptic remains. The Coptic walls were built upon a massive concentration of Roman ceramics. The lowest part of this trench was the earliest, layers of debris and walls, carefully delineated by Lisa Heidorn, of the late Pharaonic period (26-30th dynasties) mixed with a few objects of the New Kingdom. By this point we were actually lower than the





The major diversion of the season, for both staff and workmen, was the Festival of the Oars. Held in Luxor in late December in conjunction with the International Rowing meet on the Nile, the festival features a morning parade through the city and a ceremony in Luxor Temple.

avenue of the Sphinxes. This trench, when combined with trench A, gives us a fairly complete sequence of artifacts in architectural context for the history of Luxor and justified the scientific aims of the excavations.

The icing of the excavation came, as is usual in archaeology, in the last few days of digging. We had found throughout the season that walls often had stone foundations, stones taken from the temple walls. Ray Johnson has been studying such displaced fragments and reassembling whole scenes within the temple. Happily we were able to provide him with several more pieces to the jigsaw puzzle. We were taking out some of these foundation stones when one line of stones turned out to be painted plaster. In front of the plaster was about 2m of brick collapse which we began to remove, revealing a paneled "fresco" imitating stonework, typical of the Coptic period. A second wall made a corner and ran into our baulk. While digging this we noticed a crack in the baulk; minutes later the crack had widened. We cleared everyone out of the trench and waited. Suddenly Ann Roth, who had been cleaning the fresco, shouted to protect the paintings and Reis Farouk, the foreman, covered them and jumped clear just as over 3m of debris tumbled into the trench. The earth had separated from the surface of the wall which was also covered with painted plaster.

We cleaned up the mess but the cataclysm had destroyed the peace in the trench. We were continuing the removal of the room fill when the workmen started shouting "timsal" (statue). We thought they were saying "timsah" (crocodile) and were wondering how a crocodile could have gotten into the trench, when we were handed a sculpted head. This was a perfect masterpiece depicting the great New Kingdom Pharaoh Tuthmosis III . . . a gem for any museum. Indeed



Statue of head found in the fill of Coptic (6th Century AD ?) room which had imitation marble and porphyry painted plaster walls. The 35 cm. high head, perhaps Thutmosis III, was tentatively dated, on artistic grounds, to mid-XVIIIth Dynasty.

one might wonder if some connoisseur in the 6th century, having decorated his house with fine frescoes, didn't have a few older artistic masterpieces in his collection. One of the lessons we are learning from the history of Luxor is that these people, living with the evidence of the past, constantly reused and reinterpreted what they found around them. Just as the shrine of Abu'l Haggag was superimposed on a church and that on the temple, the city of Luxor and by extension the country of Egypt is the cumulative character of this long and always fascinating history.

