
A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

To return to Is 40. A voice says, 'Call out.' Another voice answers from the distance, of one who despairs of calling to a people hopeless and apathetic: 'What shall I call? All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness as the flower of the field: the grass withers, the flower fades: because the breath of Yahweh blows upon it; surely the people is grass.' The herald answers back: 'The grass withers, the flower fades: but the word of our God will stand for ever.' The answer gives hope to the desperate, and he calls back the summons: 'Get thee up into a high mountain, bearer of tidings to Zion; lift up with strength thy voice, bearer of tidings to Jerusalem.' In spite of the feminine participle in Heb. and in view of the masculine participle in LXX of this verse and in Heb. of 41^{27}, 'I will give to Jerusalem a bearer of tidings,' the R.V. version is to be preferred. The 'mountain telegraph' throws light upon Is $21^{6.7}$, where the watchman is to look and report what he sees, but also to 'listen diligently with great attention.' And 21^{11}, 'One calls unto me from Seir, Watchman, what of the night?' See also Hab 2^{1}.

When news was received, it speedily passed from mouth to mouth. In the song of Deborah we read how news was passed by travellers riding over the country, just as it does to-day amongst the Kafirs; people sitting in their houses; friends meeting on the road; or at the well as they go to draw water (Jg $5^{10.11}$). The fateful news of the death of Saul was carried by messengers 'sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry the tidings unto the house of their idols and to the people' (1 S 31^{9}). Just as David feared: 'Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon; lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.' Women were wont to take up news and carry it about (Ps 68^{11}): 'The women that publish the tidings are a great host,' or (see Briggs, *in loc.*) 'The women are heralding war.' News coming across the mountains is pictured in Ps 72^{3}: 'The mountains are personified for the messengers who come over them, proclaiming from all parts the prevalence of peace and righteousness' (Briggs). See also Jer 4^{15-16} 31^{6}, Ezk 7^{7} 19^{9}. The custom that still prevails in South Africa may, for all the present writer knows, be found in many other lands where the air is clear enough for the voice to carry over long distances; as, in Britain in early times, beacon fires carried warnings over the land from hill to hill.

Recent Excavations in Mesopotamia, 1918–1926.

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The occupation of the historic lands of Babylonia and Assyria by the British Army was one of the few beneficent results of the Great War. The opportunity afforded by the transfer of Mesopotamia from Turkey to Great Britain was at once utilized by the British Museum in 1918, and the War Office directed Dr. Campbell Thompson to explore the region of Nasiriyah, at once, before hostilities had ceased. The two principal sites in this area are Ur and Eridu, the former being the ancient Sumerian city of the Moon-god *Sin* or *Nannar*, and the latter the equally ancient seat of the cult of the Sumerian Water-god and patron of philosophy, *Ea* (the Ôannēs of the Greek writers on Babylonia) or *Enki*. In the autumn of 1918, Dr. H. R. Hall of the British Museum received a similar commission for the same sites; both were only temporary and tentative explorations of this important area, and of their results I first give account.

Brief mention should be made of the *Excursion archéologique en Mesopotamie*, by Le Comte Aymar de Liedekerke-Beaufort, a valiant soldier who fell at Verdun in 1916. His explorations at Ur and Eridu in 1913–14 are recorded from notes left in the hands of Charles Virolleaud, and are published in *Babyloniaca*, Paris, 1923, vol. vii. pp. 105–116. He gave a detailed geographical account of the country along the Euphrates from above Babylon to the famous Muhammadan city Nedjef, and from Nedjef to Muqayyar (Ur) and Abu Shahrain (Eridu), where the Euphrates reached the sea in ancient times. He remarks on Ur and Eridu that the ruins of their

stage towers are remarkably well preserved. At Ur he found natives digging for and finding cuneiform tablets. Four miles south of Ur, beyond a low sand ridge, lies the wide desolate basin known as Solébié, in the midst of which rise the ruins of the famous city Eridu. He gives a vivid account of the Arab tribes of this area, and especially of the powerful Muntefiks, who are said to have come from Mecca and whose sheikh founded Nasiriyah, the most important city in this region at the junction of the Euphrates and the old Sumerian canal, which joins the Tigris and Euphrates, now the Shatt el Hai. A good description of Eridu is given by this intrepid traveller, and also of the Roman fortress Qasr el Gesayem at the extreme southern side of the great basin on the edge of the Arabian desert. It is regrettable that this cultured Frenchman passed away in the full vigour of youth, before the great revival of Mesopotamian excavations initiated by British scholars after the War.

Eridu, the scene of Thompson's principal excavations, like Ur, its neighbouring city, fourteen miles to the north, is a foundation of prehistoric times, and though never the seat of a ruling dynasty, it, with Nippur in central Sumer, was one of the two great centres of Sumerian theology, and its Water-god counted as the third member of the Sumerian trinity: *Anu*, the Heaven-god of Erech, *Enlil*, the Earth-god of Nippur, and *Ea*, the Water-god of Eridu. It is not surprising, therefore, that sherds of pottery in black and red painted designs were found both on the surface and in trenches here. Thompson and Hall established the existence of an early Sumerian period of painted ware (*c.* 3500 B.C.) in Babylonia for the first time, and the fact was further confirmed by Hall at Ur and the neighbouring site, Tal-al-'Ubaid. In fact, the discovery of fine painted ware is one of the most remarkable features of recent excavations in Mesopotamia. It was to be followed by a great discovery of complete vessels of this ware at Jemdet Nasr in 1925–26 by the Oxford and Field Museum Expedition, and at 'Ubaid by the British Museum and Philadelphia Expedition in 1923–24. We now know that, before the real political history of the Sumerians begins (*c.* 3000 B.C.), they had long been master-craftsmen in the ceramic art in the entire region of their early occupation from Assyria in the north to the Persian Gulf. For some unknown reason this great art passed away and the skill of the sculptor takes its place in the period of their best culture (3000–2000 B.C.). At Eridu the city wall is of limestone, a unique feature of Babylonian archæology; for stone is rare in the valley of the two rivers. The ruins of its stage tower in the northern end of the city rises above the line of the wall to a height of eighty feet, and was known to the Sumerians as *E-unir*, 'the building of admiration.' At Ur the stage tower *E-lugalmalgasidi*, 'building of the king who directs justice,' also stands on the northern side of the city. Every great temple of Babylonia and Assyria had its stage tower, and at Kish there are still two of them standing as they were left by the early Sumerian masons, who employed small biscuit-shaped bricks. Wind and rain and spoliation by natives in search of bricks for building houses have destroyed the upper stages of every stage tower in the land. Only the bottom stage, and in some cases, as at Ur, Barsippa, and Kish, remnants of the second, and less often the third, stage remain. In early times they consisted of four stages only, and of this type were the towers of Eridu and Ur.

Thompson noted the marble staircase of the tower of Eridu on the S.E. side previously found by Taylor (1854) and exposed a portion of this face. This staircase is built at right angles with the S.E. face of the *ziggurat*, as is the central stairway of the N.E. side of the *ziggurat* at Ur. He sank pits in every part of the mound to determine the stratification and proved its very great age, and that the place ceased to be of any importance after the time of Hammurabi (twenty-first century B.C.). No plan of the stage tower and temple (Esira) of Ea has yet been made. Hall made careful excavations of Sumerian houses in the residential quarter and found their walls faced with white plaster, and sometimes painted with red and white stripes three inches broad. A great deal of attention is given by both excavators to the types of pottery at Eridu. Thompson visited several mounds east of Eridu, namely, Murajib, Tuwaiyil, and El-Lahm, and established their great age by pottery sherds from these sites. The ancient names of none of these ruins could be determined.