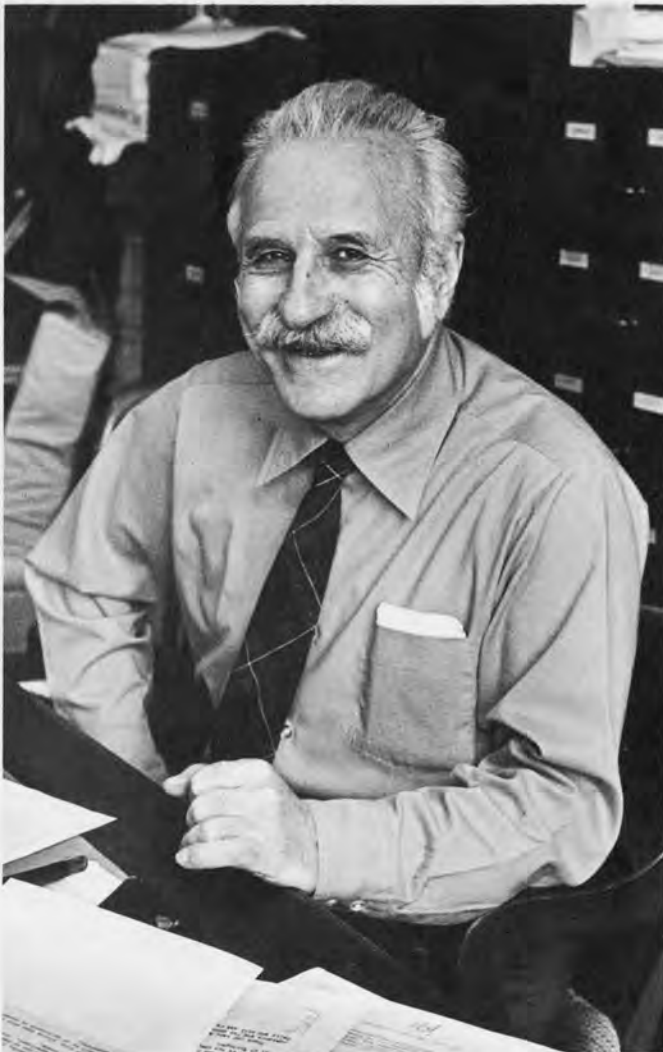
IN MEMORIAM

Ignace J. Gelb

October 14, 1907–December 22, 1985

The Oriental Institute and the entire Assyriological world was saddened by the unexpected death, on December 22, 1985, of Ignace J. Gelb, Frank P. Hixon Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus of Assyriology, after a two-month illness. Jay's death was unexpected because he was still vigorous and pursuing his scholarly work with his usual energy while making plans for the future. In October he read a paper at an international conference on Ebla in Naples, certainly not realizing that it would be his last. He contracted pneumonia on the trip and shortly after returning entered the hospital. While he was there, leukemia was discovered, and, weakened by three bouts of chemotherapy, he succumbed to secondary infections.

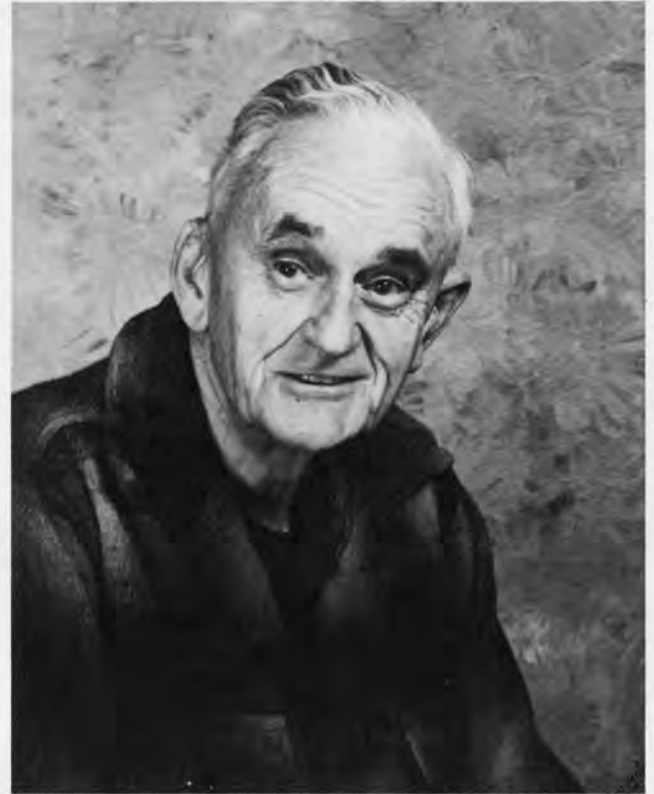
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Ignace J. Gelb

Michael B. Rowton

September 21, 1909–January 9, 1986



Michael B. Rowton

Michael Boris Rowton, Professor Emeritus of Assyriology, died on Thursday, January 9, 1986 in Munster, Indiana at the age of 76. His studies over the years had significantly advanced three different fields of research: Babylonian grammar, Western Asiatic chronology, and nomadism and the physical environment of the Near East.