The best discovery of these preliminary expeditions was made by Hall at a small mound four miles west of Ur, where a fine early temple of Ninhursag, goddess of child-birth, was unexpectedly found. His work was latterly completed by Mr. C. L. Woolley. This is the first large building of plano-convex brick masonry excavated in Mesopotamia,

although in the season of 1923–24 Mr. Mackay and Colonel Lane discovered a larger and finer one at Kish. The 'Ubaid temple was rebuilt by Dungi, king of Ur (2391–2344 B.C.). So far as we now know, the great city of Ur possessed no temple to the great earth-mother goddess, and it is possible that this site nearby was chosen for her temple and cult. Here was found the oldest known historical inscription (*c.* 3100 B.C.) of *A-an-ni-pad-da*, second king of the first dynasty of Ur, and a torso of an early Sumerian statue of a certain Kurlil of Erech. On the south-east side of this temple, near a stone stairway, Hall and Woolley discovered a great horde of copper objects, revealing the astonishing skill of Sumerian metal workers. From Hall's work comes the remarkable large copper imitation of the well-known heraldic emblem of various Sumerian cities, a lion-headed eagle grasping with its talons two fine stags in deep relief, their heads and spreading antlers being attached free from the monument. Friezes of copper bulls and others of beautiful white limestone and shell inlay, representing agricultural scenes, lay in fragments at the entrance of the temple. We found similar inlay work both outside of and inside the old Sumerian palace of Kish. This fine inlay work of 'Ubaid and Kish is clearly from the same period and the same school of craftsmanship. Here again, as in the case of the ancient painted ware, we have a delicate success in art, which suddenly disappears for ever in the long history of peoples. It is precisely this inexplicable and disturbing feature of human history that makes excavation and archæology an invaluable branch of modern science.

Near the temple to the south was found an old Sumerian residential quarter abandoned for a cemetery at an early period. Here were implements of the Neolithic period, clay sickles (set with flint teeth at Kish), stone corn grinders, and much painted and incised pottery. The bodies were wrapped in reed mats and laid in the earth without other covering, a custom characteristic of the early period. Later burials of the classical Sumerian period are frequently narrow brick tombs in which the bath-shaped clay coffins are placed. These tomb burials were also found at Ur. The new element in archæology here is that the burials in clay coffins appear to be as early as the twenty-fifth century.

In 1922 begins the period of more consecutive excavations by fully equipped and financed expeditions. Both are joint organizations, British and American. The British Museum and the University Museum of Philadelphia sent out Mr. C. L. Woolley with a staff to continue the work at Ur; Oxford University (with the support of Mr. Herbert Weld, Hon. D.Litt., Hon. Fellow of Queen's College) and the Field Museum of Chicago sent out Mr. Ernest Mackay to excavate the ancient city of Kish, eight miles east of Babylon. Both expeditions have worked continuously for the past four seasons and both have again returned for a fifth season (1926–27).

Ur is a large oval mound with long axis north-south (160 rods), and short axis east-west (120 rods). The sacred area, on which stood the massive stage tower and temples of the Moon-god (Sin) and his consort (Ningal), as well as the palace of the kings of Ur (Ehursag), the convent, temple library, and court of justice, together with other buildings connected with the temple service, lies in the north-western section. Its enclosing double wall, traced by Hall and Woolley, contains chambers communicating with the platform on which stood this enormous complex of buildings. This is known as the *temenos* area in all Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian cities. It is an immense walled rectangle, 823 feet on the N.W. end, 650 feet on the S.E. end, 1312 feet on the S.W. side, and 1246 feet on the N.E. side. On the N.W. corner of this area is another higher terrace and enclosing wall, on which stand the stage tower, the temple of Ningal, wife of the Moon-god, just south of the tower, and temple service buildings to the north of the tower. At each west and north corner of the *ziggurat* or tower platform are heavily walled fortresses, and the plan of defence is completed at the south and east corners by great buildings, the temple of Ningal and the heavy walls of the shrine Edublalmah. The entire *temenos* wall is named Etemennigur, but Mr. Woolley believes that this name applies to the great terrace wall of the *ziggurat* platform.

Dr. Hall cleared the S.E. side of the great tower in 1918–19 and determined the dimensions of the lower stage, which, like all Sumerian stage towers, is orientated with its corners to the cardinal points, and so is the sacred *temenos* area and the tower terrace. The stages of these towers are usually square, but Elugal-malgasidi at Ur is rectangular, 130 by 190 feet, the long sides being N.E. and S.W., agreeing in plan with the *temenos* area. We also found the ground plan of the tower of the War-god's temple at Kish slightly rectangular, 185 by 198 feet. On the N.E. side three long stairways, steps in stone

with brick ramps, lead up from the terrace to the platform of the second stage ; two of them are built parallel with the N.E. face of the lower stage from the north and east ends, and the central stair is at right angles with the face as at Eridu, and probably at Kish. This construction, as it stands, is largely the work of the great kings of Ur in the twenty-fourth century, but it has been repaired by Nebuchadnezzar and Nabunidus in the sixth century. The tower has only four stages, and if deductions can be made from quantities of blue glazed bricks of Nabunidus, the top stage is really a shrine (*shahuru*), built as a sleeping chamber for the god and goddess of Ur. The face of the bottom stage is covered with a coating of black bitumen. East of the tower is a great sunken court surrounded by chambers : its N.W. wall is faced with panels and attached pillars, and its whole face is whitewashed.

The great shrine of the Moon-god (Sin) and his consort Ningal, known as the temple Nunmah, 'house of the far-famed prince,' was found on the *temenos* platform below the east corner of the *ziggurat* platform. Its two chapels for the god and goddess are in good state of preservation, and many of its service chambers could be planned by Woolley. The temple had been completely reconstructed by Nebuchadnezzar, who razed many chambers before the shrines of the N.W. side, and laid down a walled court, obviously for liturgical and processional services. The brick pedestals for the statues of god and goddess were found at the back of their chambers. Reparations by Cyrus, the Mede, were also in evidence here. The pavement of a side chapel is laid in mosaics of white shell on bitumen, and beneath a pavement of Cyrus lay a horde of fine jewellery and precious stones.

Special mention must be made of two buildings where discoveries of the utmost importance were made, namely, the temple of Ningal on the tower terrace and the great rectangular building on the *temenos* platform just S.E. of the terrace, known as *Egepar*, the convent, with its magnificent shrine Edublalmah at the north end. This special temple of Ningal, whose cult in this temple is distinguished from her cult in Enunmah (as the consort of Sin), apparently represents the cult of the great virgin goddess Ishtar or Innini, the Sumerian Venus. It had been completely remodelled by Nabunidus. The fore-hall and inner shrine, the side chapels and the great adjacent court of this royal builder were first planned, and then removed. Below this lies the fine original building of the kings of Ur. In the court of *Egepar* lay the fragments of a magnificent stone stela, sculptured in bas-relief on both sides. It is the work of Ur-Nammu, founder of the last Sumerian dynasty of Ur (2409–2390 B.C.). In various registers he is represented standing before his god and goddess, Sin and Ningal, and pouring water into a great pot in which stands a small tree. The god holds an adze, measuring rod, and coiled line with which Mr. Woolley compares the vision of Ezekiel, when he received plans from his God concerning the new temple in Jerusalem. The stela actually represents Ur-Nammu proceeding to build a temple ; he carries a pick, basket, trowel, and mason's implements, and follows his god to his work. In another remarkable register of this stela a winged angel is seen descending from heaven toward Ur-Nammu. The angel pours water (?) from a bowl, which descends in a stream to a vase (?), held in the outstretched hands of Ur-Nammu. Gudea, governor of Lagash of the twenty-sixth century, tells of a similar vision which he received from his gods concerning the building of the temple E-ninnû to his god Ningirsu, and this has already been compared to the vision of Ezekiel by the Hebrew scholar, the late Dr. G. B. Gray. The stela, sadly incomplete, has also a liturgical scene on which two musicians beat a great drum (*balag*), a scene previously found at Lagash. On the S.E. side of Ningal's temple runs a fine paved street leading up to a gate house on the east corner of the terrace platform, by which one enters the court of the massive shrine Edublalmah and the convent Egepar. South of this street opposite the Ningal temple was found Ehursag, the palace of the kings of Ur. Here, beneath the late pavement, the excavators came upon three brick boxes containing small clay statuettes of priests. Their priestly robes are imitations of a huge fish, symbol of the water god Ea, deity of purification, who cleanses from all sin. A bronze relief, long since known in Paris, represents two priests wearing this robe, and they actually stand at the head and foot of a patient in the act of driving out the seven devils. Such is the ancient heritage of priestly magic, which still survives in dissembled form, ever a powerful appeal to the religious imagination of man through the ages, the priest commissioned by divine ordination wears the symbol of his mystic warrant to purge mankind from his sins.