Rowton's early life and career were hardly typical for a budding academic. He was an accomplished world-class athlete who pursued a business career before the Second World War and then spent eleven years in the British army and foreign service. It was only at the age of 41 that he began formal schooling for his later profession.

Born of British parents on September 21, 1909 in Wimereux, France, he spent his earliest years in England. After the death of his father, his mother married Baron L. J. de Kronenberg; and he moved to Poland when he was about ten years old. He attended school in Poland and Switzerland and later studied at the École Supérieure de Commerce in Antwerp. From 1930 to 1939 he worked for shipping firms in Danzig and Warsaw and achieved distinction as an athlete,

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It is difficult to write about Jay without descending into platitudes—eminent scholar, long and distinguished career, warm and generous human being—because in his case it is all true. There is no need to detail his record of promotion at the University or his membership in academic societies since this information can be found in *Who's Who* or almost any other dictionary of contemporary biographies.

Jay Gelb was born in Tarnow, Poland and studied oriental languages at the University of Rome under the famous Semiticist Giorgio Levi della Vida. He came to Chicago in 1929 at the age of 22 with a brand-new doctorate from Rome, and, with the exception of brief, temporary absences, he spent his entire academic career at the Oriental Institute. In 1938 he married Hester Mokstad and in 1939 he became a United States citizen. He had two sons, Walter Alexander and John Vincent.

One of his absences from Chicago was from 1944 to 1946 when he served in the United States Army. Under the command of General William Donovan, head of the Office of Strategic Services, he remained in Germany after the end of the war to help prepare some of the background material for the Nuremberg trials.

When he first came to the Oriental Institute, he was working on the decipherment of Hittite hieroglyphics and his first book, *Hittite Hieroglyphs I* (SAOC 2) was published in 1931. Between then and now he published twenty-one books and monographs that included further work on the decipherment of Hittite hieroglyphics (*HH II*, 1935 [SAOC 14] and *HH III*, 1942 [SAOC 21]) as well a corpus of Hittite hieroglyphic inscriptions (*Hittite Hieroglyphic Monuments*, 1935 [OIP 45]), the epigraphic finds from the Institute's excavations in Turkey (*Inscriptions from Alishar and Vicinity*, 1935 [OIP 27]), the Sargonic tablets from the Oriental Institute's Diyala expedition (*Sargonic texts from the Diyala Region*, 1952 [MAD 1] and in various collections (Old Akkadian Inscriptions in the Field Museum, 1955; Sargonic Texts in the Ashmolean Museum, 1970 [MAD 5]; Sargonic texts in the Louvre Museum, 1970 [MAD 4]), a grammar (1952, MAD 2) and a glossary (1957, MAD 3) of Old Akkadian, and corpora and analyses of personal names (*Nuzi Personal Names*, 1943 [OIP 57]; *Computer-Aided Analysis of Amorite*, 1980 [AS 21]). But perhaps his most famous work, well-known outside the field of ancient Near Eastern studies, is *A Study of Writing* (1952, revised edition, 1961) which has been translated into German, Italian, French, Spanish, Japanese, and Russian. In addition he produced about a hundred journal articles, eighty book reviews, over a hundred articles for encyclopedias and dictionaries, and served as an editor of the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary.

Up to about 1960, Jay had studied cuneiform tablets from the point of view of their writing, grammar, and lexicon. Quite suddenly, he came to the realization that there were people behind the tablets that had led day-to-day lives. From that time on, he focused his attention on the people of the tablets and began his long-term investigation of social and economic history that had been his major research for the past twenty-five years. In doing this he changed our concept of the society and economy of Mesopotamia in the third millennium and created a new discipline, "onionology," concerned with the little people and their daily bread.

In a long series of articles he demolished the long-held concept of "temple economy" and demonstrated the private ownership of land and the importance of the private sector of the economy in third-millennium Mesopotamia. His major books on household economy and social classes remain to be published.

Jay was a meticulous and painstaking scholar. His work on social and economic history was preceded by years of combing museums for unpublished texts and preparing files on all of the published and unpublished material that he could find and then continuously keeping the files up to date. As a consequence, scholars and students from all over the world have come to the Oriental Institute specifically for the purpose of consulting his files. It is a mark of his generosity that, despite the amount of personal labor that went into keeping his files, he always freely gave his colleagues the use of them as well as of his large personal library.

While Jay was an extraordinary scholar, he was also a highly successful teacher, and the two are not the same thing. His success was not so much in the classroom, where he often preferred to tell anecdotes about his travels across Turkey on horseback in the 1930's or his experiences in the army rather than lecture on Akkadian, but in his ability to lead his students to realize their potential. He was successful because he always felt a responsibility towards his students that went beyond classroom hours and fostered a relationship with his students that allowed his own love of scholarship to infect them.

There are many other things that made Jay what he was—his fondness for nature and his summer home in the Michigan Dunes; his pleasure in long walks through the woods or along city streets; his appreciation of a drink, a pipe, and good conversation—but these are things that those who knew him will keep in our own memories. His true monument will be his scholarship, not just his published work, which may be superseded, but his methodology that he passed to his students along with the knowledge that scholarship is love.

Robert M. Whiting

There will be a memorial service for Ignace J. Gelb on Monday, April 21, 1986 at 2:30 p.m. in Bond Chapel on the University of Chicago campus.

Running out of shelf space? Thinking about Spring cleaning?

If you are about to throw out all of those old **O.I. Annual Reports, Archaeological Newsletters** and *News & Notes* that you've been saving for years, stop! We can put them to good use. We are especially interested in back issues that date before 1970, but would appreciate any O.I. memorabilia that you may no longer have room for. Please contact Museum Archivist John Larson in care of the Museum Office, phone (312) 962-9520.

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excelling in running events and earning a place on the 1936 British Olympic Ski team.

When the war began in Europe in 1939, Rowton had already joined British military forces in one of the last cavalry units. He subsequently spent most of his active service as an army intelligence officer in the Middle East, where he visited sites such as Nineveh and became intrigued with the ancient history of the region. During his army career, he married Mila Glaser, and their son Tim was born in July 1945. At the conclusion of the war, he left the army with the rank of major and joined the British Foreign Service to serve with the occupation control commission in the British Zone in Germany (1946-1950). In these years, working solely on the basis of his own private reading, he published in professional journals his first three articles on the ancient chronology of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Palestine. He also began informal instruction in the Akkadian language with the German Assyriologist, Wolfram von Soden.

In 1950, Rowton left the Foreign Service to begin studies in ancient Near Eastern languages at the University of Liège in Belgium under Professor Georges Dossin. Because of his earlier private study, he was able to complete the doctorate in two years, writing a dissertation on comparative Semitic grammar. In 1952 he was invited to come to Chicago to work in the junior post of research assistant on the Assyrian Dictionary staff for eight months. This initial engagement proved satisfactory on both sides; and he was invited back in 1953 for another year, this time as a Research Associate.

This invitation forced a crucial decision in his career. At the age of 44, with very little experience in a difficult field, he was asked to uproot his family and come to the U.S. on a one-year contract to work on a project that was scheduled to last for only six more years. A letter written by him at this juncture, just after the long drawn-out U.S. visa formalities had been completed, reveals something of his state of mind:

Anyhow, at long last we are off. We leave Wednesday week, and as I have a feeling it is somewhat doubtful whether we shall ever see England again, it will be quite a momentous day.

You know sometimes I think I may be a bit of a fool to be doing this, especially as the journey and setting up home in Chicago will have used up my last reserves. On the other hand, if one thing is certain, it is that you will not get much out of life if you are not prepared to take a risk. And indeed, if I was twenty years younger I would be leaving light of heart I think. But 44 is rather a different matter. When I decided to risk trying a new job in mid-life, I thought that already a pretty risky affair; but somehow I never thought it would involve changing continents as well. Yes, I feel much as someone else did who lived before me. If it was not so staggering an affront to the mighty Atlantic, I would say the Rubicon was about to be crossed. Well, and what of it, was not he fortyish at the time: So what am I worrying about?