The massive shrine Edublalmah is called in the inscriptions found there 'the place of (Nannar's)

judgements,' and has been described by the excavator as the 'Hall of Justice.' Many other cities had also their Duplalmah, and from hordes of tablets found in adjacent rooms of this building, together with the natural meaning of the name 'far-famed house filled with tablets,' it is certain that the place was a kind of college and administrative building. The name of the entire building, including the massive shrine and forehall with court, is *Egepar*, known to have been a convent, where the high priestess resided. No less a personage than Nabunidus, king of Babylonia, caused his daughter to enter as high priestess of Nannar, the Moon-god, here. In the older building of the kings of Ur, two vaulted doorways looked out from the wings of the sanctuary, and show remarkable skill in the construction of the arch. Lane also found at Kish, in a very ancient Sumerian palace, a long vaulted drain, and in the palace of the kings of Kish was a vaulted kiln or oven.

A fine marble head of a woman of the best period of Sumerian art was recovered in Ehursag (?); the delineation of the features is not surpassed by anything in Greek sculpture, and is comparable to the wonderful statuette of a Sumerian woman (twenty-sixth century) found at Lagash. Both wear the same broad-brimmed turban with hair rolled in large chignons. This was erroneously taken for the head of the goddess Ningal, but of course it cannot represent a goddess who would wear the horned tiara. In 1925–26 the excavation of the Ningal temple was completed, and religious and grammatical texts were found, together with a horde of jewellery and a fine alabaster stone, carved with a boating scene. Special mention should be made of the temple kitchen, whose oven, sinks, and stone hand-mills were found in remarkable preservation, such that Mr. Woolley was able to restart the fires and make a photograph of the kitchen staff preparing a dinner and drawing water from the kitchen well. From this building comes a good stone statuette of a seated woman handsomely dressed in the style of the classical Sumerian period; a spacious and elegant flounced cloak falls over the body to the feet, and she wears a close-fitting necklace of several strands. It is precisely of the same style as the bas-relief figure of a Sumerian lady on a stone basin of Lagash. Remarkable is the sculpture of a goose on the side of her low stool. This, again, is erroneously defined as a figure of a goddess, and described as the goddess Bau.

It will be seen from this fragmentary review of the excavations at Ur, that this expedition has done a careful and valuable piece of work in exposing the temple plan of one of the greatest religious cults of antiquity. We now have before us very definite knowledge about the complicated temple constructions of the cult of the Moon-god of Babylonia, where the kings of the last powerful Sumerian dynasty ruled for a century over the destinies of Western Asia, and spread their culture to the far lands of Assyria, Cappadocia, and Syria.

Of the four seasons of the Oxford and Field Museum Expedition at Kish I can write with more personal touch, as I was interested in this undertaking from the time when Dr. Herbert Weld first made his offer to promote excavations in Mesopotamia. This cultured patron of learning, himself an admirable Orientalist, travelled in Mesopotamia in the spring of 1922, visiting various sites and endeavouring to secure for Oxford the most valuable inscriptions found by the natives. Among the treasures which he secured is the now famous Weld Prism of the Ashmolean Museum, which is a compilation of all the Sumerian and Semitic dynasties by a scribe who lived at the end of the dynasty of Isin. Beginning with mythological names of the ten kings who lived before the Flood, the scribe brings his lists of kings down to the end of the reign of Sin-magir (2098 B.C.). This and another tablet secured by him gave us at last the names of the ten antediluvian kings corresponding to the ten antediluvian patriarchs of Hebrew tradition, and confirmed, what was already known from Berossus, the Sumerian origin of the Hebrew tradition; it assigns a period of 456,000 years to the antediluvian period, and the Hebrew reduction of this period to about 1500 years is inexplicable, showing little knowledge of the great antiquity of man and of the remote period of the origins of civilization as now revealed by the excavation of Kish. Historical traditions agree in making Kish the seat of the first kings after the Flood, and it remained the principal capital of northern Sumer until Sargon of Agade (2752 B.C.), after which it continued to be a great metropolis down to the Persian period. It is of far greater antiquity than its later rival Babylon, eight miles away, on the new course of the Euphrates. We found the ruins of Kish to consist of mounds scattered over an area nearly five miles long from west to east. The old course of the Euphrates passed through it