What it boils down to . . . is that I have a natural inclination for ancient history, why I do not know myself. And most people who have a really genuine inclination of that sort for any particular kind of work are usually at least relatively

good at it. And I have just no means of knowing just how good or bad at it I am until I have given it a real try.

But after all, in coming to the States like this I am at least in boisterous company, the company of those many who went before me. Like them, Europe offers me no opportunity in my chosen work, America does. But it does so on condition that I am prepared to gamble on my own ability, and that in doing so I am prepared to stake the happiness and welfare of those who are dearest to me. That used to be the real immigration visa to the States, and that is mine today.

Rowton's one-year contract was renewed in 1954 and in succeeding years as work on the Assyrian Dictionary progressed. His personal research continued at first in the field of ancient chronology. He wrote a series of penetrating articles on the subject; and around 1960, when the new edition of the *Cambridge Ancient History* was being planned, he was asked to contribute the chapter on the chronology of western Asia—the definitive statement on the subject. Other successes followed. His studies on grammar yielded a monograph-length article on the Babylonian permissive in 1962, and a particular use of this common Babylonian construction became known informally as the Rowton permissive in recognition of his elucidation of it. He was promoted from Research Associate to the faculty rank of Associate Professor in 1964 and became Professor in 1973.

In the early 1960's, Rowton's research led him into a new field, which he developed almost singlehandedly at first: tribal nomads and the role of physical environment (climate and geography) in the historical development of the ancient and more modern Near East. From his wide reading in ancient, medieval, and modern sources, he had noted similarities in social and economic organization of nomadic tribes who had lived in the territories surrounding the Tigris and Euphrates river valleys about 1800 B.C. and between 1000-1900 A.D. Despite the considerable difference in time, these tribal groups showed many common features in structure that were clearly a part of their overall adaptation to survive in rugged terrain and harsh climate. To explore the environment and institutions of these various groups—nomads and sedentary peoples, tribe and town, tribal chiefdom and sovereign state—Rowton published between 1965 and 1982 a series of seventeen ground-breaking articles which were widely read by scholars concerned with ancient and Islamic history. These articles have had a profound impact on the interpretation of the history of Western Asia by archeologists, philologists, and historians and have led them to new foci of research on the changing role of the environment on historical processes and to a heightened understanding of the pivotal role of tribesmen and nomads in the development of the modern and ancient Near East.

The world of research is deeply grateful that Michael Rowton dared to risk a mid-life career change and that he accepted the challenge to see whether he was good in his chosen field. His writings have enriched many disciplines and have opened up whole new dimensions of study for people concerned with the past and present of Western Asia.

John A. Brinkman

SPRING MEMBERS' COURSES

ROMAN AND BYZANTINE PALESTINE

The incorporation of Palestine into the Roman Empire beginning in the mid-first century B.C. ushered in seven centuries of rule by Rome and Constantinople that ended only with the Muslim conquest in the 630's A.D. These centuries were ones of general long term stability and growth in Palestine, modern-day Israel and Jordan, that culminated in a peak of material prosperity and population density in the Byzantine period that was to be exceeded only in modern times. This course will examine the bases of this prosperity by identifying the factors that contributed or detracted from it. This will be achieved first by a chronological survey of the important events of the period. Beginning with the reign of Herod the Great and the time of Christ, the class will continue by examining the course of Jewish-Roman relations and the revolts of the 1st and early 2nd centuries A.D., the reign of Diocletian, the reign of Constantine and the subsequent Christianization of the area, the reign of Justinian, and the first years of Muslim rule. Selected aspects of the period will be the second component of the course. Economics, the military defenses and relations with the Arab tribes beyond the frontier, and the impact of Christianity and pilgrimage will be examined. Complementing the study of historical events and other aspects will be a sampling with slides of the extensive archaeological remains from the period.

INSTRUCTOR: Robert Schick is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at The University of Chicago. His dissertation topic is "The Fate of Christians in the Early Years of Muslim Rule." He has excavated at Byzantine sites in both Israel and Jordan.

This class will meet at the Oriental Institute from 10 a.m. till noon on Saturdays from April 5 through May 31 with the exception of May 24 (Memorial Day weekend).

THE ART OF ANCIENT EGYPT

The method of representation in Egyptian art is fundamentally different from that initiated in Greek art. The modern viewer may be prevented, therefore, by a standard of artistic value inherited from the Greeks, from anything more than a superficial enjoyment of the masterpieces of Egyptian art.

The goal of this eight-week course is to provide an introduction to the appreciation of the aesthetics, as well as to the religious and social function, of Egyptian art. Through illustrated slide lectures, the class will examine Egyptian sculpture and painting dating from the prehistoric to the Christian era. We will analyze the concepts which remained constant throughout four millennia and determine the changes in artistic style attributable to internal reasons, such as the religious innovations of the Amarna Age, or to foreign influences from Mesopotamia, the Aegean, Greece, and Rome.

Reading assignments will consist of brief articles.

INSTRUCTOR: Lorelei H. Corcoran is a Ph.D. Candidate in Egyptology at the Oriental Institute. She recently lived in Egypt for eight months to research the iconography of portrait mummies from Roman Egypt, her dissertation topic.

This class will meet at the Oriental Institute from 10 a.m. till noon on Saturdays from April 5 through June 7 with the exception of April 19 and May 24 (Memorial Day weekend).

FURTHER INFORMATION 962-9507. Tuition is \$60 plus \$25 annual membership in Oriental Institute.

Please register me for the course

- Roman and Byzantine Palestine
- The Art of Ancient Egypt
- 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 checks payable to
THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE. Please register by
Wednesday, April, 2nd • Mail to: EDUCATION
OFFICE, The Oriental Institute, 1155 East 58th
Street, Chicago, IL 60637.

FREE SUNDAY MOVIES AT THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE

All films will be shown at 2 p.m. in Breasted Hall

MARCH 9	Of Time, Tombs, and Treasure
MARCH 16	Iraq: Stairway to the Gods
MARCH 23	Egypt: Gift of the Nile
MARCH 30	Megiddo: City of Destruction
APRIL 6	Preserving Egypt's Past
APRIL 13	To be announced
APRIL 20	Myth of Pharaohs/Ancient Mesopotamia
APRIL 27	The Big Dig
MAY 4	Egypt's Pyramids: Houses of Eternity
MAY 11	Rivers of Time
MAY 18	The Egyptologists
MAY 25	Iran: Landmarks in the Desert

LECTURE SCHEDULE

All lectures (except the one on Sunday, March 16th) 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 16, 1986 Kenan T. Erim, New York University, *The Sculptural School of Aphrodisias*. A joint lecture with the Chicago Society of the A.I.A.
NOTE: This Sunday afternoon lecture will take place at 4 PM in Breasted Hall.
- April 2, 1986 Edna R. Russman, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, *Portrait Sculpture of Egypt's Late Period (700 B.C.-30 B.C.)*.
- April 30, 1986 Eric Meyers, Duke University, *Recent Excavations in the Galilee*.
- May 12, 1986 Annual Oriental Institute Dinner in the Museum.
- May 21, 1986 Karen Wilson, New York University, *Eight Seasons of Excavation at Mendes: Capital City of the 16th Lower Egyptian Nome*.

MARCH LECTURE

Our annual joint lecture in conjunction with the Chicago Society of the A.I.A. will be presented by Kenan T. Erim, from New York University, speaking on *The Sculptural School of Aphrodisias*, March 16, 1986 at 4 PM in Breasted Hall.