dividing the city into eastern and western Kish. The occupations of both sides of the river are equally ancient, but the earliest Sumerian buildings are much better preserved in the more extensive eastern area.

The eastern ruins are now known by the Arabs as Ingharra, and the western ruins as Tal-al-Uhaimir; the former lies a mile south-east of the latter, but there is another great mound at the eastern end beyond Ingharra, named Abu Sudairah; the buildings in this mound have not been determined. Beneath the many huge and smaller mounds of Ingharra lie the principal temple of the great mother-goddess of the Sumerians, Ninhursag, the ancient palace of the powerful kings of Kish, and many other unidentified temples of various deities. The huge ruins at Uhaimir cover the temple of the War-god of the Sumerians, Emeteursag, where the War-goddess Ishtar also had a chapel and cult.

Mr. Mackay began excavations at Emeteursag in 1922, and excavated the south-eastern side of the *temenos* platform, and exposed the south-eastern and south-western sides of the stage tower. Only the lowest base of this tower can now be traced, but there are remnants of two or more superior stages and it is still in comparatively good state of preservation. As at Ur the *temenos* walls contain rooms, communicating with the platform, on which stand the *ziggurat* and temple. A corridor runs round the base of the tower, communicating with court chambers, but its communications with the large temple on the north-east side have not been determined. Stamped bricks of the principal Babylonian restorers of the tower and temple, Samsu-iluna, Adad-apal-iddin, and Nebuchadnezzar abound, and the additions which they made to the facings of the walls and to the platforms are perfectly dated by them. The early plano-convex levels were reached in deep trial trenches and some painted pottery was recovered. Fragments of a large diorite stela of Hammurabi have been found in the clearings in almost every part of the mound; the fragments recovered are all inscribed in Sumerian, but nothing can now be pieced together to discover the contents of the text. Considerable work was done that season on the extensive residential quarter of western Kish, where a few cuneiform tablets, pottery of the age of Samsu-iluna, and copper weapons of the same period, were found. The best object recovered here is a perfect bone stylus, the only example now known of the instrument employed for writing the cuneiform script. A discovery made early in the second season by Colonel W. H. Lane, who had joined Mr. Mackay in October 1923, altered the plans of our excavations, and the scene of activity was shifted to eastern Kish, to which we have devoted our principal resources for the following three years. Two plano-convex buildings were detected in low unattractive mounds; one near the Ninhursag temple area, and one in the open plain almost a mile to the north, but evidently inside the old city walls. The original palace of the early kings of Kish appears to have been the great building which Mackay and Lane excavated near the temple and stage tower in eastern Kish. Two full seasons were spent on this site, and a complete plan of it has been made. Its principal feature consists in a spacious open court on the south-west corner, bounded on the eastern side by a fine alcoved wall, which is broken by a wide flight of brick steps at the back of a series of receding buttresses. This wall is the western face of a wing of the palace, and the steps lead up to the level of the rooms from the court. In the débris behind this wall lay fragments of a fine slate plaque, inlaid with white limestone figures, showing the king of Kish bringing captured kings to his city. The northern side of the court is a straight-faced wall, before which runs a heavy sleeper wall mounted by heavy round brick pillars. The discovery of this wall of pillars was a revelation in early Sumerian architecture. The plan is somewhat similar to that of the sunken court found at Ur of a much later period. The panelled whitewashed wall, decorated with attached pillars on the north-west end of the court, has been mentioned above. Parallel to this wall, but at a much greater distance away than stands the pillared wall of Kish from the face of the palace, runs a low wall on which Woolley believes wooden pillars to have been set. But the supposed pillared wall of Ur is only a conjecture, though a probable one, whereas the pillared wall of Kish was actually found in good repair, and its great antiquity is indisputable. Photographs of the fine palace court have been repeatedly published in the press and in the writer's *Excavations at Kish*, plates ix.–xii., where the evidence can be plainly seen. In a chamber behind this court wall lay fragments of another slate frieze, inlaid with white limestone figures of sheep, goats, and milking scenes of the same excellent technique as the inlaid frieze of

Tal-al-'Ubaid. When Mr. Mackay completed the excavation of this large building in 1924–25 it was found to consist of two groups, which do not communicate with each other. One is characterized by a long hall through the long axis of which runs another wall of pillars; at one end of this wall a large bitumen-lined basin is let into the pavement, apparently for the purpose of washing feet before entering the royal chambers. Characteristic of the adjoining rectangular complex of chambers is a spacious court with doors communicating with rooms on every side. To our great disappointment the sculptures and inscriptions, which were undoubtedly stored here, have been totally despoiled by the conquerors of Kish. The place was abandoned for a cemetery already in early Sumerian times, and from these graves come the best archæological discoveries made there, throwing a great light upon ancient Sumerian beliefs and customs. Buried with the dead were entirely new types of jars and dishes, as yet unique in the history of pottery. The tall water-jars have wide imitation handles on which is depicted the bust of the great goddess Ninhursag of the neighbouring temple. It is a mute symbol of their trust in the mother-goddess, who ever prayed for man before the gods, and signifies their last hope in her intervention for the soul of man, when he should at last stand before the gods of the lower world to receive judgment at the hands of the terrible god of *Arallû*. Copper vanity cases lay beside the bodies of women, together with their beads and copper hair-pins mounted in lapis lazuli; copper weapons of men who had warred on behalf of Kish were found in abundance in their graves.

The writer was present during the season of 1923–24 and devoted himself to excavating a large mound in eastern Kish, one of the residential quarters from the twenty-second century to the age of Nebuchadnezzar. A large number of streets and houses were exposed, and many hundreds of tablets, chiefly grammatical and contracts, were recovered. The tablets are sadly broken but often valuable. One of them contains observations of the risings and settings of Venus for the first six years of the reign of Ammizaduga, king of Babylonia (1921–1901 B.C.). In the third season my work at this site was taken over by Father Burrows, S.J., whose discoveries consist in the same kind of material. A beautiful silver statuette found by him outside a clay coffin shows for the first time a Babylonian lady dressed in the ornate fashion which obtained in the age of Nebuchadnezzar.

In 1925–26 I again rejoined Mr. Mackay, who now turned his whole attention to the vast temple complex of Hursagkalama, which has two stage towers, built in the old Sumerian period of plano-convex bricks, and never repaired by any later ruler. This is strange indeed; for these towers of unbaked bricks must have been in ruins when Sargon of Agade rebuilt an unidentified temple at the north-west side of the larger tower. The north-west side and part of the south-west side of the larger *ziggurat* were exposed. Its huge dimensions are surprising, its base being almost as large as the tower of Babylon. The temple Hursagkalama was located, and the fine restoration by Nabunidus about half exposed. Its uncovered walls faced with false columns and T-shaped recesses now look down upon the desolated plain from their ancient hill and can be seen for miles by the approaching visitor. Beneath this late building lies the older Sumerian temple so frequently mentioned in the liturgies of Babylonian temples. As we cleared the débris between the north-west face of the tower and the south-west face of the older temple, whose identity remains unknown, a good headless statuette of a priest or official of the old Sargonic period was found; it bears a cartouche of a Semite *Ali-ilum* son of *Sarrinna*, who dedicated it to a deity of Kish. The clearance of both this temple and of Hursagkalama will be the task of the coming season. After the well-preserved building of Nabunidus shall have been exposed and planned, it must be removed and the underlying ancient temple dug out.