APRIL LECTURE

Edna R. Russman, from The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, will present an illustrated lecture, *Portrait Sculpture of Egypt's Late Period (700 B.C.-30 B.C.)* on April 2, 1986 at 8 PM in Breasted Hall.

APRIL LECTURE

Eric Meyers, of Duke University, will present an illustrated lecture, *Recent Excavations in the Galilee*, on April 30, 1986 at 8 PM in Breasted Hall.

HIEROGLYPHS-BY-MAIL TO BEGIN IN APRIL

The Introductory Hieroglyphs-by-Mail course taught by Frank Yurco will begin in late 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 20.

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: \$46.00 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: \$30.00 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

DOCENT TRAINING COURSE

The annual training course for new Museum Docents will begin on March 31 and continue for 9 weeks. This course, an introduction to the history and culture of the ancient Near East is given by members of the Institute faculty. The course will consist of lectures, gallery workshops, films and seminars.

After completing the course, new docents are expected to spend one half day a week giving tours in the Museum for at least a year. All docents must be members of the Institute, and there is a \$25 fee for materials.

Anyone interested in becoming a docent and taking the course should call Janet Helman, Volunteer Chairman at 962-9507 for more information or to make an appointment for an interview.

THE SUQ سوق

Book Sale		Regular Price	Sale Price	Book Sale		Regular Price	Sale Price
Adams, R.	Land Behind Baghdad	22.00	14.00	Suzuki & Takai	Paleolithic Site at Douara	24.00	15.00
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Clark, G.	Mesolithic Prelude	15.00	10.00	Curtis, A.	Ugarit (Cities of the Biblical World Series)	8.95	
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Gaster, T.W.	Thespis	16.00	12.00	Lane, M.	Guide to the Antiques of the Fayyum	12.00	
Grant, M.	History of Ancient Israel	19.95	12.95	Pabari, et al	Cairo - a Practical Guide	12.95	
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Rahman, F.	Islam and Modernity	6.95	3.95				
Stern, E.	Material Culture of the Land of the Bible (Hebrew)	15.20	9.95				

Postage: \$2.00 first book, .50 each additional book (Members: 10% discount does not apply to the sale books) Illinois residents add 8% sales tax



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A STAR WITH A BEAK AND A TAIL



The Babylonian Observation of Halley's Comet

There has been much publicity for the past year and a half about the identification of a sighting of Halley's Comet on a Babylonian tablet in the collections of the British Museum. This cuneiform tablet (BMA 41462) records the sighting of the comet—*šallummû*—moving through the sky in 164 BC.

This tablet is part of a long tradition of astronomical observations. The Babylonians kept accurate records of the regular movements of the celestial bodies in order to maintain the accuracy of the calendar, the dates of holidays, and the agricultural season.

By 400 BC Babylonian astronomers had developed the practice of dividing the sky into a 360-degree circle of twelve constellations occupying 30 degrees each. We know this system today as the Zodiac. As early as the second millennium BC they had identified the five planets—Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. By the first millennium they were keeping detailed records of the movements of these heavenly bodies through the constellations.

Using these, they were able to predict the future positions of the moon and planets.

The Oriental Institute tablet collection contains a number of these Babylonian astronomical almanacs. Thirty of these were published by O. Neugebauer in *Astronomical Cuneiform Texts* (London, 1955). One records the consecutive oppositions of the sun and moon for a two-year period. Another records the position of the Zodiacal constellation Scorpio for several months. For many years various scholars working on the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary Project have worked with these kinds of astronomical texts. Already in 1962, volume 16 of the CAD had identified *šallummû* as a "meteoric fireball" and had translated its description in an astronomical text as "a star which has a beak in front and a tail in back."

The research in ancient astronomy of the Oriental Institute's Assyriologists will be highlighted in a small exhibit which will open April 13. It will feature the work of Professors Erica Reiner, David Pingree, Hermann Hunger, and Francesca Rochberg-Halton, and will include astronomical texts from the Museum's collections.



The Oriental Institute

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