My own work of the last season was almost exclusively confined to the excavation of a small site seventeen miles north-east of Kish in an indescribably desolate region. No report with plans and photographs of this remarkable site has been made, but I shall briefly describe the salient results. Attention was drawn to this place in 1924, when Arabs brought into our camp complete examples of black and red painted pots as well as clay tablets inscribed in pictographic Sumerian writing. Even the small collection of painted ware, obtained in this way by Mackay, constituted the first important group of such pottery ever recovered in Mesopotamia. I at once obtained concession of this place from the Government and excavated the site in 1925–26. The mound is called *Jemdet Nasr* by the Arabs, and is

a small L-shaped ruin only ten feet above plain level at the highest point, sloping gradually away into the surrounding detritus of the plain. The place is called *Shu-nun-(ki)* on the tablets, and perished in fire at a period more remote than all historical memories of the Sumerian scribes. Here it lay in its ashes and wind-swept débris throughout the ages. Consequently the remnants of the oldest civilization of the valley lay undisturbed by later builders. Only one large building, apparently a palace, stood here; the remainder of the town consists of ruined houses. I cleared this building completely and found a great quantity of painted ware, some of which is in perfect condition. The designs are almost exclusively conventional and geometrical in design, bands, checquer patterns, and diamond figures predominating. A vase in the shape of a pig, the domestic animal most characteristic of early Sumerian life, was a revelation to us; it had been supposed that theriomorphic vases were unknown in Mesopotamia! In one room one hundred and fifty good clay tablets lay in a tumbled mass on the pavement. They are the oldest known documents written on clay tablets, and I was astonished to find that not a single name of a deity occurs here. We had reached that remote age before the religious genius of man had clearly defined the Divine powers which he worshipped. And this is all the more astounding when on tablets, not more than three hundred centuries later from Shuruppak in the far south, we find the names of over eight hundred gods, a good part of the vast Sumerian pantheon. Seals of the most primitive type, copper fish-hooks and flint implements of the Neolithic period abound here. The most remarkable objects I found in a ruined house; they are beautiful and delicate miniature imitations of the larger painted vessels, and are obviously designed as works of art and not for utilitarian purposes.

Although this is the oldest site hitherto excavated, there is one feature which came as a complete surprise to archæologists. The bricks used here are flat and rectangular, and not plano-convex as we should expect by all the canons of Mesopotamian archæology. They measure seven and three-quarters by four inches, and are two and one-fifth inches thick. The baked bricks have two cleanly cut holes at the centre which run straight through the bricks. This is a new factor in the history of brick-making, and it must be assumed that the first workers of this craft used a mould.

Only a half mile away to the south of Jemdet Nasr lie colossal ruins, named Barguthiyat by the Arabs.[1] I planned this site and found there a large marble slab three feet square and four inches thick inscribed with the words, 'Palace of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.' All the surface débris indicate the period of this king, but excavations may prove it to be ancient. It has no stage tower apparently, but its five lofty mounds surely indicate an immense city whose identity cannot even be suggested. It is difficult to convey any idea of the awful desolation of this land, which is covered with the ruins of cities and strewn for miles in the open plains with pottery sherds from rural habitations.

Besides the work done by the two expeditions at Kish and Ur, there is little to relate. An American School of Archæology has been founded at Baghdad, equipped with the library of the late Professor Morris Jastrow, Jr., of Philadelphia. It has an annual director but no building, and the library is not accessible. Three directors have occupied this post in succession, the late Professor Clay of Yale University, Professor E. Chiera of Philadelphia, and Professor Dougherty now at Yale. Dr. Chiera did some work at Kerkuk east of Assur below the Lower Zab river, where he is said to have recovered a great number of contract tablets containing local Mitanni names. The natives of those parts have been selling tablets of this kind for many years, and they are valuable, on account of the information which can be obtained from the personal names, concerning the almost unknown language of the Mitanni people. The American School has planned an archæological survey of the whole of Mesopotamia which should be useful. Of the work done by French excavators at Susa since the War it is not possible to write here; for this site lies outside the scope of this review. A few reports of the work there, carrying on the successful excavations of the late M. de Morgan, are accessible in the *Revue d'Assyriologie*. Painted ware of the early period has again been recovered at Susa, but no other outstanding monuments have come to my notice.

[1] Mr. Henry Field took several photographs of all the mounds in this area.